

Tuna 2020 Traceability Declaration

Stopping illegal tuna from coming to market



The Ocean Conference
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SDG 14 on Oceans

Target 14.4: By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics

Note: The Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by all 193 Heads of State via a UN Resolution in September 2015 at a special Summit of the United Nations in New York

About the Tuna 2020 Traceability Declaration

The Tuna 2020 Traceability Declaration is a non-legally binding declaration that grew out of a dialogue among governments, companies and civil society, spurred by the President of the UN General Assembly's Ocean SDG Summit in June 2017. The Declaration is endorsed by leaders of the world's biggest retailers, tuna processors, marketers, traders and/or harvesters, with the support of influential civil society organizations, and governments. The entities endorsing the Tuna 2020 Traceability Declaration announced concrete actions and partnerships to demonstrate their commitment to implement the Declaration and Action Agenda.

A healthy ocean is everyone's business

We support and endorse the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a new framework for economic and social development operating within the capacity of the biosphere and its ocean. We urge all governments to achieve the commitments outlined in the SDGs and to encourage businesses to integrate them in their strategies. It is important that all stakeholders, including governments, industry and communities, act to ensure the right conditions for sustainable fisheries and a healthy ocean.

As global citizens and leaders in the food industry, we have the responsibility to ensure that all seafood ultimately meets the highest standards of environmental performance and social responsibility. There are many challenges to achieve the SDG goals, and public-private collaboration is critical to our success. In particular, industry leaders have the opportunity to drive market behaviour and partner with governments to improve the state of our oceans.

Sustainable management of tunas is an economic and environmental priority

In 2014, global landings of the seven most commercially important tuna species reached five million tons, with an estimated dock value of US \$10 billion and an end-product value of over US \$40 billion. Collectively, skipjack, albacore, bigeye, yellowfin, Atlantic bluefin, Pacific bluefin, and southern bluefin tuna support artisanal and industrial fishing in tropical and temperate seas. Canned and other shelf-stable tuna products provide plentiful and inexpensive protein to markets around the world, while smaller amounts of high-quality tuna steaks and sashimi make their way to affluent markets in the four main seafood markets of the United States, the European Union, Japan and China.

Ecologically, tuna are a vital part of marine systems. Their importance in food webs as predators and prey is difficult to monetize; however, these iconic species are known to play a fundamental role in open ocean ecosystems. That makes maintaining their health critically important to human communities that rely on them for food and economic well-being, particularly at a time of global ocean change.

Tuna management is complex and multi-jurisdictional

Tuna are a highly migratory, pelagic species, with more than 70 countries reporting landings. Conservation and management of tuna fisheries are handled through five intergovernmental tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (tRFMOs). Participating states include coastal states - including small island countries - and those with distant-water fleets. Improvements in oversight and transparency throughout the entire tuna supply chain - from harvest through processing and delivery to the final buyer - are critical steps to advance sustainability.

However, tuna populations are at risk

Several tuna populations are subject to overfishing or are classified as overfished. While most populations are recovering, or remain healthy, there is insufficient management and oversight to ensure these populations remain productive and viable economically and ecologically. Ensuring sustainable management, as well as actions to minimize Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, are important for all, from industry, government, non-government organizations and consumers to the ocean itself.

A sustainable future is within reach

We believe the tuna supply chain should be legal, sustainable and transparent, such that the benefits of tunas remain available to all. This includes effective RFMO and government regulation and monitoring of fishing efforts and catches, effective traceability so that consumers know where their tuna has come from, and government action to ensure all aspects of tuna fishing and processing are safe and free from human rights abuses and/or modern slavery. The actions in this Tuna 2020 Traceability Declaration will be a significant step in achieving this vision, and may provide a road map for other fisheries and products.

Promising initiatives are underway

We recognize and support the significant multi-stakeholder initiatives currently underway to improve the environmental performance, traceability and transparency and/or create viable long term economic opportunities for tuna fisheries such as:

- Multi-stakeholder platforms (Common Oceans (Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction), Sustainable Seafood Task Force, Safe Ocean Network, International Seafood Sustainability Foundation, Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability)
- Ratings and Certification Programs (Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch, Marine Stewardship Council, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership, Fair Trade USA, Seafood Certification and Ratings Collaboration)
- NGO Collaborations (Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions, NGO Global Tuna Forum)

In addition, non-government organizations around the world have developed advocacy, tools and advice to help all stakeholders accelerate progress toward sustainability. Further initiatives must seek to build on these efforts and enhance their overall connectivity and efficacy.

Traceability is critical

We believe that improving traceability and transparency will significantly improve existing sustainability initiatives and shows the greatest promise for scalability into mainstream commercial activities. Effective traceability (tracking tuna products from vessel to the final buyer) underpins sustainability efforts as it creates transparency and accountability within the supply chain, thereby enabling markets to directly support improved fisheries performance. Transparency (making information ultimately available to authorities and the public, including vessel fishing permissions, location of fishing activities, and catch and effort data) allows improved management of fisheries and encourages improved fisheries performance. Improved transparency also increases the likelihood that human rights abuses will be identified and stopped. Further technology developments will make traceability and transparency easier and more cost effective.

Most of the systems needed to implement traceability and transparency can be implemented independently by seafood companies to support and complement existing RFMO management requirements and, therefore, should enhance existing RFMO efforts.

While the challenges facing our tuna fisheries are complex, the commitments associated with this declaration are concrete, measurable, and important milestones to improve management of global tuna resources.

Tuna 2020 Commitments

As industry leaders, we commit to the following actions by 2020:

1. Tuna Traceability Commitment

We pledge that all tuna products in our supply chains will be fully traceable to the vessel and trip* dates, and that this information will be disclosed upon request at the Point of Sale either on the packaging or via an online system.

2. Commitment to a Socially Responsible Tuna Supply Chain

We pledge to eliminate any form of slavery and ensure suppliers at least meet minimum social standards in management practices as recommended in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Labour Organization's Conventions and Recommendations.

3. Commitment to Environmentally Responsible Tuna Sources

We pledge to source from tuna fisheries that have implemented:

- a) Robust science-based management plans, including harvest strategies that can maintain stocks at, or restore them at least to, levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield; and
- b) Measures to ensure that impacts of fisheries on the environment are sustainable, including bycatch mitigation techniques.

To put this pledge into effect we will continue to explore new opportunities to support the multi-stakeholder initiatives mentioned above, and we will work to continually increase our sourcing from tuna fisheries certified by schemes that are internationally recognized by the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI).

4. Government Partnership

In addition to the above commitments, we – as industry leaders – will call on and work with governments to take actions needed to support them:

- a) Implement Harvest Strategies for all tuna stocks under the jurisdiction of each tuna RFMO by 2020, that will ensure sustainably managed tuna fisheries in line with SDG Target 14.4.
- b) Establish systems to identify and restrict illegal seafood through government-led measures on traceability and transparency.
- c) Build capacity to establish and manage information systems to account for domestic and international fishing fleets, landings, enforcement and trade of seafood products, in line with the FAO Code of Conduct and the Port State Measure Agreement.

* Recognizing the need for aggregated vessel and trip information from small-scale tuna fisheries.