

**SUMMARY REPORT OF
THE 8TH MEETING OF THE MCS SUB REGIONAL
(TIMOR & ARAFURA SEAS) GROUP
BALI, INDONESIA**

24-25 APRIL 2018

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The 8th MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group meeting was convened in Bali, Indonesia from 24 to 25 April 2018 in follow up to the 7th MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group meeting held in Kokopo, Papua New Guinea 2017.
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. M. Eko Rudianto, Director of Surveillance for Marine Resources and Management, Indonesian Ministry for Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), as host of the meeting welcomed the delegates and officially opened the meeting and expressed the importance of MCS Sub-regional Group in establishing an action plan to address IUU fishing issues for the region and commended the information sharing activities among the members.
4. Mr Brendan Rayner, Manager of International Compliance Operations, Australian Fisheries Management Authority, as Chair of the meeting welcomed the delegates, and thanked Mr Eko for his warm welcome and reiterated his thanks to the hosts. Mr Rayner highlighted the RPOA-IUU's comments from the meeting in November 2017 that this Sub-Regional group is setting the standard for the other Sub-Regional groups in terms of collaboration and results. However he also acknowledged the importance for the Sub-Regional Group continuing to build on the successes of 2017.
5. The meeting discussed and agreed to adopt the agenda. The agenda appears as **Annex 2**.

II. CURRENT SITUATION IN THE REGION

INDONESIA

6. Mr Turman Hardianto Maha delivered a presentation updating the Group on current activities occurring in Indonesian waters and the current Roadmap to Improve Governance of Fisheries Business. The presentation appears as **Annex 3**.

Key issues from Indonesia include:

- Continuing pressure of Vietnamese fishing boats in northern waters.
- Unauthorised Foreign Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs/Rumpon)
- Fishing vessels without license
- Fishing Vessel operated unconformity with the applicable rules and regulations (No Legal Letter/SLO, Sailing Permit/ SPB)
- Fishing used prohibited fishing gears, and operated in unauthorized fishing ground
- Destructive fishing (Bombing and poison)
- Foreign Fishing vessels disguising and operating under Indonesian flag and name with prohibited gear.

TIMOR-LESTE

7. Mr Pedro Rodrigues delivered a presentation updating the Group on current activities occurring in Timor-Leste waters. The presentation appears as **Annex 4**.

Key issues from Timor-Leste include:

- Ongoing investigation of the apprehended 15 Chinese vessels by Timor-Leste Police and Sea Shepherd – final court decision pending
- Global Fishing Watch data for Indonesian vessels in Timor-Leste waters
- Continuing request for assistance to develop an MCS Framework , including Port State Measures training, VMS, Catch Documentation Schemes, and the review of fisheries legislation and licensing
- Development of ship rider protocols to encourage cooperation with Indonesia.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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

Key issues from Papua New Guinea (PNG) include:

- Illegal fishing for Tropical Rock Lobster (TRL) and Bêche de Mer (BDM) (BDM/Trepang) in the Australian/PNG jurisdiction by nationals
- Continuous illegal fishing by licensed and unlicensed Indonesian Type 3s
- BDM trading in the north/south PNG/Indonesian border
- Catch traceability by fishing vessels in the BDM and TRL fisheries.

AUSTRALIA

9. Mr Brendan Rayner delivered a presentation updating the Group on current activities occurring in Australia waters. The presentation appears as **Annex 6**.

Key issues from Australia include:

- Incursions by Indonesian fishing vessels into Australian waters

- Positive information sharing practices with all Sub-Regional Partners
- Increasing FADs on the boundary of Australia's northern waters
- Update on Vietnamese fishing boats and the public information campaign delivered in Vietnam
- Strong cooperation between Australia and Papua New Guinea in the management of a PNG Banana boats found to be illegally fishing in Australia
- The Dogleg area suspected of increasing illegal activity including possible transshipment
- Ongoing coordinated patrols between Australian and Indonesian authorities

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

10. A summary of the outcomes and the Action Plan for 2017 resulting from the 7th MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group meeting, held in Kokopo, Papua New Guinea was presented by Mr Rayner and endorsed by the Group. This is included at **Annex 7**.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FORWARD WORKING PLAN

11. The meeting had extensive discussion in relation to possible actions for the reduction of IUU activities in the Arafura and Timor Seas. As a result of discussions, action agreed to be taken by the Group are detailed in the 2018 Key IUU Issues and Action Plan in **Annex 8**.
12. While strong progress had been made in reducing IUU activities in the Arafura and Timor Seas, some key issues identified at previous MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group meetings were continuing to occur.

These key issues are:

- Increasing numbers of Vietnamese fishing vessels operating illegally in Indonesia
- Continuing need for capacity building activities in Timor-Leste in relation to licenced foreign fishing vessels and IUU fishing activities in the southern waters of Timor-Leste, and the need to further develop their MCS Framework
- Unlicensed fishing vessels operating in the waters of member countries
- Continued use of unauthorised FADs in the Arafura and Timor Seas.
- Illegal trade and market of product across borders

V. OTHER BUSINESS

13. Mr Rayner sought interest from the group regarding inviting observers from the other RPOA Sub-Regional groups to attend the next meeting. It was noted that inviting the two other Sub-Regional Secretariats was supported by all delegations.

14. A nominated contact list was added to the participant list (**Annex 1**) to assist members to easily share information on fisheries matters that relate directly member's expertise. This was distributed to all members.
15. Australia distributed the Australia Vietnam 2017 Public Information Campaign report and the Vietnamese Flagged Apprehension – Summary 2017 to all members

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

16. Australia offered to host the 9th MCS Sub-Regional meeting in Australia in the first quarter of 2019.
17. Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Timor-Leste requested that Australia continue in the role as the MCS Sub-Regional (Arafura and Timor Seas) Group Secretariat. Australia has agreed to hold the position for another year.
18. The outcomes of this meeting will be reported to the RPOA members through the RPOA-IUU Secretariat. Activities undertaken throughout 2018 will also be reported to the Coordination Committee at the next RPOA Coordination Committee meeting.

VII. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

19. Mr Brendan Rayner as Chair thanked all participants for their active contribution and willingness to discuss complex matters. He noted that the agreed outcomes and recommendations from this meeting will go a long way to combating IUU fishing in the Arafura and Timor Seas.
20. Mr Brendan Rayner 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 2017 Key IUU Issues and Action Plan

Annex 8 – 2018 Key IUU Issues and Action Plan