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New Tuna Fishery Improvement Project to Drive Improvements on Hundreds of Chinese and Chinese Taipei Longline Vessels

Project to expand observer coverage, improve fishery data and help inform science-based management strategies

June 5, 2019 – Bumble Bee Foods, LLC, FCF Fishery Company, Ltd., Clover Leaf Seafoods and Ocean Outcomes have launched a new longline tuna fishery improvement project (FIP) focused on improving fishing practices for approximately 200 Chinese and Chinese Taipei longline albacore and yellowfin tuna fishing vessels in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. A primary focus of the FIP is to improve data collection by increasing electronic observer coverage of vessels over time, with a long-term goal of 100 percent coverage. Expanding observer coverage will help drive the fisheries towards the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) standard.

“FCF is proud to start working with a large section of the longline industry to improve data, reporting, and bycatch mitigation” said Fong Lee, Sustainability Officer at FCF. “As a leading tuna supplier globally, we’re uniquely positioned to support practical and durable solutions towards sustainable tuna.”

Collectively, FIP vessels catch 15,000 metric tons of albacore and yellowfin tuna annually, much of which is canned and exported to North American markets by Bumble Bee. While the albacore and yellowfin tuna stocks are considered healthy, both stocks are subject to increasing fishing pressure.

Fishery observers currently gather first-hand data on what's caught and thrown back, as well as interactions with endangered, threatened and protected species. Observers also support compliance with fishing and safety regulations. However, observer coverage is currently occurring in a small subset of longliners. By expanding coverage electronically to participating FIP vessels, Bumble Bee and FIP participants will support effective fisheries management practices through better data collection.

“Longline albacore and yellowfin landed in Fiji are a vital part of Bumble Bee’s supply chain,” says Mike Kraft, Vice President Global Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility, Bumble Bee Foods. “The FIP team has developed a strong workplan, identifying actions that will move the fishery towards the MSC fisheries standard. We are very excited about this project and we look forward to the challenging work ahead of us.”

The quantitative data and reporting procedures generated by FIP activities will eventually be used to monitor fisheries, assess fish populations, and inform science-based management for target, bycatch and threatened species at the regional level.

Within five years, the FIP will work with the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, which oversees the management of tuna regionally, to develop and implement robust and precautionary harvest strategies which are responsive to statuses of target stocks, including best practice harvest control rules to reduce exploitation rate as needed.

“This is not just an exciting development for large-scale improvements towards sustainability in tuna fishing, it’s also a bold and very forward-looking move from FCF and Bumble Bee. Without their commitment to a sustainable future, a project of this scale would not be possible,” added Ross Wanless, Asia Tuna Manager for O2.

This FIP is one of two projects between Bumble Bee, FCF and O2 focused on ensuring sustainable Chinese and Chinese Taipei longline fisheries; the other is in development for longline vessels in the Indian Ocean. The goal of both FIPs is to achieve a certifiable status by mid-2024.

About:

[Bumble Bee Foods, LLC](#), headquartered in San Diego, is North America’s largest branded shelf-stable seafood company, offering a full line of canned and pouched tuna, salmon, sardine and specialty protein products marketed in the U.S. under leading brands including Bumble Bee®, Brunswick®, Snow’s®, Wild Selections® and Beach Cliff®, and in Canada under the Clover Leaf® brand. Bumble Bee’s mission is to provide healthy and nutritious products and meal solutions that are sourced sustainably. The company actively promotes the responsible stewardship of global fisheries resources and is a founder of the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF)—a global partnership of scientists, tuna processors and WWF, the global conservation organization.

[Clover Leaf Seafoods Company](#), headquartered in Markham, Ontario Canada, is Canada’s largest branded shelf-stable seafood company that has been providing consumers with nutritious and high quality products since 1871. Under the Clover Leaf®, Brunswick® and Wild Selections® brands, Clover Leaf Seafoods offers a family of canned seafood products that includes tuna, salmon, sardine, snack kits and specialty products such as oysters, mussels, and clams as well as surimi products. At Clover Leaf, we are committed to improving our consumers’ quality of life by providing sustainable, nutritious, convenient and affordable seafood products. Along with our sister company Bumble Bee Foods, Clover Leaf is working actively to support ISSF and promote MSC standards.

[FCF Fishery Company, 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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