COMM 12 - Report ANNEX 10e

Statement of the DSCC to the 12th Commission Meeting of SPRFMO

We are exceptionally disappointed with this outcome caused by NZ blocking Australia's proposal joined by only one Member, the Faroe Islands. We thank those members, US, European Union, and Chile which supported Australia's proposal. Those who were here last year will recall that NZ insisted on the 70% (and only 70%) proposal. For NZ now to block Australia's proposal, which as the US observed is in reality NZ's proposal from last year, is unacceptable, and represents a rejection of multilateralism and of assumed obligations that is completely out of step with international practice and norms.

As we noted yesterday, para 4 of CMM 3a reads:

4. All activities conducted under this CMM must be conducted in accordance with CMM 03-2023 (Bottom Fishing).

Para 19 reads that the Commission will review the bottom trawl management areas at its 12th annual meeting in 2024.

Since paragraph 19 has not been duly implemented, that logically means there can be no fishing.

This is also the necessary implication of UNGA resolution 61/105 paragraph 83a which reads that if VMEs are not managed to avoid SAIs fishing activities are not authorised to proceed.

The same is provided in para 120 of UNGA resolution 64/72 which reads, and I quote,"and not to authorize bottom fishing activities until such measures have been adopted and implemented;" This is also consistent with the precautionary approach under art. 3 of the SPRFMO Convention as well as the Fish Stocks Convention under which we also operate.

We call on all members to ensure that these provisions are faithfully implemented.