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ALLIANCE

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The Carbon Dimension of Seafood

With our oceans being affected by carbon-related temperature changes and acidification, the seafood industry is addressing its own contributions to global climate change. In both Europe and North America the market is increasingly being driven by consumers' ethical purchasing decisions. The terms "food miles" and "carbon footprint" have rapidly moved from the niche to the mainstream, and throughout the seafood supply chain players are not only looking at how to make carbon-friendly changes but how to then communicate these efforts to customers. The sustainability of seafood has a carbon dimension.

Carbon emissions are one more element increasingly being juggled in the seafood industry's sustainability efforts

The production and processing core of the seafood industry contribute notably to the industry's overall "carbon footprint" but it is the "food miles" of transportation that often receives the most media coverage and can be the most tangible for a consumer to comprehend and act upon in their purchasing. While road and air travel has received significant attention from environmental campaigners, the impact of shipping is beginning to come into focus. A recent investigation by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) presents new calculations that put annual carbon emissions from global shipping at 1.2 billion tons; almost double that estimated for the aviation industry (650 million tons/year). However, all emissions are not made equal; while gross

aircraft emissions are less than shipping they emit directly into the atmosphere and cause greater damage at this higher altitude.

The seafood industry is faced with complex calculations of energy use while working to supply customers with variety in their seafood options. In addition, much of the industry is working at ensuring sustainable capture or farming techniques and balancing the omnipotent factors of freshness, quality and price. Andrew Mallison, Fish Technologist with UK retailer Marks and Spencer, notes "Transportation of food accounts for about 5% of our total food carbon footprint. Although this transport figure is relatively small, we are taking steps to reduce it further by using the most efficient lorry fleets possible, working with our suppliers to better co-ordinate deliveries and maximising the amount of food we buy from the UK in season, including fish". Labelling of products according to their carbon footprint, such as French retailer Casino is beginning to do, is also increasing in prevalence and helping consumers to distinguish among those products.

Linked to food miles, the market has seen increased attention by consumers on buying local and seasonal products. The motives for this are compound, and in addition to the carbon facet, can include supporting the local economy and community, patriotism, and maximizing

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Letter from *The Director*



A FORUM FOR CONSTRUCTIVE CHALLENGE

Later this month, we'll be convening the annual Seafood Summit in Spain. For those that haven't been to this event in years past, we hope this issue of *Afishianado* gives you a flavor of what's in store. From navigating the increasingly complex landscape of carbon footprints and food miles to understanding how eco-labels and organic seafood are influencing the supply chain, this gathering covers all the bases of the sustainable seafood marketplace. The discussions in Barcelona will be made all the richer by the mix of voices represented in the room—buyers, policymakers, fishermen, conservationists, processors, investors, chefs and scientists.

While that diversity of perspectives is sure to make for rich dialogue, it inevitably produces another healthy dynamic. The Seafood Summit serves as a forum for constructive challenge—a place where leaders from different walks of life can gain a better understanding of others' motivations, ask the tough

questions that can make one uncomfortable but curious about new ideas, and blur the lines between competitor and collaborator. As we collectively push ourselves toward more responsible, better practice, challenging each other to advance our thinking and our actions can only be good for our businesses and the ocean as we head into 2008.

Seafood Choices Alliance continues to deepen its work in key markets across Europe and we're thrilled to be bringing this event to the Mediterranean for the first time. For those heading to Barcelona, we look forward to seeing you there; for all the rest of you, please watch these pages and www.seafood-choices.org for full updates and our complete set of offerings in the year ahead. ●

Happy New Year!

Mike Boots, Director

Guest's Corner



LIRA INITIATIVE: FISHERMEN PROTAGONISTS OF THEIR FUTURE

Lira-Carnota is located in the South of the legendary Coast of the Death in Galicia (identified by WWF as one of the top 15 marine areas requiring urgent protection in Spain). In 1999 the fishermen of this municipality decided to pursue a strategy for sustainably exploiting their marine resources and elevating the respect and economic value of their profession. The fishermen voluntarily established stricter management measures and helped to create LonXanet¹, a cooperative specialized in selling directly from the sea to the consumer.

In 2002 the Prestige oil spill destroyed many efforts and dreams in Lira as a carpet of oil covered the rich coast. During the following months 100,000 volunteers contributed to the clean-up and the fishermen created a fishing reserve in their grounds. Since that time they have not been alone, LonXanet Foundation, University of A Coruña and WWF have been accompanying them in this complex process. In May of 2007 the regional government created the fishing reserve of "Os Miñarzos", the first in North Spain.

WWF², in collaboration with fishermen, is developing a project to support start-up fishing reserves. Biological and socio-economic monitoring programmes, plus stakeholder workshops, are being developed to identify benefits, obstacles and solutions for successful reserve implementation. Once the management and control are well in place, fishermen will seek MSC certification for some of their key products. Awareness campaigns and volunteer activities will also support the implementation.

The Lira-Carnota effort is not only limited to local change but is having a domino effect in Galicia. Fishermen's organizations are learning from the Lira initiative to establish other fishing reserves and to urge policymakers to promote these management tools and establish more fishing-conservation measures. ●

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¹ www.lonxanet.com

² Thanks to the financial support of TELEFONICA and CAJA MADRID



all about TUNA

Tuna fisheries are some of the most important in the world both nutritionally and economically. Despite often being generically termed “tuna” there are in fact 13 different species; those species intensively fished on a commercial basis are summarised below. Conservationists are concerned about overall declining populations and with the bycatch associated with long-line and purse seine fishing methods.

As a general rule of thumb, the most recent recommendations from conservation groups list pole- or troll-caught albacore, skipjack and yellowfin as the best environmental choices.

Bigeye and Yellowfin (Ahi)—Populations of bigeye and yellowfin tuna worldwide are generally considered to be in poor shape—the one exception being the U.S. Atlantic yellowfin fishery. A valuable tuna prized for its sashimi-quality flesh, bigeye is found throughout the world’s oceans. Yellowfin tuna is popular eaten raw or lightly seared. In the USA, high-quality bigeye and yellowfin are both marketed using their Hawaiian name, *ahi*. Pole-caught fish results in significantly less bycatch than purse seined or long-lined.

Albacore—Albacore tuna found in the North and South Pacific and the South Atlantic are fairly abundant while those in the North Atlantic, Indian Oceans and Mediterranean Sea are in shorter supply. Longlining is the most common capture method; however bycatch contributes to the decline of some endangered species of sea turtles, sharks and seabirds. The Hawaiian longline fishery has strong bycatch reduction measures. Albacore caught by troll or pole and line have least negative impact and the American Albacore Fishing Association tuna fishery was recently certified as sustainable to the Marine Stewardship Council standard.

Bluefin—A fish to avoid; the Atlantic bluefin catch is said to be only 10% of what it was a decade ago, due to overfishing and poor management. Populations in the Mediterranean have been notoriously over-exploited through tuna ranching and illegal fishing and southern bluefin is listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN. The high prices gained in the Japanese market drive the continued overexploitation of this popular sashimi fish. Various stakeholder groups, including conservation groups, American tuna fishers, and traditional Spanish tuna trappers, are united in their critique of the mismanagement of this culturally and economically important fish.

Skipjack—Skipjack, which matures at an early age and is found throughout many of the world’s oceans, is generally resilient to fishing pressure. It is often sold as canned tuna (the most popular canned tuna in the UK market), but is sometimes sold fresh and frozen. Skipjack is caught in a variety of ways; the best choice from an environmental perspective is troll or pole-caught (such as that from the traditional Maldives fishery); purse seining poses a bycatch threat to other species. ●

For more information about environmentally sustainable choices—and to locate suppliers—visit www.seafood-choices.org. Also check out the panel on Mediterranean and East Atlantic bluefin tuna at the Seafood Summit.

Techno’ Fix

Simple changes to fishing gear and techniques can help reduce the environmental impact of fisheries. Using ‘circle’ hooks instead of ‘J’ hooks for example can reduce the bycatch of endangered marine animals, including sea turtles, on tuna long-line vessels. WWF’s annual Smart Gear competition aims to catalyze and reward gear innovation such as this to help reduce global bycatch.

SEAFOOD SUMMIT 2008: GLOBAL CHALLENGES, LOCAL SOLUTIONS

Seafood Summit is going to Europe! For the first time ever, Seafood Choices Alliance is organizing its annual Seafood Summit to take place outside of the United States in the beautiful Mediterranean city of Barcelona, Spain from January 27-30, 2008. This year's Summit, *Global Challenges, Local Solutions*, will examine the marketplace for sustainable seafood from a global perspective, with panels, workshops and seminars designed to expose world challenges. By connecting the seafood industry with seafood conservation organizations from around the world, the Summit will provide the opportunity to explore local solutions to global challenges.

Last November, the journal *Science* published a report warning of the demise of 90% of the world's fisheries by 2048 if current practices are not addressed. Many companies around the world are doing their part to address these issues to ensure this doesn't happen. The time has come to exchange information globally about common goals and best practices.

This year's Summit promises a variety of timely discussions. Perennial "hot" topics such as traceability, organics, eco-labeling and sustainable sourcing will once again be covered at the conference. A number of panel topics are new for 2008, including: climate change—from food miles to the effects of carbon dioxide pollution on the seafood industry; communicating sustainability to consumers; closing

ports to IUU (illegal, unregulated and unreported) fish; and the impact of the global sustainable seafood movement on developing countries. These topics and more will be covered by speakers from a wide variety of companies, organizations, and institutions including: the Mauritanian Artisanal Fishing Sector Organization, Culinary Institute of America, OECD, IntraFish Media, ISEAL Alliance, ASDA Stores Ltd., UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Young's Seafood, and the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition.

Aside from the exciting topics that will be covered, a new cooking demonstration and photo exhibition look set to be highlights. Seafood Choices Alliance is partnering with Euro-Toques, a 4,000 strong organization of chefs, to deliver a multi-national cooking demonstration that is sure to be memorable and delicious. Chefs from seven countries—France, Italy, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States—will prepare sustainable seafood dishes representing the cuisine of their respective countries.

Barcelona was chosen as the Summit's first European location because of the Spanish market's impact within European and global seafood portfolios. The Spanish fleet lands over 750,000 tons of seafood every year, making it the largest seafood producer in the EU. ●

For more information, log on to www.seafoodsummit.org.

What's Hot . . . *French Interest in Ecolabels*

France recently hosted its first symposium on eco-labeling; the "Colloque Ecolabel" was held in Lorient, Brittany during the Itech'mer fair in October. Around 100 participants took part in an animated debate, which gave insight into the interest for this subject among the different actors of the French seafood sector. Speakers included Gallic heavyweights such as Findus France, Casino and Scapêch. The langoustine fishermen association AGLIA and the conservation group WWF France also attended. Independent fisheries consultant Marie-Christine Montfort convened the event and noted that "French fishermen are now ready to jump into the sustainable seafood movement. They

are eager to learn more about the ecolabel concept, which has traditionally had more awareness amongst retailers and processors."

While eco-labeling has been prominent in the neighboring UK and German markets for several years, the French market, with its more traditional purchasing patterns, has been less involved. However, as the large retailers take an increasing market share of seafood trade, consumers are looking for markers of provenance in their fish products, illustrated by Casino's recent move to stock fresh fish (sole and mackerel) certified as sustainable to the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) standard. ●



Pollution Profile

OIL AND WATER DON'T MIX

Oil spills exacerbate existing environmental conditions in the Black Sea and delay oyster season in San Francisco, while South Korea suffers its worst spill ever.

It is generally accepted that the ocean and its inhabitants are under stress from climate change, extraction industries and other impacts, man-made or otherwise. At a time when many are doing their best to preserve our natural resources and support effective management of these fragile ecosystems, it is distressing to learn of three oil spills in just over a month. On November 7, a cargo ship ran into the San Francisco Bay Bridge, spilling 58,000 gallons of oil into the bay. One week later, a fierce storm in the Kerch Strait which links the Black Sea and Sea of Azov, tore apart an oil tanker and other carriers, causing over 360,000 gallons of oil and sulphur to leak into that body of water. In South Korea, the Hebei Spirit supertanker collided with a drifting barge on December 7, spilling 2.7 million gallons of oil into the Yellow Sea.

The Black Sea has had its fair share of environmental issues—pollution and overfishing in particular. Interfax news agency quoted Alexander Tkachyov, governor of the Russian Black Sea region Krasnodar as saying: “The damage [from the spill] is so huge that it can hardly be evaluated. It can be compared to an ecological catastrophe.” The spill has already caused the death of at least 30,000 birds in the region. Tkachyov was also quoted as saying it was “just impossible to count the loss of fish.” WWF Russia is calling for the halt of oil transport via the Kerche Strait and more rigorous standards for ships and carriers. “Preliminary damage to fish stocks amounts to 3.96 billion rubles [roughly \$162 million],” the Russian agricultural agency Rosselkhoznadzor said in a statement.

Although the San Francisco bay spill was roughly one-sixth the size of the Black Sea incident, the effects have been far-reaching, particularly for the area’s seafood industries. Marin County’s largest oyster farm was shut for three weeks following the spill. Drake’s Bay Family Farms reopened on November 30th after receiving clearance from state officials. Owner Kevin Lunny estimated his company lost between \$200,000 and \$300,000 after the spill forced their oyster farming operations to close.

Herring and crab industries have also been affected, which usually begin their seasons in mid-November. Local fishermen voted to keep the fisheries closed until it was certain there were no risks of contamination. The California Office of Environment Health and Hazard Assessment tested 1,138 fish and crabs, caught along the coast and around the bay, and found no detectable levels of PAHs, the cancer-causing components in fuel oil. On November 29, California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger officially lifted the ban on fishing and crabbing in the San Francisco bay area.

The clean-up from South Korea’s worst ever oil spill will continue for months, local officials have said, with the Taeon region declared a “disaster area”. The affected area is 100 miles southwest of Seoul and is home to a national park, six public beaches, as well as important tourism and fishery operations.

Over 385 aquaculture operations in the area, including oyster, abalone and seaweed farms, have been directly impacted by the spill. The Taeon area is also an important migratory route for birds. Lee Jae-Hak of the Korean Ocean Research and Development Institute was quoted as saying, “The damage is so immense that we can hardly predict how long it will take to recover.” ●



EUROPE MOMENTUM

Stakeholders throughout the seafood supply chain are seeing an increase in environmental responsibility across Europe. Southern European countries have a strong food culture and sustainability issues have begun to emerge. Northern European markets have long been leaders on this issue, with ecolabelled products and consumer awareness now at record levels. The Seafood Summit's warm welcome from local government and organizations in Barcelona, plus the work of WWF Spain with local fishermen, indicate this progressing attitude and momentum. ●

Events

JANUARY

27-30: Seafood Summit 2008, "Global Challenges, Local Solutions", Barcelona, Spain

FEBRUARY

9-10: Aquaculture America 2008, Orlando, Florida, USA

10-12: Fish International, Bremen, Germany

23-26: Mediterranean Seafood Exposition, Rimini, Italy

24-26: International Boston Seafood Show, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

MARCH

9-11: International Restaurant and Foodservice Show of New York, New York, NY

Visit www.seafoodchoices.org for more upcoming events and information.

THE CARBON DIMENSION OF SEAFOOD

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freshness. In the USA, legislation on Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) now identifies where food comes from, and the promotion of domestic shrimp over imported Asian products has helped highlight seafood's geographical provenance. In southern Europe locality is also an issue, with consumers preferring to support local fishing communities over large commercial sea bass and bream farms, (as recently documented in the industry trade press).

While buying seasonal meat and vegetables is a common concept in the UK, most consumers have little awareness of the seasonality of fish species. Increasing consumer awareness of seafood seasonality could help in managing expectations over what should be on their store's fresh fish counter at any given time of year and help us in ensuring the health of our ocean. ●

Interested? At the Seafood Summit look out for the panel discussing Food Miles.

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