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**SEAWEB'S SEAFOOD CHOICES ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES
2009 SEAFOOD CHAMPIONS**

Six leaders honored for their commitment to advance sustainability and ocean conservation across the seafood industry.

(Boston, MA - March 15, 2009) Seafood Choices Alliance announced today the 2009 Seafood Champions at a special awards ceremony and reception during the International Boston Seafood Show. The six Champions were lauded for their dedication and leadership within the global sustainable seafood movement and recognized for their work in advancing the marketplace for eco-friendly seafood. Since their inception in 2006, the Seafood Champion awards have honored 22 individuals and groups who have demonstrated a passion for conserving ocean resources in the increasingly global seafood arena.

The 2009 Seafood Champions include representatives from the fishing, aquaculture, restaurant, and foodservice industries, and hail from four different countries. Together with previous Seafood Champions, these individuals, companies, and associations are helping to ensure a healthy and viable future for the seafood industry.

"It is an honor to be able to help recognize these Seafood Champion winners for their commitment to developing a responsible seafood industry," said Melanie Siggs, Director of Seafood Choices Alliance. "As in previous years, these Champions have been nominated and judged independently, with the 2009 winners chosen from a record number of submissions." SeaWeb's President, Dawn M. Martin added, "These awards mark the recognition of the Seafood Champions' peers and it is our privilege to be able to make that possible."

The 2009 Seafood Champions are:

- **American Albacore Fishing Association (AAFA) (United States)**
AAFA is a US-based association that represents a pole- and troll-caught albacore fishery in California, and is responsible for dramatically expanding the market for sustainable albacore products across the United States and Europe. The first tuna fishery to be certified sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), AAFA made its albacore available on an equal-opportunity basis in order to effectively penetrate the market for tuna. AAFA's pricing program provides fishermen with the certainty and incentive necessary to earn their support for sustainable fisheries.
- **Association des Ligneurs de la Pointe de Bretagne (France)**
Association des Ligneurs de la Pointe de Bretagne is a fishermen's association based in France. In 2008, it established a self-imposed fishing ban on sea bass from February 15 to March 15, the species' reproductive, and thus most vulnerable, season. The 150 fishing companies represented by the Association and committed to the "Pointe de Bretagne" program have shown that healthy economic activity and observance of essential biological cycles are not incompatible. The

Association also launched the first line-caught sea bass marking operations in 1993, a small orange label fastened to the fish's gills that indicates to buyers the method used to catch the fish.

- **Australis Aquaculture (United States)**

Australis Aquaculture farms and distributes Barramundi across the US marketplace. The company utilizes sustainable aquaculture technology, such as innovative water reuse systems and feeds to improve the environmental performance of its farms. As one of the world's largest indoor fish farms, Australis is adamant about the high quality of both feed and fish, and works closely with several environmental groups to ensure consistency. The company supports its fishermen by paying better prices and advancing them feed and equipment, improving both their livelihoods and their communities.

- **Caroline Bennett (United Kingdom)**

Caroline Bennett is the owner of London's only sustainable sushi restaurant, Moshi Moshi. She pioneered the move away from bluefin tuna in her sushi restaurants and has passionately highlighted the plight of the bluefin tuna, whose rapid decline has been indicative of overfishing. In addition to the efforts she has made in her own restaurants, Bennett has also co-established the Pisces Responsible Fish Restaurant initiative. Pisces-RFR helps chefs source fish that is more sustainable, of higher quality, and of closer proximity, and rewards good fishing practices with better prices for fishermen. Through her work, Bennett encourages others to improve sustainability and makes this more feasible by directly connecting restaurants with responsible fishermen.

- **OSO Madagascar (Mathias Ismail, Managing Director)**

OSO Delta Peche, an organic shrimp farm based in Madagascar, was the first shrimp farm in the world to achieve the official organic certification AB Label (France / EU n°2092-91 regulation). Mathias Ismail is the Managing Director of OSO Delta Peche. Specialists have been brought in to develop nursery plantations and grow local species of trees, including mangroves, that are used to provide a resource for the local community, stabilize pond banks, and protect the site from wind erosion. Ismail and OSO have made a commitment to choose sites and farming methods that minimize any impacts on the unique environments emblematic of Madagascar.

- **Gary Johnson (United States)**

Gary Johnson is the Senior Director of Worldwide Supply Chain Management for the multi-national McDonald's Corporation. Recognizing over a decade ago that McDonald's would face challenges in assuring itself of a stable supply of whitefish, he created McDonald's Global Fish Forum in 2001, bringing suppliers together to assess global whitefish sources. In 2002, Johnson led efforts to develop a sustainability standard for McDonald's fish sourcing that is still used by the company today. Working with their suppliers under Johnson's leadership, McDonald's has fostered improvements in several key whitefish fisheries, including the reduction of illegal fishing of Barents Sea cod, and has shifted sourcing of roughly 20,000 metric tons of whitefish to better managed fisheries.

Ten 2009 Seafood Champion finalists were announced at Seafood Choices Alliance's annual Seafood Summit in San Diego last month. The finalists included Dr. Tom Pickerell of the UK Shellfish Association, the Santa Monica Seafood Company, Seafood Scotland, and Tracy Taylor of supermarket chain Ahold.

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For interviews with the award recipients and other media requests, please contact Stephanie Crane Faison (stephanie@seaweb.org or 1.908.626.0111) or Brian Cohen (bcohen@seaweb.org or 1.301.512.4906).

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Seafood Choices Alliance is an international program of SeaWeb that provides leadership and creates opportunities for change across the seafood industry and ocean conservation community. We seek to create synergies and help identify creative solutions to long-held challenges. By building relationships and stimulating dialogue, Seafood Choices is encouraging and challenging all sectors of the seafood industry along the road toward sustainability. www.seafoodchoices.org

SeaWeb, founded in 1996 to raise awareness of the growing threats to the ocean and its living resources, is a communications-based nonprofit organization that utilizes social marketing techniques to advance ocean conservation. By increasing public awareness, advancing science-based solutions and mobilizing decision-makers around ocean conservation, SeaWeb has brought together multiple, diverse and powerful voices for a healthy ocean. www.seaweb.org