

**SUMMARY REPORT OF
THE 6th MEETING OF THE MCS SUB REGIONAL
(TIMOR & ARAFURA SEAS) GROUP
Dili, Timor-Leste**

20-21 APRIL 2016

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The 6th MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group meeting was convened in Dili, Timor-Leste from 20 to 21 April 2016 in follow up to the 5th MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group meeting held in Darwin, Australia in March 2015.
2. The meeting was attended by delegates from all of the four member countries: Australia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste. The list of participants appears as **Annex 1**.
3. Mr Pedro Rodrigues, Chief of MCS Department, Ministry Agriculture and Fisheries, as Chair of the meeting welcomed the delegates and officially opened the meeting on behalf of Timor-Leste. Mr Rodrigues handed out Mr Augusto Fernandes, National Directorate for Fisheries and Management of Marine Resources, and Acting General Directorate for Fisheries – Timor-Leste, who stated that he was very happy to have the delegates in Timor-Leste as this group has a lot of experience that will assist in guiding a young country like Timor-Leste through combating IUU fishing. He noted that the meeting should result in continued positive collaboration between the member nations in efforts to eradicate IUU fishing in the region.
4. The meeting discussed the agenda and agreed to adopt the agenda. The agenda appears as **Annex 2**.

II. CURRENT SITUATION IN THE REGION

INDONESIA

5. Mr Fran Ohiorat delivered a presentation updating the Group on current activity occurring in Indonesian waters as well as new initiatives implemented to combat IUU fishing. The presentation appears in **Annex 3**.

Key issues from Indonesia include:

- Fishing vessels without legal permit (cloning/duplication of vessel name)
- Fishing using prohibited fishing gear in unauthorised fishing grounds
- Fake documentation, manipulation of licences, (deletion certificate, bill of sale)
- Illegal and/or unreported transshipment at sea
- Multiple flags
- Dummy company address and forged documentation

TIMOR-LESTE

6. Mr Tomas De Sousa delivered a presentation outlining the current situation in Timor-Leste waters. The presentation appears in **Annex 4**.

The key issues from Timor-Leste is:

- Large scale fishing operating in south of Timor-Leste
- Timor-Leste has concerns that two licensed foreign fishing vessels may be operating outside their licence conditions whilst fishing in Timor-Leste.
- Multiple fishing licences are being sort from foreign fishing nations.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

7. Mr Martina Ragagalo delivered a presentation outlining the current situation in Papua New Guinean waters. The presentation appears in **Annex 5**.

Key issues from Papua New Guinea include:

- Unregulated transshipment at sea;
- Duplication of issued licenses and Markings;
- Flagging of fishing vessels and Catch Declaration as a result of transshipment;
- Utilisation of member countries waters to avoid enforcement activities;
- BDM trade between Merauke and Papua New Guinea

AUSTRALIA

8. Mr Brendan Rayner delivered a presentation detailing the current situation in Australian waters. The presentation appears in **Annex 6**.

Key issues from Australia include:-

- The Seabed Jurisdiction Area where it is believed that sedentary species are being taken illegally;
- Concerns of large numbers of vessels operating just north of the AFZ including the TSPZ as well as the increasing numbers of fish aggregation devices in use in this area;
- BDM taken illegally from the TSPZ and subsequent trade between Merauke and Papua New Guinea;
- Concern over the apprehension of Vietnamese fishing vessels in the AFZ

III. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MEETING RELATED TO THE MCS SUB-REGIONAL (ARAFURA AND TIMOR SEAS) GROUP

9. A summary of the outcomes and the Action Plan for 2015 resulting from the 5th MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group meeting, held in Darwin, Australia was presented by Mr Rayner and endorsed by the Group. This is included at **Annex 7**.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FORWARD WORKING PLAN

10. The meeting had extensive discussions in relation to possible actions for the reduction of IUU activity in the sub-region. As a result of discussions, action agreed to be taken by the Group are detailed in the 'Key IUU Issues and Action 2016' document as it appears at **Annex 8**.
11. It was evident from discussions that issues identified at previous MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group meetings were continuing to occur in the Arafura and Timor Seas.
12. These key issues are -
 - Unlicensed fishing vessels operating in member countries' waters
 - Unauthorised mothership activity including transshipment
 - Duplicate licenses (multiple vessels using one licence and duplicate vessel markings)
 - Large numbers of Vietnamese fishing vessels operating illegally in the region
 - Large scale operations fishing illegally south of Timor-Leste and concerns there is inadequate training to manage fisheries
 - BDM taken illegally from the TSPZ and subsequent trade between Merauke and Papua New Guinea
 - Increasing use of FADs in the sub-region.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Timor-Leste noted that they concerns that they currently lack the expertise to conduct inspections and assess if their Fisheries Legislation is strong enough to effectively manage large fishing vessels. Mr Firdaus provided Mr Rodrigues a copy of the RPOA-IUU's Fisheries Legislative Model paper from 2010.

Australia Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste developed a list of considerations that Timor-Leste should review to ensure that they are preventing IUU fishing and protecting their resources.

Australia Indonesia, Papua New Guinea expressed their appreciation to Timor-Leste for hosting the meeting and welcomed the opportunity to continue to collaborate in such a cooperative manner in combatting IUU fishing in the sub-region. All members thanked Mr Pedro Rodrigues in his role as Chair.

COORDINATION OF THE MCS SUB-REGIONAL (ARAFURA AND TIMOR SEAS) GROUP

13. Papua New Guinea offered to host the 7th MCS Sub-Regional meeting in Papua New Guinea in the first quarter of 2016.
14. Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Timor-Leste requested that Australia continue the role as the MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group Secretariat. Australia has agreed to hold the position for another year.

15. The outcomes of this meeting will be reported to the RPOA members through the RPOA-IUU Secretariat. Activities undertaken throughout 2016 will also be reported to the Coordination Committee at the next RPOA Coordination Committee meeting.

VII. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

16. Mr Pedro Rodrigues as Chair expressed his appreciation to all participants for their active participation and contribution, which enabled the meeting to come up with viable outcomes and recommendations for combating IUU fishing in the Arafura and Timor Seas.
17. Mr Pedro Rodrigues as Chair declared the meeting closed.

Annex 1 - List of Participants

Annex 2 - Agenda

Annex 3 – Indonesia: Presentation

Annex 4 – Timor-Leste: Presentation

Annex 5 - Papua New Guinea: Presentation

Annex 6 - Australia: Presentation

Annex 7 – Review of 2015 Key IUU Issues and Action Plan

Annex 8 – 2016 Key IUU Issues and Action Plan