

QUESTION ON NOTICE / Spoken

IQ23-000033 – JSCOT Protocol Amending the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization: Fisheries Subsidies Agreement

Hearing Date: 31 July 2023

Topic: WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement - Pacific Partners

Mr Henry Pike MP

Question

We've talked about the compliance requirements and the impacts for some of our Pacific partners, do any of those countries that we are seeking to have a strong relationship within the Pacific offer subsidies to their fishing industry that may be subject to this?

Would you be able to outline which nations in the world do offer... not requiring a comprehensive list, but is there any particularly bad offenders?

Answer

WTO Members have existing obligations to notify fisheries subsidies under the WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM Agreement). However, there is a poor record of compliance with notification of subsidies by WTO Members.

None of the Pacific Island WTO Members have fisheries specific subsidies based on WTO notifications. Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu are WTO Members.

Based on WTO notifications, 21 WTO Members reported fisheries subsidies for 2019-2020:

Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, European Union, Hong Kong, China, Israel, Japan, Korea, Macao, China, Mauritius, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, Turkiye, United Kingdom and the United States.

There is no current assessment of the sustainability of a fisheries subsidy and whether it is "harmful" or may contribute to maintaining fish stocks at sustainable levels.