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New Fishery Improvement Project Launched to Address Sustainability Gap in Indian Ocean Tuna Fisheries

Bumble Bee Foods, FCF and Ocean Outcomes double down with second initiative focused on improving Chinese Taipei longline albacore fisheries

February 11, 2020 – Bumble Bee Foods, LLC, FCF Co, Ltd. and Ocean Outcomes have launched an initiative to improve the sustainability of Bumble Bee source fisheries in the Indian Ocean. The project is the first of its kind in the region for longline vessels catching albacore tuna. To date, no albacore tuna or longline fisheries in the Indian Ocean are certified as sustainable.

The project team hopes to change this in the coming years by improving fishery data collection, reporting mechanisms, monitoring tools and management strategies through a newly launched fishery improvement project (FIP). The objective of the FIP is to improve practices on Chinese Taipei longline tuna fishing vessels so that the fishery is able to achieve a certifiable status within five years.

“We are very excited to formally launch our FIP in the Indian Ocean, expanding the work we have initiated in the Pacific,” said Mike Kraft, VP Global Sustainability and Social Responsibility for The Bumble Bee Seafood Company. “This Indian Ocean FIP will work to improve the sustainability of yet another major source of the albacore used in Bumble Bee’s products.”

Participating FIP vessels catch approximately 6,000 metric tons of albacore tuna from the Indian Ocean annually, much of which is loined in Mauritius and exported to North American markets for canning.

Project team members believe this FIP – along with other new and emerging initiatives in the Indian Ocean – can be a catalyst for tuna fisheries in the region to support development of precautionary science-based management strategies, which can help ensure the abundance of albacore species.

“Projects such as this offer a transparent, stepwise approach for fishers to move towards sustainability, which is sorely needed in the Indian Ocean. We’re proud to work with the industry to reduce the negative impacts of fishing and to address the challenges of longline fisheries,” said Daniel Suddaby, VP Strategy and Impact at Ocean Outcomes.

As a first phase of the project, the project team will work to generate better fishery data, which will be used to inform science-based management at the regional level for the target albacore stock and any fishery bycatch species. A key component of this effort will be to increase electronic observer coverage on the fishing vessels, with a long-term goal of 100 percent coverage. Currently, observer coverage is occurring in a small subset of longliners.

This FIP is one of two projects between Bumble Bee, FCF and O2 focused on ensuring sustainable Chinese Taipei longline fisheries; the other is for longline vessels in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Coordination with – and support from – other organizations working on sustainable tuna, such as International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) will be core to the projects' success. The goal of both FIPs is to achieve a certifiable status by 2024.

To learn more about the Indian Ocean tuna FIP and track its progress, visit www.FisheryProgress.org.

About:

[Bumble Bee Foods, LLC](#) is on a mission to create a new generation of seafood lovers by delivering delicious, healthy and sustainable seafood options in innovative ways. As an industry leader in sustainability, Bumble Bee works to protect the health of our oceans, marine life and the fishing community through multiple efforts, including the development of dolphin-safe fishing practices, partnerships with organizations like World Wildlife Fund, the Marine Stewardship Council, the Global Ghost Gear Initiative, and as a founder of the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF), a global partnership of scientists, tuna processors. Bumble Bee's full line of seafood and specialty protein products are marketed in the U.S., Canada and over 50 markets globally under leading brands including Bumble Bee®, Brunswick®, Clover Leaf®, Snow's®, Wild Selections® and Beach Cliff®.

[FCF CO, LTD. \(FCF\)](#) is one of the world's largest marine products integrated supply chain service provider companies specializing in tuna. An industry leader in sustainability and traceability, and FAD-free fishing policy, FCF works closely with governments and non-governing organizations to ensure the environmental sustainability of tuna stock and marine life products around the globe.

[Ocean Outcomes \(O2\)](#) is an international organization which works with local communities, fisheries, and the seafood industry to improve the environmental, social and economic sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture operations.

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