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## **South Pacific Tuna Corp: No Long-Term Agreement Reached at Conclusion of Tuna Treaty Negotiations**

*Interim agreement grants U.S. Fleet Western Pacific access through 2016*

**SAN DIEGO & Brisbane, AUSTRALIA**— South Pacific Tuna Company executives participating in the South Pacific Tuna Treaty negotiations this week in Brisbane, Australia, are reporting that at the conclusion of the three-day convening, the parties failed to reach an agreement that would renew the South Pacific Tuna Treaty. The 1987 treaty provides United States purse seine fishing vessels access to the Western Pacific Ocean, as well economic assistance to the Pacific Island Parties (PIPs).

J. Douglas Hines, Executive Director of South Pacific Tuna Corporation, and business partner Max Chou, attended the meetings along with representatives and owners of the U.S Fleet.

Although participants worked late into the night Wednesday AEST, there remain material obstacles to reaching a term agreement. However, members of U.S. State Department, U.S. Commerce and Industry did agree at the eleventh hour to accept an interim agreement for 2016 in coordination with representative members of the Pacific Island Parties, Fisheries Forum Agency (FFA), and PNA Fisheries executives.

Additionally, the PIPs committed to present to their leadership in the coming weeks a longer term plan with the hope to salvage the existing agreement of cooperation between the US and the Pacific Island Nations Fisheries agreement.

“It was a sad moment Wednesday night to witness the possible end to a 27-year agreement that means so much to people in the region,” said Mr. Hines. “Members of the State Department did a tremendous job to bring a conclusion to a six-year process in which they have worked diligently over time. That said, all parties must have a desire to continue this relationship for this effort to be successful; that did not appear to be the case.”

Brian Hallman, Executive Director of the American Tunaboat Association added: “We don’t know what the lack of a U.S. Treaty arrangement will mean to the future of the US Fleet, its processors who rely on our supply in Samoa, or the other canneries on the Mainland, our service providers and employees. This remains a dramatic and challenging issue; our industry has a lot of work ahead of us.”

According to South Pacific Tuna Corp leadership, there remains opportunity for the process to continue, but that opportunity is now in the hands of the Pacific Island Nations. “We do have some time,” said Mr. Hines, “but appears to be quickly slipping away.”

Terms of the 2016 agreement were not disclosed. Further information regarding the industry stance can be made by contacting Brian Hallman at [bhallmanata@gmail.com](mailto:bhallmanata@gmail.com).

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### **About South Pacific Tuna Corporation**

South Pacific Tuna Corporation is a United States-based tuna vessel management company headquartered in San Diego, California. Its 14 U.S. flag tuna vessels fish in the Western Pacific under the rules and regulations outlined by the South Pacific Tuna Treaty. Learn more about the company’s commitment to safety and environmental sustainability at [www.sopactuna.com](http://www.sopactuna.com).