

Japan  
Fisheries  
Association



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Views and Opinions of Japan's Fisheries Industry

ICFA Annual Meeting

## ICFA MEETS IN ROME VOICES ADDED TO ICFA FROM EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA

The International Coalition of Fisheries Associations (ICFA) met on 13-14 November, 2007, in Rome, Italy, to identify and address issues of common interest in international fisheries. The European Community, Peru and the Faroe Islands joined ICFA, which will considerably enhance its presence in the international community.

ICFA members committed themselves to strongly encouraging their respective national governments to continue their management successes and target efforts to limit fishing in sensitive ocean areas in order to ensure that seafood can continue to be supplied to global populations while protecting specific ecosystems.

They also called on their governments to recognize the limitation of a Marine Protected Area (MPA) as stock protection measures, and rather consider closure areas as a means to protect biodiversity.

Finally, members agreed to support the joint meeting of the tuna regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) scheduled for January 2007.

The following are some of the key issues with their resolutions adopted in the meeting.

### BOTTOM TRAWLING

Members exchanged views on rational and scientific means of addressing the environmental impact of bottom trawling, which would be discussed at the United Nations after the ICFA meeting. Members agreed that a high seas moratorium is not a solution and that fishing nations, RFMOs and the FAO should be committed to the mitigation of adverse impacts as a matter of urgency. The following resolution was adopted in the ICFA meeting.

#### Resolution on Bottom Trawling

Whereas ICFA:

- Notes that more than 90% of fishing activity takes place within nations' Exclusive Economic Zones and that bottom trawling is the major fishing method used around the world, accounting for more than 60% of production.

- Notes that trawling is acknowledged to be a sustainable fishing method contributing to global food supply and security.
- Rejects assertions that bottom trawling is a destructive fishing practice.
- Disputes some environmental NGOs unsubstantiated and unscientific claims that



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bottom trawling, particularly on seamounts, destroys biodiversity.

- Rejects and condemns lawless acts of piracy against private fishing vessels.

ICFA therefore:

- Recognizes the need for Flag States to manage fishing activities that may affect sensitive marine ecosystems in the high seas.
- Calls for urgent action to establish regional fishery management organizations (RFMOs) in high seas ocean areas, when appropriate. Until these RFMOs are established, all states should begin to develop the means of providing scientific advice upon which measures to protect sensitive habitats and to conserve stocks in those areas should be based.
- Urges nations to engage in appropriate RFMOs that provide for the utilization of demersal fish resources through bottom trawl fishing while ensuring sustainability, and that any significant adverse effects on the aquatic environment are avoided or mitigated.
- Encourages the United Nations General Assembly to seek the technical and scientific advice of the experts from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization on issues of bottom trawling on the high seas.
- Urges all nations to continue to reject extreme restrictions, such as proposal for a bottom trawling moratorium on the high seas.

## ECOLABELLING

Public communication of sustainability has been an issue of importance for years, and ecolabelling has attracted special attention in the past two years. ICFA is concerned that gloomy stories which quite often contradict reality are the preference of the mass media in general. ICFA agreed that governments have the responsibility to be actively engaged in communicating the success of fisheries management and to prevent unnecessary confusion in the market. The following is the applicable resolution adopted in the meeting.

### Resolution on Commitment to Sustainability

Whereas ICFA:

- Notes that governments have a responsibility to manage global fisheries;

- Notes that governments also have a responsibility to communicate success in fisheries management;
- Notes that the vast majority of the globe's fish stocks are sustainably managed;<sup>1</sup>
- Notes that the private sector has turned to third party organizations to demonstrate a commitment to source their products from sustainable fisheries;
- Notes that the UN Food and Agriculture Organization has developed Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Products from Marine Capture Fisheries

ICFA:

- Strongly encourages governments to continue to ensure that global fish stocks are sustainably managed;
- Strongly encourages governments to commit more resources to better communicate their success in managing fisheries;
- Urges governments to develop tools to communicate with retailers and restaurants about the status of their fisheries management;
- Encourages governments to coordinate effectively their fisheries management and the communication of these results;
- Encourages any third party fisheries management certification be consistent with the UN FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines.

## TUNA FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

The Joint Meeting of Tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) will be held January 22-26, 2006, in Kobe, Japan, hosted by the Japanese Government with technical support from the FAO. It will be the first meeting of the world's five RFMOs for tuna: the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). The meeting will enable them to jointly address common issues for the conservation and management of tuna.

The meeting was initiated following the establishment of the WCPFC in 2004, which resulted in full coverage of all of the world's oceans by the tuna RFMOs, and was based on recognition of the idea that there is an urgent need to enhance cooperation and coordination among the tuna RFMOs. Such enhanced cooperation

and coordination would enable them to address issues which might not be adequately dealt with by each RFMO alone, such as illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing and the management of fishing capacity.

It was agreed that the ICFA will contribute to the meeting as a representative of the responsible industry.

## IWC

Members from pro-whaling countries expressed concerns that IWC has been dysfunctional for years without being able to implement the Revised Management Scheme (RMS), a risk averse method of calculation of catch quotas developed by the IWC's Scientific Committee. The St. Kitts and Nevis Declaration adopted at the 58<sup>th</sup> IWC meeting was introduced and supported. ICFA therefore adopted the following resolution urging the IWC members to normalize the Commission.

### Resolution on Whaling

Recalling existing resolutions regarding whaling;

ICFA recognizes that:

- The sovereignty, cultural practices, and dietary habits of individual nations and their peoples should be duly respected;
- Conservation and management measures should be implemented based on scientific findings;
- All marine living resources, including whales, should be used sustainably while ensuring the proper conservation and rational use of stocks, as endorsed by Agenda 21 of the 1992 Earth Summit;
- Some whale stocks are abundant and feeding on large amounts of fish and other marine resources which likely impacts sustainable commercial fisheries;
- The International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling explicitly states its purpose as "to provide for the proper conservation of whales stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry";

ICFA is:

- Deeply concerned about the continuing failure of the IWC to implement the Revised Management Scheme, thereby maintaining the 1982 moratorium on commercial whaling despite the IWC's Scientific Committee's development of a

risk averse method of calculating catch quotas and advising that a number of stocks could be harvested on a sustainable basis;

- Deeply concerned that the IWC maintains the 1994 Southern Ocean Sanctuary without a recommendation that such measure was required for conservation reasons.

ICFA urges the IWC to:

- Complete and implement the Revised Management Scheme at the earliest opportunity thereby ending the moratorium on commercial whaling;
- Encourage the research on interactions between marine mammals and fishery resources such as that being done by Japan, Norway, Iceland, and Russia.

ICFA:

- Supports St. Kitts and Nevis Declaration adopted in the 58<sup>th</sup> International Whaling Commission meeting;
- Urges International Whaling Commission members to be seriously engaged in the process of normalization of the IWC;
- Notes the resumption of commercial whaling by Iceland and acknowledges the right of individual nations to determine the appropriateness of whaling.

#### (Footnote)

<sup>1</sup> FAO SOFIA 2006

*ICFA is an international nongovernmental organization representing the fishing and seafood sectors. Members include the national associations from Canada, Chile, European Community, Faroe Islands, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Russia, and South Korea.*

## OPINION POLL

### Majority supports sustainable whaling in a Yahoo Japan opinion poll

Yahoo Japan, the nation's largest web search engine, conducted an internet opinion poll on commercial whaling for a week from October 18 to 24.

A total of 21,221 votes were counted, of which about

90% or 19,001 votes supported commercial whaling.

As a general observation of the opinions publicized on the website, (1) participants in the discussion seemed considerably well informed of the status of whale stocks, and not many voters held that whales are endangered. (2) Even those who opposed whaling seemed to dissociate themselves from the argument that whales should be treated as a special animal because they are intelligent. (3) Many of the supporters of whaling seemed to find it particularly unacceptable to impose someone's value on different people or nation.

The poll was conducted after Iceland's announcement on October 17 to resume commercial

whaling after 20 years on the grounds that the debate at the International Whaling Commission has made no progress.

On October 21, Iceland caught a fin whale.

Previously, there were questionnaires on whaling on the internet, and the majority in Japan has always supported the pro-whaling position.

In a similar vein, an opinion poll was conducted by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 2002 in the United Kingdom, a country at the forefront of the world's anti-whaling campaign. To the question made in this poll on whether whaling should be permitted, over 65% of the respondents answered affirmatively.

## SEAFOOD EXPO

# JFA to hold 9th International Seafood Show in Tokyo in July

—Osaka Seafood Show Is Also Slated for February—

**T**he Japan Fisheries Association (JFA) said it will hold the 9th International Seafood & Technology Expo at the Tokyo International Exhibition Center (Tokyo Big Sight) on July 18-20, 2007.

The show, one of the largest in scale of its kind, will be co-sponsored by the Japanese Government ministries, foreign embassies in Japan, seafood trade organizations and other related industries.

The show will feature the exhibition of wide-ranging products and services, including seafood, seasonings and food additives, as well as machinery and equipment related to seafood processing, packaging, cooking, food sanitation control, and waste disposal.

Targeted visitors will include seafood buyers, mass retailers (supermarkets, department stores, etc.), and large-scale seafood users (hotels, restaurants, etc.)

The JFA also said it will organize the 4th International Seafood & Technology Expo in Osaka at Intex Osaka on February 21-22, 2007.

Meanwhile, the JFA made public the results of the 8th International Seafood & Technology Expo held in Tokyo, July 19-21, 2006.

A total of 295 companies from a broad spectrum including the seafood, seasonings and food processing industries, exhibited at the show in 535 booths.

The average number of business negotiations conducted during the show was 80.3 per exhibitor,

with the maximum number reaching 909.

A total of 22,493 people including seafood buyers, mass retailers and users, such as hotels and restaurants, visited the show, as compared with 25,885 in the previous show.

Reflecting the general recovery of Japan's economy and rising demand for fish, many exhibitors reported they had positive business talks with clients.

One exhibitor said it concluded a contract worth 100 million yen as a result of exhibition.

Machinery and equipment makers also reported strong results, reflecting Japan's recovering economy. (In the past shows, there were views that the exhibition should probably not include machinery and equipment. However, in this show the prevalent view of the visitors was that they wanted to see more machinery and equipment exhibited.)

Another exhibitor reported that exhibition by category (such as products for the aged or restaurants) lead to a visible increase in orders.

The exhibition secretariat said that the show has become an active information source for the companies engaged in seafood.

The JFA said that the 3rd International Seafood & Technology Expo in Osaka held February 16 and 17, 2006, was participated in by 135 companies in 180 booths, with visitors totaling 8,807 as compared with 8,164 in the 2nd show.