



**Western
Pacific
Regional
Fishery
Management
Council**

March 8, 2022

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
Secretary of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Lloyd Austin
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

The Honorable Gina M Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr./Madam Secretary:

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (Council) at its 189th Meeting held virtually December 8-10, 2021, addressed outcomes of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) 18th Regular Session held earlier in December 2021. The WCPFC oversees management of nearly two-thirds of the world's tuna supply within a geopolitically strategic region of the Pacific where the single largest economic common denominator is fisheries.

Attached to this letter is a briefing paper, "Waning US Influence and Impacts to Major US Pacific Tuna Fisheries within the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO): A Call for a US Government Strategic Plan." It calls for the Biden Administration to develop a new high level strategy that will prioritize improving negotiations within the Pacific to advance US interests and enhance cooperation across all relevant federal departments, including the Departments of State, Interior, Commerce, Defense, and Homeland Security. Lack of progress towards advancing US interests within the WCPFC should signal a need for a completely new strategy for the US government to tie in the geopolitical interests of US fisheries in the Pacific with a larger mission – to strengthen the position of the US and US Territories through cooperation of other Pacific Island nations. We would appreciate meeting with appropriate staff to discuss this further and to chart a path forward. Please have your staff contact me at kitty.simonds@noaa.gov or via telephone at +1 (808) 522-8220.

Sincerely,

Taotasi Archie Soliai
Council Chair

Kitty M. Simonds
Executive Director

CC: Admiral Samuel J. Paparo, Commander of the United States Pacific Fleet, US Navy
Keone Nakoa, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs, Interior
Kelly Kryc, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries, NOAA
Janet Coit, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA
Alexa Cole, Director, International Affairs and Seafood Inspection, NOAA
David Hogan, Director, Office of Marine Conservation, Department of State
Hawaii Longline Association
American Tunaboat Association
Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council Members