



**COMMISSION
SIXTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
5 – 11 December 2019

CLIMATE CHANGE

**WCPFC16-2019-DP04
5 November 2019**

SUBMITTED BY FFA MEMBER CCMs



1 November 2019

Jung-Re Riley Kim
CHAIR
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
PO Box 2356, Kolonia
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Riley,

CLIMATE CHANGE

This statement is made on behalf of the 17 members of the Forum Fisheries Agency. The views expressed in this letter are without prejudice to the further development of positions and proposals by FFA members individually or collectively.

At the recent annual meeting, Pacific Island Forum Leaders have reaffirmed climate change as the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific, and our commitment to progress the implementation of the Paris Agreement. We are facing an unprecedented global challenge. The impacts of climate change are particularly severe in Pacific Island countries and for many, the threat posed by climate change is an existential one.

Climate change places a great risk on the benefits to Small Island Developing States in the Pacific from our region's tuna fisheries. For many of our countries, tuna fisheries are a critical, if not the most critical, renewable resource providing essential social, cultural and economic benefits. Tuna stocks are increasingly important for food security in the region and essential for achievement of the SDGs by Pacific Island countries – not just in respect to SDG14 but all of the SDGs.

Forum Fisheries Ministers paid particular attention to climate change at their meeting in June this year and agreed as follows:

Climate change impacts on offshore fisheries

1. Ministers welcomed the priority that the FFA is placing on work to respond to the threat of climate change, noting that climate change is the single greatest threat to the security of Pacific Island countries, and called for increased investment in science and research in relation to the impacts of climate change on the region's tuna stocks.
2. Ministers strongly supported the key work areas identified by the Secretariat for responding to climate change including: work on adaptive management regimes; the securing of baselines and associated maritime boundaries in the face of sea-level rise; and the importance of ensuring tuna stocks are managed at levels that continue to contribute to the food security of Pacific Island communities given the predicted declines in coastal fisheries resources.

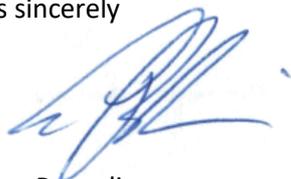
3. Ministers also called for these issues to be raised internationally at the highest levels, to emphasise the importance for all countries, particularly large emitters, to meet their commitments under the Paris Agreement and to gain international recognition of the potential impacts of climate change on Pacific tuna fisheries and the associated economic and social impacts on Pacific Island countries. Ministers supported the continued Pacific advocacy efforts to drive increased global ambition to tackle the threat of climate change.

Accordingly, FFA members call on the WCPFC, as a collective body made up of all its member countries, to take stronger action on climate change. We propose action on three fronts:

1. Increased focus and attention by the Scientific Committee's Ecosystem and Bycatch Working Group on the implications of climate change for the region's tuna stocks;
2. Active consideration by the Commission of how, through agreement of appropriate Conservation and Management Measures, it can:
 - a. mitigate the impacts of climate change on Pacific Island countries arising from the influence of climate change on regional tuna stocks;
 - b. reduce the carbon footprint of fishing in the Convention Area for fish stocks managed by the Commission.
3. Ongoing action by the WCPFC Secretariat and members to reduce our collective carbon footprint, and the carbon footprint associated with WCPFC meetings.

FFA members look forward to working with our fellow WCPFC members to respond proactively to the threat to all of us posed by climate change.

Yours sincerely



Eugene Pangelinan,
Chair, Forum Fisheries Committee