



A unique group of leaders who are fast-tracking solutions to the most pressing challenges facing the ocean



## Eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

### Context

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing depletes fish stocks, destroys marine habitats, distorts competition and puts honest fishers at an unfair disadvantage. In Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 (Life Below Water or the 'Ocean Goal'), governments set out to end IUU fishing by 2020. Friends of Ocean Action is working with partners to fast-track action to achieve that goal, creating new momentum for transparency and solutions in the sector.

With its partners, Friends of Ocean Action aims to create a breakthrough in the fight against IUU fishing by accelerating progress on three fronts in tandem: action by companies to control their supply chains; action by governments to control access to their ports; and the creation of powerful new data capabilities to support both. By moving these efforts forward in concert, we can help to ensure that they reinforce each other – that governments and companies align on the data they require to monitor vessels; that corporate action in supply chains further strengthens government enforcement in ports; and that new data tools provide robust information on activities on the ocean that enable governments and companies to act.



Tuna is transhipped from an IUU purse seine fishing vessel onto a reefer, or cold storage vessel, on the high seas. © Alex Hofford/Greenpeace

## What the Friends are doing to help

### 1. Supply chains

Leading retailers and seafood companies have pledged to drive traceability and sustainability throughout the sector. Examples include the Tuna 2020 Traceability Declaration where 66 companies in the tuna sector – retailers and suppliers – made commitments to improve both. Under the Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship initiative (SeaBOS) convened by the Stockholm Resilience Centre and the Swedish Academy of Science, the world's 10 largest seafood companies have committed to advancing sustainability across the seafood industry using their influence to create transparency and change where needed. Friends of Ocean Action is working with these initiatives, and with leading NGOs, to expand participation in their efforts and accelerate progress.

Working with supply chains for tuna, one of the world's most valuable traded fish, Friends of Ocean Action aims to bring together the Tuna 2020 Declaration signatories with the Global Tuna Alliance, an active collaboration of European seafood leaders committed to improving tuna supply chains. Collectively, this group of leading private sector influencers and NGO partners will:

- Bring on board further committed actors in the tuna value chains, expanding and deepening action;
- Support signatories in fully implementing the Declaration, including commitments to:
  - collect and share data in line with the recommendations of the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST)
  - ensure environmental sustainability certification
  - develop a robust strategy to address human rights issues that may exist in the fisheries;
- Establish a mechanism for tracking implementation of these actions.

The International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF), which represents 85% of the global canned tuna sector, and SeaBOS will take action in parallel to these commitments to add strength and influence in tackling IUU fishing.

### 2. Policy

Under the leadership of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UN member states have agreed to the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), which was designed to prevent vessels from landing illegal catch. Friends of Ocean Action will work with the

High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, leading governments, the FAO and key NGOs to forge international cooperation in implementation of PSMA, especially in the Pacific. It is hoped that such cooperation will result in the following outcomes by 2020:

- Major port and flag states will have ratified PSMA;
- A coalition of Pacific port and flag states will have established a program for joint implementation of PSMA, serving as a model for action;
- The APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) member states will have agreed to a robust roadmap for combating IUU fishing across the region e.g. sharing vessel monitoring system (VMS) data.

Friends of Ocean Action, The Nature Conservancy, The Pew Charitable Trusts, WWF and partners are working with the Government of Chile and other High Level Panel Asia Pacific members to build an initiative under APEC that includes:

- Ratification of PSMA by all key APEC members and Pacific states;
- Agreement on a package of key components for robust implementation including:
  - Publication of ship registry, ownership, licences and permits, and Unique Vessel Identifiers (IMO numbers) for flagged vessels through the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels
  - Sharing real-time data on vessel fishing activities, including VMS data and transshipment information
  - Encouraging the application of complementary or equal measures to domestic fleets
  - Investing in capacity-building in developing countries in the Pacific that are important port or flag states.

In 2019, Chile is host to the APEC Summit. This gathering offers a unique opportunity to accelerate progress on PSMA and to build a powerful implementation program in the Pacific. The FAO, the World Economic Forum's Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution and The Nature Conservancy, Pew Environment Group, WWF and Global Fishing Watch are providing support. Friends of Ocean Action and the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy are helping to mobilize the political will that it will require. This group of actors will also support a coalition of Pacific port and flag states in delivering shared implementation of key aspects of PSMA that uses new

technological capabilities to allow for effective fisheries monitoring and communication between ports.

### 3. Data

The past few years have seen the beginning of a revolution in transparency in the fisheries sector, with development of new tools to monitor fishing activity, including transshipment, on the ocean and to trace fish from the boat to the supermarket shelf. Friends of Ocean Action will work with governments, companies and leading data platforms to increase the sharing of data that is needed to detect IUU fishing and the development of platforms that support action in supply chains and at ports. This will be done in the following ways:

- Friends of Ocean Action and partners are working together to enlist coastal and flag states and regional fisheries management organizations to share key data, including VMS data, ship registries, ownership, etc., that are required for the GDST recommendations and PSMA.
- Global Fishing Watch and REV Ocean work with Friends of Ocean Action to:
  - Build the capability to use the automatic identification system (AIS) and VMS data to provide detailed vessel tracking and basic information for every vessel on a common data platform
  - Develop algorithmic tools to detect illegal fishing, monitor transshipment and assess risks of human rights abuses using shared data.
- Friends of Ocean Action will work with partners to create guidelines for data collection and sharing and use them to address key data policy questions and alleviate existing concerns about the sharing of commercially sensitive data (i.e. VMS).

Friends of Ocean Action believes that through a powerful combination of vital commitments and action by leading companies, together with an international framework for government cooperation in controlling ports and revolutionary new data capabilities, we have an unprecedented opportunity to crack the challenge of illegal fishing. Working with governments, industry and NGO partners, the Friends are determined to seize that opportunity.

**For more information, please contact:**  
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Aerial view of a large number of fishing trawlers operating together illegally in a marine reserve. © Richard Whitcomb/Shutterstock