5-28-1991

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Peru: Fisheries Ministry Orders Confiscation Of Soviet Fleet Fish Catch

by Barbara Khol
Category/Department: General
Published: Tuesday, May 28, 1991

On May 23, the Fisheries Ministry ordered the confiscation of nearly 1,000 MT of seafood products captured and processed in Peruvian territorial waters by the 20-ship Sevibra fleet. The Soviet fishing company was also fined the equivalent of $175,360. Next, the Coast Guard and Captainship Administration (Direccion de Capitanias y Guardacostas-DCG) said the Sevibra fleet, immobilized early in the week at the El Callao port, would not be permitted to depart until its obligations to the Peruvian government are met. Sevibra has a 15-day deadline to pay the fine and relinquish the seafood products to Peruvian authorities. On May 9, the government formally cancelled Sevibra's fishing license and prohibited all fishing operations in territorial waters. According to the Fisheries Ministry, after May 9, 13 Soviet ships captured and processed 867 tons of frozen seafood products, 108 tons of fishmeal, and slightly more than six tons of fish oil. In addition, the state-run Peruvian Fisheries Services Enterprise has insisted on a $20 million payment from Sevibra in compensation for breach of contract. The bilateral contract dates from 1985. Spokespersons for Sevibra have asserted that the problem originated in the Peruvian company's inadequate infrastructure to handle its portion of the Soviet catch. Under contract terms, the Peruvian firm was to receive 75,000 MT of Sevibra's annual 400,000 MT maximum fish catch. (Basic data from AFP, 05/23/91)

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