



**DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TROPICAL TUNA MEASURE  
WORKSHOP 2 (TTMW2)  
Electronic Meeting  
6-10 September 2021**

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**AMERICAN SAMOA STATEMENT TO TTMW2**

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**WCPFC-TTMW2-2021-DP03  
10 September 2021**

**Submitted by American Samoa**



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September 6, 2021

Ms Jung-Re Riley Kim  
Chair  
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission  
PO Box 2356, Kolonia  
FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Talofa Madam Chair,

On behalf of the people of American Samoa I am addressing you on a matter of urgency regarding the application of WCPFC conservation and management measures (CMMs) on American Samoa.

American Samoa is a small island developing territory. Our economy is based on tuna. The tuna industry provides 83.8% of our private employment and accounts for 99.5% of our exports. 54.4% of our population live in poverty.

Unfortunately, our economy is suffering due to the unintended consequences of the current CMM. We are losing our American Samoa tuna purse seiner fleet for two reasons. One is reflagging. Boats are changing flags in pursuit of better economic and operating conditions. In 2015 there were 40 US flag tuna purse seiners operating in the Convention Area. Now there are 14. 20 boats have changed flags since 2015, mostly to Pacific Island Countries that exempt their fleets from certain CMMs, such as the FAD closures.

The other reason is fishing economics. Boats are fishing further from American Samoa in waters where they don't have to pay for access and where they are not subject to FAD closures. These more distant fishing grounds make it uneconomical to return to American Samoa to unload their catch. This not only severely impacts the supply of tuna to our canneries, but it also damages our tuna dependent economy.

To give you some appreciation for the severity of the economic damage being inflicted on American Samoa, so far this year, we have seen a 38% reduction in purse seiner calls at Pago Pago. As each of these calls represents about \$400,000 in local purchases, our economy has lost about \$56 million so far this year, not to mention the negative impact on our cannery.

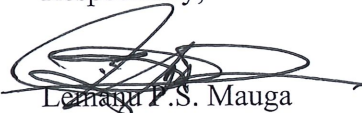
Yesterday we heard Palau say, on behalf of the PNA members and Tokelau, that while they view the current measure as working well and not needing major changes, they recognize that modifications need to be made where the measure is unfair.

I am here to make clear to other CCMs that the current measure is seriously unfair for American Samoa. The measure is NOT working well. It needs to be changed. At the very least the measure should recognize a FAD exemption to the American Samoa based US flag purse seiner fleet.

In developing a new tropical tuna conservation and management measure the Commission needs to fully recognize the special requirements and interests of American Samoa as a small island developing territory which is highly dependent on the regional tuna resources. This is the responsibility of the Commission under Article 30 of the Convention.

I implore you and the Commission to take these negative impacts on the American Samoa people, and economy, into consideration as you deliberate this week during Tropical Tuna Measure Workshop 2 and the upcoming Commission meeting in December.

Respectfully,



Lennan P.S. Mauga  
Governor of American Samoa

cc: Alexa Cole, US Head of Delegation  
Archie Taotasi Soliai, AS Head of Delegation