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BUREAU OF FISHERIES AND FISHERIES LAW ENFORCEMENT, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS, THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

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July 13th, 2020

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Director
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La Jolla, California

Subject: National Compliance Scheme and Actions Taken by China to Implement Measures in C-17-02

Chinese fleets operating in IATTC Area are all longline vessels targeting tuna and tuna-like species such as bigeye and albacore tuna with by-catch of other pelagic species. As a member of IATTC and a responsible country, China have been attaching great importance to the conservation and management measures of the commission, and we have established series of domestic regulations and conducted related training sessions. I, hereby, advise the actions we took as follows,

• Management

To further enhance China's compliance with the conservation and management measures of T-RFMOs, such as IATTC, WCPFC, ICCAT, IOTC, in 2019, China Fisheries Authority established new rules for our industries to follow to enhance the compliance with international tuna conservation and management measures. Through the new rules, the basic management measures from IATTC, WCPFC, ICCAT and IOTC are highlighted and the requirements for our vessel owner which include vessel registration, logbook, catch limit, fishing gear, minimum size requirement, VMS, observer, high-sea boarding inspection, statistical document, bycatch, marine conservation, vessel marking, etc. have to be strictly complied.

• Record of Fishing Vessels

China Fisheries Authority reviews the compliance status of each vessel and operator annually. The vessels operating normally and regularly in compliance with the commission and the domestic measures finally got authorized to be renewed while those not implementing the domestic and/or international regulations would be suspended or even delisted. Regarding the vessel registration, China notified the Secretary timely when the vessel information had been modified.

• Catch Limit Regulation for Bigeye

Catch limit is one of the regulations China established for the vessels operating under IATTC in accordance with para 16 of C-17-02. The vessels shall operate under the total catch limit while each boat owner enjoys their allocation clearly fixed internally. Once the total catch limit is reached, the vessel must stop fishing and go back to port. The company will be faced up with severe penalty if it refuses to stop fishing in the IATTC area when overfished.

As usual, China received 6000 tons of BET quota from Japan in 2019, which made our total BET catch limit become 8507 tons. No BET Statistical Document would be issued for overfished catch.

• **Data Collection**

China officially issued tuna logbooks for longline fishery in 2008, which is later updated in 2014 in line with T-RFMO's requirement to have a better science for stock assessment and by-catch mitigation, and any vessel authorized by China to operate in T-RFMOs Areas shall, therefore, carry on board such logbooks and fill them every day. China Overseas Fisheries Association (COFA) and Shanghai Ocean University are authorized by the Chinese government to jointly undertake the data collection from the tuna fishing activities. The tuna logbooks have to be submitted to Shanghai Ocean University by the end of March of the following year in accordance with the requirements of our domestic regulation. In order to ensure the authenticity of the data, China reviews the logbook with the historical track through VMS, to reject the faulty ones. In case of intentionally tampering with the data, we also set up certain rules on the standard of data reporting with corresponding punishments for tampering or non-reporting the data.

We were also trying the e-logbooks in 2019, integrating the data reporting system into the electric devices onboard the vessels. The trial of such e-logbooks was conducted on some fishing vessels and their captains are fully trained before fishing. The trial was showing a success and we are confident that in the next few years, most of our vessels will be equipped up with this system. This will be of great help for our data collection and analysis.

• **Vessel Monitoring System**

China has implemented VMS reporting since October, 2006, and it is mandatory that all fishing vessels shall have an operating VMS equipment on board when fishing overseas. Each vessel operating in IATTC area is equipped with an operating VMS on board in line with IATTC VMS Resolution. *Regulation on VMS Reporting* was issued by our Ministry in 2006 and was revised, thereafter, in 2014, according to which manual reports are compulsory by the vessel/vessel owner should the vessel not able to be automatically polled. For those vessels whose crew members turned off their VMS on board on purpose and/or tampered, the company will be deemed as seriously violating domestic regulations and will face a severe penalty, e.g. their fishing license will be suspended in case of a serious nature.

To further monitor the vessel operation and enhance the compliance ability, China voluntarily improved the reporting frequency to every hour for all Chinese vessels from 1st Jan 2020.

• **Observer**

China Overseas Fisheries Association (COFA) and Shanghai Ocean University have a program for the observers' training, selection, dispatch, etc. Each year China dispatches the national observers to the vessels fishing in convention area in line with C-19-08. At the beginning of each year, China Overseas Fisheries Association (COFA) confirms the vessels to accept the observers annually by organizing an industrial fair-play of lot-drawing to make sure the coverage of observers.

Observers are socially recruited under certain requirements, they will be then joining in training of weeks through which they can be successful on their duties and familiar with

the relevant RFMOs' CMMs.

Chinese government allocates certain amount of budget to support the observer program. China dispatched 13 national observers to the vessels operating in IATTC Area in 2019, and met the requirement of 5% observer coverage.

- **Training**

China conducted a national-wide meeting each year, in which all companies relating to tuna fishing activities shall participate. During the meeting, we evaluate the compliance status of each company, announce the actions against those companies which breached t-RFMO resolutions in previous year, and circulate new resolutions that will come into force the next year including properly translated version. We are pushing the vessel owners/companies to bear in mind the compliance issues and obligations and to take it as priority when fishing in t-RFMO's Area.

We also invite experts from different Organizations, such as Bird international, ABNJ and so on, to give lectures to the front-line managers and captains. The topics are mainly concentrated in bycatch mitigations and recognitions.

We will continue taking actions to work with the Commission to implement the measures in C-17-02.

Regards,

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Division of Distant Water Fisheries
Bureau of Fisheries
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China

July 11th, 2018

Dr. Guillermo A. Compeán
Director
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
La Jolla, California

**Subject: national compliance scheme and actions
taken by China to implement the measures in C-17-02**

Longline is the only fishing gear Chinese fleet use in IATTC Area, targeting tuna and tuna-like species, such as Bigeye and Albacore tuna. In recent years, our annual total catches maintains on the level of 20000 tons. As a member of IATTC, we attach great importance to conservation and management measures of the commission, and year by year, we have set up series of domestic regulations and conducted several training sessions. I hereby advise the actions we took as follows,

• Management

We are amending our domestic regulations for overseas fisheries this year, in order to better keep pace with the development of management in global fisheries, and to manage our industries in a more effective way. The new regulation will be more comprehensive than the previous one, and will give better guidance to our Tuna fisheries in IATTC area.

• Catch limit regulation for bigeye

Catch limit is one of the regulations we established for vessels operating in IATTC in accordance with C-17-02 para 16. Vessels shall operate under the total catch limit allocated to their companies, once reached, the vessel must stop fishing and go back to port, waiting for the next allocation. The company will be faced with severe penalty if it refuse to stop fishing in IATTC area when overfished.

As usual, we received 6000 tons of BET quota from Japan this year, which made our total BET catch limit become 8507 tons.

No BET Statistical Document would be issued for overfished catch.

• Vessel Monitoring System

China has implemented VMS reporting since October 2006, and it is mandatory that all fishing vessels shall have an operating VMS on board when fishing overseas. Each vessel operating in IATTC area is equipped with an operating VMS on board in line with IATTC VMS Resolution. *Regulation on VMS Reporting* was issued by the Ministry of Agriculture of China in 2006 and revised thereafter in 2014, according to which manual report is required by the vessel/vessel owner should the vessel cannot be automatically polled. For those vessels whose crew members turned off their VMS on board on purpose and/or tampered, the company will be deemed as seriously violating domestic regulations and will be facing a large amount of fine, their fishing license will be suspended if circumstance is of a serious nature.

We have certain staffs in charge of surveillance of good standing status of our VMS devices every day, they collect information on non-reporting vessels on a regular basis and come up with a report for our information, so that we could have a total picture of our vessels and to take further actions to vessels unable to report their positions.

- **Data Collection**

China officially issued tuna logbooks for longline fishery in 2008, which is later updated in 2014 in line with t-RFMO's requirement to have a better science for stock assessment and by-catch mitigation, and any vessel authorized by China to operate in t-RFMOs Areas, shall therefore carry on board such logbooks and fill them every day. Logbooks must be submitted to Shanghai Ocean University by the end of March the following year, where the data in these logbooks will be carefully collected and analyzed. In order to ensure the authenticity of the data, we review the logbook with the historical track through VMS, to reject the faulty ones. In case of intentionally tampering with the data, we also set certain rules on the standard of data reporting, and punishments for tampering, non-reporting the data.

We are also testing e-logbooks this year, integrating the data reporting system into the electric devices onboard the vessels. The tests are running on several fishing vessels and captains are fully trained before setting sail. The tests are running quite well, we are quite confident that in the next few years, most of our vessels will equip this system. This will be of great help for our data collection and analysis.

- **Observer**

We deem observation as an important way to have a better understanding of the status of the stocks, and also a responsibility for us members to fulfill our obligation in IATTC area. Each year we dispatch several national scientific observers to vessels fishing in convention area in line with C-11-08. At the beginning of each year, we will open up a draw for the observer distribution, and the vessels selected in the draw shall carry on board an observer.

Observers are socially recruited under certain requirements, they will be then joining in weeks of training sessions held by our certain academy, through which they learn about their duties and relevant RFMOs' CMMs.

Chinese government allocates certain amount of budget to support the observer program and try to keep the coverage on the 5% level, including the salaries, training program and travel for these observers.

- **Training**

We conduct a national-wide meeting each year, in which all companies relating to tuna fisheries shall participate. During the meeting, we evaluate the compliance status of each company, announce the action against those companies which breached t-RFMO resolutions in previous year, and circulate new resolutions that will come into force the next year including translation format. We are pushing the vessel owners/companies to bear in mind compliance issues and to take it as priority when fishing in t-RFMO's Area. We also invite experts from different Organizations, such as Bird international, ABNJ and so on to give lectures to the front-line managers and captains. The topics are mainly concentrated in bycatch mitigations and recognitions.

We will continue taking actions to work with the Commission to implement the measures in C-17-02.

Regards,

Wan Chen
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