



Dr David Wilson
Ag. Executive Secretary
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
Mahe
Seychelles

24th March 2016

cc. Mr Herminio Tembe, Chair of the Compliance Committee;
Mr Hosea Gonza Mbilinyi, Vice Chair;
Mr Beeharry, Ministry Fisheries, Mauritius (sbeeharry@govmu.org) and
Mr Chen Wan, Ministry of Agriculture, China (wan.chen@live.com)

Dear Dr Wilson,

Confirmation of the registration status of two purse seine vessels Blue Ocean 111 and Blue Ocean 112.

I attach recent correspondence with your offices that highlights issues that are pertinent to the Compliance Committee. These include a query by UKOT concerning the registration status of Blue Ocean 111 and Blue Ocean 112, a response from the IOTC Compliance Officer, and email exchanges with China Overseas Fisheries Association. The BIOT Administration are grateful for these clarifications. The correspondence highlights:

- In the case of these two vessels, following this enquiry, it is now clear that the vessels are now flagged to China with State authorisation to fish using light seine and to fish small pelagics in the Indian Ocean, and that they are no longer authorised to fish for IOTC species.
- That there is a deficit in the records held by IOTC following de-registration from the Mauritius Register of Vessels as at the time the vessels were detected by the BIOT Patrol Vessel there was no notification of the new flag. Furthermore, for the vessel Blue Ocean 112 via AIS the vessel identified MMSI number 645380000, which again matches the Blue Ocean 112 flagged in Mauritius (see <http://www.marinetraffic.com/en/ais/details/ships/645380000>) and thus the details had not been updated to reflect the new flag, or vessel name; the vessel was also clearly still displaying the previous Mauritian callsign on the ship's hull.
- Resolution 15-04 details the rules relating to registration and authorisations, but it appears this may need reviewing to avoid any gaps and deficiencies in the record as have happened.

We are unclear how common such events are, but consider this something that needs to be addressed. Coastal States rely on the information held on the IOTC vessels records when conducting monitoring control and surveillance operations and there should be no gaps or deficiencies in this record. Could we request that the Secretariat present an Information Paper to the Compliance Committee highlighting these issues and proposing solutions for consideration?

We would be grateful if you could circulate this message for the attention of the Compliance Committee, thank you.

Yours Sincerely



Dr C.C. Mees
Head of UKOT Delegation to IOTC

Enc:

Letter dated 21 March 2016, from UKOT to IOTC Compliance Officer

Copy of email dated 23 March 2016, from IOTC Compliance Officer to UKOT

Copy of emails dated 24th March, from China Overseas Fisheries Association to IOTC Compliance Officer, and further email exchanges

Mr Gerard Domingue
Compliance Coordinator
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
Le Chantier Mall (2nd floor)
PO Box 1011
Victoria Mahé - SEYCHELLES
gerard.domingue@iotc.org

21 March 2016

cc Mr Beeharry, Ministry Fisheries, Mauritius (sbeeharry@govmu.org) and
Mr Chen Wan, Ministry of Agriculture, China (wan.chen@live.com)

Dear Mr Domingue

The UK (OT) on behalf of the British Indian Ocean Territory Administration requests confirmation of the status of the two purse seine vessels Blue Ocean 112 and Blue Ocean 111. These vessels have been removed from the Mauritian flag registry at this time but still appear to be active in the Indian Ocean without a further registration under another flag.

BLUE OCEAN 111 (IOTC0015251) 49.56m GRT 651 Callsign = 3BSF

<http://www.iotc.org/vessels/history/87407/15251>

BLUE OCEAN 112 (IOTC0015252) 49.56m GRT 651 Callsign = 3BSG

<http://www.iotc.org/vessels/history/87409/15252>

The Blue Ocean 112 was identified via AIS operating in the High Seas in the vicinity of the British Indian Ocean Territory MPA between 18/03/2016 and 21/03/2016 (05°17.91 S 67°49.59 E 06:00 (local) 21/03/2016). Photos of the Blue Ocean 112 are attached. The Blue Ocean 111 has only been observed via AIS for a similar period.

The Blue Ocean 112 was not fishing and on checking the IOTC RAV for details of the vessel it appears that the vessel's latest entry on the IOTC RAV shows that it was most recently flagged to Mauritius (confirmation of deletion received from the IOTC Secretariat on 18/03/2016) but when spotted the Mauritian call sign 3BSG was confirmed by the Senior Fisheries Protection Officer as still being clear on the side of the vessel. (Photographs attached – apologies for poor quality as submitted over low bandwidth link direct from the BIOT Patrol Vessel). The vessel was also confirmed visually to be flying the flag of China on her bow and stern. At this time no valid authorisations to fish are listed on the IOTC RAV for either vessel.

The vessel was at 07:45 (local) heading towards the BIOT MPA at 4 knots but when she observed the BPV Pacific Marlin she turned away, increased her speed and headed NNW at 8 knots on a course of 330. The vessel's AIS was initially switched off however, but was then switched on and the vessel identified MMSI number 645380000, which again matches the Blue Ocean 112 flagged in Mauritius. (See <http://www.marinetraffic.com/en/ais/details/ships/645380000>). Please note no illegal activity has been suggested. The vessel has only been observed on the High Seas. The concerns are solely over the identity and flag of the vessel and if it is currently authorised to fish in the Indian Ocean.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely



John Pearce
Principal Consultant

On behalf of Dr C.C. Mees
Head of UK-OT Delegation



Figure 1 Long-range identification photographs of the Blue Ocean 112.

From: Gerard Domingue [mailto:gerard.domingue@iotc.org]

Sent: 23 March 2016 06:57

To: John Pearce <j.pearce@mrage.co.uk>

Cc: sbeeharry@govmu.org; wan.chen@live.com; Chris C Mees <c.mees@mrage.co.uk>;

Tom.Moody@fco.gov.uk; Paul.Smith@fco.gov.uk; Secretariat@iotc.org

Subject: RE: Blue Ocean 112 - Confirmation of flag State and authorisation to fish status (MragRef:IO0785)

Dear Mr Pearce,

We acknowledge receipt of your below message and the attached letter.

We would like to confirm that the two vessels, Blue Ocean 111 and Blue Ocean 112, were authorised to operate in the IOTC area up to 12th February 2016. Our record indicates that they were both flagged to Mauritius for the period December 2013 up to February 2016. On 16th February 2016, Mauritius advised the Secretariat that the two " *vessels have been deleted from the Mauritius Register of Vessels in accordance with Section 40 (1) of the Merchant Shipping Act 2007, as from the 12/02/16*". The Secretariat has not received any new information as to whether these two vessels were due to leave the IOTC area or to which country they were to be reflagged.

We hope that the above answers your query.

Kind regards,

Gerard Domingue

From: Zhang Kairui [mailto:admin1@tuna.org.cn]
Sent: 24 March 2016 07:03
To: Gerard Domingue <gerard.domingue@iotc.org>
Cc: wan.chen <wan.chen@live.com>
Subject: 回复: FW: Blue Ocean 112 - Confirmation of flag State and authorisation to fish status (MragRef:IO0785)

Dear Gerard,

I wish to advise that Blue Ocean 111 and Blue Ocean 112 have reflagged to China and renamed as "Lu Rong Yuan Yu 111, 112". They are authorised by Chinese government to engage in fishing activities by using light seine and to fish small pelagic species on the high seas of Indian Ocean.

If you have further question, please feel free to contact me.

Zhang kairui
China Overseas Fisheries Association

admin1@tuna.org.cn

发件人 : [Gerard Domingue](#)

发送时间 : 2016-03-24 15:45

收件人 : 'Zhang Kairui'

抄送 : 'wan.chen'; authorised.vessels@iotc.org

主题 : IOTC VESSELS RECORD requested update for CHINA - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

IOTC VESSELS RECORD requested update for CHINA – ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

IOTC REF: CHN-00097

Dear Ms Zhang,

We acknowledge your below email, that provided information for the IOTC Record of vessels authorised to operate in the Indian Ocean. Before posting this information in the IOTC website, we shall be most grateful if your office could complete the information for the two vessels in the attached template. We have completed some fields in the template with some fields information available to us, but we would please ask your office to verify the information that we have provided in the template.

We await the completed template to process the two records.

Kind Regards,
Gerard Domingue

From: Zhang Kairui [mailto:admin1@tuna.org.cn]
Sent: 24 March 2016 08:48
To: Gerard Domingue <gerard.domingue@iotc.org>
Cc: wan.chen <wan.chen@live.com>; authorised.vessels@iotc.org; 工作组 <admin1@tuna.org.cn>
Subject: 回复: IOTC VESSELS RECORD requested update for CHINA - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dear Gerard,

I have completed the information in the template, please see the attachment. Kindly be advised that BLUE OCEAN 110, 113, 116 were also reflagged to China and renamed as "Lu Rong Yuan Yu 110, 113, 116 ". These five vessels are lighting purse seiners and authorised by Chinese government to fish small pelagic species on the high seas of Indian Ocean. Because they are not engaged in fishing for IOTC species, thus previously we did not register for them in the IOTC Record of Authorised Vessels.

Thank you for assistance.

Warm regards,

Zhangkairui

admin1@tuna.org.cn

From: WanChen [mailto:wan.chen@live.com]
Sent: 24 March 2016 09:24
To: gerard.domingue@iotc.org
Cc: admin1@tuna.org.cn
Subject: FW: 回复: IOTC VESSELS RECORD requested update for CHINA - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dear Gerard,

Regarding the Email below from Mr. Zhangkairui, I want make the following clarification for your reference;

Beacause those five vessles are authorisd by Chinese goverment to fish for small pelegic species not managemed by IOTC, so we don't think those vessels needed to be regestered in the IOTC Record of vessels and included in the positive vessel list posted in the IOTC website. Thus, we provided those information in the template only for your information in case for other people's inquiry about the status of those vessel and you on behalf of IOTC secretait could give them clear interpretation, but one again, I want to kindly advise you that those information we

provided in the template is not for registering purpose.

Thanks for your understanding and if you have question please feel free to contace me.

Best regards

Wan Chen