



Fishery Improvement Projects: The Transition to Sustainable Fishing

Our living planet is only as healthy as its oceans. Unfortunately, its reserves are overdrawn, threatening countless communities with climate, economic, and food insecurities. Increasing the use of sustainable fishing practices offers promise for improving the health of important marine ecosystems, which has benefits for both people and planet.

Across the seafood supply chain, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is working with retailers, food service companies, manufacturers, and suppliers to responsibly source seafood from fisheries that are Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified. WWF recognizes the MSC standard as the leading program to ensure wild-caught fisheries are well managed and sustainable. Seafood buyers are using their purchasing power to encourage non-certified fisheries to engage in fishery improvement projects (FIPs) as a tool to transition toward sustainability. A FIP draws together fishers, industry, researchers, government and non-governmental organizations like WWF to help improve fishing practices and management. Through a transparent and comprehensive approach, the FIP will increase a fishery's level of sustainability and help it meet the requirements of the MSC standard.

How a FIP Works

WWF uses a stepwise approach to identify sustainability issues in a fishery, implement improvements, and report on results.

Stage 1 Scoping & Development	Stage 2 Workplan & Launch	Stage 3 Implementation	Stage 4 Improvements in Fishing Practices or Management	Stage 5 On the Water Change
The fishery's performance is evaluated against the MSC standard and stakeholders are recruited to participate in the project.	Project participants and workplan are finalized and posted publicly. An associated budget must be adopted by the participants.	The fishery takes action addressing its shortcomings, tracks its progress to increase transparency, and course corrects if needed.	The fishery has modified fishing practices, or improved fisheries policy or management.	The fishery has achieved verifiable improvements on the water, such as reduced fishing mortality, habitat impacts, and bycatch.

In addition to improving fishing practices, engaging in a FIP may ensure access to key markets, including buyers who are committed to sustainable sourcing.

Learn More

There's been tremendous progress toward increasing sustainable fishing in recent years, but much more work remains to be done. WWF provides ongoing support for FIPs, offering technical support and increased market awareness and recognition.

For more information, please visit <http://seafoodsustainability.org> or contact info@seafoodsustainability.org.