



FISHERIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA



A FISHERY UNDER THREAT

- Accounts for 12% of global fish catch (2015)
- Officially employs 3.7 million people
- Total stocks down 70-95% since 1950s
- Catch rates down 66-75% over last 20 years
- Reefs were declining by 16% per decade
- Clam harvesting, dredging & island building severely damaged over 160km²







LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

- UNCLOS Art. 123: States bordering a semi-enclosed sea obligated to cooperate on marine environment, fish stocks
- UNCLOS Art. 192: All states obligated to “protect and preserve the marine environment”



A BLUEPRINT FROM THE CSIS EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON THE SOUTH CHINA SEA



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1. Establish a Fishery and Environmental Management Area drawing on precedents like the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
 - Without prejudice to maritime or territorial claims
 - Zones determined solely on scientific criteria
 - Layout determined by a multilateral body of experts and officials from all claimants bordering the sea
 - Advisory body to include Gulf of Thailand countries



- ## 2. Split enforcement between occupiers and flag states
- Claimants monitor and interdict violators within 12nm of outposts they occupy **AND** within 200nm of their coastlines
 - Patrol/interdiction elsewhere can be undertaken by any claimant, preferably in coordination with others
 - Prosecution of ships from a claimant should be undertaken by flag state. Prosecution of non-claimant vessels by the arresting party

FISHERY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ENFORCEMENT ZONES



FISHERY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ENFORCEMENT ZONES (SPRATLYS & SURROUNDING AREA)





3. Agree not to use subsidies to encourage fishing in the South China Sea
4. Coordinate efforts to reintroduce giant clams and other threatened species such as sea turtles to depopulated reefs
5. Avoid activities that damage the marine environment or alter the seabed
6. Cooperate on marine scientific research



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