



*Bureau of Oceans and International  
Environmental and Scientific Affairs*

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

September 17, 2021

Dear Council Members and Staff,

Greetings, my name is Colin Brinkman and I will be the Department POC for SPRFMO and will also be providing general State Department updates to the Council for the near future. I just started in the Office of Marine Conservation in mid-August, though I am not totally new to the office, as I served as an AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow in the office from 2016-2018. During that time I covered a number of issues relevant to the council, including NPFC, the U.S.-Russia ICC, Taiwan fisheries issues, and global shark conservation efforts, among other things. From 2019 to 2021, I was a contractor in the Department of State Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs, covering the office's foreign assistance portfolio and the Our Ocean conferences.

In terms of substantive RFMO issues, I will defer to Mr. Tosatto to provide any relevant updates on WCPFC and SPRFMO, but I do have several other updates for you below.

#### **Commissioner Appointments**

- NMFS and State will review the Council's recommendation of Archie Soliai and consider subsequent steps on an appointment package for Archie Soliai for SPRFMO. This item was delayed due to Mr. Brakke's transition to IASI, but we are now working on it.
- For WCPFC, we await a Council recommendation on a replacement for Michael Goto.

#### **UN Meetings**

As with RFMOs, most United Nations meetings related to fisheries have been postponed, some until next year:

- The UN also intends to hold an informal consultations of States parties to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement in March 2022, if conditions allow. That meeting will focus on the ecosystem approach to fisheries management as well as preparations for the UN Fish Stocks Agreement resumed Review Conference.
- The UN Fish Stocks resumed Review Conference has been postponed, and is currently slated to be held in May 2022, if conditions allow.
- A UN General Assembly workshop on the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks was originally scheduled for August 2020 but has been postponed to a date to be determined in the second half of 2022. The workshop will inform a review of provisions and recommendations related to bottom fishing as part of the negotiations of the annual UN General Assembly resolution on sustainable fisheries.
- The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), has been rescheduled again, this time for March 7-18, 2022.

- The UN Ocean Conference, originally scheduled for June 2-6, 2020, will likely be held during the last week in June 2022. A decision on this will be made by the UN General Assembly this fall.

**Tuna Treaty**

I'll provide an oral update on the SPTT negotiations during the agency updates agenda item.

**Other items of Interest to the Council**

Deep-sea Mining: The July session of the ISA Council was to have further discussed the development of regulations for exploitation activities in the Area. That session, tentatively rescheduled for October due to COVID-19, has not been confirmed. We will monitor for any confirmed rescheduling of the Council to meet. In June, Nauru activated a process in the ISA rules to complete the exploitation regulations by July 2023 so that an application that it may sponsor for exploitation in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone may be submitted and considered. We will be happy to continue to provide updates to the Council on the work of the ISA.

Sincerely,

C. Colin Brinkman  
Office of Marine Conservation