

## REGIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS FORUM

### Position Papers on Priority Areas

#### **INCREASED ECONOMIC RETURNS FROM FISHERIES ACTIVITY AND MARITIME SURVEILLANCE**

The CSO meeting endorses the recognition of increased economic returns from fisheries activity and maritime surveillance as a priority of regional significance. Whilst we recognize that this is necessary it is in our view not a sufficient approach for fisheries management in our region. We have commented on the fisheries proposals but we urge Leaders to clearly recognize the full suite of ocean issues, including governance and climate change issues.

In considering the circulated proposals and those that had concrete ideas to effect change on key issues the CSO meeting supports proposals from both Palau and PNA that focus on rights based management, increasing Pacific Island engagement in fisheries and increasing investment in effective monitoring, control and surveillance of our domains.

The CSOs are also aware of the Roadmap for the Future of Fisheries (FFA and SPC) that is set to be endorsed by Forum Leaders at this meeting and recommend an integrated approach including submissions from PNAO and Palau. In addition we call on the leaders to create a process whereby PNA, Palau and other stakeholders including CSOs are able contribute to the further development and implementation of the Roadmap.

1. CSOs call on Leaders to recognize that returns from fisheries activity are not just economic in value but also to fully recognize the value of subsistence food security and fisheries livelihoods attached to these shared resources. We support actions such as increased use of inshore FADs essential for local food security, building local livelihoods including sustainable tourism, and in building resilience to impacts of climate change on oceans and coasts and response to disasters.

2. Further, CSOs observe

- Leaders, in addition to increasing economic returns, need to reinforce their stewardship role of shared fisheries resources and commit to ensuring sustainability of these resources, this includes taking key measures to eliminate over fishing of big eye tuna and more actively managing the southern albacore fishery.
- Offshore and in shore fisheries values must be managed in a more complementary manner to benefit Pacific Island peoples where both local subsistence needs and local commercial values of access to tuna fisheries are valued and invested in together with managing DWFN effort.
- We support increasing investment in the monitoring, control and surveillance.
- We believe the lack of transparency in fisheries is of serious concern. As citizens of Pacific Island states we have the right to know where and what vessels of all nations, including our own, are doing in our sovereign jurisdiction. We encourage public sources of information for vessel activity, including the Vessel Monitoring System, to be made accessible via internet.

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- Leaders use the research and modeling done on the impacts of climate change on tuna fisheries and develop policies based on this research to build a platform to address loss of tuna resources eastwards and to the high seas. Pacific Island states should seek a special high seas management area under their collective stewardship to compensate for impacts of climate change on tuna stocks.

3. CSO's believe that the fisheries issues raised under the new Framework for Regionalism needs to be integrated into a wider "Blue Economy" approach and made consistent with the new sustainable development goals and that the following are addressed:

- Leaders recognize that the time has come for sensible and integrated planning and management of our ocean domains individually and collectively. This "whole-domain" approach inclusive of our EEZs and seabed and of an increasing set of issues from tuna fisheries, seabed mining, marine genetic resources, sustainable tourism and marine protected area is needed for each Pacific Island state. CSO's recognize Palau's commitment to zoning and managing their domain in the form of a sanctuary approach.
- Using a 'whole-domain' approach will lead to recognition of the ecosystem services of our jurisdictions in coping with the effects of climate change. These services should be paid for by the global community in order for Pacific Island states to invest well in ocean stewardship.
- Using a 'whole-domain' approach will also lead to recognition of the need for Leaders to unite on high seas management inadequate and patchy management of the high seas threatens the viability of actions Forum countries take to manage their resources within jurisdictions.
- We ask that Leaders use this feedback to inform and recommit to implementing their approved ocean policies notably the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy and the Pacific Oceanscape Framework that together provide for an integrated approach to oceans, including fisheries management.