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Fisheries
Association



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Views and Opinions of Japan's Fisheries Industry

HIGHLIGHTS: WTO SPECIAL ISSUE

RISING VOICE FOR RESPONSIBLE TRADE RULES BASED ON SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

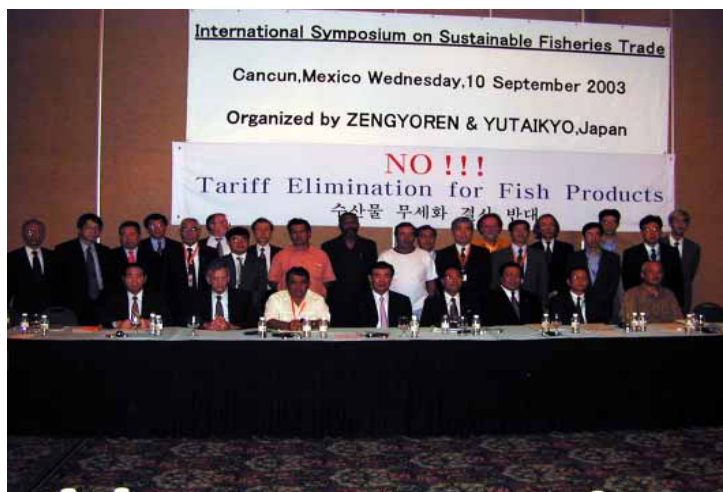
--WTO IN CANCUN--

The Cancun Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) ended on 14 September without reaching a consensus. Although the Meeting was deadlocked over agriculture issues, significant progress was made on fishery issues toward responsible free trade rules, led by Japanese fishing industry representatives of the National Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Associations (JF-Zengyoren) and the Japan Fisheries Association (JFA). They have been struggling for years with the cooperation of industry representatives from Korea and Chinese Taipei to appeal the importance of responsible international trade rules compatible with resource management in the global community. They found, in Cancun, a substantial number of supporters of responsible trade rules through various activities described below. JF-Zengyoren and the JFA are resolved to further cooperate with their new colleagues and work on the WTO to address concerns expressed during the Conference, including the issues of compatibility with resource management and the sustainability of local communities, so that the WTO will develop new trade rules that can be welcomed by the global community.

SYMPOSIUM ON SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES TRADE

On September 10, an International Symposium on Sustainable Fisheries Trade was held, with 41 representatives of fishery organizations from 10 countries and entities attending. The symposium was closed with the adoption of a statement (1) that the WTO rules should contribute to ensuring appropriate management and conservation and sustainable utilization as well as sustenance of fishing activities; and (2) that the WTO should fully take into account the actual state of fisheries in developing its trade rules.

Following is the full text of the statement.



Representatives from fishery organizations at the symposium

STATEMENT ON SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES TRADE

We, the participants in the International Symposium on Sustainable Fisheries Trade held in Cancun, Mexico, on 10 September 2003;

Recognizing the important roles and functions of fisheries and fishing communities in each country, such as their contribution to sustainable food self-sufficiency and the socio-economic development of fishing communities, etc.;

Fully aware of the importance of complying with national, regional and international rules and regulations pertaining to fisheries, including the UNCLOS and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; and

Recognizing the importance to ensure the establishment of international trade rules for fish and

fish products by the WTO which do not negate the effectiveness of existing regional fisheries agreements and the International Plans of Action of FAO regarding Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported fisheries and fishing capacity;

Agree as follows:

1. WTO rules on trade for fish and fish products should be made to ensure the sustainable development of fisheries, the proper management and conservation of fishery resources, and the continued business viability of each country's fisheries.

2. In drawing up trade rules, the WTO should fully consider the actual situation of each country so that its fisheries and fishing communities should not be unduly threatened by the promotion of global scale trade liberalization.

Fishermen from 23 Countries Add Voice to Sustainable Fish Consumption

Prior to the WTO meeting, the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) held its General Assembly on September 3 and 4 in Oslo, Norway. ICA is an independent, non-governmental association which unites, represents and serves co-operatives worldwide. Founded in 1895, it now has 232 national members in 93 countries, plus four international members. The International Cooperative Fisheries Organization (ICFO), a specialized organization of the ICA, has 27 member organizations from 23 countries.

On September 5, ICFO adopted two resolutions: one on Trade Rules of Fish and Fish Products and the other on Promotion of the Worldwide Fish Consumption Movement. The latter resolution deserves special attention in that it proposes the promotion of the sustainable and sound use of fishery resources while taking note of the characteristics of fishery products as limited natural resources.

At the ICA General Assembly, Juan Somavia, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), was invited as a keynote speaker. He said: "My perception is that people have hopes for globalization. But they just don't see its benefits fairly distributed. They are worried about greed-dominated, power-dominated economic decision making. They want respect, voice and participation. They want fairness and accountability. Above all, they

want opportunity - dignity through employment - quality jobs where they are born, where they want to live, and where they want to stay."

Commenting on this speech, Mr. Shoji Uemura, Chairman of ICFO, and also President of the JF-Zengyoren, said Mr. Somavia's remark is fully in line with the JF-Zengyoren's efforts of attaching importance to fisheries as regional industries.

What follows is the essence of ICFO's resolutions.

Resolution on Trade Rules of Fish and Fish products

1. From the standpoint of the necessity to ensure sustainable use of exhaustible natural resources, we can not accept tariff elimination of fish and fish products
2. As regards tariff reduction formula, maximum possible consideration should be given to "sensitive products" in each country, with due consideration paid to status of stocks and the state of actual fisheries resource management, and that the formula should be made as flexible as possible so that it can be acceptable to each country.
3. In clarifying and improving WTO disciplines on fisheries subsidies, due consideration should be given to the discussions by FAO and other organizations that have expertise on matters of

fisheries.

Resolution on Promotion of Worldwide Fish Consumption Movement

We participants in the ICFO Plenary meeting held at Radisson SAS Plaza Hotel, Oslo, Norway, on 5 September, 2003,

Recalling the Kyoto Declaration of the International Conference on the Sustainable Contribution of Fisheries to Food Security held in Kyoto in December, 1995, the Rome Declaration of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of FAO in March, 1999, the Declaration of the World Food Summit: Five Years Later of FAO in June, 2002, and the Johannesburg Declaration of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September, 2002,

Recognizing that sustainable contribution of fisheries to food security is important under the current yearly increasing trend of world population which is predicted to exceed 7 billion in 2015 and 8 billion in 2030,

Noting that fishery resources are exhaustible natural resources and the overfishing will lead to depletion of the resources,

Also noting that fishery resources have features that are different from manufactured industrial products because if the resources are depleted, it becomes very difficult to restore them,

Recognizing that overfishing will lead to price collapse of fish catch leading to collapse of fisheries and fishing communities, and

Further recognizing that to deal with fish and fish products only from the commercial viewpoint, that is buying and selling, should be strictly refrained from, from the standpoints of the necessity of sustainable development of fisheries and worldwide food security,

Resolved as follows:

1. that each ICFO member will make its efforts to promote "fish consumption movement", along with all out resource management efforts, within the country. This movement shall be implemented as much as possible under the "Consume The Products Where They Are Produced" principle, or known as "Local Production Local Consumption" principle, in order to ensure balanced development of fisheries and contribute to social roles of fisheries, that is, contribution of fisheries to food security.
2. that each ICFO member makes its efforts to use every possible opportunity to encourage fisheries organizations of non-ICFO member countries to engage in fish consumption promotion activities as well.

For more information, please visit <http://www.ica.coop/ica/ica/index.html>.

Fishing Communities of the World Oppose the Eventual Elimination of Tariffs in a Joint Declaration

On September 12 in Cancun during the WTO Ministerial Conference, the representatives of the Japanese fishing industry held a consultation with the members of the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers (WFF), an international non-governmental organization composed of the national organizations of coastal fishermen from 42 countries. This consultation was motivated by the participation of Mr. Humberto Mella Ahumada, WFF President, in the International Symposium on Sustainable Fisheries Trade on September 10. Other participants in the consultation included Mr. Francois Poulin, Secretary of the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters, and delegates from Portugal and Mexico. The WFF reported that it adopted an emergency joint declaration under the name of its 10 members who

gathered in Cancun. In their exchange of views, all parties attending the consultation agreed that they oppose the reduction and elimination of tariffs and the abolition of fisheries subsidies with a view to protect the livelihood of fishermen.

Given below is an excerpt from the WFF's joint declaration.

JOINT DECLARATION CONCERNING

NEGOTIATIONS ON TRADE OF FISH AND FISH PRODUCTS AT THE 5TH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

The national fishermen organizations of the countries of Latin America, North America and Europe, members of the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers declare:

The fisheries constitute a heritage for humanity and fishing communities. They represent a way of life that manifests itself in its special relation with the resources of the sea.

The majority of fishers in the world are engaged in small-scale fisheries and thus are in a weak position. They are liable to suffer from sharp changes in trade, fluctuation of stocks and so forth. In due consideration of this fact, it is important that such negative impacts are mitigated by tariff measures etc in each country, or by support of subsidies for resource management and infrastructure development and other appropriate measures.

Fishing communities are able in each country to participate in food security for the world and they are essential in the management, conservation and sustainable use of resources

In consequence:

They reject the intent of WTO to include the fishery sector in its regulations and they oppose the eventual elimination of tariffs that are regulating international trade in fish and fishery products and they point out

World fishermen's Voice Is Not Reflected in the Government Policy: Uemura

In an interview after the return from Cancun's WTO Ministerial Conference, President Shoji Uemura of the JF-Zengyoren told reporters that there was understanding among fishermen of the world on the importance of sustaining fisheries and fishing communities as well as the serious threats now facing fisheries which have taken root in various parts of the world.



President Uemura

Further, he recognized the complaints of fishermen about fishery products being discussed under the category of non-agricultural products such as mineral products.

What is at issue is that the voice of fishermen around the world have not yet become their governments' voice, Uemura said.

**The Editor welcomes readers' comments or views on the articles in this issue at
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the danger that represents the complete liberalization of the world trade in fish.

One must remember that FAO estimates that approximately 70 % of the world's major fish stocks have been either fully exploited to the maximum limit, or over-exploited exceeding that level. However, the chair person of NAMA, ambassador Pierre Girard in his proposed Draft Elements of Modalities for Negotiations on Non-Agricultural Products included fish and fish products in the sector wide tariff elimination groups, neglecting necessary consideration to be given to the sustainable use of resources. We are deeply concerned that such tariff elimination measures may lead to over-use of resources for export purposes. Accordingly, fish and fish products should be removed from sector wide tariff elimination groups.

Subsidies in the fishery should be maintained as a form of support for the sustainable management of the fisheries, mainly in the national coastal areas where 90 % of the fishermen can be found.

Applications for the 6th International Seafood Show To Be Accepted from Oct.1

Applications for the 6th Japan International Seafood & Technology Expo, to be held at the Tokyo International Exhibition Hall, July 21-23, 2004, will be accepted starting from October 1, the Japan Fisheries Association, the organizer of the event, announced recently.

The previous show attracted 2,600 visitors, a record number since this event started five years ago. The JFA expects the number of display booths in the coming show will increase to about 800 from about 600 in the previous year.

A similar Expo is scheduled in Osaka, a major commercial center in western Japan, for two days from February 26 at Intex Osaka. The organizer foresees that the show, the first to be held in western Japan, will attract its targeted number of applications for 300 display booths before the end of this year, reflecting a rising interest in the event, stimulated by the organizer's slogan: "Western Japan has its own food culture and seafood market." Contact: Secretariat at <http://www.k-ide.com/seafood/eindex.html>