

11 July, 2019

ATTN: Heads of Delegation to IOTC, IATTC, ICCAT and WCPFC

Dear Delegates:

Building on the Global Advocacy Appeal submitted to tuna RFMOs in 2018, this letter is submitted on behalf of the undersigned companies, non-governmental organizations and fishing industry associations, all of whom recognize that the sustainability of tuna stocks is integral to businesses and livelihoods, as well as to the health of the marine environment.

Your government serves as an important leader in tuna stock sustainability as a member of one or more of the four regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) charged with managing the world's tropical tuna fisheries. We are writing to bring to your attention our collective views on several issues crucial to the long-term sustainability of tuna stocks:

- The development and implementation of comprehensive, precautionary harvest strategies
- Effective monitoring and management of fish aggregating devices (FADs)
- Strengthened monitoring, control and surveillance tools, including increased observer coverage in purse seine and longline fisheries, and of at-sea transshipment activity through human observers and/or electronic monitoring
- Greater focus on implementation of bycatch mitigation actions, with an emphasis on longline fisheries

We recognize that some tuna RFMOs have made progress on several of these issues and we applaud those actions. However, we wish to underscore that while the progress to-date is positive, accelerated actions must be taken at this year's RFMO meetings to:

1. Develop and implement comprehensive, precautionary harvest strategies with specific timelines for all tuna stocks, including the adoption and implementation of target and limit reference points, harvest control rules, monitoring strategies, operational objectives, performance indicators, management strategy evaluation, and appropriate tools to achieve exploitation levels;
2. Increase compliance with mandatory minimum 5% longline observer coverage rates by identifying and sanctioning non-compliance;
3. Adopt and implement a 100% observer coverage requirement – human and/or electronic – within five years for longline and purse seine fisheries (where not already required);

4. Adopt and implement a 100% observer coverage requirement – human and/or electronic – for at-sea transshipment activities, as well as other measures – as defined in the [Best Practices for Well-Managed At-Sea Transshipment](#) document developed through the NGO Tuna Forum – that ensure transshipment activity is transparent and well-managed, and that all required data is fully collected and sent to the appropriate bodies in a timely manner;
5. Require the use of the best-available observer safety equipment, communications and procedures on fishing and transshipment vessels;
6. Develop and implement science-based recommendations for the effective management of FADs – as defined in the [Best Practices for Well-Managed FAD Fisheries](#) document developed through the NGO Tuna Forum – and integrate FAD-based information into stock assessments to reduce uncertainties;
7. Implement adopted measures for the use of non-entangling FAD designs as a precautionary measure to minimize the entanglement of sharks and other non-target species, and transition to the use of biodegradable materials to mitigate marine debris;
8. More effectively implement, and ensure compliance with, existing RFMO bycatch requirements and take additional mitigation action, such as improving monitoring at sea, collecting and sharing operational-level, species-specific data, and adopting stronger compliance measures, including consequences for non-compliance for all gear types.

We believe these measures will positively impact the long-term sustainability of tuna stocks and the overall health of the marine ecosystem.

The companies that have signed this letter represent major seafood buyers that source seafood products from a diverse, international supply network.

The non-governmental organizations work in more than 100 countries and engage suppliers and provide advice to retailers, buyers and food service companies regarding improvements in tuna sustainability.

The fishing industry associations represent a variety of gear types, including purse seine, longline, troll, pole and line, and handline vessels active in tuna fisheries worldwide.

Collectively, we request that your government, as a member of one or more of the tuna RFMOs, take active steps to ensure significant progress on these issues at each of the relevant RFMO meetings in 2019, as a matter of priority.

Sincerely,



Gavin van Der Burgh, CEO



Hugo Byrnes, VP of Product Integrity



Helen Packer, Science and Sustainability Coordinator



Anthony Snow, Seafood Director



Beaver Street Fisheries, Inc.®



Casey R. Marion, Director of Sustainability



Rayk Mende, Managing Director Corporate Responsibility



Philipp Ilbertz  
Director Corporate Responsibility



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Dr Cleo Small, Head of BirdLife International  
Marine Programme



Dr, Luciano Pirovano, Sustainable Development Director



Chris Wirges, CEO



Michael Scola, President/Controller



Catherine Weller, Senior Lawyer, Head of Biodiversity Programme



Jan Tharp, Interim CEO



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Maura Latini  
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Luciano Pirovano, Sustainable Development Director



Fabien GIRARD  
Directeur tft France



Michael McNicholas, Managing Director



Katie Schleit, Senior Marine Campaign Coordinator



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Director of Sustainable Products



Jose Aller, Sustainability Manager



Tobias Aguirre, Chief Executive Officer



Mr. Teddy Kho, VP-General Manager, General Tuna Corporation



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Brett Bremser, Executive VP & Chief Merchandising Officer



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Luciano Pirovano, Sustainable Development Director



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Development


  
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Dane Chauvel, Chief Executive Officer



Charles W. Laidley, Ph.D., Director of Food  
Safety & Fisheries Sustainability




  
Luciano Pirovano, Sustainable Development Director




  
Gorka Aspuru, General Manager




  
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Luciano Pirovano, Sustainable Development Director



  
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Amanda Nusz: Vice President, Product Quality & Responsible Sourcing



Rachel Hopkins, Senior Manager, International Fisheries



Renato Curto, President and CEO



Kevin Bixler, Global Director, Group Fish Procurement



Robert Bleu, President, True World Group



*Robert Bleu*

Robert Bleu, President, True World Group



*Craig Price*

Craig Price, Chief Executive – Commercial, Fish



*William W. Fox, Jr.*

William W Fox, Jr., PhD, VP, Tuna Fisheries Conservation