

IPNLF POSITION STATEMENT

16th Regular Session of the
Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 5-11 December 2019



Indonesian one-by-one tuna fishing © Paul Hilton & IPNLF

The International Pole & Line Foundation (IPNLF) is an international non-profit working across science, policy and the seafood sector to improve the wellbeing of coastal communities committed to environmentally and socially responsible one-by-one fishing methods. The Western and Central Pacific has strong historical linkages to such fisheries, and many continue to play important roles in Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, the Solomon Islands, French Polynesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, among others.

The Western and Central Pacific Ocean is home to the world's largest tuna fishery, two of the world's largest pole-and-line fisheries, and many troll and handline fisheries supporting coastal communities throughout the region. IPNLF would like to see management measures adopted that safeguard tuna stocks and ecosystems so that one-by-one tuna fisheries, and the communities that depend on them, can flourish.

At this year's Commission meeting, IPNLF encourages members, cooperating non-members and participating territories (CCMs collectively) to adopt a number of conservation and management measures (CMMs) that, together, will strengthen the framework for sustainable tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Specifically, we urge progress in the following areas:

- **Continue progress of harvest strategies for all major tuna stocks** to ensure sustainability while also recognizing the social and economic dependence of coastal communities on fisheries harvesting shared tuna stocks. To this end, we expressly encourage the adoption of harvest strategies with equitable reference points and control rules for all target tuna stocks.
- **Strengthen the management of tropical tunas**, in line with advice from the Scientific Committee (SC), to avoid overfishing and secure continued opportunities for one-by-one fisheries (e.g. pole and line, handline and troll), coastal fisheries and communities in accordance with the UN Fish Stock Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Improve the monitoring and regulation of fish aggregating devices (FADs) and purse seine supply vessels** to better understand their impacts on fishing efficiency and inform future management. Regularly submitted information should include set-history data, while a transparent, independent and harmonized control of operational (dFAD) buoy numbers should be implemented.
- **Reduce marine pollution, including plastics and ghost fishing impacts associated with FADs** which wash ashore and damage coastal habitats by setting a strict time-frame for implementing fully biodegradable materials in drifting FAD construction. Also, **ensure that FAD owners recover drifting FADs while at sea**, prior to beaching events, and use available information to inform aligned mitigation initiatives. Independent verification of the materials used in FAD construction should be part of the process.
- **Adopt measures that will effectively reduce bycatch and protect endangered, threatened, or protected species, including sharks, seabirds, cetaceans, and sea turtles.** A comprehensive shark measure, as recommended by the SC, should be adopted this year and at minimum include: a rebuilding plan for oceanic whitetip sharks, require a harvest strategy developments for all overfished shark species, and require sharks to be landed with fins naturally attached. Additionally, prohibit the intentional setting around, or retention of mobulid rays. Furthermore, setting a time-frame to transition to FADs which does not use netting materials in their construction will greatly reduce impacts of ghost fishing on sharks and sea turtles.

- **Improve Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance in relation to longline fishing activities** to reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing through the introduction of 100% observer coverage, either electronic or human, and strengthening at-sea transshipment measures.
- **Address effort creep by imposing strict monitoring and control on the use of any aerial means to search for tropical tunas**, including aircraft, drones, helicopters or any other types of unmanned aerial vehicles.

There are several proposals on the table for this year's Regular Session which will advance these key issues, and we hope common ground can be found. Progress across all of these areas is needed, as more sustainable management frameworks will benefit every CCM, bring positive long-term returns to fishing communities, and minimise the risk of future fisheries collapse. We look forward to working with delegates as well as with our [Members](#) to strive for the highest standards of sustainability and equity in fisheries management to reinforce the good work of the Commission.



Happy fishers and their catch © IPNLF



ABOUT IPNLF

The International Pole & Line Foundation (IPNLF) works to develop, support and promote socially and environmentally responsible one-by-one tuna fisheries around the world. IPNLF's ambition is to contribute to thriving coastal fisheries, including the people, communities, businesses and seas connected with them. As a hub for sustainably-minded organisations, we use the influence of the market to forge change through practical fishery projects and stakeholder cooperation. IPNLF membership is open to organisations involved in the one-by-one tuna supply chain. Allied with our Members, IPNLF demonstrates the value of one-by-one caught tuna to consumers, policymakers and throughout the supply chain.

IPNLF was officially registered in the United Kingdom in 2012 (Charity 1145586), with branch offices in London, Maldives, Indonesia and South Africa, and a staff presence in Germany, Kenya, Netherlands and St. Helena.

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Keep informed about the latest developments in one-by-one tuna fisheries through our website and by connecting with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).