



Association of Pacific Island Legislatures

American Samoa
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
FSM, State of Chuuk
FSM, State of Kosrae
FSM, State of Pohnpei
FSM, State of Yap
Island of Guam
Republic of Kiribati
Republic of the Marshall Islands
Republic of Nauru
Republic of Palau
State of Hawaii

A RESOLUTION

APIL Resolution No. 33-GA-02

“Expressing the sincere gratitude of the General Assembly of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures to the Ministers of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) for their firm and decisive actions taken on behalf of the people of the member countries of the PNA; and respectfully requesting the leadership of the PNA to enter into dialogs with the senior fisheries officials of the American affiliated APIL jurisdictions to explore ways by which the PNA can assist these island jurisdictions achieve similar benefits from their ocean resources as are being achieved by the PNA for its member countries.”

1 **WHEREAS**, for more than three decades the Parties to the Nauru Agreement, PNA,
2 consisting of the countries of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Kiribati,
3 the Republic of Nauru, the Republic of Palau, the Independent State of Papua New Guinea,
4 the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu, have been devoted to
5 increasing the member nations’ economic benefits from the tuna fishery, while expanding
6 management and conservation measures over tuna stocks; and

7 **WHEREAS**, these eight Pacific Island countries that are Parties to the Nauru
8 Agreement control the world’s largest sustainable tuna purse seine fishery supplying fifty
9 percent of the world’s skipjack tuna; and

10 **WHEREAS**, since its inception, PNA has been a champion for marine conservation
11 and management, taking unilateral action to conserve overfished bigeye tuna in the Western
12 and Central Pacific Ocean, including closures of high seas pockets, seasonal bans on use of
13 Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD’s), satellite tracking of boats, in port transshipment, one
14 hundred percent observer coverage of purse seiners, closed areas for conservation, mesh size
15 regulations, tuna catch retention requirements, hard limits on fishing effort, prohibitions
16 against targeting whale sharks, shark action plans, and other conservation measures to
17 protect the marine ecosystem; and

1 **WHEREAS**, the adoption by the PNA of the FSM Arrangement in 1995 whereby
2 domestic fleets are given preferred treatment for fishing in the EEZ's of the member
3 countries has confirmed the PNA's commitment to the economic importance of domestic
4 purse seine development for the PNA countries to promote sustainable national economic
5 development within the region; and

6 **WHEREAS**, the further adoption by the Parties to the Nauru Agreement of the
7 Palau Arrangement in 2010 has provided for the implementation of a new Vessel Day
8 Scheme (VDS) for purse seiners fishing in PNA waters which has resulted in a nearly four-
9 fold increase in revenues to the eight member nations; and

10 **WHEREAS**, the most recent meeting of PNA Ministers was held in Majuro,
11 Marshall Islands in June of 2014, and was attended by Ministers from all eight of the PNA
12 member countries; and

13 **WHEREAS**, during its Majuro meeting, the PNA Ministers agreed to raise the
14 fishing day fee from the current benchmark of US\$6,000 to US\$8,000 starting
15 January 1, 2015 and to cap the number of fishing days available in 2014 and 2015; and

16 **WHEREAS**, it is the sense of the General Assembly of the Association of Pacific
17 Island Legislatures that these landmark actions and decisions, most notably made by the
18 PNA in its Majuro meeting, will certainly help to sustain and conserve tuna resources for the
19 future while increasing the value of fishing days; and

20 **WHEREAS**, while the raising of VDS fees and the capping of the number of fishing
21 days show great fortitude on the part of the eight PNA Ministers, the Parties to the Nauru
22 Agreement still face a number of very significant challenges in their quest to increase the
23 economic benefits of the fishing industry for the participating member countries while at the
24 same time ensuring responsible resource management and conservation; and

1 **WHEREAS**, among these challenges are: (1) the re-negotiations relative to a Pacific
2 nations treaty with the United States on EEZ access by the American fishing fleet to address
3 the requisite payment of the increased VDS fees being imposed by the PNA in 2015; (2)
4 efforts to ensure that the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)
5 adopts and applies enforceable measures to effectively conserve and manage tuna stocks in
6 the high seas; and (3) the development of the first VDS for long line fishing vessels
7 operating in PNA waters; and

8 **WHEREAS**, as we are all islanders ourselves, the Delegates to the 33rd General
9 Assembly of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures share in the values expressed by
10 the Parties to the Nauru Agreement to increase the member nations' economic benefits from
11 the tuna fishery; moreover

12 **WHEREAS**, as an assembly of law makers gathered together in the Association of
13 Pacific Island Legislatures, we are even more conscious of the need to manage and to
14 conserve the tuna stocks within our region, not only for the islanders of today, but, more
15 importantly, for our sons and daughters and their sons and daughters for many generations to
16 come; now, therefore,

17 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, 33rd General
18 Assembly, July 15 through July 17, 2014, Island of Majuro in the Republic of the Marshall
19 Islands, that the APIL General Assembly hereby expresses its sincere gratitude to the Ministers
20 of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement for their firm and decisive actions taken on behalf of the
21 people of the member countries of the PNA; and

1 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Delegates to the 33rd General Assembly of
2 the APIL, whose membership extends not only to countries that are members of the PNA,
3 but also to island jurisdictions that are directly affiliated with the United States of America
4 and thus are not able to become parties to the PNA, respectfully request the leadership of the
5 PNA to enter into dialogs with the senior fisheries officials of the American affiliated APIL
6 jurisdictions to explore ways by which the PNA can assist these island jurisdictions achieve
7 similar benefits from their ocean resources as are being achieved by the PNA for its member
8 countries; and

9 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the APIL President shall certify, and the APIL
10 Secretary shall attest to the adoption hereof and that copies of the same shall thereafter be
11 transmitted to the Ministerial Chairman of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement, the
12 Honorable Elisala Pita of Tuvalu; to the PNA Ministers of each of the member countries of
13 the PNA; and to the Chief Executives and Presiding Legislative Officers of each member
14 jurisdiction of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 17th DAY OF JULY, 2014.



**JUDITH T. WON PAT, ED.D.
PRESIDENT**



**CHANG WILLIAM
SECRETARY**

