

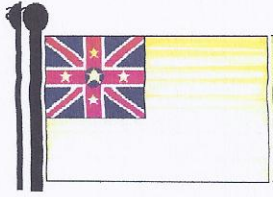


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ADVICE ON PURSE SEINE EEZ LIMITS - NIUE

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GOVERNMENT OF NIUÉ

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY & FISHERIES
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Date: 14th November 2013

To The Chairman of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

Subject: Formal Declaration of catch and effort limits within the Exclusive Economic Zone of Niue Island

Dear Charles,

Niue is a small island developing State with a very high dependence on our EEZ fisheries for sustainable economic development of our people. Niue takes the obligations that we have to our people to properly manage and conserve our highly migratory fisheries resources, very seriously.

We continue to faithfully participate in the work of the Western and Central Pacific Commission (WCPFC) with this important responsibility in mind, and take our WCPFC obligations very seriously.

Given our fisheries are significant and important sources of economic revenue for our country, we are continually working to secure their long-term future, and improve the economic benefits we can derive from them.

Key to this is the establishment of sustainable limits for key HMS stocks. We have completed a rigorous process involving technical inputs and advice from the Forum Fisheries Agency, the Secretariat for the Pacific Community and consultation with our national stakeholders, and members of the FFC Subcommittee on South Pacific Tuna and Billfish.

In determining our fisheries limit, we have taken into account

- a) the status of the stocks, biomass estimates and the existing level of fishing effort in the fishery; and
- b) past, present and future fishing patterns and the extent of the catch being utilized for domestic consumption and food security; and
- c) historic catches and effort in and around our EEZ; and
- d) the fact that our economy, food supply and livelihood are strongly interlinked and dependent on the exploitation of marine living resources; and
- e) the contributions we have made and will continue to make to conservation and management of the stocks, including the provision by them of accurate data and support for scientific research in the Convention Area; and
- f) our strong record of compliance with WCPFC conservation and management measures; and
- g) the needs of our communities and traditions regarding fish stocks; and
- h) our legitimate development aspirations

We have following this process, implemented through our legislative instruments limits for longline and purse seine fisheries as follows:

- a. A longline catch limit for South Pacific Albacore for the EEZ as 3,000 tonnes per annum. It should be noted however that Niue remains committed to fulfilling the more recent directive from FFA Ministers to implement a harvest strategy for the south pacific albacore fishery. Niue agrees to work within the bounds of the harvest strategy process (once agreed), including being subject to any baselines, with the long term ambition of developing our south pacific albacore fishery.
- b. A longline catch limit for bigeye tuna for the EEZ as 500 tonnes per annum
- c. A longline catch limit for yellowfin tuna for the EEZ as 950 tonnes per annum
- d. A purse seine catch limit for skipjack tuna of 3000mt for the EEZ per annum
- e. A purse seine limit (combined) of yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna of 1000 tonnes.

In accordance with obligations under CMM2012-01, specifically for non-PNA coastal States to set catch or effort limits for purse seine fisheries within their EEZ's, Niue sets an effort limit for purse seine fisheries for the Niuean EEZ at 200 fishing days per annum, within the above catch limits. We will make best efforts not to exceed this limit. It should be noted that we have obligations under the multilateral Treaty with the United States, including an obligation on non-PNA countries, to allow up to a total collective fishing effort of 300 multi-zone days for vessels fishing pursuant the multilateral Treaty, within non-PNA EEZs, with the ability for further fishing on a bilateral basis. Non-PNA members are and will continue to work together to ensure that our collective limits are not exceeded as a result of this obligation.

It should be noted that the limits that we have adopted include room for further development of our fisheries, consistent with the WCPF Convention. These are provided, without prejudice to our future position on the above named fisheries, and our ability to revise and adjust our fisheries management frameworks, including catch or effort limits.

Niue continues to underline our strong interest in improvements being made to the south pacific albacore measure, and the need to put zone based and high seas catch limits in place in this fishery. We hope that the Chair recognises the importance of this fishery to very small Island developing states such as Niue, and we urge the Commission to consider adopting process at this year's Regular Session, to enable such limits to be put in place.

I ask that you please place this letter on the Commissions website as a delegation paper for the 10th Regular Session of the Commission, where we hope to make a short statement outlining to the Commission that we have established these limits.

Thank you Mr Chair, and we look forward to continuing to engage in the work of the Commission in pursuing the Conventions Objectives.

With kind regards



Brendon Pasisi
Director for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Niue