



PNA press statement

PNA MSC Recertified

Upon receiving news that PNA MSC free-school skipjack and yellowfin fisheries will be recertified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), PNA CEO Ludwig Kumoru responded that it is “great news,” but reflected that “It was inconceivable that the Independent Adjudicator ruling could have ever been otherwise. Even so, this is a big weight off our shoulders, not least financially, for our small economies. It is not cheap fending off the legal actions by IPLNF, with their Queen’s Counsel and team of lawyers, who were reportedly acting on behalf of the commercial interests of their members who are understood to be mostly small scale artisanal pole and line fishermen around the globe.”

Lastly, Ludwig said they “welcomed the tiny territory of Tokelau, whose Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) has been used to enhance the MSC unit of certification. This is massive for this tiny economy which is almost exclusively reliant on tuna revenues for income.”

In reflecting on the initial MSC certifications in 2011 and the inclusion of yellowfin in 2016, as well as their new re-certification of skipjack and yellowfin, PNA noted with pride, “These are significant achievements and a testament to the leadership and innovation of the PNA office and the Parties’ commitments to good sound conservation, management and governance. Today the PNA MSC free school fishery remains the largest and most complex tuna purse seine fishery ever MSC certified; our region supplies up to 50% of global skipjack, and unlike all other oceans, all four of our tropical tuna stocks are in the GREEN.”

Maurice Brownjohn Commercial Manager PNA continued he “was always quietly confident on the recertification, as the hearing to evaluate whether MSC standards had been correctly applied.” He noted, “after eight pre-assessments, 2 full assessments, 1 expedited assessment, 4 annual audits, and 6 peer reviews, all by leading experts globally, and ALL said “IT DOES PASS.” Further, we have demonstrated continued improvements in the fishery, driven in part by incentivizing MSC free school targeting.”



It has been a long and arduous road for the PNA; in 2011 ISSF (an association of large brands and processors) and OPAGAC (a Spanish Industry group that is highly FAD dependent) took the PNA to adjudication in London, opposing the PNA certification. Last year IPNLF lodged 24 scoring objections to PNA's MSC free-school skipjack and yellowfin fishery's re certification, which went to an adjudication early this year, challenging MSC's voluntary standards and the Conformity Assessment Body's (CAB's) scoring against these standards. Very clearly, these actions had little to do with conservation and management, but everything to do with protecting commercial interests especially in the UK market where Pacifical continues to take market share, bringing genuine MSC certified tuna products backed with sophisticated chain of custody, to the consumer and with Pacifical co-branding, it links each can back to the PNA peoples.

So the news that the independent adjudicator ruled last week in favor of PNA, dismissing 100% of the misinformation and accusations from IPLNF and upholding the CAB's decision to recertify PNA's MSC certificate was a welcome affirmation for the PNA office (PNAO) and the peoples of the region.

Dr. David Agnew, MSC Science and Standards Director reacted to the IA ruling: "This highlights the strength of the MSC process. As a result of this objection, more information is now in the public domain about the PNA fishery, adding to the information in the published assessment report, and improving the transparency of the fishery's management. This confirms that the PNA skipjack tuna fishery is a sustainable and well-managed fishery that has made considerable improvements over the course of its first MSC certificate. People buying MSC labeled PNA tuna can be confident that their purchase is making a positive difference to the sustainability of our oceans."

The 47-page ruling of the Independent Adjudicator is public and can be accessed at <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/pna-western-and-central-pacific-skipjack-and-yellowfin-unassociated-non-fad-set-tuna-purse-seine/@@assessments>

Note: The PNA MSC certification is owned by a coalition of eight Small Island Developing States in the Central and Western Pacific, who have a Strong vested interest in sustainability, with few resources other than tuna. Over 90% of the



purse seiners in PNA waters work under the scheme which currently has potential to deliver up to about 800,000 mt annually.