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**OFAD Report on Pacific Albacore Troll Fishery 2018**

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**Submitted by  
Ocean Friends Against Driftnets**



## ODAD Report on the Pacific Albacore Troll Fishery in the WCPFA, 2018

By Captain John Harder, F/V OCEAN JOY

The South Pacific Albacore Troll Fishery has been on the decline for the past 12 years, and the North Pacific Albacore, inside the Convention area, is practically nonexistent for 15 years.

The South Pacific Albacore Troll fleet consisted of around 12 vessels this year. Less than 400 tons were caught by the jig fleet. The area of fish found was not healthy enough to support the amount of vessels fishing. The fleet struggled to make expanses. There are only 6 vessels starting the 2019 South Pacific Albacore season as of now. Most all are owed by one company, otherwise there would be less.

3 Albacore Troll vessels tried fishing in the North Pacific Convention Area only to fail in their efforts to find any productive area. What they did find was wads of driftnet debris from 31%-34%N x 170%E & 38% N x 176-179%E. This happened to be in the same area that was reported last year by authorities to have had no driftnet activity.



The 3 vessels left the area emptyhanded and returned to the west coast where there was productive catches reported. By mid September, reports of driftnet scratched fish were being sighted off the coast of Washington, Oregon & Canada.







The West Coast Albacore Troll season was not much better than the previous 2017 season which was one of the worst seasons ever. Average season on the coast would have been less than 50 tons per vessel.

A normal season for a North Pacific Albacore Troller would be around 100+ tons. Each vessel would normally catch around 1 ton+ per day.

In Conclusion, Albacore Stocks are well below MSY for the Sustainable Pacific Albacore Troll Fishery to operate due to IUU driftnet fishing and or overfishing by longline fishing vessels.

OFAD & Pacific Albacore Trollers, being primary stakeholders as fishers, request to the WCPFC15 the following provisions:

Ban all driftnets for highly migratory species, or any other species(including squid), as it infringes on our benefits and violates our "freedom of the sea" in international law.

Organize a "Pacific Albacore Trollers Fund" made by the commission, to pay a reward of \$500,000.00 for information leading to a conviction of any IUU driftnet vessels.

All transshipments of Albacore coming from the Northwestern quadrant be under suspicion of IUU fishing. 100% observers on all carrier, or freezer ships effective immediately. All observer organizations must make sure that observers are educated in detecting tuna caught using the method of driftnets. Make sure there is a space in the reports made to verify if fish caught was by driftnets, or not. 20% observer coverage on all longline vessels over 100 ton gross weight effective immediately. To be 100% observer coverage on longline vessels within 2 years.

Heavy fines for any vessels caught, such as 1 million USD, and seize the load.

We ask that any vessel that is not otherized to transship and otherwise dose, pay a heavy fine & seize the load.

We ask the commission to consider any transshipping, that was unotherized, or not observed, to be deemed IUU fish & confinscated with a million USD fine. That all transhipments must be submitted to the secrariate, with a cargo manafest, prior to the transshipment date. That transshipping be redused by 50% efective emedeatly and be eliminated by the next 2 years.

We ask that the commission reduce the Albacore Longline effort by 20% in both north and south pacific efective emedeatly.

OFAD & Albacore Trollers in the Convention area request that the commission make a motion to Ban the use of pair trawling for highly migratory species, especialy Albacore tuna as the Pacific Ocean has a Troll fishery and therefor would be again infringing on our bennifits and rights to freedom of the sea.

We also ask for total transparency of the TCC relating to the taking of Albacore in the Pacific, whethere it be compliant or non compliant, as we are fishers and are efected dirrectly. We should be allowed freedom of information to all that pertains to us fisherpersons.

Distingwished members of the WCPFC, The Pacific Albacore Troll Fishery is a frail and fragile fishery that relies on healthy albacore stocks far greater than the scope of science, or best avalabel science, without the consideration of the fishery itself. Science can not explain why a spacific species of tuna, such as the Albacore, can be harvested by trolling and be productive like no other. Nor can science explain the changing of the nature of the species after it has been targetted by driftnets. Tuna that have been introduced to driftnets, tend to stop feeding on the surface and therefore uncachable by trolling.

It only takes 1-2 years of driftnet fishing to deminish a whole fleet of trolling vessels. This has been proven before, in the 1980's and is upon us now. Driftnets have been harvesting Albacore, in the WCPFA, for the past 15 years. Albacore trollers have stopped beeing productive for the same amount of time. Our livelyhoods depend on this commission to enforce the law with "0" tollerance.

We ask that high sanctions and or tarrifs be put on the countries that are repeat offenders using IUU driftnets.

OFAD & Pacific Albacore Trollers would like to request that the commission make a rulling that forbids any pole and line vessel (Example Japanies pole boats) to come within 4 miles of a Albacore troll vessel durring fishing, or daylight hrs. It happens to be a fact that once the tuna start taking to the bait, they will not feed on the jigs. This also infringes on our bennifits and takes away from our freedom of the sea. Let the bait boats find their own fish, and we jig boats will do the same.

We would also request that the commission form a "Pacific Albacore Trollers Fund" for a collection of funds to aid our fishery in funding 3 observer vessels to resurch west of the dateline durring (in-season) the fishing season. This would help enforcment to cover such a large ocean and give much needed scientific data as to the movment and harvesting of the Albacore tuna. We have eager fishermen axious to enter the fishery, but have little to no resourses to take a risk on loosing the season. For example, 1-300,000.00 USD per vessel, per season would suffice. That would be around 900,000.00 USD per year for 3 chartered vessels. This would be a great benefit to all by having extra set of eyes and ears to help curb IUU fishing, and give our sustainable fishery a boost back into production.

As it is now, We have the most sustainable tuna fishery in the world, deemed by MSC, that once thrived in the WCPFA, dead as a doornail, or dieing on the vine (South Pacific).

Please, WCPFC, we are in dire need of your help. We are made up of many nations. We have fishermen, captains, & crew from USA, Canada, New Zealand, Cook Islands, American & Western Samoa, Viet Nam, China, Fiji, Tahiti, Phillipines and south American too. We are not governed by one nation, but at the mercie of all nations. As it is not to the benafit of one, but for the benafit to all. Please protect us. Enforce the law of the sea.

Thank you for your consideration and action regarding this matter.

Sincerely, OFAD & Pacific Albacore Trollers

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