

International Seafood Sustainability Foundation

April 28, 2009

A STATEMENT OF CONCERN REGARDING BY-CATCH

There is a general consensus among scientists, regional bodies and NGOs that bycatch resulting from fishing methods used for capturing tunas should be studied and evaluated, that such studies should incorporate adequate sampling designs, and should include the use of observers in order to produce a clear picture of the impacts on the populations involved and to assure transparency of the fisheries. Globally coordinated programs must be initiated to study and evaluate the effectiveness of various types of bycatch mitigation fishing technology, as well as available management options. In this context effort should be made to ensure the consistency of the data collection and management programs among the RFMOs so that the information obtained is easily comparable.

While there have been recent regional technical meetings, and a few regional research programs of limited scope conducted on this issue, the work to date has not been coordinated and has suffered from a lack of rigorous experimental design. In some instances the efforts overlap, in others there are gaps, and other needed areas of study are neglected altogether.

The upcoming Joint RFMO meeting, to be held in San Sebastian, Spain from June 29 – July 3, 2009, presents an excellent opportunity for meaningful global discussion and coordination on this urgent issue. ISSF strongly encourages serious study and coordination of effort.

The mission of ISSF includes undertaking science based initiatives for reducing by-catch and promoting ecosystem health.

ISSF is committed to undertake actions to address the issues associated with bycatch resulting from fishing for tuna.