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Fiji Industry Offended By EU Warning

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Press Release – Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association – PITIA

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE USE 16 November 2012 Fiji Industry Offended By EU Warning The Fiji industry delegation at the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association (PITIA) AGM which is now being held in Auckland was incensed at the media statement ...
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Fiji Industry Offended By EU Warning

The Fiji industry delegation at the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association (PITIA) AGM which is now being held in Auckland was incensed at the media statement issued by the European Commissioner Maria Damanaki. This gave a warning to 8 countries around the world that the commission feels have not done enough to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

PITIA fully supports Fiji's concerns given the actions and the processes in place in Fiji.

Fiji has a very strict compliance system in place, and are in the process of strengthening their MCS tools through the application of an Offshore Decree to control activities of flag state vessels on the high seas. The country's Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry applies 100% inspection on all vessels landing into Fiji, including foreign, applies a VMS system to all its tuna vessels and an observer scheme.

MFF has sent two submissions to the EU's DG Mare informing them of the steps being taken and is now in the process of revising its NPOA-IUU with assistance from Devfish II. To say that Fiji does not participate in enough dialogue is rather strange given its efforts to strengthen what is already a very strong monitoring, control and surveillance system.

A recent independent review by EU consultants, GOPA, scored RMI, FSM and PNG as low risk IUU countries, and Kiribati and Fiji as medium risk. Actions to improve compliance throughout the Western and Central Pacific Ocean are also being supported by the Forum Fisheries Agency.

Strange then that other countries that demonstrate higher levels of risk have not been singled out for attention.

PITIA continues to support the initiatives of its national governments through the FFA process to combat, deter and eliminate illegal fishing.

About Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association (PITIA)

With its membership covering 14 Pacific Island countries and several national industry associations, the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association (PITIA) provides information and services to its members to encourage information and engagement of industry in key policy decisions affecting their businesses. www.pitia.org ^[1]

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