



ENABLING SUSTAINABILITY

through Engagement
& Advocacy



ISSF 2013 Annual Report

International Seafood Sustainability Foundation



2013-2014 ISSF Board of Directors

ISSF: A Sustaining Partnership for Global Tuna Stocks

Founded in 2009, the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) is committed to improving the sustainability of global tuna stocks by developing and implementing verifiable, science-based practices, commitments and international management measures that result in tuna fisheries meeting the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification standard¹ without conditions, and becoming the industry standard for vessel owners, traders, processors and marketers.

To achieve these objectives, ISSF coordinates with and supports Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), and vigorously advocates to RFMO members for the adoption and implementation of science-based management measures so that tuna stocks are managed comprehensively and sustainably.

A Collective Approach to Continuous Improvement

The long-term sustainability of global tuna fisheries can only be realized through coordination with a broad collection of stakeholders that share this common goal. That is why facilitating constructive engagement across multiple stakeholders is the essence of the ISSF approach – and is well-reflected in the organization's leadership model.

The ISSF's Board of Directors is comprised of industry, scientific and environmental stakeholders that have come together to drive continuous improvement in tuna fisheries around the world.

Supporting the Board are a group of formal and informal partners – marine scientists, environmental stakeholders, fleet owners, ISSF participating companies and others – who are experts in their respective fields and provide their time and insights on a voluntary basis to inform the Board and the organization's efforts.

Facilitating Constructive Engagement. Promoting Practical Change.

ISSF is constructed on the belief that diversity of opinion, perspective and approach among those with shared interests and goals is not a hindrance – rather it is a great strength. The organization has established its role in the global sustainability community as a convener of common interests, a facilitator of dialogue, and a promoter of science-based approaches that can be practically applied across tuna fisheries to continuously improve global tuna stocks and their ecosystem.



Juan Corrales
Chairman, CEO,
Grupo Conservas
Garavilla

John Connelly
President,
National Fisheries
Institute (U.S.)



Dr. Victor Restrepo
Chairman, ISSF
Scientific Advisory
Committee

Susan Jackson
President, ISSF



Dr. William Fox
Vice President,
Fisheries,
World Wildlife Fund US

Javier Garat
Secretary General,
Cepesca



Miguel Angel Jorge
Managing Director,
50in10

Alfred Schumm
Director, WFF Global
Fisheries Program
(Smart Fishing
Initiative), World
Wildlife Fund
International



¹ISSF will seek to achieve conformance with the Marine Stewardship Council's Performance Indicators (MSC PIs) at an 80 score level, which is sufficient for certification of a fishery without conditions. These performance indicators will serve as the basis for ISSF's assessment of global tuna fisheries, as well as a guide for its areas of focus.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

For some, the fishing industry is an important global business. For others, it is a critical part of the world's food supply. For others still, it is just one component of a diverse, yet delicate ecosystem. For someone whose family has been engaged in commercial fishing and canning for four generations, it is "all of the above."

This perspective has long influenced my personal views on the long-term sustainability of the oceans in general and tuna stocks in particular: that effective global management of tuna fisheries is critical if we are to maintain the right balance among tuna harvesting, consumption, and stock and ecosystem health. My background and personal views also influence why I feel so strongly about the mission and ongoing efforts of the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF).

Making an Impact

Since ISSF was founded in 2009, we have seen a great deal of progress made – both as an organization and as advocates for science-based approaches to tuna stock sustainability. First and foremost, ISSF has integrated itself into the global sustainability community by highlighting and promoting areas of common ground among a diverse collection of interested stakeholders.

It has focused effort and energy on supporting and promoting the development of science-based best practices that can – and have – made real impacts.

It has established [conservation measures and commitments](#) based on these best practices, which participating companies have agreed to conform to in order to support the continuous improvement of global tuna fisheries.

And perhaps most importantly, the efforts and actions of ISSF have been integral in fostering an increasing conviction across the tuna industry that it is time for sustained commitment and action on behalf of global tuna stock sustainability.

As participants in ISSF since its inception, we are proud of what has been accomplished under the leadership and guidance of Chris Lischewski, ISSF's Board Chairman from its founding until late last year, and to whom we owe appreciation and gratitude for his tireless commitment to this organization.



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Sustainability through Engagement and Advocacy

With such a strong foundation in place, I am honored and excited to lead this organization as we take the next steps toward achieving our objectives. Over the course of 2013, ISSF refined its focus through the development of a five-year [strategic plan](#). The plan was influenced by many, as we reached out to a broad array of stakeholders to gain their opinions and insights. We also took into account the good work being done by these stakeholders – seeking to amplify those efforts where they align to our objectives, while providing leadership in areas where our efforts are most needed.

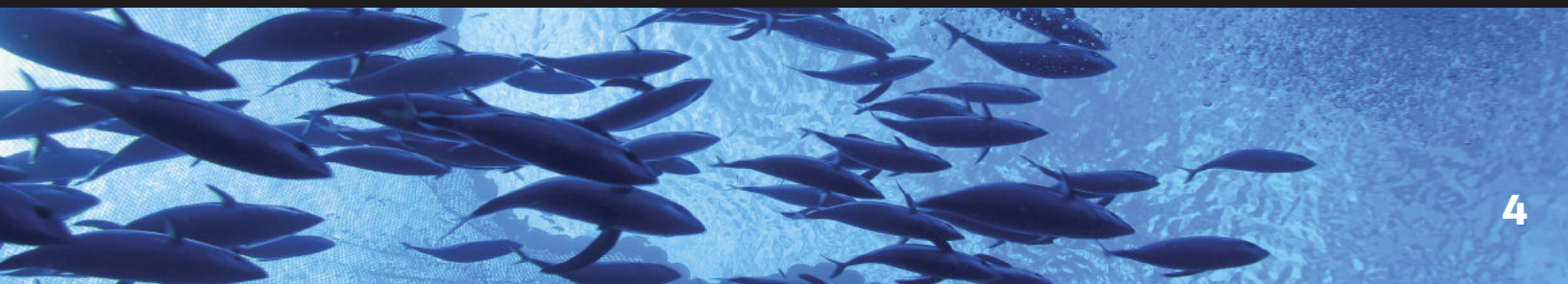
Moving forward, ISSF will:

- *Focus more than ever on utilizing science-based approaches to advance tuna stock sustainability that are both implementable by key stakeholders and that evolve as new best practices are defined;*
- *Advocate for these approaches, encouraging stakeholders to play a role in the continuous improvement of tuna fisheries in ways that best suit their abilities and perspectives;*
- *Collaborate with those from all fields and backgrounds who are committed to working together to ensure the long-term sustainability of global tuna stocks and their ecosystem.*

This, the organization's first inaugural annual report, is designed to better express what ISSF is, what we seek to accomplish, and how we are working to achieve it. ISSF is committed to publishing a report each year moving forward, which we hope will become an annual marker for the progress we all make together.

We have seen much progress made in the last five years; yet we understand there is still more to accomplish. Achieving long-term tuna fishery sustainability is not an easily achievable goal. But through collaborative, committed effort that drives continuous improvement, I am confident it can be achieved.

Juan Corrales



FOSTERING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT through Collaboration

Susan Jackson, President, ISSF



They say any goal that's easy to achieve isn't worth achieving. By this standard, ISSF's goal of ensuring the long-term health and sustainability of global tuna fisheries is indeed a worthy one. And we are committed to achieving it – through collaborative approaches among engaged stakeholders that lead to continuous improvement across tuna fisheries around the globe.

To accomplish our goal, it is critical that ISSF establish, support, promote and advocate for science-based initiatives that foster implementable improvements across areas where we can have the greatest impact. Two key beliefs underpin our efforts:

1. Since no one organization can achieve tuna fishery sustainability on its own, we must work collectively with those that share our goals and wish to work together to achieve them
2. Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) – which have the necessary legal frameworks, geographic scope and membership – are best positioned to facilitate real and practical change across global tuna fisheries and should be supported, improved and strengthened

As an organization, ISSF strives to:

1. Facilitate engagement and dialogue among a diverse group of stakeholders
2. Promote understanding of and alignment on science-based approaches to tuna stock sustainability
3. Work with the parties that can make the greatest potential impacts

Refining Our Strategy

With these objectives in mind, ISSF began a comprehensive planning process to better define what we are, our role in the global sustainability community, and how we can best drive meaningful, practical, implementable progress.

We engaged stakeholders from across the expertise spectrum – environmental groups, government leaders, tuna processors, traders, vessel owners, retailers and the scientific community – to hear their perspectives and gather their insights. The result is a five-year [strategic plan](#) for the organization constructed around three core pillars:

1. Achieve Sustainability of Tuna Stocks and Their Ecosystems through Continuous Improvement – Measurably Demonstrated – Across Global Tuna Fisheries

Core Focus Areas include:

1. Promoting science-based approaches to address important issues on which the collective stakeholders can have the most positive impact:
 - a. Bycatch Mitigation
 - b. FAD Management
 - c. Capacity
 - d. Enforcement & Compliance
2. Long-Line Engagement
3. Progress Measurement and Communication

2. Maintain and Enhance Credibility through Improved Transparency and Compliance Related to All ISSF and Participating-Company Commitments – as Well as All Initiatives Directly Supported by ISSF

Core Focus Areas include:

1. Communication of Participating Company Compliance with ISSF [Conservation Measures and Commitments](#)
2. Maintaining the [Proactive Vessel Register \(PVR\)](#), a database of vessels that highlights their performance against certain conservation measures and on-water best practices

3. Exercise Market and Policy Influence in Regions and Fisheries Where Participating Companies Operate and Harvest Tuna to Directly and Positively Impact the Goal of Tuna Stock and Ecosystem Sustainability through Market Influence and RFMO Institutional and Member Advocacy

Core Focus Areas include:

1. RFMO Engagement & Advocacy
2. National Government Engagement and Advocacy
3. Market Outreach
4. Vessel Owner Engagement
5. Trader Engagement
6. Environmental Stakeholder Engagement
7. Non-Participating Company Engagement

With these pillars as a guide, we have clearly defined our approach and have set forth a path for constructive engagement that facilitates continuous improvement in global tuna stocks.

Convene. Collaborate.

ISSF's mission is dependent upon the support and actions of many. While the group of stakeholders engaged on issues of tuna stock sustainability is broad and diverse, our many common goals make working together not only practical, but essential.

Given our objectives, ISSF could be many things to many constituencies. But we believe that we best achieve our goals as a convener of common interests and a partner advocating for continuous improvement. In this role – working with others of like mind and interests – we are more focused than ever on ensuring the long-term sustainability of tuna stocks and their ecosystem.

IMPROVING FISHERY PERFORMANCE

Through Science-Based Approaches

Sustainable management of global tuna fisheries is complicated. The factors that impact tuna stocks and their ecosystem – positively or negatively – are both diverse and interconnected. The core of ISSF's mission is the principle of supporting and leveraging scientific research and analysis to better understand and address the challenges of directly improving tuna fisheries.

Working with its many stakeholders, ISSF:

- Utilizes research and insights to align on and promote science-based approaches and tools that can be tested and practically implemented
- Encourages data collection and sharing on issues where additional information is required to promote better under-

standing of issues and to support the development of new best practices

- Monitors and reports on the status and international management of global tuna fisheries and associated bycatch
- Works with other constituencies that collect and/or analyze data to encourage standardization of collection and analysis

Tracking Progress

Central to the effective management of tuna fisheries is consistent tracking and measurement. ISSF produces two reports each year that seek to provide clarity about where we stand – and how much further we still need to go – to ensure the long-term sustainability of tuna stocks:



- [ISSF's Status of the Stocks Report](#) – produced annually – provides a comprehensive analysis of tuna stocks by species.
- [The ISSF Analysis of Tuna Fisheries against Marine Stewardship Council \(MSC\) Performance Indicators \(PIs\)](#) – produced annually – provides a snapshot of the health of tuna fisheries by region, as defined by MSC PIs.

Together, these measurement tools help to define the continuous improvements being made, as well as focus attention on areas and issues that require greater attention.

Untangling FADs

Science at its best doesn't just identify and quantify a problem, it uses data and testing to find a solution. There is no greater recent example than non-entangling FADs.

Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) do not lack real benefits. They make commercial purse-seine tuna fishing more efficient by improving catch volume and reducing search time. They also generate criticism for their negative impacts on biodiversity, primarily through the unwanted bycatch of sharks and other marine life.

ISSF does not view FADs as inherently bad based on research and data currently available. However, we strongly believe that all types of fishing methods require active management and continued best-practice improvements – and FADs are no exception.

Since 2010, ISSF has been actively addressing this issue – working with scientists, fishing vessels, RFMOs and others to:

- Improve data reporting on FAD use to better understand all benefits and impacts
- Enhance monitoring of FAD use and associated bycatch
- Improve FAD design to mitigate negative impacts

This multi-year effort resulted in ISSF's [Guide for Non-Entangling FADs](#), which leveraged scientific input and real-world vessel observation to establish best practice recommendations for developing more environmentally friendly FADs that minimize the risk of unwanted bycatch.

Importantly, three RFMOs – IATTC, ICCAT and IOTC – in 2013 recommended the use of non-entangling FAD designs based in part on ISSF-supported research. ISSF, along with its many partners and stakeholders, will continue to promote understanding of FADs and encourage further process improvements toward our goal of eliminating unwanted bycatch.

What's Ahead

- Continued advocacy for non-entangling FAD design and improved data reporting
- On-water testing of escape panels in sub-surface netting and other methods designed to release sharks before they are on board

According to an ISSF-supported study, implementing non-entangling FAD best practices in the Indian Ocean alone could prevent the entanglement of up to 480,000– 960,000 silky sharks annually.



Collaboration at Sea

Bycatch mitigation is a core area of focus for ISSF. Each year, we support multiple initiatives to track, report on and minimize unwanted bycatch among purse-seine fishing vessels, as well as conduct research across all fishing methods to define and promote best practices that positively impact this important issue.

One of the most effective initiatives has been annual purse-seine vessel cruises – sponsored by ISSF – for scientific researchers to work directly with fishers to learn more about bycatch first hand and to develop and test methods for reducing bycatch. Many important learnings and best practices have resulted from this work, including:

- Targeting of bigger aggregations of desired tuna can reduce net undesired bycatch
- Good release practices onboard can save 15-20 percent of sharks encircled in purse seine nets

What's Ahead

- Four more ISSF-sponsored research cruises where scientists will focus on three main topics:
 - Passive mitigation of bycatch
 - Avoiding catch before setting
 - Release of bycatch from the net



Promoting Best Practices

Best practices matter only if they are widely understood and practiced. Each year, ISSF produces a series of skippers' workshops to share information on best practices focused on bycatch mitigation. Since 2009, these events have reached more than 300 skippers and more than 250 stakeholders, including ship owners, cannery executives and fleet managers. Since the beginning of 2013, ISSF held workshops in Ghana, Peru, Ecuador, Panama, Taiwan, South Korea and Spain.

To support this effort, ISSF has developed and distributed [electronic guidebooks](#) – available in multiple languages – that dispense the information shared in these workshops for both purse seine and long line vessels.



SHOWING CLEAR SUPPORT

ISSF and its participating companies and partners understand that a collective commitment to tuna stock sustainability is underpinned by both action and

transparency. That is, concrete actions that drive continuous improvement across tuna fisheries; and transparency in the sense of providing clear evidence of actions taken.



Meeting Commitments

ISSF participating companies have agreed to meet a number of conservation measures and commitments that are independently audited and designed to improve the long-term health of tuna fisheries.

Conservation measures in effect as of 31 December 2013:

ISSF Conservation Measures & Commitments

No transactions in tuna caught by vessels on RFMO IUU list

Provide data to RFMO scientific bodies

Warrant that tuna products comply with ISSF resolution 09-01 – IUU Fishing – & upon discovery of a violation, will withdraw product from the marketplace

Trace tuna products from capture to plate

No transactions in tuna caught by vessels not on the authorized vessel record of the RFMO

No transactions in tuna caught by vessels subject to RFMO listing & capable of being registered by IMO that have not registered with IMO and received an IMO UVI

No transactions in tuna caught by large-scale pelagic driftnets

Establish & publish company policy prohibiting shark finning

No transactions with companies that carry out shark finning or do not have a policy prohibiting shark finning

No transactions with vessels that have been determined to have been conducting shark finning for a period of 2 years after the conclusion of the investigation making such determination, provided there are no further incidents

ISSF Conservation Measures & Commitments

No transshipment at sea, whether high seas, EEZ, territorial waters or archipelagic water

Must be flagged to a member or cooperating non-member of the relevant RFMO or have applied for such status

Must have a UVI regardless of RFMO vessel registry listing requirements such as size and fishing area

Skippers are ISSF trained: participate in training on best practice

Observer on at least one trip for large scale vessels during 2013

Retain all tuna caught, except those unfit for human consumption, on at least one trip with an observer onboard in 2013

No transactions in skipjack, bigeye & yellowfin tuna caught by large scale purse seiners that are not actively fishing for tuna as of 31-Dec-12 (except for those vessels under contract for construction on or before 31-Dec-12 with construction completed by 30-Jun-15)

Submit CEO Certificate of Compliance (ISSF Participating Companies Only)

Participating Company Compliance

ISSF participating companies have committed to clearly demonstrating compliance with ISSF conservation measures and commitments.

See the [ISSF Report of Conservation Measure and Commitment Compliance for 2013 audit results](#).

Proactive Vessel Register (PVR)

An important component of supporting transparency is the ProActive Vessel Register (PVR), created by ISSF to provide vessel owners with an opportunity to identify themselves as active participants in meaningful tuna sustainability efforts. At the same time, the PVR provides validated information to tuna purchasers and interested stakeholders that reflect the steps each vessel is taking in implementing a series of commitments designed to improve tuna fishing practices. The PVR does not provide an endorsement of the vessels listed on it; rather, it measures individual vessel performance against a defined set of conservation measures.

At ISSF, we believe the PVR is the most effective mechanism currently available that transparently identifies – among the vast and disparate global tuna fishing fleet – those individual vessels that are implementing science-based, sustainable tuna fishing practices. By tracking compliance by individual vessel – validated through third-party auditing – the PVR offers interested stakeholders the credible information they seek to inform their programs, procurement and decisions.



*All participating companies
with controlled
purse seine tuna vessels
include those vessels
on the PVR.*



Exercising Influence THROUGH ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT

One important outcome of ISSF's [strategic plan](#) is the greater emphasis placed on activating market and policy influence – both through the direct efforts of the organization and its participants, and by encouraging interested stakeholders to do the same. 2013 was year one of ISSF's heightened focus on advocacy and engagement, which has led the organization to:

- Strengthen its RFMO and member government outreach and advocacy efforts
- Actively seek greater engagement from vessel owners, traders and non-participating companies
- Work with all stakeholders to better align efforts on those priorities that are both impactful and attainable

The purpose of these collective efforts is to become more active advocates for continuous improvements that advance the goal we share with many partners and stakeholders – long-term sustainability of global tuna stocks and their ecosystem.

Outcome Driven Advocacy

Central to ISSF's advocacy efforts is the position that international mechanisms such as RFMOs are the only vehicles with the legal framework, mandate, membership and geographic scope necessary to drive real change in behaviors and practices that positively impact tuna stocks and their ecosystem. Therefore, ISSF engages scientists, environmental organizations, participating companies, vessel owners and others to encourage science-based conservation and management actions through RFMOs and their member governments, while also seeking to improve the functioning of RFMOs themselves when appropriate.

These efforts advance both [ISSF's strategic plan](#) and our identified global priorities – as reflected in ISSF conservation measures and commitments – and seek specific outcomes for each RFMO that support science-based, continuous improvement across global tuna fisheries.

ISSF 2013 Global Advocacy Priorities

- *Harvest control rules and biological reference points*
- *FAD management and non-entangling FAD designs*
- *Cap purse seine fishing capacity*
- *Compliance and transparency*
- *Full tuna retention*
- *Purse seine observer coverage*
- *Improved data reporting*

Advocacy in Action – IMO Numbers

Advocacy is often a multi-stakeholder, multi-year effort. But it can support positive change, as this example indicates:

*IOTC, ICCAT & WCPFC:
In 2012 ISSF Position Statement
first calls for the adoption of
IMO numbers or UVIs*

*In 2013, proposals were tabled
with IOTC, ICCAT and WCPFC
to make IMO numbers
mandatory to be on the RFMO
Authorized Vessel Record*

*In 2013 three RFMOs – IOTC, ICCAT
and WCPFC – adopted a requirement that,
by 2015 or 2016, certain vessels must have
an IMO number to be on the RFMO
Authorized Vessel Record.*

At the end of 2011, 12% of large-scale purse seine tuna vessels had a publicly known IMO number. Today, 88% do.



2013 Outcomes by Region

Among important accomplishments made by RFMOs for which ISSF, our partners and engaged stakeholders have advocated include:

Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)

- Resolution requiring collection of specific FAD data (effective 2015)
- Recommendation for use of non-entangling FAD designs (effective 2014)
- Requirement that vessel larger than 24 meters have an International Maritime Organization (IMO) number (effective 2015)
- Resolution prohibiting retention of oceanic white-tip sharks and the intentional setting of purse nets around cetaceans (effective immediately)
- Resolution setting interim biological reference points and a work plan for developing harvest control rules

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

- Resolution requiring collection of specific FAD data (effective 2015)
- Recommendation for use of non-entangling FAD designs (effective immediately)
- Agreement to hold Target Capacity Workshop in 2014

International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

- Resolution requiring collection of specific FAD data (effective 2014 for developed States; 1 January 2015 for developing States)
- Recommendation encouraging use of non-entangling FAD designs (effective immediately)
- Requirement that vessels larger than 20 meters have an IMO number (effective 2016)

Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)

- Establishment of provisions for FAD closures and FAD set limits
- Resolution prohibiting retention of silky sharks (effective 1 July 2014)
- Requirement that vessels at least 100 GT or 100 GRT in size have an IMO number or LR numbers issued to them (effective 1 January 2016)
- Capacity freezes for developed State flagged large-scale purse and longline fishing vessels (with freezing capacity)
- Establishment of provisions for the development of a scheme to reduce overcapacity without constraining developing coastal States, and the transfer of capacity from developed to developing coastal States including market-based mechanisms for the voluntary transfer

Activating Advocacy

ISSF utilizes a number of tools and activities in advocating for science-based conservation and management action through RFMOs, and to improve RFMO performance:

- Position statements developed and distributed in advance of each RFMO meeting, reinforce by an ISSF presence at each meeting
- Materials for participating companies with specific messaging by RFMO, aligned to ISSF global priorities
- Outreach to MSC client fisheries to explain ISSF positions and to offer assistance for meeting certifications and conditions
- Direct outreach to RFMO member governments
- Coordination of RFMO outreach and positions with environmental NGO partners in advance of meetings to maximize collective impact
- Presentations, side events, articles, letters, e-newsletters, infographics, blogs, communication of technical reports

Advocacy in Action – Non-Entangling FADs

*Advocacy is often a multi-stakeholder, multi-year effort.
But it can encourage positive and, at times, rapid, policy changes,
as this example indicates:*

Building on observations from earlier research, in 2010, ISSF begins work with scientists and fishing vessels to develop ways to mitigate significant estimated shark mortality due to entanglement in FADs in the Indian Ocean

In 2012, based on the recommendations of its Scientific Committee, ISSF publishes a Guide to Non-Entangling FADs, disseminates it to all RFMOs and the ISSF RFMO position statements call for the adoption of and use of non-entangling FAD designs by purse seine fleets

In 2013, three RFMOs – IOTC, IATTC and ICCAT – adopt recommendation for the use, by purse seine vessels, of non-entangling FAD designs, consistent with the ISSF Guidelines



805 15th Street NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20005 | iss-foundation.org