



**“Nowhere to land, nowhere to sell”
Seafood sector giants focus action on closing ports
and supply chains to illegal fishing**

Tuesday, 16 February 2021

Today, five of the most influential industry and multi-stakeholder platforms in the seafood sector have released a joint statement calling for action to combat the scourge of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. In their “Statement on Traceability and Port State Measures,” the groups call for a combination of private sector and government actions to help transform the transparency and accountability of seafood supply chains and block landings of IUU catch. The five groups releasing the statement are [Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship](#) (SeaBOS), the [Global Tuna Alliance](#) (GTA), the [International Seafood Sustainability Foundation](#) (ISSF), the [Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability](#) (GDST), and the [Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative](#) (GSSI). Taken together, these platforms include over 150 companies from across the seafood value chain, making this one of the largest seafood industry calls for action on record.

Recognizing the urgent need to address a major threat to ocean ecosystems and the livelihoods of coastal communities, the joint statement calls on companies worldwide to endorse groundbreaking new industry standards released by the GDST last year as the foundation for a worldwide system to improve seafood traceability and calls on governments to ratify and implement robust control measures aligned with the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), a powerful international treaty that requires port inspections and other measures to prevent IUU catch from being brought ashore. Taken together, these actions would go far in preventing IUU catch from reaching markets or even being landed in the first place.

“There must be nowhere to land and nowhere to sell fish and seafood that is caught illegally,” said Ambassador Peter Thomson, UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy for the Ocean and Co-Chair, Friends of Ocean Action. “I applaud this initiative by seafood sector leaders, urge others to support their efforts in 2021, and call upon all countries to work towards full implementation of FAO’s Port State Measures Agreement. Ending illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing is essential to ensuring a sustainable blue

economy and the maintenance of a thriving ocean. I wish to emphasize that this is a critical target of the Sustainable Development Goal for the Ocean, SDG14.”

QUOTES FROM COALITION LEADERS

“Sustainable seafood, including tuna, is paramount to our customers and thus to our business, and eliminating IUU is an essential precursor of sustainability. Accordingly, we are enthusiastic to support this collaboration – both as METRO but also on behalf of the Global Tuna Alliance (GTA). Being a member of the GTA, we are committed to improving supply chain interoperability and ensuring that the fish we sell is legally sourced. Adopting the GDST standards, and the implementation of robust port state measures will help us achieve this.” **Andrea Weber, Director Corporate Responsibility, METRO AG; Industry Chair of the GTA.**

“The value of our coalition’s collaborative call to action cannot be overestimated. Real change for more sustainable fisheries can only come through unified and consistent appeals to the world’s fisheries managers. And it is an approach that accelerates the speed of needed change. ISSF is pleased to partner with GTA, SeaBOS, GDST, and GSSI on this important effort.” **Susan Jackson, President, ISSF.**

“The world’s largest seafood companies understand the need to make the industry more sustainable. Eliminating illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing activities is a critical step in that process,” said **Therese Log Bergjord, Chair, SeaBOS.** “We cannot stand by and wait. SeaBOS is united with GTA, GSSI, GDST, and ISSF to secure the future of our ocean.”

“Better access to verifiable information about the origin of fish products is essential to the future of the seafood industry. Global alignment around the GDST standards will dramatically improve traceability across the entire sector, while also making it more affordable and business-smart. Moreover, the GDST standards and the PSMA can work hand-in-hand to improve the transparency and reliability of seafood supply chains. By working together to support the implementation of the PSMA and GDST 1.0, companies and governments can have an enormous impact in favor of legal, sustainable, and responsibly-sourced seafood.” **David Schorr, Co-Chair, GDST.**

“GSSI’s vision is more sustainable seafood for everyone. Reducing, and ultimately eradicating, IUU fishing is essential to achieve this and requires industry and governments to act together to prevent IUU fish from entering value chains,” said **Bill DiMento, Vice President Corporate Sustainability and Government Affairs, High Liner Foods; Chair of the GSSI Steering Board.** “This collaborative call to action shows actors from across the entire seafood value chain are aligned and ready to work together to address this. GSSI is proud to be part of this.”

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

Largely out of sight, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing steals millions of tonnes of fish from the ocean each year. It robs honest fishers of their livelihoods and takes billions of dollars out of national economies — the economic loss to IUU fishing is valued at between \$10 billion and \$36.4 billion annually. It is a threat to food security for the one billion people who rely on fish as their principal source of protein. It is also a threat to national security for coastal nations – vessels engaging in IUU fishing practices often also traffic in drugs, arms, and human beings.

But this threat can be addressed if IUU fishers have nowhere to land or sell their catch. Critical to achieving this goal is action to establish robust controls in the ports where seafood is landed or transshipped, and robust traceability in supply chains. These safeguards have become even more urgent as COVID-19 restrictions have constrained fisheries monitoring and enforcement around the world.

This initiative responds to the vision of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, co-chaired by Prime Minister Solberg of Norway and former President Remengesau of Palau, and including the leaders of twelve other countries – Australia, Canada, Chile, Fiji, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, and Portugal. The Panel cited IUU as a key priority, calling for action to:

Eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing by incentivizing the use of the latest innovations and technologies—such as digital traceability—to increase transparency; strengthening monitoring, control and surveillance; improving flag state control; effectively implementing the Port State Measures Agreement; and enabling enhanced collaboration amongst all stakeholders in the supply chain.

The commitment also aligns closely with the Sustainable Development Goal for the Ocean, SDG14, in which all 193 Member States of the United Nations committed to “effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, IUU fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible.”

The Groups Joining in the Statement

This powerful group of industry and stakeholder platforms, supported by the [Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions](#) as part of the [Friends of Ocean Action](#), has come together to create a future in which global seafood supply chains are transparent and support sustainable fisheries and aquaculture and healthy marine ecosystems. It comprises five groups.

The Global Tuna Alliance (GTA) is an independent group of retailers and tuna supply chain companies that are committed to realizing harvest strategies for tuna fisheries, avoidance of IUU products, improved traceability as well as environmental sustainability, and progressing work on human rights in tuna

fisheries. GTA builds on the Tuna 2020 Traceability Declaration, signed by 66 companies, and works by utilizing commercial buying power to leverage policy change through direct engagement with decision-makers and supply-chain actions.

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The International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) is a global coalition of scientists, the tuna industry, and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) — the world’s leading conservation organization promoting science-based initiatives for the long-term conservation and sustainable use of tuna stocks, reducing bycatch and promoting ecosystem health. Helping global tuna fisheries meet sustainability criteria to achieve the Marine Stewardship Council certification standard — without conditions — is ISSF’s ultimate objective. ISSF’s 26 participating companies represent the majority of the world’s canned tuna processing capacity.

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Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS) is a unique collaboration between scientists and seafood companies across the wild capture, aquaculture and feed production sectors, leading a global transformation towards sustainable seafood production, and improving ocean health. The collaboration has been coordinated by the Stockholm Resilience Centre at Stockholm University. Together, SeaBOS companies represent over 10% of the world’s seafood production and comprise over 600 subsidiary companies globally.

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The Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST) is an international, business-to-business platform established to advance a unified framework for interoperable and verifiable seafood traceability. The Dialogue brings together more than five dozen companies from around the globe and across different parts of the seafood supply chain. In March 2020, after a multi-year industry-led drafting process, the GDST released the first-ever global standard (GDST 1.0) governing information content and data formats for seafood traceability systems. Learn more at www.traceability-dialogue.org.

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The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) is a public-private partnership on seafood sustainability with 90+ stakeholders industry-wide. GSSI aligns global efforts and resources to address the latest seafood sustainability challenges. Governed by a Steering Board representing the full seafood value chain, companies, NGOs, and international organizations – including the FAO¹ – GSSI promotes sector-wide collaboration to drive forward more sustainable seafood for everyone.

¹ Although the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN (FAO) is a member of the GSSI Steering Board, GSSI’s participation in the coalition Statement does not constitute an FAO endorsement of the GDST Standard V1.0. The GDST Standard V1.0 is an industry standard and FAO cannot endorse any industry standard.

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