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**South Pacific Tuna, Global Fleet Inform United States Congressional Leadership,
Department of State they are No Longer Able to Operate under Decades-old Treaty**

SAN DIEGO—South Pacific Tuna Corporation (SoPacCo), The Global Companies, (Ocean Global, LLC, Sea Global, LLC, and Pacific Global, LLC) met last week with members of the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Department of State’s Office of the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs about the current U.S. Flag tuna fleet licensing impasse between the U.S. Government and Pacific Fisheries Forum (FFA).

During the meetings in Washington, D.C., they advised Senate Foreign Relations Committee leadership, as well as other key congressional members, that Industry may not continue to operate under the 1987 Treaty due to the tuna industry’s unwillingness and/or inability to comply with the 2016 Statement of Intent between the FFA and U.S. Government.

As of December 31, 2015, all U.S. vessels operating in the Western Pacific Ocean under the South Pacific Tuna Treaty—including those owned by The Global Companies and managed by SoPacCo—are adhering to orders to halt fishing operations.

This action does not only impact the U.S. Fleet operating in the Western Pacific, but the supply chain as a whole, including U.S. factories in Georgia, California, and America Samoa, as well as the thousands of jobs provided there. The move also materially impacts the guarantee to the American public of sustainable tuna process and policies as the supplying vessels would no longer be part of U.S. management oversight.

Although Congressional and State Department leadership were positive confirming the Treaty in the Pacific should remain an important cornerstone to America’s relationship in Pacific with the Pacific Island Nations, days later, the Government announced formal withdrawal from the existing agreement. Under terms of the Treaty, withdrawal is not final until one year after the date of formal notice.

“Withdrawing from the Treaty would be devastating to U.S. tuna fleet,” stated Global Companies Shareholder J. Douglas Hines. “However, we do understand that the current Treaty is outdated and needs to be restructured to meet the needs total fleet as well as the Pacific Island Parties. We believe the U.S. government’s current action is a withdrawal of the *existing* arrangement, not from the spirit of the Treaty as a whole.”

According to Mr. Hines, U.S. Ambassador David Balton, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Bureau of Oceans & International Environmental & Scientific Affairs, was understanding and committed to working towards a solution as well as addressing the challenge to update the existing Treaty.

Mr. Hines also confirmed that The Global Companies would maintain their original commitment made in Brisbane under the 2016 Statement of Intent between the parties and that if a vessel should pay their allocation, they should be allowed access and not held ransom by the actions of other members of the fleet.

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“Governments on both sides are continuing to discuss solutions with hope to correct the current stoppage and allow vessels to return to fishing, with understanding that time is critical,” Hines said.

“It going to be painful and require tremendous challenges from all,” Hines said. “But the bottom line is that we must search for a resolution that meet both the needs of the US government, and that of the Island Nations, one that is not centric to the individual company model,” he added. “We intend to pursue this objective.”

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