



New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Te Māngai o Aotearoa

Increasing economic benefits to Small Island
Developing States Partnership Dialogue

New Zealand statement

Delivered by Hon. Maggie Barry
New Zealand Minister of Conservation

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Thank you to the co-chairs of this important session.

I am delighted to be here and to have the opportunity to speak about this area of crucial importance.

For New Zealand, and for our Pacific neighbours, a healthy ocean is vital to our livelihoods, economies and cultural identity.

New Zealand is working with Pacific Islands to support their efforts to exercise greater control over their fisheries, to ensure sustainable management of the resource for the future of their economies.

60% of the global tuna catch is harvested in the Pacific region, representing the single most important economic resource for Pacific Island countries.

Even so, Pacific nations receive only a small proportion of the market value of this key resource.

New Zealand is working in partnership with our Pacific neighbours and investing 54 million dollars to improve sustainable fisheries management and to reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. For example, we have been working with the Cook Islands on the implementation of a catch quota system, and supporting fisheries reforms in Tokelau.

Already, Pacific Island countries are implementing rights-based management systems.

Vessel Monitoring Systems and full observer coverage on all purse seine vessels have tightened monitoring and compliance.

The rest of the international community, especially the fleets of Asia, the Americas and Europe, needs to agree and implement stronger controls on overfished stocks in the region.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing robs Pacific Island economies of an estimated US\$153 million each year.

Of the assistance New Zealand has pledged, 29 million dollars is allocated to projects to reduce illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing in the Pacific.

This covers port state controls, information and monitoring systems, catch documentation systems, and controls over transshipment. It includes patrolling of the South Pacific Longline Tuna fishery in the high seas; and genetic testing of tuna to detect mis-reporting of fish species.

Maximising the economic and development benefits from fisheries also requires creating a fair international playing field.

New Zealand has long been an advocate of eliminating harmful fisheries subsidies, which create a serious environmental issue and distorts the seafood market.

We urge countries to cooperate for the establishment of effective disciplines on harmful subsidies in fisheries at the World Trade Organisation.

We call on others to join us in this cause, and in broader efforts to protect our ocean.

Thank you