

18.36 Large-scale Pelagic Driftnet Fishing

AWARE of the growing concern on the part of the international community at the impact on the living marine environment of large-scale pelagic driftnets;

MINDFUL that the use of large-scale pelagic driftnets on the world's oceans and seas can be a highly destructive, unselective and wasteful fishing practice which threatens the effective conservation of living marine resources;

CONCERNED that in addition to targetted species of fish, such large-scale pelagic driftnets, both in active use and when lost and discarded, entangle and kill non-targetted species such as highly migratory and anadromous species of fish, marine mammals, turtles and birds, including endangered and protected species;

FURTHER CONCERNED that large-scale driftnet fishing threatens the viability of commercially and ecologically important targetted fish stocks;

NOTING WITH CONCERN the significant increase in the use of large-scale pelagic driftnets by fishing vessels in recent years and the impact of this fishing method on the living marine resources of the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean and other areas of the high seas;

CONSCIOUS of the growing opposition of the international community to the continuation of this fishing practice, as shown in commitments by international leaders;

NOTING the adoption by South Pacific Heads of Government of the Tarawa Declaration on 11 July 1989, which called for the cessation of large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing in the South Pacific and the implementation of effective management programmes, and their subsequent reaffirmation of it in the Communiqué of the 21st South Pacific Forum held in Vanuatu in July 1990;

NOTING ALSO the resolutions adopted by the 29th and 30th Sessions of the South Pacific Conference held respectively in Guam in October 1989 and Noumea in October 1990 which declared the opposition of the countries and territories of the South Pacific region to the practice of large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing;

NOTING ALSO the Langkawi Declaration on the Environment adopted on 21 October 1989 by Heads of State and Governments of the Commonwealth which called for a ban on the use of driftnets;

NOTING FURTHER the Castries Declaration adopted by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States in November 1989 which resolved to establish a regional regime for the regulation and management of pelagic resources in the Lesser Antilles that *inter alia* would outlaw the use of driftnets;

FURTHER NOTING the adoption by South Pacific States and Territories of the Convention for the Prohibition of Fishing with Long Driftnets in the

South Pacific, at Wellington on 24 November 1989; WELCOMING the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly on 22 December 1989 of Resolution 44/225 which addressed for the first time the impact of large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing on the living resources of the world's oceans and seas;

NOTING WITH APPRECIATION announcements by the Republic of Korea and Japan that, in advance of the deadline (30 June 1992) set by UN Resolution 44/225, each has ceased driftnet fishing activities in the South Pacific;

NOTING ALSO that at its 42nd Annual Meeting in July 1990 the International Whaling Commission, taking account of the fact that large-scale pelagic driftnets are used in areas of the high seas which include important habitats for cetaceans encompassing feeding and breeding grounds and migratory pathways, endorsed UN Resolution 44/225;

NOTING ALSO that at its IXth Meeting in October/November 1990 the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources in Resolution 7/IX endorsed the goals of UN Resolution 44/225 on large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing and agreed that there will be no expansion of such fishing into the high seas of the Convention area;

NOTING ALSO that the first substantive session of the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in August 1990 called for a comprehensive report to be submitted to its second substantive session scheduled for March 1991 on the impact of large-scale harvesting, and on new fishing technologies and fishing technologies incompatible with the sustainable management of biological marine resources;

REAFFIRMING the need for the international community to take all possible actions to ensure the effective conservation of biological marine resources and the ecosystems of the world's oceans and seas;

The General Assembly of IUCN—The World Conservation Union, at its 18th Session in Perth, Australia, 28 November-5 December 1990:

1. DECLARES its full support for the implementation of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 44/225 and calls on all members of the international community to commit themselves to full compliance with its provisions, including the establishment of effective monitoring and enforcement measures;
2. CALLS UPON IUCN State members to actively support full implementation of UN Resolution 44/225, as well as relevant regional and sub-regional commitments relating to the elimination of large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing as a fishing technique;
3. FURTHER CALLS UPON IUCN State members and other members of the international community which use high seas driftnet technology immediately to cease further expansion of large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing on the world's oceans and seas where it is currently practised, and to undertake not to extend their operations into the high seas of other oceanic regions, as mandated by Resolution 44/225;
4. WELCOMES the commitment evident in the actions of nations fishing far from their coasts to

the implementation of Resolution 44/225;

5. REITERATES its commitment to the development and use of fishing methods that are environmentally sound and enable the effective conservation and management of target fish species while ensuring the protection of other living marine species;

CALLS UPON the United Nations General Assembly at its 45th Session to support the eradication of large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing on the basis that it is an environmentally unacceptable fishing practice

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