

Working Together  
for Seafood Sustainability

# Kroger Seafood Sustainability Report

2009 – 2020





# PROTECTING OUR OCEANS TOGETHER

## WWF and Kroger Partner for Sustainable Seafood

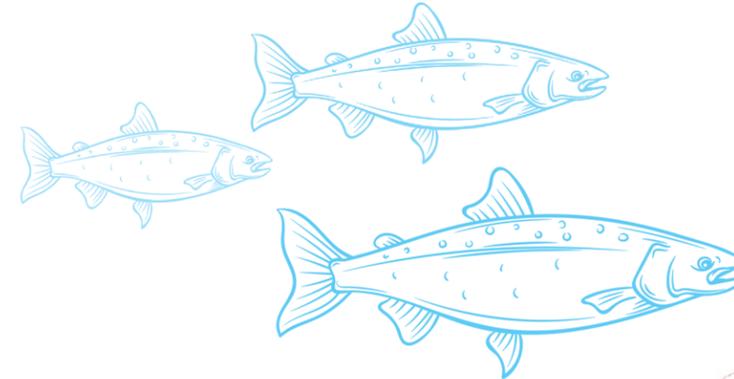
### History of Partnership

As one of the first major US grocery retailers to publicly commit to a seafood sustainability policy, Kroger was instrumental in leading and inspiring others within the industry to act. When Kroger launched their partnership with WWF in 2009 to drive improvements throughout their seafood supply chain, it energized the sector, putting into motion a more sustainable future for our ocean's fisheries.

At the onset of the partnership, WWF assessed the environmental sustainability of Kroger's procurement by conducting a detailed analysis of sourcing locations for wild-caught species and a rapid assessment of the health and environmental impacts of the associated fisheries to identify and develop recommendations for areas of improvement.

In 2011, Kroger made a public commitment to ensuring the sustainability of their top 20 species by volume by the end of 2015.

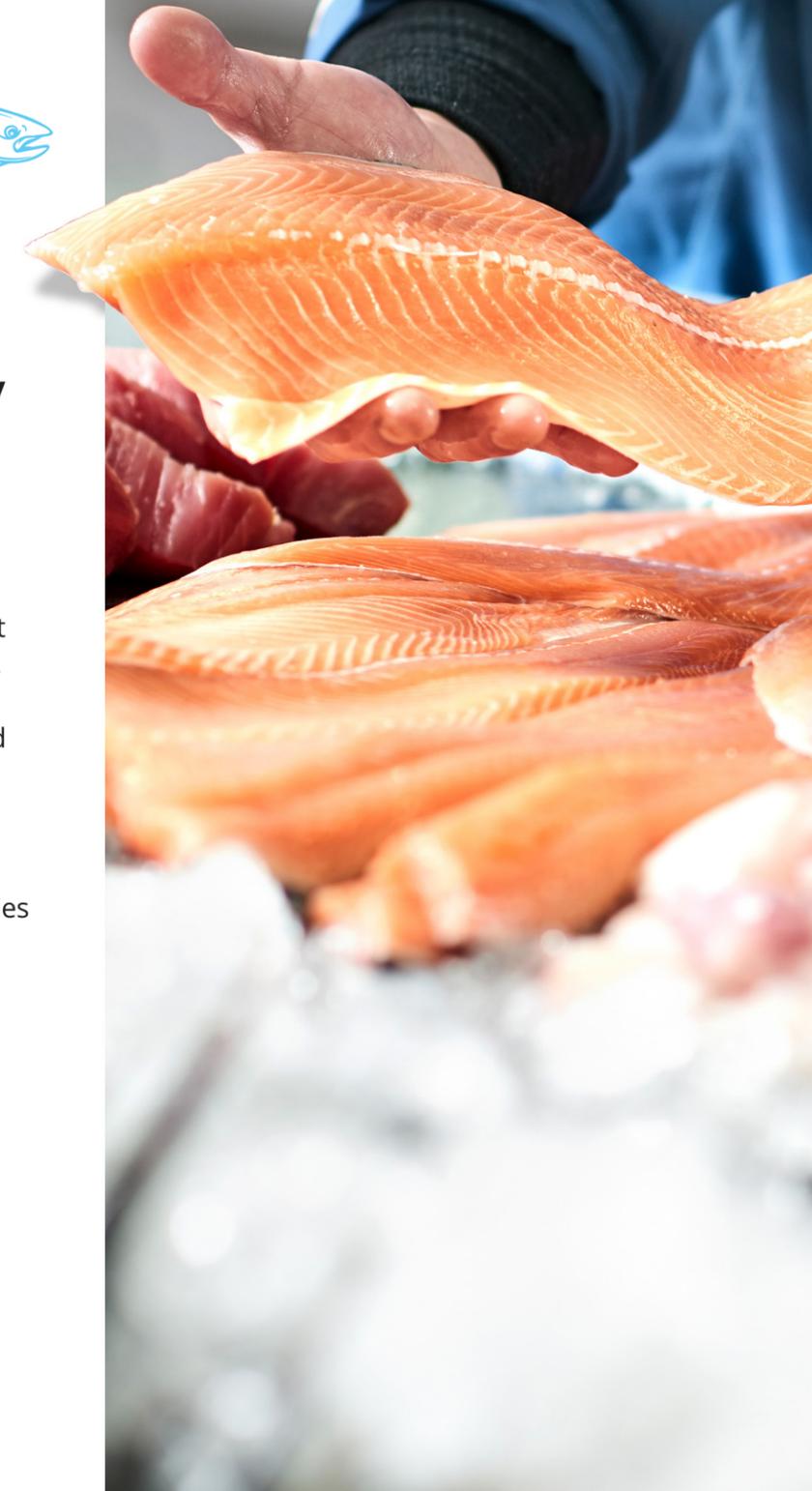
In 2016, Kroger expanded upon the goal by publicly committing to sourcing 100% of their wild-caught seafood from fisheries that are Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified, in MSC full assessment, in comprehensive Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs), or certified by other Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative-recognized programs.



### Kroger's 2020 Seafood Sustainability Commitment

At present, Kroger has publicly committed to the following:

- Kroger will source 100% of wild-caught seafood in their Seafood Department from fisheries that are Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified, in MSC full assessment, in comprehensive Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs), or certified by other GSSI-recognized programs, by 2020.
- Kroger will preferentially source MSC certified wild-caught seafood and, by 2020, Kroger will source at least 90% of their volume from fisheries that are MSC certified.
- Kroger maintains their commitment to source 100% of shelf-stable tuna from companies aligned with the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF).
- Kroger will source 100% of farm-raised seafood from farms that are Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP) 2-star or greater certified, Aquaculture Stewardship (ASC) certified, or GLOBALG.A.P certified, by 2020.



# KROGER'S ACHIEVEMENTS

## Kroger's Commitment Progress

For wild capture, Kroger continues to make progress towards attaining their sustainable seafood sourcing goal. Since the inception of the partnership with WWF, Kroger has more than doubled the volume of wild-caught seafood that meets their commitment. Kroger is currently 88% of the way to meeting their wild-caught seafood commitment.

For shelf-stable tuna, Kroger has met their 100% goal of sourcing from tuna companies that are part of the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) and following its conservation measures.

For farmed seafood, Kroger is 96% of the way to meeting their farmed-raised seafood commitment. This also includes product that is ASC certified, which WWF considers to be the most credible, robust aquaculture certification program.

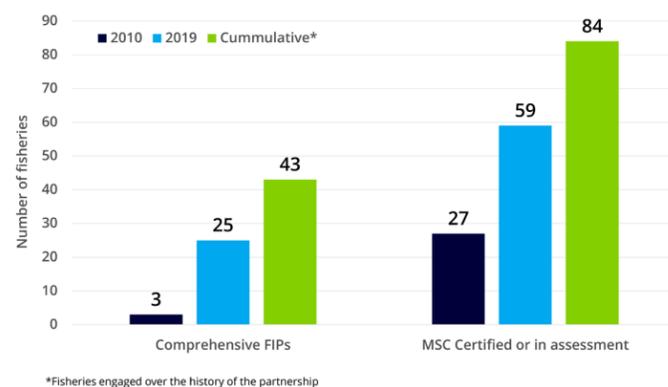
### Kroger's CY2019 Wild-caught Overview



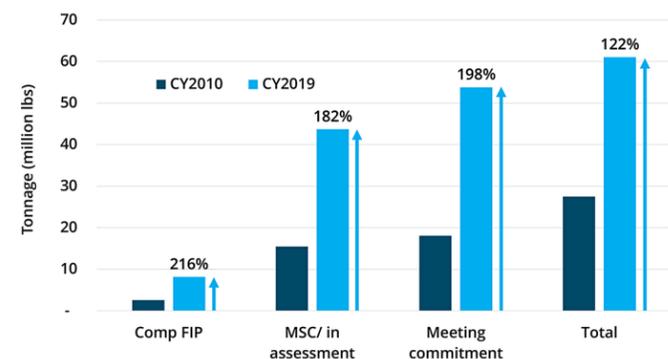
CY19	
Category	% of Total Vol.
MSC	71%
MSC FA	1%
GSSI	3%
FIP	13%

## Over the Years: Kroger's Sourcing

Kroger increasing the number of fisheries working towards sustainability



Kroger increasing the volume of seafood towards sustainability



## Driving Change on the Water

Kroger is a clear leader in driving global fisheries towards more sustainable practices as one of the largest US supporters of Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs). Since the beginning of the partnership with WWF, Kroger has cumulatively engaged 43 FIPs through sourcing, funding or both. As a FIP participant in WWF-led FIPs, Kroger has contributed approximately \$500,000 in funding, which has supported 18 FIPs and 1 rapid assessment – an analysis of strategically important fishery species mapping the potential for fishery improvement and third-party certification. Thanks to this support, several of the fisheries have been able to enter assessment for certification to the MSC Fisheries Standard.

Over the course of the partnership, the fisheries supported by Kroger through improvement projects have covered 52 million pounds of seafood.

Kroger's active involvement as a FIP participant not only drives change on the water and through the supply chain, but it directly and indirectly supports hundreds of thousands of people in fishing communities around the world who depend on fish for their livelihood; well over 300,000 fishers and other local people are employed within the communities associated with WWF FIPs supported by Kroger.

## Leading Efforts for Tuna Conservation

Over the last year, Kroger has raised the bar on their sustainability commitment for shelf-stable tuna by introducing several tuna products that are MSC certified with Chain of Custody (CoC) certification and that bear the MSC ecolabel on the can. This traceability from bait to plate means that products can carry the MSC label and customers can make purchases that can be traced all the way back to a MSC certified fishery.

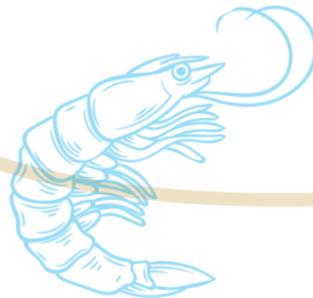
Kroger demonstrated their leadership in tuna advocacy by signing on to support global efforts asking country delegates within key tuna Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) to adopt measures that are critical to tuna conservation. As a result, several key measures have been adopted, including a binding requirement for the use of lower-entangling Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) designs to catch tuna. The use of these lower-entangling FADs helps to reduce the incidental catch of sharks, sea turtles, dolphinfish, billfish, and other finfish, while targeting tuna stocks. Today, all four tuna RFMOs have adopted this requirement.

# Kroger TIMELINE OF COMMITMENTS

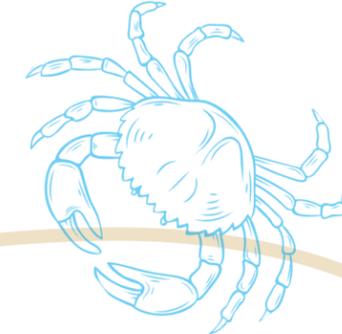
## October 2009

WWF assisted Kroger in assessing current sourcing of the company's top 20 wild-caught seafood species in order to develop a sustainable seafood sourcing strategy.

2009



2011



## April 2011

Kroger set a goal of sourcing 100% of their top 20 wild-caught species from sources that are certified by the MSC, in MSC full assessment, or involved in a WWF-led FIP by the end of 2015.

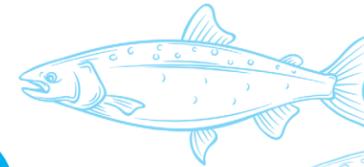
2015



## December 2015

Kroger reached 83% of their 2011 commitment and set a new goal for sustainable seafood that expanded upon their previous commitment and included additional sourcing targets.

2016

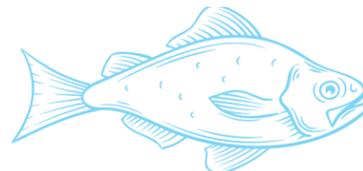


## July 2016

Kroger set a new public commitment with the following goals:

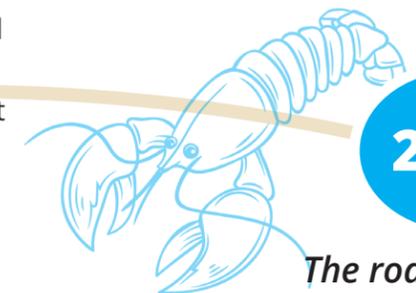
- Kroger will source 100% of their wild-caught seafood from fisheries that are MSC certified, in MSC full assessment, in comprehensive FIPs, or certified by other GSSI-recognized programs by 2020; Kroger will preferentially source MSC certified wild-caught seafood and, by 2020, source at least 90% of their volume from fisheries that are MSC certified.
- Kroger will maintain their commitment to source 100% of shelf-stable tuna from companies aligned with the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF); All Our Brands canned tuna will state that the tuna is sourced from ISSF-participating companies.
- Kroger will source 100% of farm-raised seafood from farms that are Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP) 2-star or greater certified, Aquaculture Stewardship (ASC) certified, or GLOBALG.A.P certified, by 2020.

today



Kroger has more than doubled the volume of wild-caught seafood that meets their commitment and is 88% of the way to meeting their MSC certified wild-caught seafood commitment; Kroger has met their 100% goal of sourcing from ISSF-participating tuna companies following ISSF conservation measures; Kroger is 96% of the way to meeting their farmed-raised seafood commitment, which includes product that is ASC certified.

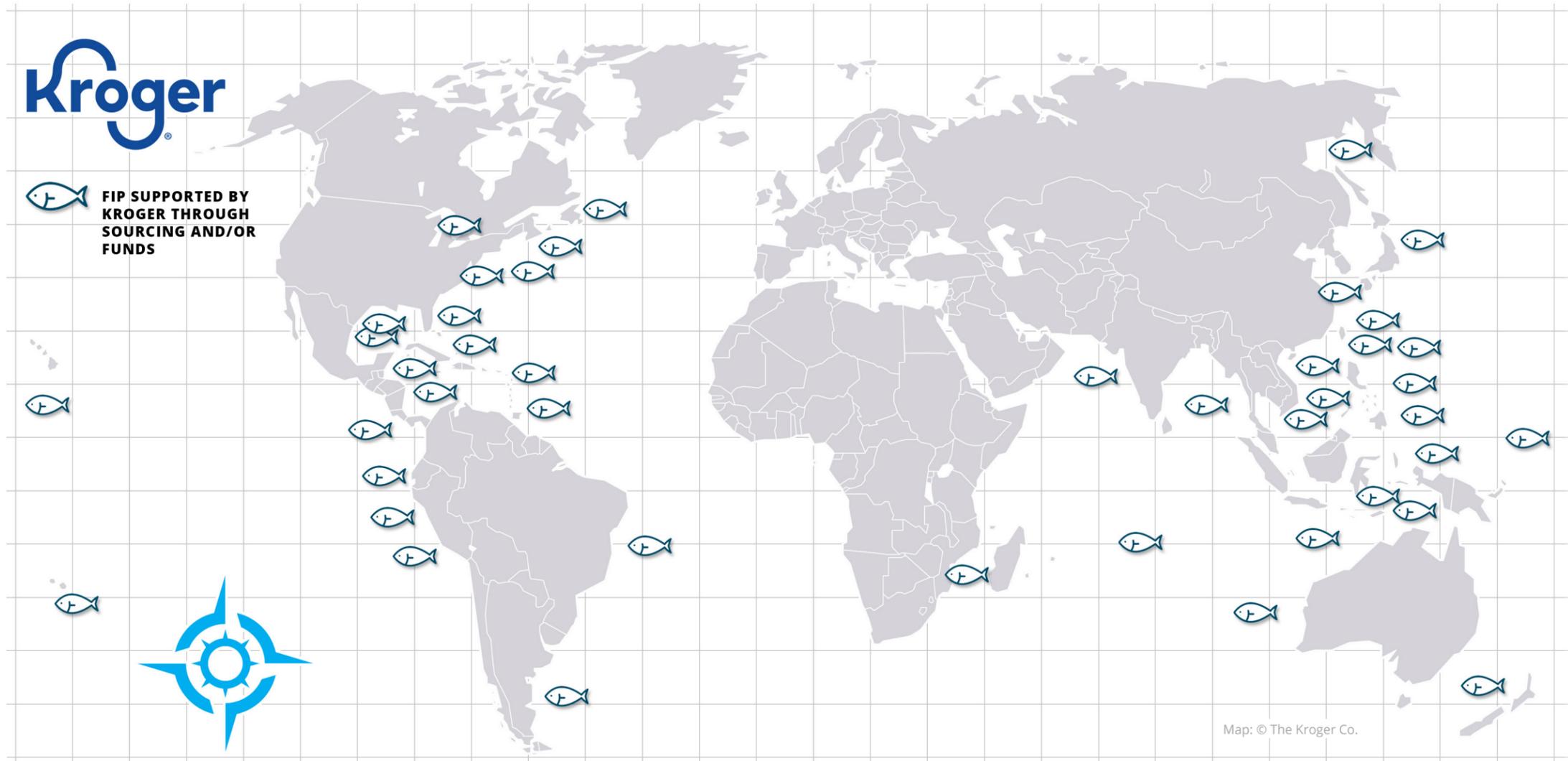
2021



*The road ahead...*



# SUPPORTING FISHERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (FIPs)



## Securing a Sustainable Future for Peru's Mahi Fishery

The Peruvian mahi mahi fishery is one of the country's most important artisanal fisheries. For the more than 4,000 fishermen that work in this region, it is the core element of their livelihood and a vital source of income. The fishery also serves as a key link in the marine food chain, providing sustenance for not only people, but sharks, dolphins, and other ocean predators.

Kroger has supported the WWF Peru mahi Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) since the start of the FIP in 2013. In 2017, a representative from Kroger visited the fishery to engage with fishermen and see first hand how their contributions have supported improvements on the water. Since then, a considerable amount of progress has been made to improve upon the sustainability of the fishery and improve the quality of life for local fishing communities.

In December 2019, the Peruvian government approved the National Plan of Action for the Conservation of Sea Turtles, which WWF-Peru helped to develop. The plan aims to reduce bycatch of endangered marine turtles in the mahi longline fishery by strengthening government inter-institutional monitoring and management to ensure fishers use bycatch reduction techniques. To better define the boundaries of the Eastern Pacific Ocean stock to promote sustainable practices, the Peruvian Institute of the Sea is working with processors to conduct genetic sampling of mahi. In addition, the Peruvian Navy is piloting the use of TrazApp, WWF's mobile electronic catch documentation system, to better monitor the permitting process, as well as departure and arrival of fishing vessels. TrazApp is also being tested by the Ministry of Production for integration with a traceability system that tracks products from the processing plant to export, which would allow products to be digitally traced along the entire supply chain.

Additional priority activities that are expected to occur include: developing mahi fishery management regulations to implement the National mahi Action Plan issued in 2016; training fishers to reduce sea turtle bycatch; working with authorities to speed up the permitting process for unlicensed mahi vessels; continuing to scale up the use of TrazApp with fishers, landing sites, government, and processors; and working with the Peruvian government to agree to a binational action plan with Ecuador to jointly manage mahi.

Thanks to the support from Kroger, the fishery continues to improve fishing practices and management to increase its performance and help it meet the requirements of the MSC standard. This long-term investment by Kroger for the health of the fishery is well aligned to Kroger's commitment to provide seafood for generations to come.



Photo: © LFPuntel / Getty

*"As one of the largest supporters of FIPs in the US, Kroger is a leader in driving true change on the water. Their commitment to support fishery transition will help support fishermen, local communities, and governments working to safeguard marine wildlife, the natural environment, and the livelihoods of people who depend on ocean resources."*

— Caroline Tippett, Sr Director of Seafood Markets at WWF

**43** Number of FIPs Kroger has supported through funding, sourcing, or both

**52 MILLION** Pounds of seafood covered through fishery improvement projects supported by Kroger

**300,000+** Fishers and other local people employed within the communities associated with WWF FIPs supported by Kroger



Kroger



## THE ROAD AHEAD

Today, there is a clear opportunity to build on the work of over a decade of partnership to affect global change in both wild capture and farmed seafood. By combining our efforts, WWF and Kroger will continue to encourage the seafood sector to improve the sustainability of their seafood offering and use their market leverage to influence consumer behavior. As we look to the future, WWF will continue to support Kroger's leadership in building upon a solid foundation of work and progress towards goals that support more sustainable, responsible, and traceable food systems.

To help conserve marine ecosystems and protect the livelihoods of the millions of people who depend on them, WWF will continue to identify opportunities to transition fisheries to more sustainable means through Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) and will provide tools for Kroger to leverage. We also seek to involve the entire value chain in supporting FIPs to increase fishery performance and decrease negative impacts on the water.

As aquaculture continues to grow, the demand for farm-raised seafood is also expected to rise. We seek to engage on important issues facing the aquaculture industry such as traceability and conversion-free mangroves for farmed shrimp, the most economically valuable traded seafood product in the world.

Seafood sustainability continues to evolve and there are additional areas where Kroger can lend their influence to affect global change. WWF looks forward to continuing our partnership and building on the progress made to date. Together we can safeguard marine wildlife, the natural environment, and the livelihoods of people who depend on the oceans and coastal environments for their wellbeing.

*"Kroger's commitment to sustainable seafood is not only good business, it is good for the oceans. As one of the largest seafood grocery retailers in the world, Kroger is using their influence to increase the quality and quantity of sustainable fisheries in every corner of the globe. Kroger has demonstrated their leadership with transparency by communicating the value of sustainable seafood to their customers, publicly sharing their sourcing goals, and reporting their progress to date."*

— Michael Griff, Manager of Seafood Engagement at WWF



### **Why we are here**

To conserve nature and reduce the most pressing threats to the diversity of life on Earth and to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature.

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[www.seafoodsustainability.org](http://www.seafoodsustainability.org)