



Introduction

Many important fisheries are not yet able to meet the standards of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or other international arbiters of sustainability. For many major seafood buyers and producers, this is a dilemma: they need the products of these fisheries, but they are committed to sustainability in their sourcing.

Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) fills a critical gap by helping problem fisheries meet the environmental requirements of major markets-and by utilizing the power of the private sector to get the job done.

A Fishery Improvement Partnership (FIP) is an alliance of buyers, suppliers and producers that work together to improve a fishery by pressing for better policies and management while voluntarily changing purchasing and fishing practices to reduce problems such as illegal fishing, bycatch and habitat impacts.

Strategy Snapshot:

Each fishery is different, and can improve at a different pace. Each Fishery Improvement Partnership (FIP) is tailored to fit the specifics of each fishery, but has the same basic process and elements that must be achieved.

1. SFP gathers information on the status and sustainability needs of the fishery, and reports initial findings and recommendations openly on FishSource (www.fishsource.org). SFP encourages each fishery to confirm the impartiality, completeness and accuracy of these recommendations, by undertaking a formal MSC pre-assessment.
2. Major buyers are engaged along with their suppliers. SFP organizes meetings between buyers and suppliers to build mutual understanding. We negotiate long term objectives and short-term improvement milestones to be achieved and develop a work plan for the next 6 to 12 months.
3. As trust grows, SFP works with the lead participating companies to form the FIP and invite other companies to join. The FIP then agrees on the “steps to sustainability, and implements procurement policies (e.g., to cut down on over-quota fishing and mitigate the impacts of certain fishing gears) and education, training and outreach activities to encourage governments to improve policies and strengthen management.



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4. SFP then monitors and reports on the progress of the work, its impact, and the physical results or outcomes in the water:

- Process indicators include: improvement needs articulated to policy-makers, common procurement rules are communicated to suppliers.
- Impact indicators include: reduction in illegal fishing, increased use of lower impact fishing gears, changes in sourcing according to procurement policies, fisheries policies and management practices improved.
- Outcome indicators include: increasing fish stock biomass, declining by-catch, increasing populations of critically endangered species impacted by the fishery.

Current Fishery Improvement Partnerships

- Russian Pollock
- Barents Sea Cod
- Gulf of California Shrimp
- Baltic Cod
- Argentine Hake
- Chilean Hake
- Chilean Hoki
- Argentine Hoki
- Gulf of Mexico Shrimp
- Indonesia Blue Swimming Crab
- Russian Far East Salmon

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