

October 6, 2017

An Open Letter from International Scientists

In April 2012, more than 2000 scientists from around the world wrote the attached letter to the leaders of Arctic countries, asking them “to take a lead in developing an international agreement to address fisheries in the central Arctic Ocean, based on sound scientific and precautionary principles, and starting with a catch level of zero as a reflection of the state of understanding of the fisheries ecology of the region.

We are pleased that the five Arctic coastal states have done so, resulting in the 2015 Oslo Declaration in which they pledged not to fish in the high seas waters of the central Arctic Ocean until there is sufficient scientific information to support robust management of the fisheries and ecosystem of the region. We are further pleased that five additional distant-water fishing jurisdictions have been involved in subsequent negotiations to create an international Agreement based on these same principles, including provisions to establish an international, cooperative scientific effort to generate the information that will be a critical part of the long-term well-being of the central Arctic Ocean ecosystem.

We write now to urge Canada, Denmark/Greenland, the European Union, Iceland, Japan, Norway, the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America to conclude a successful agreement, demonstrating their commitment to sound stewardship of the Arctic Ocean and peaceful international cooperation.

(The scientists who have signed this letter have done so in their personal capacities. Institutional affiliations are provided only for identification purposes, and do not imply any institutional position on Arctic Ocean fisheries.)

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