



## Fact Sheet: U. S. Department of State (DOS)

The State Department 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; by issuing passports and providing emergency assistance to U.S. citizens abroad; by negotiating treaties to reduce nuclear weapons and equipping countries to respond to their own security challenges; by helping countries with health, food and humanitarian crises; by promoting stability, peace and human rights; and by increasing understanding of American society and values.

The United States has the largest economy in the world today. It also functions as an economic aid donor, spending around billions of dollars on Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), the most of any nation in the world. Additionally, while fishing and **aquaculture** makes up only 0.29% of its gross domestic product, the United States imports more fish and seafood than any other country in the world.

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 (WCPFC) and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization.

DOS 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. Working with other U.S. federal agencies and constituents, DOS' specific objectives are to:

- Promote a level playing field for U.S. fishermen and access to fishery resources on an equitable basis.
- Adopt and implement effective and enforceable conservation and management measures based on reliable and objective science.
- Control and reduce **bycatch** and discards of juvenile fish, non-target fish species, associated and dependent species, and species belonging to the same ecosystem (including sea turtles, seabirds, and sharks, among others).

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- Control and prevent **illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing**.
- Adopt and implement effective monitoring, control, and surveillance measures.
- Control fishing capacity and fishing effort at levels commensurate with the sustainability of fish stocks.
- Protect the marine environment from destructive fishing practices.
- Promote trade regimes that contribute to **sustainable** fisheries.
- Promote responsible and **sustainable aquaculture**.

### 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 Hiroto and generally supports its efforts.

### Questions to Consider:

- How important is the fish industry to the United States?
- What are U.S. priorities in dealing with issues of sustainability and conservation?
- What regulations do the United States have in place to guide the U.S. fish industry?
- What does the United States think should be done in the future?
- What makes this issue potentially difficult for the United States to address?
- How could the relationship between the United States and the CIH and/or Uzan be affected if a dispute arose between Hiroto 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?

