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STATEMENT TO WCPFC16

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Submitted by North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC)



North Pacific Fisheries Commission

Observer Statement

North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC)

By Dae-Yeon Moon, Executive Secretary

Good morning,

Ms. Riley Kim, Chair of WCPFC, Mr. Feleti Teo, Executive Director, distinguished delegates, observers, and ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to members of WCPFC and the Executive Director for inviting the North Pacific Fisheries Commission to attend the 16th Regular Session of WCPFC as an observer.

As stated through an observer statement at the annual meeting of WCPFC held in Hawaii, cooperation with relevant international organizations is one of our mandates in accordance with our Convention and accordingly we, as a relatively young RFMO, have made linkages with a number of organizations since commencement in 2015, including formal cooperation arrangements with NPAFC and PICES with a view to exchanging information and collaborating in matters of common interest.

Continuing from last year, I would like to stress the importance of cooperation between WCPFC and NPFC, which share responsibilities for the management of fisheries resources in a large part of the North Pacific Ocean. NPFC has set a priority for cooperation with organizations having overlapping jurisdiction with that of NPFC, hence the development of a formal tie with WCPFC has been supported by the NPFC Commission. To move this initiative forward, the Secretariats of both organizations have continued communication and agreed that an MOU arrangement would facilitate cooperation between the two organizations.

The areas of collaboration could be broad encompassing compliance, science as well as operational aspects, with the first of these as one of the areas of mutual concern that we believe should be addressed urgently. We recognize the considerable experience that WCPFC has in monitoring vessel activity on the high seas and in some of its Members' EEZs. As RFMOs with overlapping Convention Areas, we both share the global concern with respect to stopping the IUU fishing in our respective areas, and as such, we realize the benefits of cooperation on compliance issues. Such collaboration provides us with an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to other RFMOs the benefits

of sharing information on activities of “vessels of interest” to either or both RFMOs. NPFC Members have stated their intent to take an aggressive stance to address the high levels of IUU fishing in the global oceans and therefore wish to initially focus on links with our neighboring RFMOs with overlapping jurisdictions. We know we can learn a considerable amount from your experience and wish to create formal links for sharing of information and possibly joint operations in the overlapping areas. As an example, NPFC notes that several fish carrier vessels are cross-authorized to operate in both the NPFC and WCPFC Convention Areas, thus providing an excellent opportunity to jointly monitor transshipments, this being one of the major gaps in fisheries compliance today. When successful, this would be an excellent example of cooperative efforts and success in deterring and eliminating IUU fishing in the Northern, Central and Western Pacific Ocean.

We also can benefit from scientific cooperation with WCPFC having many years of experience of using diverse scientific methods to address not only target species but also non-target, associated, and dependent species. Potential areas of scientific cooperation include collecting, sharing, and analyzing data of common interest to both Commissions, exchange of data and information, and collaboration on research relating to stocks and ecosystems of the North Pacific. Methods and best practices of data collection and setting up observer programs is another promising area for cooperation between the organizations. Since both RFMOs are sharing the North Pacific as the common Convention Area to a large extent, the exchange of scientific information gathered by each side and sharing of information on fishing activities could minimize duplication in efforts and costs to cover such a wide area as the North Pacific.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express our sincere thanks to Mr. Teo and his team of the WCPFC Secretariat for their efforts and contribution to the progress in this initiative which we have made so far and look forward to continued discussions for a formal MOU between NPFC and WCPFC within the next year. To facilitate this process, I would like to invite representatives of the WCPFC to participate in our 6th Annual Meetings of the Commission, which will take place in Japan during 15-22 June 2020.

Finally, let me thank the government of Papua New Guinea for hosting this meeting at the beautiful city of Port Moresby as well as for the great hospitality, and I wish you every success in this important meeting.

Thank you very much.