

South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation

2nd Meeting of the Scientific Committee

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

1-7 October 2014

SC-02-03

USA Annual Report

2013 Annual Report of the United States to the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO)

The United States is currently a Cooperating non-Contracting Party (CNCP) of SPRFMO and has applied for continued (CNCP) status (see Attachment A). The United States was an active participant in the international and Preparatory Conference meetings to establish SPRFMO and is a signatory to the Convention. Our process for final ratification under domestic law is ongoing.

We submit this 2013 Annual Report in accordance with Article 24(2) of the Convention. The United States currently has no vessels participating in the fisheries managed by SPRFMO. The United States had a limited squid jig fishery that may have been operating on the high seas in the Convention Area approximately 10 years ago (please see Attachment 1 to the CNCP application of the United States regarding historical information on this fishery and the vessels that participated in the fishery). As such, the United States has no specific data or information to provide to the Commission regarding implementation of the Commission's conservation and management measures and compliance and enforcement procedures for the 2013 calendar year.

The United States has a continuing interest in the fisheries managed by SPRFMO and may have vessels that enter these fisheries in the future. If U.S.-flagged vessels enter SPRFMO-managed fisheries, the United States would provide the Commission with all relevant data and information and abide by all relevant measures adopted.

Attachment A – Cooperating Non-Contracting Party Application

**United States Department of State***Bureau of Oceans and International
Environmental and Scientific Affairs**Washington, D.C. 20520*

November 08, 2013

Dr. Robin Allen
Acting Executive Secretary
SPRFMO Secretariat
P.O. Box 3797
Wellington 6140, New Zealand

Re: Cooperating non-Contracting Party Application

Dear Dr. Allen:

I am writing to request the continued participation of the United States as a Cooperating non-Contracting Party (CNCP) of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO). The United States was an active participant in the international and Preparatory Conference meetings to establish SPRFMO and is a signatory to the Convention. The United States also has an interest in the fisheries managed by SPRFMO and may have vessels that enter these fisheries in the future. Our process for final ratification under domestic law is ongoing.

Pursuant to Paragraph 3 of Decision 1.02, of the Rules for Cooperating non-Contracting Parties and the Secretariat's letter of 19 September, 2013 Re: Request for CNCPs to become Contracting Party or to attain CNPC status, I provide the following information to support the application of the United States for continued CNCP status:

- a. **Reason for seeking CNCP status:** The United States has been an active participant in SPRFMO negotiations, has an interest in the fisheries managed by SPRFMO, and supports the objective of the Convention.

- b. **A commitment to cooperate fully in the implementation of conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission and to ensure that fishing vessels flying**

its flag and fishing in the Convention Area and, to the greatest extent possible, its nationals, comply with the provisions of the Convention and conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission: The United States is committed to cooperate fully implementing all applicable measures adopted by SPRFMO.

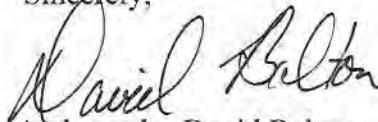
c. **An explicit commitment to accept high seas boarding and inspections in accordance with the Commission's procedures on high seas boarding and inspection, once they have been adopted; full data on its historical fisheries in the Convention Area, including nominal catches, number/type of vessels, name of fishing vessels, fishing effort and fishing areas:** The United States currently has no vessels participating in the fisheries managed by SPRFMO. The United States had a limited squid jig fishery that may have been operating on the high seas in the Convention Area approximately 10 years ago. I have enclosed historical information on this fishery and the vessels that participated in the fishery.

d. **All the data and information members of the Commission are required to submit, in accordance with the standards adopted by the Commission:** The United States currently has no vessels operating under the jurisdiction of SPRFMO. If U.S. flagged-vessels enter SPRFMO-managed fisheries, the United States would provide the Commission with all relevant data and information.

e. **Any further relevant information as determined by the Commission:** We are prepared to provide any additional information necessary to support this application, subject to U.S. domestic authority.

I appreciate your attention to our CNCP application. Please contact Nicole Ricci (riccinm@state.gov; (202) 647-1073) or Michael Tosatto (michael.tosatto@noaa.gov; (808) 944-2281) if you have any questions associated with this application

Sincerely,



Ambassador David Balton
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
for Oceans & Fisheries

Enclosure: As stated

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3.7.3.2 Domestic Distant-Water Squid Fishery in the Pacific

The domestic distant-water squid jigging fishery in the Pacific Ocean is currently being conducted by a single operation and is a very small contributor to the Pacific squid harvest. The vessels of this one operation occasionally call into Honolulu and Dutch Harbor, but the operation may be relying mostly on at-sea transshipment to deliver product to buyers. The level of on-board processing depends on the size of the squid caught and the preferences of buyers (pers. comm., Bob Endreson, 10/8/03). All of the product of the operation is currently destined for the Japanese market (pers. comm., Bob Endreson, 10/8/03).

3.7.3.2.1 Number of Vessels Involved

According to a representative of the U.S. distant-water squid harvesting operation, the operation consists of four catcher vessels (pers. comm., Bob Endreson, 10/8/03). The mothership is 47 m long and holds 1 million lb of squid. It is a Japanese-built vessel that was seized by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) for illegal driftnet fishing, bought at auction, and given a U.S. fisheries endorsement. It has 38 jigging machines on board and cost \$1.5 million to convert. The other three catcher boats are converted crab boats from Alaska. They range from 32 m to 34 m in length, and each holds between 450,000 lb and 850,000 lb of squid (Table 3.7-12). Fitting out the vessels for squid fishing was costly (the least expensive boat was \$1.2 million) because of the need to install blast freezers aboard each boat (pers. comm., Bob Endreson, 10/8/03). The total investment of the operation is about \$20 million.

Table 3.7-12 Characteristics of the Vessels Participating in the Domestic Distant-Water Squid Fishery in the Pacific Ocean.

Vessel Name	HSFCA Permit Issue Date	Length (m)	Gross Tonnage	Hold Capacity (m ³)	Crew No.
Pacific Wind	April 22, 2002	47.1	642	443.77	18
Pacific Ballad	September 3, 2001	32.5	327	438.27	12
Pacific Star	September 4, 2001	33.3	277	208.19	12
Pacific Venture	September 4, 2001	34.2	335	527.05	12

Source: NMFS PIRO.

Honolulu is listed on the HSFCA fishing permit and application as the hailing port of all the vessels. Each vessel is incorporated under a different name.

3.7.3.2.2 Type and Quantity of Fishing Gear Used

The U.S. distant-water operation relies solely on the jigging method of harvesting squid. The four catcher boats each carry 21-38 jigging machines (pers. comm., Bob Endreson, 10/8/03).

3.7.3.2.3 Species of Fish Involved and Their Location

According to the HSFCA fishing permit and application, the vessels participating in the U.S. distant-water operation are licensed to fish in the following six FAO fishing areas:

- 61. Northwest Pacific;
- 67. Northeast Pacific;
- 71. Western Central Pacific;
- 77. Eastern Central Pacific;
- 81. Southwest Pacific; and
- 87. Southeast Pacific.

The U.S. distant-water operation competes directly with international fleets in oceanic squid fisheries outside the U.S. EEZ. The operation fishes to the north of the Hawaiian Archipelago (at around 45°N) in zones of enhanced biological productivity. The primary species targeted in the North Pacific fishery is *O. bartrami* (commonly referred to as the neon flying squid or red flying squid). This fishery is seasonal, usually occurring during the summer months of the Northern Hemisphere.

In addition, the U.S. distant-water operation fishes in the New Zealand EEZ where it operates under charter to a New Zealand-owned company. The New Zealand fishery is managed by an individual transferable quota system (Easton 1989). The target species in the fishery is *Nototodarus sloanii* (Wellington flying squid). Participation by the U.S. distant-water operation in this fishery generally occurs between October and February.

3.7.3.2.4 Actual and Potential Revenue from the Fishery

A representative of the U.S. distant-water operation reports that the squid catch can be as high as 35,000 to 40,000 lb per night when fishing in the waters off New Zealand; while the catch on the North Pacific fishing grounds can reach 18,000 lb per night (pers. comm., Bob Endreson, 10/8/03). At an assumed ex-vessel price of \$1,000 per ton, these catches would generate gross revenues ranging from \$9,000 to \$20,000 per night of fishing. However, average catches and revenues may be much lower. During fishing trips made in the 2003 fishing season, the combined squid catch of three of the vessels participating in the U.S. distant-water operation was only 44,596 lb after about 22 days of fishing on the North Pacific grounds (these fishery statistics are based on 2003 North Pacific high seas squid jig logbook data).

3.7.3.2.5 Recreational Interest in the Fishery

Access to the *O. bartrami* resource by the general public is limited. There is likely no recreational fishing for this species in the western Pacific region.

3.7.3.2.6 Nature and Extent of Foreign Fishing and Indian Treaty Fishing Rights, If Any

There are no foreign fishing or Indian treaty fishing rights associated with the distant-water squid jigging fishery.

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