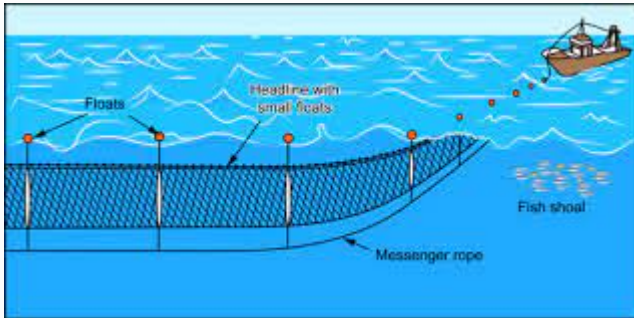


Tarawa Declaration

- Protection and conservation of marine resources
- concerned at the damage now being done by pelagic drift net fishing



- indiscriminate, irresponsible and destructive fishing technique threatens the survival of the albacore tuna resource, and so the economic well-being of Forum Island Countries
- regretting that Japan and Taiwan have failed to respond
- to conserve fisheries stocks



- commends the Republic of Korea for its decision to cease drift net fishing in the region;
- calls on Japan and Taiwan to follow this example, and abandon immediately their damaging drift net operations.
- Recognising the crucial dependence of the Pacific Island peoples on marine resources;
- profoundly concerned at the damage now being done by pelagic drift net fishing to the economy and environment of the South Pacific region;
- convinced that this indiscriminate, irresponsible and destructive fishing technique threatens the survival of the albacore tuna resource, and so the economic well-being of Forum Island Countries;
- deeply regretting that Japan and Taiwan have failed to respond to the concerns of regional countries about this most serious issue;
- noting that it is in the mutual interest of the major fishing nations active in the region, and the Forum , to conserve fisheries stocks;

- noting that all countries inside and outside the region are affected by the mismanagement of the resources of the world's oceans, by the environmental dangers of drift net fishing and by the threat to safe navigation ;
- recalling the relevant provisions of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and in particular Articles 63, 64, 87, 116, 117, 118 and 119;
- recognising that the use of drift nets as presently employed in the Southern Pacific Albacore Tuna Fishery is not consistent with international legal requirements in relation to rights and obligations of high seas fisheries conservation and management and environmental principles;
- resolves for the sake of this and succeeding generations of Pacific peoples to seek the establishment of a regime for the management of albacore tuna in the South Pacific that would ban drift net fishing from the region ; such a ban might then be a first step to a comprehensive ban on such fishing;
- determines, to this end, to convene an urgent meeting of regional diplomatic, legal and fisheries experts to develop a Convention to give effect to its common resolve to create a zone free of drift net fishing;
- calls on the international community to support, and cooperate in, the urgent conclusion of a Convention establishing the zone;
- resolves that individual member states of the South Pacific Forum will take all possible measures in the interim to prevent drift net fishing within their waters, and otherwise actively to discourage the operations of drift net fishers;
- further resolves that member states acting individually and collectively will take what action they can within relevant international organisations to contribute to the cessation of this harmful form of fishing;
- commends the Republic of Korea for its decision to cease drift net fishing in the region;
- calls on Japan and Taiwan to follow this example, and abandon immediately their damaging drift net operations.