

01<sup>st</sup> June 2009/ 01juin 2009

## **IOTC CIRCULAR 2009/16; CIRCULAIRE CTOI 2009/16**

### **SUBJECT: COMMUNICATION FROM AUSTRALIA**

Please find attached a communication from Australia, relating to the inclusion of fishing vessels registered in Sierra Leone on the IOTC Record of Vessels Authorised to operate in the IOTC Area.

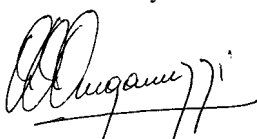
I would like to renew the invitation for other Members to express their views on the matters raised by the communication of the European Community (see IOTC Circular 2009/-15) and the attached letter.

### **SUJET: UNE COMMUNICATION DE L'AUSTRALIE**

Veillez trouvez ci-jointe une communication de l'Australie, concernant l'inclusion des navires de pêche immatriculés en Sierra Leone sur la liste des navires autorisés à opérer dans la zone CTOI.

Je voudrai renouveler l'invitation pour que d'autres Membres expriment leurs opinions sur les sujets abordés dans la communication de la Communauté Européenne (voir la circulaire 2009/-15 de la CTOI) ainsi que dans la lettre ci-jointe.

Yours sincerely/Cordialement,



Alejandro Anganuzzi

*Executive Secretary / Secrétaire exécutif*

#### **Attachments/ Pièces jointes**

- Letter from Australia/Une Communication de l'Australie

#### **Distribution**

**IOTC Members:** Australia, Belize, China, Comoros, Eritrea, European Community, France, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vanuatu.

#### **IOTC Chairperson.**

**Cooperating non contracting parties:** Senegal, South Africa, Uruguay.

**Copy:** FAO

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Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Mr Alejandro Anganuzzi  
IOTC Executive Secretary  
P.O. Box 1011  
Fishing Port – Victoria  
SEYCHELLES

Dear Mr Anganuzzi

I seek further clarification regarding the recent discussions at the 13<sup>th</sup> annual session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) concerning the acceptance of the instrument of accession submitted by the Republic of Sierra Leone to the Commission and the proposed fishing operations to be undertaken by vessels flagged to Sierra Leone.

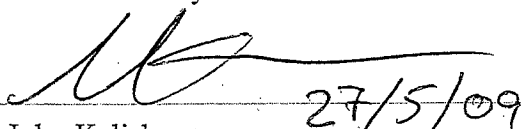
Australia expressed concern during the meeting in Bali, Indonesia, on 30 April – 3 May 2009 as to whether Sierra Leone met the eligibility criteria as prescribed under Article IV of the IOTC Agreement. We are of a like mind to our European Commission counterparts, who considered that in such circumstances the FAO should have sought the views of the Members. In this context, and recognising that the IOTC Secretariat is awaiting advice from the FAO on the matter, we also seek further clarification of the procedure that FAO followed with respect to the recent acceptance of the instrument of accession submitted by the Republic of Sierra Leone.

We would also seek an assurance from the FAO that any future consideration of instruments of accession to the IOTC, took full account of the eligibility criteria outlined in the IOTC Agreement and that where there was an issue of doubt over eligibility, the FAO would consult fully with the IOTC members on the matter.

Australia also shares the concern of the European Commission regarding the fishing operations proposed by Sierra Leone. It is our understanding that eight fishing vessels flagged to Sierra Leone intend to operate in the IOTC area, primarily for wahoo (*Acanthocybium solandri*) – a species not covered under the IOTC mandate. It is our opinion that commercial industrialised fishing operations targeting wahoo will inevitably catch other species, notably tuna species, already under heavy fishing pressure in the Indian Ocean. As such, Australia supports the European Commission call for a moratorium on authorisations of fishing vessels flying the flag of Sierra Leone until the matter of Sierra Leone's accession to the IOTC is clarified to the satisfaction of all IOTC members.

I kindly request that you circulate this correspondence to IOTC members and that you seek members' views on the matter.

Yours sincerely



John Kalish  
General Manager  
International Fisheries