

BIKENIBEU DECLARATION BY MINISTERS FOR FISHERIES OF THE PARTIES TO THE NAURU AGREEMENT

Securing greater value from their common fisheries wealth

Fisheries Ministers of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement concerning Co-operation in the Management of Fisheries of Common Interest (hereinafter referred to as the "PNA") met in Bikenibeu, Tarawa, Republic of Kiribati on 21 October 2009;

RECALLING the Nauru Agreement concerning Co-operation in the Management of Fisheries of Common Interest 1982 establishes a framework for the Parties to secure greater economic benefits from the tuna resources and co-ordinate and harmonise the management of common fish stocks for the benefit of their peoples;

FURTHER RECALLING the Palau Arrangement for the Management of Western Pacific Purse Seine Fishery 1992, the Federated States of Micronesia Arrangement for Regional Access 1995 and subsidiary agreements developed by the Parties to strengthen the management of their common fish stocks;

EXPRESSING disappointment at the lack of participation of Pacific Islands nationals in the harvesting and utilisation of their tuna resources and the low level of economic benefits resulting from the exploitation of their tuna resources by distant water fishing nations;

REITERATING the special aspirations of small-island developing States that their common tuna resources should be developed for the benefits of their peoples;

COMMITTING to the enhanced participation by the Parties in the development of their common tuna resources to maximise the economic benefits for their peoples

FURTHER COMMITTING to developing strong and effective conservation and management measures to ensure the long term sustainability of their common tuna resources;

DESIRING to ensure regional solidarity in the management of their common tuna resources and underlining their commitment to regional co-operation and strength through cooperation with other members of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency;

AGREEING to additional institutional arrangements to strengthen the management and conservation of their common tuna resources for the benefits of their peoples and to develop innovative approaches to maximise the economic opportunities from the sustainable utilisation of these resources;

MINISTERS AGREED AS FOLLOWS: -

In order to secure greater economic benefits and control of their tuna resources, the PNA shall strengthen the institutional arrangements for their co-operation in the management and development of their shared fisheries resources through the establishment of additional mechanisms.

Establishment of the PNA Office

A. Ministers agreed to the establishment of the PNA Office in Majuro, Marshall Islands from 1 January 2010. The office shall have the functions of supporting the Parties amongst others to: -

- Develop strategic fisheries conservation and management initiatives for the Parties.
- Develop initiatives to maximise the sustained direct and indirect economic benefits to the Parties.

B. Ministers noted that the paper provided by Kiribati provided a basis for elaborating on the structure, functions and priorities of the PNA Office

Closure of additional high seas areas

Ministers noted the serious impact on the bigeye stock from fishing by distant water longliners and purse seiners in the high seas and that the high seas continues to provide a safe haven for IUU fishing. The Ministers agreed that further work will be taken on closures of additional high seas areas.

New PNA Initiatives

Ministers look forward to new PNA initiatives to generate increased benefits for their domestic economies from the region's tuna fisheries reflecting the importance of catches in their waters for global tuna supply. These include amongst others, refuelling in port, unloading catches in PNA ports and requiring vessels to have PNA nationals as crew.

PNA Longline Vessel Day Scheme

Ministers underlined the importance of the PNA Longline Vessel Day Scheme and noted progress towards its development and looks forward towards its implementation by the end of 2010.

Done at Bikenibeu, Tarawa, Republic of Kiribati this 21st Day of October Two Thousand and Nine

 Federated States of Micronesia	 Republic of Kiribati
 Republic of the Marshall Islands	 Republic of Nauru
 Republic of Palau	 Independent State of Papua New Guinea
 Solomon Islands	 Tuvalu