

20 Years on 14% of Wild Seafood Engaged With the MSC Program

International non-profit, the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), has released its 20th anniversary annual report. Over the last two decades the MSC has worked with scientists, NGOs and the seafood industry to set a globally recognised benchmark for sustainable fishing. Those organisations that meet the MSC's standards for sustainability and traceability can then use the blue MSC label on seafood products. Today, more than 25,000 products display the MSC label and, in the last financial year, consumers bought 730,860 tonnes of MSC labelled seafood worth \$5.6 billion. The annual report also shows that more than 400 fisheries, landing 14% of global marine catch, are engaged in the MSC program, with a total of 315 fisheries in 34 countries certified to the MSC's Standard.

The report also outlines the MSC's plans for the future, including an ambitious target to engage 20% of marine catch by 2020 and a new initiative that will increase consumer awareness of the blue MSC label and add value to MSC certified sustainable fisheries.

"This high level of engagement in the MSC's program drives real and lasting change in the way our oceans are fished and would not have been possible without the commitment and leadership of our partners, and the generosity of our funders," said Rupert Howes, CEO of the MSC. "The MSC is determined to remain a leading catalyst for improved fisheries management, contributing to the sustainable use of our oceans and supporting food security and livelihoods in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals," he continued.

More than 1,200 documented improvements have been made by MSC certified fisheries. These have delivered more stable biomass, reduced bycatch of unwanted species and improved management through better scientific understanding. The MSC is committed to continue incentivising improvements in fisheries worldwide in order to achieve UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 — to conserve and sustainably use the oceans. To this end, over the last year the MSC has also been involved in supporting international commitments to protect arctic habitats, tuna traceability and ocean stewardship by the world's largest seafood producers.

More and more businesses are signalling their commitment to sustainability by sourcing MSC certified seafood: at least 77 major retailers, 14 brands and 17 food-service companies have made public pledges to source MSC certified seafood to date. In recognition of 20 years of the MSC and to continue to raise public awareness and support for sustainable seafood the MSC has launched a major new consumer engagement campaign, rolling from September 2017 through to April 2018. Consumer campaigns will engage the public in 21 countries through the personal stories of the Wild Ones – fishers, chefs, retailers, sportspeople and others passionate about sustainability and seafood. Accompanying this are MSC certified seafood recipes and real-life stories from fishers that have achieved MSC certification, hosted online on a new consumer-focussed website: 20.msc.org.

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