U.S. Department of State

The U.S. Department of State leads the United States in its relationships with foreign governments, international organizations, and the people of other countries. It aims to promote the security, prosperity, and interests of the American people around the world. It does so by creating American jobs through support for open markets for U.S. companies; issuing passports and providing emergency assistance to U.S. citizens abroad; negotiating treaties and equipping countries to respond to their own security challenges; helping countries with health, food, and humanitarian crises; promoting stability, peace, and human rights; and increasing understanding of American society and values.

Particular to this issue, the State Department promotes the management, conservation, and restoration of stocks of living marine resources in order to maintain healthy and productive marine environments and ecosystems and promote economic benefits and food security through sustainable fisheries.

The United States has one of the largest economies in the world today. It also functions as an economic aid donor, spending roughly $30 billion on Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), the most of any nation in the world. Additionally, while fishing and aquaculture makes up less than .2% of its gross domestic product, the United States imports more fish and seafood than any other country in the world. It is estimated that 90% of the seafood consumed in the United States is imported. Other important imports include electronics, automobiles, and oil.

The United States is party to a number of fisheries agreements, such as the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, the FAO Compliance Agreement, and the FAO Port State Measures Agreement. It is also a party to other environmental agreements such as the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, among others. It has signed, but not ratified, several other treaties including UNCLOS and the Convention on Biological Diversity. The United States is also member to many Regional Fishery Organizations (RFOs) such as the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization.

FAST FACTS

90%

of the seafood consumed in the United States is imported

Member of the

UN Fish Stocks Agreement

FAO Compliance Agreement

FAO Port State Measures Agreement

Opening Position

- The United States can rely on its vibrant civil society to be supportive of efforts to find a resolution to the issue that balances economic development and long-term sustainability.
- The United States will want the FAO to play a stronger role in discussions on the issue.

- The United States sympathizes with the position of Hiroot and generally supports its efforts.

Questions to Consider

- What are U.S. priorities in dealing with issues of sustainability and conservation?
- What does the United States think should be done in the future?
- How could the relationship between the United States and Hiroot and/or Uzan be affected if a dispute arose between Hiroot and Uzan?
- What implications do the decisions made by the U.S. Department of State have in the future?
- What are possible funding sources for the solutions?