



Parties to the Nauru Agreement
PNA Office - P.O. Box 3992
Majuro, Marshall Islands (MH) 96960
Phone: (692) 625-7626/7627

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Press Release – Outcomes of the 19th Session of the WCPFC

The Chief Executive Officer of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement Office, Dr. Sangaalofa Clark, expressed satisfaction with the overall outcomes of the 19th meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission that was held in Da Nang, Vietnam from 1-7 December 2022.

Dr. Clark attached particular importance to the Commission's decisions to strengthen the Commission's commitment to a harvest strategy approach to managing tuna stocks and adopt an interim management procedure for skipjack tuna. These proposals were developed by PNA and Tokelau and put forward by the broader FFA group. The advances by the Commission on the implementation of harvest strategies would be good news for consumers and those involved in supplying products from the largest sustainably managed tuna fishery globally from PNA waters.

Dr. Clark noted other positive outcomes of the meeting that were important to PNA, including in the areas of strengthening the monitoring of compliance, transshipment monitoring, shark conservation and heightening the place of climate change-related issues in the Commission's work.

The PNA particularly welcomed, also, the reinstatement of the obligations related to the carriage of observers. In general, the large purse seine fishery in the waters of PNA Members had been very resilient to the impacts of COVID, especially in terms of PNA government revenues. The restart of observer programmes would restore the flow of the information being collected on fisheries in the region and bring back the livelihoods of the families of many hundreds of observers.

It was great to get back to working with people in person, said the PNAO CEO, after having the last two sessions of the Commission held virtually. There is still a large backlog of work to catch up on, but the Da Nang meeting was a very good start on that. Looking ahead, the PNA priority was to see the Commission close the large gap between the high standards of management and conservation of tuna fisheries in the waters of PNA and Tokelau and other Pacific Island coastal states, and the lower standards applied by the Commission to tuna fisheries in the adjacent high seas, especially the longline fisheries.

Dr. Clark thanked the Government of Vietnam for so successfully hosting the meeting. She also expressed great thanks to the outgoing Chair, Ms. Riley Jungre Kim, and Executive Director Mr. Feleti Teo, and warmly welcomed the new leadership team of Dr. Josie Tamate as Chair, and Ms. Rhea Moss-Christian as Executive Director.