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Addressing sustainability concerns in tuna fisheries

FFA experiences in the Western and Central Pacific

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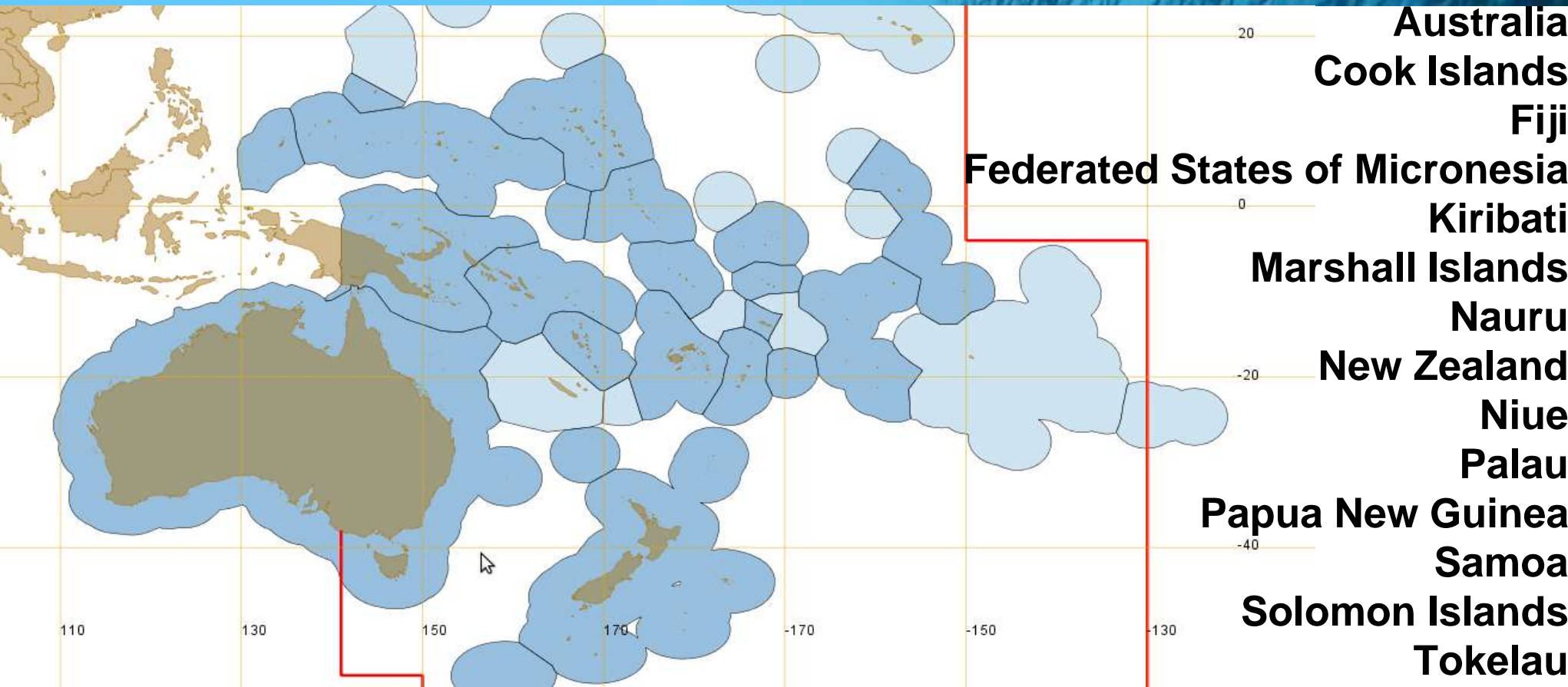
**Presentation to the 2nd Joint Tuna RFMO Meeting,
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Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency

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Headquarters: Honiara, Solomon Islands



To enable member countries to manage, conserve and use the tuna resources in their EEZs and beyond, through enhancing national capacity and strengthening regional solidarity



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Scientific advice is clear...

...throughout the world, **fishing mortality must be reduced** in many major tuna and billfish fisheries

effective tuna fisheries conservation and management measures must be **adopted and fully implemented**

- **Ecosystem impacts of fishing** must be **minimised**, particularly for seabirds, sea turtles and sharks
- **Effective and comprehensive MCS tools** are necessary, for the full and effective implementation of measures
- **Need for complete and accurate fisheries data**



FFA responses...

We have taken action, in the **exercise of our sovereign rights**, which seek to effectively respond to sustainability concerns:

- In purse-seine fisheries: the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (**PNA**) have adopted the Vessel Days Scheme (**VDS**) and **PNA 3rd Implementing Arrangement**
- Throughout our national waters, we are implementing an **ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM)**
- Also we FFA members have worked collaboratively to **develop and implement cooperative arrangements for MCS in our region**



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FFA experience with capacity management in the WCPO

- As coastal States, we have learnt that **vessel numbers are a blunt and ineffective tool** for effectively reducing fishing mortality and achieving socio-economic goals
- **Catch or effort limits** are the most effective option to managing tuna fisheries in the WCPO
 - such as the PNA vessel days scheme (VDS) to manage the WCPO purse seine fishery
- FFA members have had first hand experience: **overcapacity measures are open to abuse**
 - Non binding WCPFC resolution to control fishing capacity that was agreed to in good faith has been used to create significant difficulties for FFA members to obtain vessels to build domestic fleet capacity.



Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Ministers have said...

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“It is the position of FFA Members that the fleets of developed CCMs must be reduced or restructured so as to accommodate the aspirations of Pacific Island Countries to develop their own fisheries. Through mutually beneficial arrangements, developed CCMs that cooperate with FFA Members’ current moves toward achieving their planned development of domestic fishing industries will have a future in the region. Those that fail to adapt will be excluded.”

FFA Regional Tuna Fisheries Management and Development Strategy, adopted May 2009 by Fisheries Ministers



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WCPFC responses to date

- Recognition of the sovereign rights of coastal States to conserve and manage fisheries in their waters, for example CMM 2008-01:
 - **Purse-seine:** EEZ-based catch or effort limits and reductions to respond to scientific advice
 - Vessel Days Scheme limiting purse seine fishing effort, measured in days
 - Additional measures to reduce fishing mortality on bigeye tuna
 - High seas pockets closure
 - FAD closures
 - Retention of all catch
 - Compatible measures for other EEZ and high seas areas
 - **Longline fisheries** are temporarily managed through flag-based limits with broad exemptions for small island developing States and Territories to develop their domestic fisheries as well as fisheries in high seas. In coming years, these flag-based longline measures will be phased out by FFA members in favour of catch or effort based EEZ-based limits.



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2008 Resolution on Aspirations of Small Island Developing States and Territories

- Brings together provisions from relevant legal instruments, relating to the aspirations and special requirements of small-island developing States
- **“Islandization”**: a basis for conservation and management decisions in the WCPFC to support and encourage on-shore fisheries development in Pacific Island countries (Para 3 & 6)
- All Commission members are to:
 - consider **innovative ways** to **restructure developed fleets in favour of SIDs and Territories** in the WCPO (Para 2)
 - **enhance the ability of developing States**, particularly the least developed among them and SIDS and Territories in the Convention Area, **to develop their own fisheries** for highly migratory fish stocks in the WCPO, **including but not limited to high seas fisheries** (Para 1)



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Where to from here?

FFA members suggestions

- This is a **valuable opportunity** to make good progress on addressing sustainability concerns faced by all tuna RFMOs
- We suggest that any collaborative work between tuna RFMOs to respond to sustainability concerns, needs a broader focus and must **address the causes of overcapacity, not just the symptoms**
- **Allocation must be explicitly addressed** by all tuna RFMOs, including full recognition of the special requirements of developing States, particularly small island developing States and Territories
- **Future discussions** need to look more fundamentally at the issues being faced in global tuna fisheries conservation and management and the tools that are available to effectively reduce fishing mortality



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Five essential areas for future work

FFA members suggestions

1. Methods for **assessing a range of management regimes (eg catch or effort)** against the individual fishery characteristics and RFMO objectives.
2. Guidance for RFMOs in **developing and implementing regimes to reduce and control fishing mortality**
3. Full recognition in all tuna RFMOs of the **special requirements of developing States**, particularly SIDS, in accordance with Articles 24, 25 and 26 of UN Fish Stocks Agreement
4. The **role of flag states in managing fleet capacity** in recognition of the fishing opportunities available and in driving fleet economic outcomes
5. Ways and means for developed countries, and tuna RFMOs as a collective, to **actively facilitate domestic fleet expansion** of SIDS, including through fleet restructuring and cooperative investments