

**STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES TO PWG**

The United States appreciates the Chair's proposal (PWG-408) to extend the expiring provisions of Rec. 18-12 for one year. We would also like to thank the EU for providing information in PWG-407 on its implementation of the two expiring provisions of that recommendation, which provide validation derogations to the EU in the case of small bluefin tuna that are tagged as well as certain product types of bluefin tuna that are domestically traded.

To assist the United States in taking a decision on PWG-408, we would like to request additional details from the EU. While the EU presented data in PWG-407 listing the number of trade events that were rejected, the percent of trade events that were cross-checked was not included. We would appreciate it if the EU could provide this information. Furthermore, consistent with past requests, the United States requests information on validations and trades between individual EU Member States, specifically: (1) the total number of trades and the percentage of such trades that were cross-checked; and (2) the number of trades and amount of tonnage when an exemption from validation was used. PWG-407 provides information on exports from the EU to other CPCs, total volume of trades among all EU Member States and internal trades inside Member States territories - but this information is not broken out to show trades between each Member State. The EU's report is helpful in getting an overall picture of the derogations, but a more granular level of data showing validations and trades between individual EU Member States would allow a mass balance analysis to be conducted to identify potential inconsistencies in the trade data associated with these derogations. The IUU activity uncovered in the Tarantelo operation highlights the need for this level of detail. We also look forward to an update in the PWG and/or COC on the Tarantelo operation and how the EU has sought to close the loopholes in its management regime, including its implementation of eBCD, that allowed those illegal operations to take place. We look forward to receiving additional details from the EU through the correspondence process.

The United States also takes note of the draft forms provided by the Secretariat on abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG). Generally the information requested in the forms seems fine to us and consistent with Recommendation 19-11. If feasible, we suggest consideration be given to combining them into one form related to ALDFG.