

November 9, 2016

Dear Delegates,

This letter is submitted on behalf of the undersigned non-governmental organizations and fishing industry organizations that participate in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) process, or may seek to do so in the future.

Collectively our organizations work in more than 100 countries and work with industry, engage suppliers and/or provide advice to retailers, buyers and food service sectors regarding improvements in tuna sustainability. In addition, the undersigned organizations work with or represent many purse seine, longline, pole and line and handline vessels active in tuna fisheries and recognize that the sustainability of tuna stocks is integral to businesses as well as the health of the marine environment.

We are writing to bring to your attention our views on the development of harvest strategies – an issue we believe is fundamental to sustainable fisheries management -- and one that necessitates immediate action by the WCPFC.

We recognize that the Commission has made some initial progress in recent years to establish basic science-based management measures to ensure the sustainability of the world's largest tuna fishery in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Specifically, in 2015 the Commission committed itself to implement a six-part harvest strategy approach for each of the key fisheries or stocks under its management, including a work plan with clear timelines. We support this action, and encourage the Commission to apply the Precautionary Approach using clear target and limit reference points and harvest control rules, as called for by the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement.

As you prepare for the upcoming 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission, we urge your government to support the full and timely implementation of the Work Plan for harvest strategies, including timelines to adopt appropriate biologically-based target reference points, harvest control rules and the other elements of the harvest strategy approach, for skipjack, bigeye, yellowfin and south Pacific albacore tuna. In particular, we urge you to ensure the Commission takes the decisions necessary this year (e.g., agree on acceptable levels of risk, a rebuilding time frame for bigeye, and management objectives for south Pacific albacore, skipjack, bigeye and yellowfin) to allow management strategy evaluation and other work to proceed as scheduled in

2017. For northern albacore, we recognize the ISC's efforts on MSE-related work and encourage continued progress on harvest strategy development consistent with the agreed 2017-2019 Work Plan, including determination of a target reference point together with other elements of harvest strategies.

In addition, we request your support for proposals that would establish precautionary target reference points for south Pacific albacore and performance indicators to evaluate harvest control rules for south Pacific albacore and skipjack tuna. Finally, in order to optimize harvest control rules for all tuna stocks in the future, we suggest that the Commission request regular updates from your scientific advisors regarding reference points and performance indicators, and development of a monitoring strategy to assess performance against reference points.

We urge the WCPFC to take these actions at its upcoming Commission Meeting in December in Fiji as a matter of priority.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Y. Koca".



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized "F" followed by a checkmark.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Nelson".



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Holt".



*Charles*



Masyarakat dan Perikanan Indonesia



*Amanda Day*



*Margaret Spring*



*Timothy D. Long*



*Michael R.*



*Tom Agio*



Rupert Hower



