

(Submitted by Japan)
Explanatory Notes for
DRAFT CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE ON
ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM FOR TRANSHIPMENTS BY LARGE-SCALE
TUNA LONGLINE FISHING VESSELS

1. Background

Since early 1990's, tuna RFMOs such as ICCAT and IATTC has been developed various measures to combat IUU fishing, e.g., trade restrictive measures and positive vessel listing scheme. These schemes are implemented in association with statistical document program, through which tuna products not validated by the flag states are not authorized to be exported to the Member of the RFMO.

Although these measures are still effective, IUU large-scale tuna longline vessels (LSTLVs) are attempting to circumvent these regulations by developing new type of illegal activities so called "fish laundering" recent year. For example, they falsify the information on the fishing areas where harvest occurred (EPO->WCPO) and/or on the name of vessels conduct fishing (IUU -> duly licensed vessel). Conspiring with cargo vessels, the point of transshipment at sea was also falsified in order to export the products taken by IUU fishing by deceiving government authorities concerned. Since those activities seriously undermine the effectiveness of conservation and management measures by the RFMO, urgent actions to eliminate or nullify those activities are required.

2. Measures on transshipment by other tuna RFMOs

In order to solve the problem mentioned above, ICCAT adopted in 2005 the *Recommendation Establishing a Programme for Transshipment by Large-Scale Longline Fishing Vessels* (ICCAT Recommendation 2005-06). In accordance with this recommendation, transshipments at sea to cargo vessels without Commission observer on board are not allowed, and products transshipped without observation by Commission observer are denied to be imported. This Programme will start from January 2007. Similar transshipment measures were adopted by IOTC (Resolution 06/02) and IATTC (Resolution C-06-04), starting from July 2008 and January 2009 respectively.

3. Measures required for WCPFC

As Japan reported at the seventh session of PrepCon in 2004, such fish laundering activities by IUU LSTLVs are occurring also in the WCPFC Convention Area (WCPFC/PrepCon/DP34). IUU LSTLVs is mainly targeting bigeye and yellowfin in the Convention Area and their frozen products are transshipped at sea to ultra-low temperature freezer cargo vessels and are shipped to the foreign port as the products legitimately harvested.

Since the number of such cargo vessels involved in this activity is significantly small compared with those of fishing vessels. Cargo vessels are estimated to be around 50 in the world, while longliner are at least more than one thousand. Therefore, placing observers on the cargo vessels is an effective and efficient way to monitor and regulate fishing activities including transshipment rather than placing them to numerous longline vessels operating in WCPO.

One cargo vessel operate in several oceans in one cruise. A observer on board a cargo vessel may observe two or more Ocean on his duty. Thus an introduction of coherent and coordinated measure on transshipment through all the tuna RFMOs is indispensable for better implementation of the measure.

For the consideration by the Committee, Japan herein developed draft WCPFC program for transshipments by large-scale tuna longline vessels. This draft Conservation and Management Measure is originally based on the IATTC Resolution adopted at the 2006 meeting and necessary changes were made for WCPFC. As was explicitly mentioned, this program only applies to LSTLVs and cargo vessels transshipping frozen tuna products at sea in the convention area. Cargo vessels without WCPFC observer on board are prohibited from conducting transshipment at sea.

As for the costs of implementing this program, flag members of large-scale tuna longline vessels wishing to engage in transshipment operations will assume them. Implementation of this program together with the Bigeye Statistical Document Program would be quite effective to shut out illegally harvested products from their markets.