

Press Release



Future of the Tuna Industry in the Global Market on Sustainability and Non IUU Fishing

Bangkok, 24 May 2016, 10.00 a.m.

The Thai Tuna Industry Association (TTIA) in conjunction with 3 agencies consisting of Friend of the Sea (FOS), British Food Importers & Distributors Association and International Pole and Line Foundation (IPNLF) clarify and share their opinions on the future of the tuna industry in the world market.

At present, the total quantities of raw tuna caught at the global level are confined to a total amount of approximately 5 million metric tons, 15-18% of which are imported and processed for exportation by Thailand, equivalent to 700,000-800,000 metric tons per year. Over the past many years, the global community has accorded importance to the determination of diverse measures designed to promote sustainable fisheries, e.g. the sustainable use of fish resources, especially with special reference to tuna, the promotion of legal fishing practices, as well as the institutional enhancement of mentor agencies in charge of encouraging organizations concerned to comply with national legal requirements and regulations

Dr. Chanintr stated “ *TTIA’s stance regarding the resolution of IUU issues is based on the following **four principles**”*

(1) The academic principles and scientific data postulated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Thailand’s Department of Fisheries, or the European Union (EU), all of which collectively constitute the best set of data to be used in redressing the management of Thailand’s marine resources in accordance with international standards;

(2) The Legal framework proposed by FAO, or enshrined in the UNCLOS 1982: In this connection, the EU Regulations on IUU fishing is also founded in part on the principles developed in the FAO and UNCLOS regulations;

(3) The principle of transparency: The resolution of all problems concerned shall be implemented in a transparent manner. All relevant documents must be available for reference and inspection purposes by all stakeholders concerned in IUU issues; and

(4) Constructive cooperation: This principle serves as the core of the legal corpus of the EU’s IUU regulations, which are based on assistance and cooperation with third countries, Thailand included, in order to redress and enhance various issues with an aim of restoring these countries’ fisheries resources.

Dr.Chanintr also added *“TTIA welcomes and supports Thailand’s and the EU Commission’s enhanced efforts in improving the country’s fisheries resources. TTIA is poised to readily extend its utmost cooperation in this connection.”*

The EU’s recommendations with regard to the resolution of salient shortcomings comprise **the following three issues:**

3.1 The legal Framework: The enactment of 65 anti-IUU ancillary regulations under the Royal Ordinance on Fisheries, B.E. 2558 (A.D. 2015), 35 of which have been promulgated;

3.2 The installation of a monitoring, control and surveillance system (MCS): One such system is a vessel monitoring system (VMS). According to the FAO IUU Fishing Principle, the installation of any such system is designed principally to control and monitor the fishing operation of large fishing vessels of 24 metres in length (or vessels of 30 gross tonnage) or above.

3.3 Scientific data used in individual countries: With special reference to the issue of overfishing, the maximum sustainable yields (MSYs) are normally applied. For example, fishing vessels registered in an EU-member state catching the Yellowfin tuna in the Indian Ocean shall have to comply with the regulations as the MSY thereof that were once in the green range have now attained the red range. In the same vein, Thai fisheries operators shall also need to comply with the same principle in their MSY calculation based on scientific principles.

Dr.Chanintr finally stated *“The government, and TTIA – as a private sector representative association – have accordingly been cooperating with each other, and have collectively acted as the combined champions of the cause in the anti-IUU campaign based on the afore-mentioned principles. It is highly-desirable that such principles should be upheld as universal, and should apply across the board equally among all nations.”*

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