

News release

GREENPEACE

Greenpeace urges consumers and investors around the globe to avoid Thai Union Group canned tuna

As a key market, Canadian tuna products potentially connected to forced labour, human rights abuses and environmental devastation

5 October 2015 (Vancouver) – Today, Greenpeace launched a global campaign demanding that the world's largest canned tuna company, Thai Union Group, take urgent and far-reaching steps to eliminate labour abuse and destructive and wasteful fishing practices from its supply chains. Thai Union Group considers Canada a key market, and is in the process of attempting to acquire Canada's biggest tuna brand – Clover Leaf.

"We can no longer allow Thai Union Group and its brands around the world to sacrifice the world's oceans and jeopardize workers at sea," said Greenpeace USA Seafood Markets Lead Graham Forbes. "For far too long Thai Union Group has passed the blame onto others and hidden behind ineffective policies. Until this industry giant takes responsibility and demonstrates real leadership, we will work to ensure that every single customer knows it's not just tuna that comes with purchasing one of its tainted brands."

In response to [investigations](#) and [media reports](#) connecting Thai Union Group to human rights abuses, forced labour and destructive fishing methods, Greenpeace on Friday sent a letter to the company demanding a detailed work plan and schedule for moving toward lower-impact fishing techniques and increased oversight, traceability and transparency at sea. Thai Union Group and its subsidiary brands primarily catch tuna using two fishing methods, purse seining with fish aggregating devices (FADs) and longlining. These methods result in high levels of bycatch of sharks, turtles, juvenile tuna and seabirds, and are often associated with illegal fishing and violations of human and workers' rights.

Greenpeace also sent an investor brief to Thai Union Group shareholders to inform them of the risks associated with the company. Implications in human rights abuses and forced labour have brought reputational and legal risks, as three class-action lawsuits have already named Thai Union Group as the supplier. The brief also warned that destructive fishing methods and overfishing threaten the company's ability to sustain revenue into the future.

The bulk of tuna products found on Canadian supermarkets shelves are currently canned in Thailand. Preliminary research has shown that various product lines have links to Thai Union.

"As Canada's major buyers and sellers of canned tuna start to look at the sustainability of their canned tuna products, more attention needs to be given to the social responsibility side of their procurement," said Sarah King, Greenpeace Canada Senior oceans strategist. "With most of the tuna found on supermarket shelves being canned in Thailand, the burden of proof is on retailers and brands to ensure their supply chains are not linked to human rights abuses, starting by determining whether Thai Union Group supplies their tuna and putting pressure on them to make serious changes to its policies and supply chains."

Earlier this year, the European Union (EU) issued a yellow card against Thailand, putting the country on formal notice for its failure to take action against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Labour abuses are often closely associated with IUU fishing. As the largest seafood company in

Thailand, Thai Union Group's actions could help determine whether the country is issued a red card, which would mean a complete ban of Thai fisheries products in the EU market.

In the US, the 2015 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report maintained Thailand at the bottom-ranked tier 3 level and noted the Thai fishing industry as a problem area. The annual report places countries onto one of three tiers based on the extent of their efforts to comply with "minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking." In addition to action from Thailand's government, industry giants like Thai Union Group could help avoid future sanctions by taking steps to clean up seafood supply chains.

Greenpeace has ranked Thai Union Group brands in its canned tuna rankings for major markets around the world. Greenpeace Canada's [latest tuna ranking](#) found that Thai Union Group potential new brand, Clover Leaf, in last position. Greenpeace Canada's [Sustainable Canned Tuna Guide application](#) features some of Thai Union Group's owned brands, along with other brands with links to the company. Greenpeace is campaigning to transform the global tuna industry, starting with Thai Union Group.

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For more information about the campaign, click here: <http://tuna.greenpeace.org/>

To access the investor brief sent to Thai Union Group's shareholders, click here:

http://us.greenpeace.org/site/DocServer/Thai_Union_Investor_Brief.pdf/1580047474?docID=861&verID=1

To view the most recent canned tuna ranking for Canada, click here: greenpeace.ca/tunaranking

To download the Sustainable Canned Tuna Guide, click here: greenpeace.ca/tunaapp