



TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Seventh Regular Session

28 September - 4 October 2011

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia

JAPAN'S COMMENTS ON CIRCULAR NO.2011-24

WCPFC-TCC7-2011-DP/17

28 September 2011

Paper prepared by Japan



FISHERIES AGENCY

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES, GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

1-2-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8907, Japan

September 21, 2011

Dr. Charles Karnella
Chair, WCPFC
PO Box 2356
Kolonias, Pohnpei 96941
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Dr. Karnella,

We refer to the circular No. 2011-24, a discussion paper prepared by the Secretariat, on the replacement measure for CMM 2008/01. First of all, we express our sincere appreciation to you and those involved in the effort to compile this difficult document. However, since we have several serious concerns/questions on this document as follows, we have to register our strong reservation to advance the discussion based on this document before solving those issues. Please note that those are preliminary comments and we may make further comments in the future.

We would first point out that our fundamental position on the issue we have conveyed to you in several occasions is not reflected in the document; that is, we need to analyze why CMM 2008/01 had failed to achieve its objective before we discuss the replacement measure. For that purpose, the Commission needs to evaluate the performance of CMM 2008/01 by analyzing data by country, by fishery type and by region. Also, the impact of many exemptions contained in CMM 2008/01 on the conservation effort shall naturally be investigated. Only after such reviews, the replacement measure can be discussed constructively on a fair and equitable basis. Japan has reduced its catch of bigeye by longline as well as purse seine by more than 30% from the 2001-04 level. The conservation efforts by members like Japan to properly implement CMM 2008/01 must be duly taken into account in the consideration of the replacement measure.

The objective of CMM 2008/01 was to reduce the fishing mortality of bigeye by 30% from the annual average during the period of 2001-04 or 2004. According to TCC7-17a, the total annual catch by longliners in 2010 is 62,226t, which is 34% reduction from the reference point of 94,349t. Japan fulfilled its obligation through cooperative efforts by the industry and government, including governmental financial provision to decommission of its vessels. However, there are some countries which have increased its catch in the same period. Further, some countries are exempted from the effort to reduce the catch. It is unfair to request those CCMs having already achieved the objective to reduce their catches further whereas some other CCMs having failed to do so are granted the starting points for their future reduction as their current catch

levels, which are higher than the 2001-04 level or even the 2008 levels.

On the other hand, total purse seine effort between 20N-20S has increased by 6% just from 2008 to 2010. The catch of bigeye by purse seine has increased by 34% from 32,390t in 2004 to 43,389t in 2010, while the overall objective of CMM 2008/01 was to *reduce* the bigeye fishing mortality by purse seine fishery by 30%. This demonstrates that the tools in CMM 2008/01 to manage purse seine activity were insufficient to achieve its objective. In order to avoid the same situation to happen in implementing CMM 2011/01, we need to learn how and why CMM 2008/01 had failed to achieve its objective. Therefore, we need not only the effort data that is presented in TCC7-17a, but also catch data of bigeye by purse seine by country in the 20S-20S area and we request the Secretariat to prepare the information.

We are also concerned with the change of the reference year from 2001-04 or 04 in CMM 2008/01 to 2010 in CMM 2011/01. This is tantamount to ignore the efforts by the fishermen and members to comply with CMM 2008/01 while rewarding those who expanded its fishing activity in spite of CMM 2008/01. CMM 2008/01 requires members to maintain the level of purse seine effort in days fished at 2004 level but in reality, it increased significantly by 2010. It is simply not right to use 2010 level as reference.

There are also several other important aspects of CMM 2008/01 which we need to address before the consideration of the replacement measure. We strongly support the exemption for SIDs' legitimate fishery development but would like to know how much conservation trade-off is needed for such exemption as well as how to incorporate the trade-off in the new CMM to ensure the overall conservation benefit required for achieving the objective. Another question is how we assess and incorporate in the new CMM the fishing activities in internal water/archipelagic water. We would also review the progress of purse seine industry's initiative to technically reduce catches of juvenile bigeye and yellowfin tuna caught in association with FADs as described in paragraph 25 of CMM 2008/01.

We believe that answers to those questions are essential to the fair and constructive discussion on the replacement measure for CMM 2008/01. Japan committed to have a measure that actually achieves the objective and we are looking forward to discussing the issue further with other CCMs.

Regards,



Masanori Miyahara
Japanese Commissioner to WCPFC