

Lifting the lid on the major canned tuna brands in Canada:

Ranking the sustainability and equitability of tuna sourcing
2011 edition



GREENPEACE

greenpeace.ca



GREENPEACE

Author

Sarah King

Copy editor

Cheryl Johnstone

Design

Elysha Poirier

Acknowledgments

A huge thanks to Shane Moffat for all his work on research and profile development, to Aube Giroux, Anil Kanji and Anna Raugalis for their help with photos, and to Brian Blomme, Cat Dorey, Stephanie Goodwin, Giorgia Monti, Nina Thullen and Sari Tolvanen for their valued input.

Published by Greenpeace Canada

February 2011

ISBN 978-0-9810375-6-1

Printed on 100 percent post-consumer recycled, chlorine-free paper.

▲ A turtle swims around a FAD near the northern Galapagos Islands. © Alex Hofford / Greenpeace

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Like the rest of our favourite fish, global tuna stocks are on the decline. Media outlets worldwide have covered the plight of the prized bluefin tuna that is at the core of the luxury sashimi market, but less attention has been given to the tuna found in the stacks of cans lining local supermarket shelves.

The depletion of the tuna stocks most commonly targeted for canning has been recorded by scientists over many years. Today, there is the real possibility that commercial extinction of these species could be around the corner if action to curb overfishing is not taken immediately. But fishing pressure continues to grow and so too does the number of industrial fleets moving into the last tuna-rich areas, including the Western and Central Pacific.

Plagued by destructive fishing methods that are threatening species at risk, by pirate fishing and by unfair returns to those who depend on the seas for their livelihoods, the tuna industry may unpleasantly surprise consumers with the discovery of the extent of ocean destruction represented in their cans.

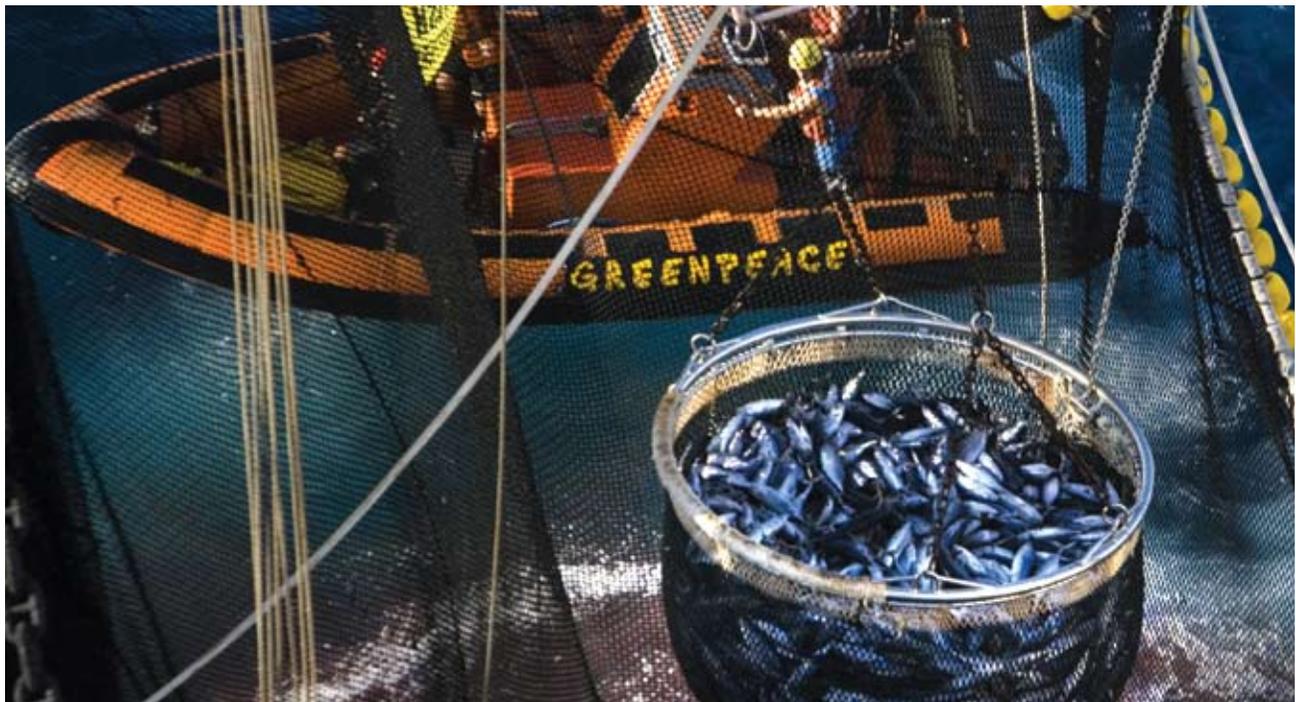
A survey of fourteen major tuna brands sold in Canada reveals that when it comes to providing sustainable and equitable tuna, few companies have turned intentions into action. As a result of the global sustainable seafood movement and rising expectations of retailers, many tuna brand companies have some sort of sustainable

procurement policy in place, but too few have actually made any real changes to their tuna sourcing practices.

Wild Planet landed on the top of the stack as one of only two companies that received a passing grade. Wild Planet takes care to use more-sustainable gear to minimize impacts on other species and is fully transparent with its customers about where and how its tuna is caught. However, concerns remain about the stocks being sourced from. Unico came in last after not responding to Greenpeace's questionnaire and having no publicly available information suggesting any type of policy or sustainability commitment. The house brands of Canada's major supermarkets were found to place in the middle, their companies committed to improvement on tuna but still involved in the investigation phase, most lacking real action. Well-known national brands were scattered throughout, some of whose companies were more willing to cooperate than others.

On the whole, the results demonstrate that most companies need to take immediate action to stop sourcing from imperiled stocks such as yellowfin, stop sourcing from destructive fishing methods that waste precious marine life, and ensure that fishing operators pay a fair price for their fishing licenses from the coastal states whose resources they exploit.

Tuna fish for the future means fair and sustainable tuna fishing now.



▲
A scoop of tuna and bycatch from the net of the Albatun Tres, the world's largest purse seiner.
© Paul Hilton / Greenpeace

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive summary	3
Introduction	5
What's really in your tuna can?	6
Destructive tuna fishing—the hidden catch	6
Stolen fish—inequitable and unfair fisheries	7
Taking stock of canned tuna	8
Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>)	8
Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>)	8
Albacore tuna (<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>)	8
Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>)	9
Tongol/Longtail tuna (<i>Thunnus tongol</i>)	9
Greenpeace's 2011 tuna brand ranking	10
A tuna ranking overview	10
How does your tuna brand rank?	10
Wild Planet Foods	11
Raincoast Trading	12
Ocean Fisheries, Ltd.	13
Metro	14
Sobeys	15
Loblaw Companies, Ltd.	16
Walmart	17
Canadian Fishing Company	18
Overwaitea Food Group	19
Safeway, Inc.	20
Clover Leaf Seafoods Company	21
Bolton Alimentari Italia S.p.A.	22
Pastene, Inc.	23
Unico, Inc.	24
Protecting the future of tuna	26
References / Endnotes	27

INTRODUCTION

Canned tuna has long been a staple lunch food for many Canadians. Tuna fish sandwiches introduced many children to the meat of the sea and satisfied parents as a healthy, low-cost protein option. But what we have found out in recent years is that the true cost of our love affair with tuna is much more than \$1.99 a can, particularly for the millions of coastal peoples who depend on tuna and for the hundreds of thousands of other marine species that are collateral damage in destructive tuna fisheries.

The true ecological and social cost of the global tuna industry is becoming too great to quantify, but because tuna fleets are working overtime to satisfy demand, these costs have not yet been reflected on the supermarket receipts of customers. With the exception of specialty or certified tuna products, consumers pay far less than the tuna in their can is truly worth, given the health of tuna stocks worldwide.

Tuna cans of all different brands line supermarket shelves. This gives consumers the illusion that there are plenty of tuna in the sea. But like with our other large, predatory ocean fish, there are not. Ninety per cent of cod, tuna, sharks, swordfish and other species of the most commercially popular fish have already ended up on our plates.¹

Global tuna stocks have largely been decimated since industrial fishing began in the 1950s. Having fished tuna in other oceans to the point of serious depletion, most of the world's tuna fishing fleets can now be found in the Western and Central Pacific, where 60 per cent of the world's tuna is now fished. Skipjack tuna represents about three quarters of what is caught in the region, and is also the most abundant tuna left in our oceans.

Unfortunately, most of the tuna sold in Canadian supermarkets is not coming from abundant stocks fished in a sustainable and equitable way. This report takes a look inside the cans of some of Canada's major tuna brands to see how they stack up when it comes to keeping fishy tuna off supermarket shelves and lots of tuna in the sea.



A woman sells skipjack tuna, by the roadside in Tarawa.
© Greenpeace / Natalie Behring-Chisholm

WHAT'S REALLY IN YOUR TUNA CAN?

Until recently, many consumers were not aware that the “tuna fish” in their can could be a number of tuna species from all over the world’s oceans, and not just one type of fish. However, as the sustainable seafood movement in Canada has begun to creep up the supply chain, tuna companies have started to indicate the actual common name of the species on tuna product labels. The emergence of these labelling changes has revealed that three main species are used for canned tuna: skipjack, yellowfin and albacore.

Occasionally, tongol and bigeye are also sold in cans. However, because providing the common or scientific name is not required by law in Canada, it may not be clear which species you are taking home, depending on the brand or product you choose, and whether there are sustainability concerns associated with it.

Destructive tuna fishing – the hidden catch

Buyers of canned tuna must be aware that they may be getting more than they bargained for in their tuna can, depending on which species they choose and the practices employed by its respective fishery.

The type of fishing method employed varies with the type of tuna targeted. The vast majority of tuna worldwide is caught using purse seine nets or longlines. Albacore, bigeye and tongol are most commonly caught with longlines, while skipjack and yellowfin are usually caught with purse seine nets. Unfortunately, in many cases the resulting catch of these fisheries is far from only one tuna species.



▲ Pole-and-line caught skipjack canned in a Maldivian processing plant.
© Greenpeace / Paul Hilton

Turtles and sharks on the line

Longline fleets use fishing lines up to 100 kilometres long, with thousands of baited hooks. When tuna is caught using longlines, the bycatch rate can be as high as 35 per cent (by weight and often much higher by number).² Sharks, turtles and seabirds also take the bait and get caught on the hooks. It has been estimated that around 250,000 loggerhead turtles and 60,000 leatherback turtles are caught on longlines each year as bycatch, but recent studies suggest that those numbers are likely underestimated by two orders of magnitude.^{3,4} This indiscriminate practice has also resulted in the death of an estimated 1.4 million sharks annually in the world’s largest tuna fishery, the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.⁵

Don't follow the FAD

Purse seining is a fishing technique where a net is drawn in a circular motion around gathered fish and pulled closed at the bottom, enclosing the fish in the net. The nets are often as large as several city blocks, and once deployed, capture anything and everything within their perimeter in the top layers of the ocean.

A significant proportion of canned tuna is caught using purse seines with the aid of fish aggregating devices (FADs)—floating or submerged objects that provide a rare visual stimulus in the open ocean and attract fish, including tuna. Over time, large numbers of fish will collect around a FAD, creating a perfect scenario for fishermen to set the massive nets in a circle around them.



▲ Tuna purse seiner.
© Paul Hilton / Greenpeace

Over the last two decades, FADs have increasingly been used in purse seine fisheries, as a cheap and easy way to land more tuna. The use of FADs globally has risen from an estimated 50 per cent of purse seine operations to at least 70 per cent in 2008.^{6,7} The problem is that FADs attract not just the target tuna species—they also catch turtles, sharks and juvenile tuna.

Leatherback, green, hawksbill, loggerhead and olive Ridley turtles all fall victim to nets used with FADs.⁸ More than three quarters of open ocean sharks and rays are threatened with extinction as a result of



▲ Fish circle a FAD during a banned FAD fishing season in the Western and Central Pacific ocean in 2009. © Paul Hilton / Greenpeace

wasteful fishing practices like fishing using FADs.⁹ On average, every time a FAD is used, 10 per cent of the fishing haul will be bycatch.¹⁰ Juvenile tuna are also frequently found with FADs, which means they are removed from the population before they can breed. One study showed that over three years, for every 1,000 tons of yellowfin tuna caught using FADs, nearly 111,000 other individual animals were also killed.¹¹

In addition to the devastating loss of life in these fisheries, the results of a DNA testing study commissioned by Greenpeace have confirmed that the unselective nature of purse seine/FAD fishing also leads to inconsistent species content in cans. Tuna cans from various brands and countries were sent for testing and while some cans came back with no negative surprises, in other cans three situations were discovered: mixing of different species within individual cans; different species in



▲ Large and small yellowfin tuna. © Greenpeace / Roger Grace

different cans of the same batch of purportedly the same product, as well as in different batches; and, in some cans, a different species in the can from what was indicated on the label.

The results raised concerns that in many cases retailers were not aware of certain species being found within cans on their shelves and that some tuna brand companies may or may not have been aware of what they were sourcing. The presence of bigeye in cans labelled as light tuna is particularly alarming, given the state of bigeye stocks, and also alarming is that most tuna brands in Canada market skipjack or yellowfin as light tuna and do not claim to sell any bigeye. For the full results of the study and more information on FADs, visit [www.greenpeace.org/international/en/publications/under “Tinned Tuna and Fish Aggregation Devices.”](http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/publications/under%20Tinned%20Tuna%20and%20Fish%20Aggregation%20Devices)

Stolen fish— inequitable and unfair fisheries

It likely does not occur to consumers that the tuna in their can could be stolen, but in many regions that is exactly what is happening. Lack of adequate regulations and the practice of transferring catch at sea (known as transshipping), to enable ships to evade set quotas, exacerbates pirate fishing. This contributes to the ongoing decline of tuna stocks and loss of income for coastal developing states. The problem is compounded by big fishing nations such as Japan, EU member states, Taiwan, Korea and China negotiating unfair access agreements to fish for tuna in the coastal waters of developing countries, resulting in coastal states being virtually robbed. Often, coastal states will only receive between five and six per cent of the value of this multi-billion dollar industry. This is why Greenpeace supports coastal states in the Western and Central Pacific in their quest to domesticate the tuna fisheries in their waters.

TAKING STOCK OF CANNED TUNA

Tuna stocks worldwide are in decline. Overfishing is the culprit. Presented below is an overview of the state of tuna stocks and the adverse impacts associated with the fisheries that supply cans found on Canadian supermarket shelves.

Yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*)

Yellowfin tuna is found throughout the world's tropical and subtropical seas except in the Mediterranean.

Concerns:

- All four stocks are known to be declining, but they continue to be fished at a very high rate.^{12,13,14,15}
- Lack of precautionary and ecosystem-based management.
- Rising FAD use. For example, over 40 per cent of purse seiners in the Indian Ocean use FADs.
- About 15 per cent of yellowfin tuna are caught by longline fishing, a fishing method with high discard and bycatch rates.

Necessary action:

- Stop the sale of canned yellowfin tuna until fishing pressure is reduced and stocks recover.

Bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*)

Bigeye tuna is a tropical and subtropical species found in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans.

Concerns:

- All stocks of bigeye tuna are in a long-term decline.
- All stocks except the Atlantic stock are being fished at far too high a rate, and catch of juvenile bigeye in purse seine FAD fisheries is a major problem for stock recovery.^{16,17,18,19}
- Atlantic longline fisheries have a negative impact on bluefin tuna and on billfish (e.g., swordfish) stocks, which are declining.²⁰

Necessary action:

- Stop the sale of bigeye tuna until fishing pressure is reduced and stocks recover.

Albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*)

Albacore is found in all tropical and temperate oceans, and in the Mediterranean Sea.

Concerns:

- With the exception of South Pacific albacore tuna, the fishing rate for albacore stocks is too high.
- Illegal fishing operations are a major source of concern for these stocks.
- Coastal states often receive unfair returns for tuna fished in their waters.
- Bycatch in longline fisheries threatens the health of at-risk species.

Necessary action:

- Albacore tuna should not be sourced unless there is evidence that the stock in question is healthy and the fishing method is not destructive to other species.

Skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*)

Skipjack tuna are found in the surface waters of tropical oceans.

Concerns:

- While skipjack stocks worldwide are in decent shape, fishing rates continue to increase, and recently, initial concerns over the status of some of the stocks have started to emerge.^{21,22,23,24}
- Skipjack is mainly caught with purse seines using FADs
- Illegal fishing and unfair returns to their coastal states are plaguing many skipjack fisheries.

Necessary action:

- Tuna brands must examine their products and supply chains closely and seek best-practice, sustainable and equitable supplies, focusing on tuna originating from well-managed fisheries using pole-and-line, hand-line and troll-fishing methods. All skipjack fished by purse seiners should be FAD-free.

Tongol/Longtail tuna (*Thunnus tongol*)

Tongol, or longtail, tuna is a small tuna species living in tropical waters. Its main distribution area is the Indo-West Pacific.

Concerns:

- There is limited information on the health of tongol stocks. No quantitative stock assessments for this tuna have been performed, but catches are on the rise.²⁵
- Bycatch, by longline fisheries.

Necessary action:

- Tuna brands should avoid tongol until more information is known about the health of these stocks.



GREENPEACE'S 2011 TUNA BRAND RANKING

A tuna ranking overview

At the end of 2010, Greenpeace set out to uncover what is hidden behind the colourful tuna brand labels on Canada's supermarket shelves. Some findings were unexpected, others not so much, but on the whole we were pleasantly surprised to find out that almost all of the companies of the tuna brands surveyed know quite a bit about where and how the species they can were caught. This is the first step in determining whether the source of supply warrants further investigation.

To obtain information about the brands selected for this ranking, Greenpeace contacted the companies and requested that they fill out a questionnaire about their tuna procurement. Almost all of the companies replied to the survey. Greenpeace then created a profile for each company and supplemented survey information with company correspondence, publicly available information from websites and publications, and information obtained by Greenpeace volunteers engaging in spot checks of their local supermarkets. Greenpeace then sent the companies their profiles for review.

Greenpeace graded the companies based on five key areas:

- 1 Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood**
Is there a sustainability policy in place?
Is it implemented? Is its implementation monitored?
Is it publicly available?
- 2 Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices**
Does the policy have clear criteria for tuna sourcing?
Are they being followed?
- 3 Tracing tuna to its source**
Can the company trace its tuna from ship to can to shelf? Does it know key information about the fishing operations?
- 4 Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing**
Does the company support domestic, coastal fisheries?
If not, does it ensure fair access agreements?
Does it keep its fleets out of proposed marine reserve areas and support their creation? Does it push political leaders to create marine reserves?
- 5 Comprehensive and clear labelling**
Does the label of a brand provide key information about where and how the tuna was caught? Does the label help consumers make more-informed decisions?

To get full marks, a company needs to walk the talk and be pushing its suppliers and fisheries managers to do the same.

How does your tuna brand rank?

The following companies were surveyed and ranked: Wild Planet Foods, Raincoast Trading, Ocean Fisheries, Ltd., Metro, Sobeys, Loblaw Companies, Ltd., Walmart, Canadian Fishing Company, Overwaitea Food Group, Safeway, Inc., Clover Leaf Seafoods Company, Bolton Alimentari Italia S.p.A., Pastene, Inc., and Unico, Inc.

How Tuna Brands Can Provide Canadians with Sustainable and Equitable Tuna

- 1 An end to destructive fishing.** Sourcing from healthy stocks where pole-and-line fishing is used is the best choice. For non-pole-and-line sources, tuna brands must ensure purse seine vessels do not use FADs and have fulltime observers on board. The vessels should also use all possible means to avoid bycatch of unwanted animals, such as turtles and sharks. Longline vessels should also have observers on board at all times, and should have best-practice mitigation in order to avoid bycatch.
- 2 No stolen tuna; support equitable fishing.** Companies that fish in developing countries' waters, such as the Pacific Islands, must use fair access agreements. These must have strong sustainability and equitability standards.
- 3 No pirate fishing.** Avoid all tuna from illegal sources and operations that transfer tuna at sea. The tuna operator should also guarantee fulltime observer coverage on their vessels. Observers ensure compliance with conservation and management measures of tuna stocks.
- 4 Complete and consistent labelling.** Tuna can labels should have the species' common name, scientific name, catch area and stock, and catch method. Additional information about the fishery should be available on the company website and in stores.

WILD PLANET FOODS

Brand(s): **Wild Planet; Sustainable Seas**



score:
65.1%

The website of Wild Planet Foods www.wildplanetfoods.com states that the company was born out of a desire to actually provide consumers with “sustainably caught wild seafood,” and this phrase just so happens to be the company’s slogan. Originally part of a large, US west coast seafood company, Carvalho Fisheries, the Wild Planet brand was created in 2005 when the heads of Carvalho Fisheries ceased company involvement in fisheries deemed destructive to the marine environment or other species. The company merged under the name Wild Planet Foods in 2008.

Wild Planet has clearly positioned itself in both US and Canadian markets as an eco-product, often appearing in the “green” section of major Canadian retail chains and specialty stores. The company’s website is a wealth of information about the species it sells, and how and where they are caught. There are also strong declarations made against sourcing from destructive fishing methods. Wild Planet is endorsed by various eco-certification schemes and makes a commitment to use more-sustainable packaging. These factors likely contribute to their tuna selling at a higher price compared to most tuna brands.

Tuna sold under Wild Planet brand: Skipjack from the western Pacific, and albacore from the northeastern Pacific Ocean.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Wild Planet recently created a sustainable seafood procurement policy and has a clearly defined decision-making process for purchasing its tuna. The company also has a full monitoring system, to ensure suppliers are meeting sustainability requirements.

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Wild Planet is committed to providing canned tuna that did not come from destructive fishing operations. The company assures its customers that its tuna will not be

caught using longlines, and that the negative impacts on other species and species at risk will be minimized.

Tracing tuna to its source

Wild planet is able to trace its tuna through every link in the supply chain. Customers can be sure that the tuna found in Wild Planet brand products is what it says it is and was not fished illegally.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

Wild Planet has a commitment to work with its suppliers and through political forums to ensure equitable fishing for tuna. The company demonstrates its commitment by sourcing all of the brand’s tuna from coastal state-owned and operated fisheries in their own Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs)¹ in the US and Japan. Processing, however, is carried out elsewhere. Wild Planet currently has no commitment to support the creation of marine reserves in its fishing regions.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Wild Planet really strives to provide its customers with key information about its products. Labels indicate not just the species’ common name and country of processing but also the country of catch; and a variety of symbols are used to indicate that the tuna is longline-free, and dolphin- and turtle-friendly. Cans also indicate that they are bisphenol A (BPA)-free.

Verdict

Wild Planet has worked hard to ensure that its mandate is fulfilled. The company has all the makings of a sustainable and equitable tuna brand, but must ensure it is fishing on healthy stocks, not placing further stress on declining ones.

¹ The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of a coastal state is the area of ocean extending 200 nautical miles from the coast, over which the country has sovereign rights to all the economic resources of the sea, seabed and subsoil.



RAINCOAST TRADING

Brand(s): **Raincoast Trading**

Owned and operated by the Wick family, a fourth-generation fishing family, Raincoast Trading has been selling premium wild seafood products since 1978. The company is based in Vancouver, BC, and the Raincoast trademark is owned by North Delta Seafoods, Ltd., which has the same address as Raincoast. The company has its own fleet, and processing and canning are carried out locally, in BC.

According to its website (www.raincoasttrading.com), Raincoast markets “sustainably-harvested, gourmet canned seafood,”² and was the first Canadian-packaged retail seafood company endorsed by the Ocean Wise³ conservation program as an “environmentally-friendly seafood choice for retail grocers and consumers.” Raincoast’s commitment to providing more-sustainable products extends to its packaging, which uses soy-based inks, and recyclable materials where possible, and the cans are BPA-free. In addition to marketing itself as an environmentally responsible choice, Raincoast emphasizes the uniquely flavourful and healthy qualities of its seafood products.

Tuna sold under Raincoast brand: Albacore tuna, from the coasts of Washington, Oregon and British Columbia.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Raincoast has not yet developed a sustainable seafood procurement policy, but has intentions to do so. The company does, however, have a clear decision-making process when it comes to sourcing tuna and works closely with sustainable seafood programs, including Ocean Wise, SeaChoice⁴ and Seafood Watch.⁵

² Raincoast Trading, “Our Concept,” www.raincoasttrading.com/concept/index.php, accessed December 2010.

³ Ocean Wise is a program of the Vancouver Aquarium that seeks to help businesses implement sustainable seafood choices. Restaurants, retailers and companies can carry an Ocean Wise logo, denoting approval according to the program’s criteria.

⁴ SeaChoice is a sustainable seafood program formed by a coalition of five Canadian environmental organizations. SeaChoice helps Canadians take an active role in supporting sustainable fisheries and aquaculture at all levels of the seafood supply chain by undertaking science-based seafood assessments, providing resources for consumers, and supporting businesses through collaborative partnerships.

⁵ Seafood Watch is a program of the Monterey Bay Aquarium that evaluates the sustainability of wild-caught and farmed seafood sold in the US market and provides information to consumers and companies about best- and worst-choice species.



score:
50.0%

Excluding destructive fishing practices

Consumers of Raincoast products can be assured that its tuna is caught legally, using more-sustainable methods, and without having devastating impacts on other species. Raincoast has committed to not source from longlines or nets, and employs “a ‘hook and line’ method in which 12 barbless hooks are trolled behind each fishing vessel.”

Tracing tuna to its source

Because Raincoast Trading sources from its own fleet and processes its own tuna, the company has full traceability of all of its products. Raincoast uses comprehensive chain-of-custody procedures and a special code to trace its tuna from when, where and how it was caught, transported and processed.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

As a locally owned, operated and fully integrated company, Raincoast supports local fisheries in BC and the Pacific northwest, and the local economy. Though not an official policy, the company has a commitment to support marine reserve creation in the region from which its tuna is sourced.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Raincoast Trading clearly feels as if it has nothing to hide in its tuna cans as its can labels are very comprehensive, including the fishing method, common name of the species, origin of the catch, country of processing, and other sustainability logos.

Verdict

Raincoast Trading is walking the talk and taking strides to ensure more-sustainable tuna products are provided to Canadians. The company would benefit from a formalized procurement policy and an implementation monitoring process to ensure consistency in product sourcing and more transparency in the decision-making process. The company should also ensure it is not sourcing from fisheries which are of concern due to high juvenile mortality and to fishing rates above recommended levels.

OCEAN FISHERIES, LTD.

Brand(s): **Ocean's**



score:
45.7%

Ocean Fisheries is a British Columbia–owned and operated and fully integrated fishing company that distributes its seafood products in many countries around the world. In 1983, the company created its Ocean's brand, to market its seafood products in Canada, and this is now the second-largest canned seafood brand in Canada. While much of the harvesting and processing remains local, Ocean Fisheries also imports fish, including tuna.

In the late 1980s, Ocean Fisheries began to identify areas of environmental concern associated with its seafood products, from impacts to marine mammals to fossil fuel consumption and overall carbon footprint. The company now outlines its sustainability and other green initiatives on its website (www.oceanfish.com), and has sought eco-certification for its canned salmon. For the company's tuna products, Ocean's marketing campaign focuses on healthy living and offers meal ideas on its website.

Tuna sold under Ocean's brand: Albacore, yellowfin and skipjack tuna, from the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Ocean's finalized its Sustainable Seafood (Tuna) Procurement Policy this year and has communicated its sustainability requirements to its suppliers. The company plans to monitor the implementation process and has informed its customers of its sustainability initiatives through the website and through advertisements.

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Ocean's has strong criteria in place to avoid unsustainable tuna originating from overfished stocks or from fishing methods that have negative impacts on other species; however, to date only about 50 per cent of the fisheries from which the company sources meets

some of its criteria. Ocean's sources from unhealthy yellowfin and albacore stocks that also have serious concerns associated with the fishing method used. FADs may be used in the skipjack fisheries.

Tracing tuna to its source

Ocean's can trace its products back to the region and vessel, and knows the fishing method used. To date, it is not clear whether all tuna is transshipment-free, and some of the fisheries have not provided bycatch information—two key elements of ensuring catches are clean and legal. Ocean's is meeting with suppliers to connect the missing dots.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

One of Ocean's objectives is to improve the equitability of tuna fisheries; however, as policy implementation rolls out, work needs to be done on the water to live up to that commitment. The company has not yet made a commitment to support marine reserve development in areas from which it sources its tuna.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Tuna can labels for all products contain the common name of the tuna and the country in which it was processed. Ocean's Chunk Yellowfin in Water product also states the catch area, which is the western Pacific. Product labels currently do not tell the consumer how the species was caught.

Verdict

With the recent adoption of its procurement policy and the continuation of its work to seek out more-sustainable tuna fisheries, Ocean's is on the right track but must ensure its suppliers' fishing methods hold true to its policy objectives. First and foremost, the company must cease sourcing from stocks that need a break, such as yellowfin, and ensure its tuna is FAD-free.



METRO

Brand(s): **Selection** (formally Equality, Master Choice, Selection Merite)

Metro is Canada's third-largest food retailer, with close to 600 supermarkets, stores and discount stores spanning Quebec and Ontario. Banners include Metro, Metro Plus, Super C, and Food Basics. However, in Quebec, a number of stores belong to independent owners who have leases or affiliation agreements with the company. Metro operates 12 warehouses for fresh and frozen food procurement and storage. The company's Pêcheries Atlantiques division is Quebec's largest distributor of fresh and frozen seafood products.

Metro recently adopted one main house brand for tuna and other canned products: Selection. Equality, Master Choice, and Selection Merite brands have been discontinued but may still be found in stores. In addition to its house brand, Metro also sells six of the national brands ranked in this report.

Tuna sold under Selection brand: Albacore, skipjack or yellowfin tuna, from all over the Pacific Ocean and the east and west Indian Ocean.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Metro has a sustainable seafood policy that includes application to canned tuna; however, implementation of that part of the policy will only commence following the present focus on fresh and frozen products. Metro's seafood commitments are available on its website (www.metro.ca).

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Metro has made commitments not to source from stocks that are overfished, from fishing methods that adversely affect threatened species, or from fisheries that exceed assigned quotas. Metro also seeks to avoid fisheries with high levels of bycatch. However, for the moment little of Metro's Selection brand meets these criteria.



score:
45.2%

Tracing tuna to its source

Metro can trace its tuna supply back to the catch area and its suppliers can provide information about the gear type used and the country in which it was processed. Information about the exact tuna stock being fished and the actual operations of the catch vessel is not known for all products.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

As part of Metro's seafood sustainability policy, the company seeks to support local fisheries. It also encourages its suppliers to follow "a continuous improvement process" and "will favour suppliers who make tangible progress toward the sustainable management of their activities, the traceability of their products and the application of recognized standards." Metro does not at present ban its suppliers from sourcing tuna within proposed marine reserve areas.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Metro's Selection brand labels only provide the common name of the tuna species and the country of processing.

Verdict

Metro sources from various tuna stocks around the world, most of which have serious sustainability and equity concerns. As Metro moves into the second phase of policy implementation and begins to tackle tuna, it must ensure that its commitment not to source from overfished and destructively fished stocks is upheld. Metro can act now by discontinuing the sale of yellowfin under its Selection brand to help ensure recovery.

SOBEYS

Brand(s): **Compliments**



score:
42.1%

Sobeys began as a grocery store in Stellarton, Nova Scotia, in 1907 and has since grown to become Canada's second-largest food retailer, under the ownership of Empire Company Limited. Empire operates more than 1,300 stores across Canada under banners that include Sobeys, IGA, Needs, Foodland, Thrifty Foods, Les Marchés Tradition, and Rachelle-Béry, among others. In June 2007, the shareholders of Sobeys and its parent company, Empire Company, approved a plan to convert Sobeys into a private company. Empire Company now holds 100 per cent of the shares in Sobeys.

Sobeys has a well-known private label, Compliments, and sells nearly 3,700 private-label products, including canned tuna. Sobeys also sells various national tuna brands across its supermarket chains.

Tuna sold under Compliments brand: Albacore and skipjack, sourced from the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Sobeys has a sustainable seafood policy that will apply to canned tuna in the second phase of implementation. As the company works to phase out unsustainable supply, some monitoring and auditing will be performed to ensure compliance. Information about Sobeys' policy is available on its website (www.sobeyscorporate.com/en/Home.aspx).

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Sobeys has some criteria in its policy to exclude destructive fishing practices, including overfishing, but relies on its partnership with the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP)⁶ for more complete assessments of the sustainability of its tuna supply. Compliments albacore is caught using longlines and skipjack is caught by purse seines, both of which raise concerns related to impacts on other species.

Tracing tuna to its source

Consumers of Sobeys' Compliments brand tuna can be confident that even though the products may not yet contain much information on the labels, the company does in fact know where and how the tuna was fished. But questions remain about the impacts of the fisheries on other species and whether the tuna has been transshipped at sea.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

Sobeys has not made any commitments to support marine reserves initiatives in its tuna sourcing areas or ensure its supplier follows suit. While Sobeys seeks to improve the sustainability and equitability of tuna fisheries, and help develop coastal state tuna processing and value-adding activities in the regions from which it sources its tuna, the company currently does not make a point to source from coastal state-owned and -operated fisheries.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Sobeys commits in its policy to ensuring its products indicate on their labels the common name of the species and where and how it was caught. Compliments tuna can labels currently have the species' common name and the country where processing takes place.

Verdict

With the release of Sobeys' new policy and its work with the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership, there is promise for improvements in the sustainability and equitability of its Compliments house brand. However, currently there are many unanswered questions about the impact of its source fisheries on other species, so Sobeys must address these as implementation of its policy rolls out.

⁶ The Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) is a project that works with seafood suppliers, producers and retailers to work to improve fisheries and strengthen policy through fishery improvement partnerships.



LOBLAW COMPANIES, LTD.

Brand(s): **President's Choice; NoName; Bella Trovola; Sun Spun / GFS**

Loblaw Companies, Ltd. is a subsidiary of George Weston Limited, one of the largest food processing and distribution groups in North America, headquartered in Ontario. Loblaw is Canada's largest food distributor and also provides a range of drugstore, general merchandise, and financial products and services. Present in every province and territory in Canada, the company operates a network of 1,528 stores under well-known banners, including Atlantic SaveEasy, Real Atlantic Superstore, Dominion (in Newfoundland and Labrador), Extra Foods, Loblaws, No Frills, Maxi, Valumart, Provigo, and T&T.

Canned tuna is a top seller at Loblaw, and the company not only markets tuna products under four house brands but also sells over a dozen national tuna brands, including almost all of those profiled in this report. Loblaw recently publicly committed to purchase all house and national brand canned tuna only from members of the International Sustainability Seafood Foundation (ISSF) by the end of May 2011, which may reduce the number of brands sold that do not meet the commitment.

Tuna sold under President's Choice and other Loblaw brands: Albacore, skipjack, yellowfin and potentially other tunas, from various oceans.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Loblaw has a sustainable seafood policy that applies to canned tuna, and a full monitoring and auditing system to ensure its suppliers are adhering to sustainability requirements. Specifically, Loblaw has identified tuna as a key critical species and has made it a business commitment to source only from ISSF members by May 2011 and ensure a more sustainable source by 2013. Loblaw's policy information is available for its customers on its website (www.loblaw.ca).

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Loblaw hopes to stop sourcing from overfished tuna stocks and avoid illegal and destructive fisheries through



score:
41.0%

its commitment to ISSF. Avoiding illegal sources is further reinforced by its overall Sustainable Seafood Policy, whereby the company strictly prohibits seafood from illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) sources. Because of a lack of information about Loblaw's sources, it is difficult to estimate just how much of its supply is meeting any of those objectives.

Tracing tuna to its source

Loblaw is currently unable to trace its canned house brand tuna from ship to shelf; however, because the company has such an extensive tuna product line and with the aim of ensuring increased traceability, Loblaw is undertaking to distribute a vendor questionnaire, as part of a larger, cross-food category, full-traceability effort.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

Loblaw is committed to working with governments to promote creation of marine reserves; however, Loblaw currently does not require suppliers to support such initiatives. Loblaw's policy does not address the equitability of its tuna supplies.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

President's Choice and other Loblaw house brand labels contain the species' common name, the country where it was processed and whether capture is dolphin-friendly. Other key information is not yet available.

Verdict

As Canada's largest supermarket chain and a major buyer and seller of private-label tuna, Loblaw must ensure that the tuna it sources comes from regions where stocks are not under threat and where fisheries do not employ harmful methods such as FADs. Loblaw currently sources from many tuna stocks of concern, including yellowfin, and should take a strong step and remove this species from sale. Loblaw has a clear timeline for implementing a more sustainable tuna supply but must ensure that its ISSF sources actually meet the company's own criteria.

WALMART

Brand(s): **Great Value**



score:
40.7%

Walmart Canada is owned by Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (Walmart), the world's largest retailer, operating more than 8,400 stores around the world. Walmart entered Canada in 1994, with the acquisition of Woolco, a division of Woolworth Canada, and now operates 317 discount stores and plans to open 35–40 more in 2010, mostly in western Canada. While Walmart currently holds only a small percentage of the Canadian grocery market, it continues to grow. Walmart Canada already does business with more than 6,000 Canadian suppliers. Fresh seafood, represents a very small percentage of its sales; however, canned seafood represents a significant proportion.

Walmart sells its private-label canned tuna under the Great Value brand. Walmart also sells various national brands. As part of Walmart's sustainable seafood policy, the company has committed to sell only ISSF tuna by 2013, which may have implications for its private-label brand.

Tuna sold under Great Value brand: Skipjack and albacore tuna, sourced from the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Walmart has a sustainable seafood policy that applies to tuna. By the time the policy is implemented in 2013, Walmart hopes all of its tuna will be from sustainable sources, through sourcing only from ISSF member companies. The company undertakes auditing and monitoring of its suppliers. Walmart provides much information on its sustainability initiatives on its website (www.walmart.ca) but its seafood policy is not easily found.

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Walmart's seafood policy commits not to source from stocks where overfishing is occurring or from vessels operating illegally. Through its commitment to ISSF, Walmart hopes to also combat issues with bycatch and destructive fishing; however, there currently is not enough information to determine whether the longline

albacore fisheries it sources from have a high level of bycatch or whether the purse seine skipjack fisheries employ harmful FADs.

Tracing tuna to its source

In its policy, Walmart identifies full transparency and full traceability as key elements in ensuring sustainable seafood supply. Walmart's supplier of Great Value products is able to provide information relating to where and how the species was caught and ensure that it is coming from legal sources. Bycatch and transshipment information is unavailable, making it more challenging to determine the sustainability of the fisheries.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

Walmart has intentions to work with suppliers, regional governments, and inter-governmental bodies to support equitable fishing; however, in practice there is little evidence that this is happening. Walmart also has not committed to support marine reserves.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Walmart has a labelling policy and all Great Value brand labels contain the species' common name and country of processing. Great Value brand labels are lacking key components, such as the fishing method and catch area.

Verdict

Walmart's seafood policy and ISSF commitment, with a clear timeline for implementation, show the company is trying to move toward sourcing more-sustainable tuna products for its customers. However, ISSF or not, Walmart must start ensuring that the fisheries it sources from are equitable to developing coastal states, are not employing destructive practices, and fish from healthy stock levels. The results of Greenpeace's genetic testing study found bigeye tuna in a Great Value can that did not contain that species information. Walmart can help ensure that Great Value brand products are free from such species of concern by not sourcing from FAD fisheries.



CANADIAN FISHING COMPANY

Brand(s): **Gold Seal; Life; Everyday; Great Value**

Gold Seal is the premium national brand for Canadian Fishing Company's (Canfisco's) line of canned salmon, tuna and other seafood products. Canadian Fishing Company began operations in 1868 and now owns and operates the largest fleet of fishing vessels in British Columbia. Based in Vancouver, it describes itself on its website (www.canfisco.com) as a "fully-integrated fishery products organization" and has offices and facilities along the West Coast of North America.

In 1984, Canfisco became part of The Jim Pattison Group, the third-largest privately held company in Canada. Today, Gold Seal products are sold throughout North America, Western Europe, Japan, New Zealand, Australia and many other countries. In Canada, tuna products sold by the company can be found across most of the food retail sector and in some drug stores.

Some of the first Gold Seal ads and promotional characters were designed by Walt Disney in the early 1940s. More recent marketing campaigns have focused on weight loss, with an ad of a tuna can with a measuring tape around its middle with the slogan "Tuna that fits," and other ads focusing on the convenience of its Tuna Snack Kits, with the tag line "Gold Seal to Go."

Tuna sold by Gold Seal and other Canfisco brands:

Yellowfin, albacore and skipjack, from the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Canfisco has a sustainable seafood policy that the company says will soon be available on its website. Canfisco's policy statement can be found on the Gold Seal website.



score:
40.4%

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Canfisco seeks to avoid sourcing from tuna stocks that are overfished or from fisheries that appear on Greenpeace's blacklist or exceed quota. Canfisco has not made any commitments to address the impacts of its tuna fisheries on other species.

Tracing tuna to its source

Canfisco consumers can be assured that the company knows where and how its tuna was caught, but when it comes to sustainability information, the company does not have access to full information.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

Canfisco seeks to work with suppliers to find more-sustainable and equitable tuna, but currently does not have a commitment to source tuna from the coastal states of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Canfisco currently does not actively support marine reserve creation.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Canfisco has a labelling policy to ensure all products contain the common name and the country of processing.

Verdict

Having a well-known brand like Gold Seal and in light of its producing various private label brands, Canfisco is positioned to help retailers make better tuna sourcing choices and ensure that consumers are not getting unsustainable and inequitable tuna. However, the company must show its commitment to avoid tuna from stocks where overfishing is occurring and cease the procurement of yellowfin tuna. The region where the company sources albacore is also under stress and Canfisco should act accordingly.

OVERWATEA FOOD GROUP

Brand(s): **Western Family**



score:
39.1%

Overwaitea Food Group (OFG) is a division of The Jim Pattison Group, Canada's third-largest private company. Headquartered in Vancouver, OFG operates over 120 supermarkets throughout Western Canada, under the Save-on-Foods, Overwaitea Foods, Urban Fare, Cooper's Foods, PriceSmart Foods, and Bulkley Valley Wholesale banners.

OFG sells tuna under its Western Family private-label brand, and like Canada's other major retailers, it also sources many national brands.

Tuna sold by Western Family brand: Tongol, skipjack, albacore and yellowfin, from the western, central and northeast Pacific Ocean.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

OFG has a sustainable seafood policy that includes its house-brand tuna. The policy is available on the company's website (www.owfg.com) and there are mechanisms in place to monitor supplier adherence to the policy requirements.

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

OFG seeks to source tuna for its private-label brand that does not come from overfished stocks, that does not originate from illegal sources, and that comes from fisheries where there are management measures in place. The company does not have strict sourcing criteria to avoid destructive fishing methods that affect other species, though one of its product lines does source from a more sustainable method—trolling.

Tracing tuna to its source

OFG's policy identifies traceability of its products as "a critical component of product safety and integrity." Specifically, the company identifies the species name, country of origin, catch region, fishery name, and gear type, as the information required for all wild-caught products. The company currently knows the common name and how the tuna was caught for all its Western Family tuna, but where it was caught and other important information on the catch is not known for all products.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

While OFG's policy emphasizes the need to be politically active and work with its suppliers to promote sustainable fisheries, it does not emphasize the need to promote equitable fisheries or the creation of marine reserves. Through one line of its tuna supply, however, OFG does support local fisheries.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Western Family tuna cans provide the common species name, where the tuna was processed and a dolphin-safe logo. One of the brand's product lines is Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)-certified and carries the blue and white logo.

Verdict

OFG has already begun to search for a more sustainable tuna supply, but needs to make sure it extends this policy to all of its Western Family product line. The company should take immediate steps to remove yellowfin tuna from sale and ensure that its skipjack is FAD-free and that its other supply does not originate from destructive practices or unfair and inequitable operations.



SAFEWAY

Brand(s): **Safeway**

Established in 1929 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada Safeway is a well-known retail supermarket chain in western Canada, operating approximately 224 stores located primarily in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. Canada Safeway also serves independent grocery stores and institutional customers through its distribution centers and food processing plants. Its parent company, Safeway, Inc., is based in California and operates 1,501 stores across the US and through a subsidiary in Mexico. In western Canada, Safeway holds approximately 25% of the grocery market.

Like the other major food retailers in Canada, Safeway not only sells tuna under its Safeway house brand, but also under various national brands.

Tuna sold under Safeway brand: Yellowfin, albacore and skipjack tuna, from the western, central, and eastern Pacific Ocean.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Safeway has a sustainable seafood policy but it currently does not apply to canned tuna. The company is in the process of expanding its policy to include shelf-stable seafood. Implementation will begin in 2011. Safeway does have social accountability standards that overseas packers must meet and are audited on. Information about the company's seafood sustainability is found on the Safeway US website (www.safeway.com/ifl/grocery/CSR-Food-Sustainability) but not yet on the Safeway Canada website (www.safeway.ca).

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Safeway takes care to ensure that its tuna does not come from vessels operating illegally and has not been transshipped at sea. The company plans to investigate new suppliers that catch tuna using pole-and-line and inform their customers of these initiatives. Safeway currently sells tuna from fisheries that employ



score:
30.6%

destructive and wasteful fishing practices and they sell redlisted yellowfin tuna.

Tracing tuna to its source

Safeway brand canned tuna products can be traced from ship to shelf and suppliers are able to provide the company with all pertinent information, with the exception of bycatch information.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

Safeway has not yet made a commitment to support marine reserves in the Western and Central Pacific high seas region, where it sources its tuna, nor does the company require its tuna to be caught by Pacific coastal states.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Safeway brand labels contain the species' common name, country of processing, and a dolphin-friendly logo. Key information, including area or method of catch, is not yet provided but changes are expected in 2011.

Verdict

Safeway needs to ensure that its commitment to expand its seafood policy to include canned tuna turns to strong action in 2011. In the mean time, the company should commit to cease the sourcing of yellowfin tuna in its Safeway brands. While the company explores more-sustainably caught tuna sources, it should ensure its skipjack comes from purse seine operations that are FAD-free. If Safeway plans to continue sourcing from the Western and Central Pacific Ocean it should make sure to support coastal state fishing operations, support marine reserve creation in the high seas regions and stop sourcing albacore from these proposed marine reserve areas.

CLOVER LEAF SEAFOODS COMPANY

Brand(s): **Clover Leaf**

Clover Leaf Seafoods Company holds the largest market share of the Canadian canned seafood market, and about a quarter of the market share in canned tuna. Clover Leaf is a wholly owned subsidiary operating company of Connors Bros., LP, which was acquired by Lion Capital from Centre Partners at the end of 2010. Connors Bros. markets tuna under Clover Leaf brand in Canada and Bumble Bee in the US.

Clover Leaf-branded tuna is found across Canada, as are the company's offices and facilities. Chris Lishewski, the CEO of Clover Leaf/Bumble Bee, is based in the US and has recently developed a significant public profile after being named IntraFish Media's 2010 Person of the Year for his role in the creation of the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF). While the company tries to position itself as a sustainable seafood provider, its marketing of tuna takes more of a health angle. Clover leaf is running a "Take 5" campaign that provides customers with tuna recipes which contain five ingredients and take five minutes to create. Consumers can join the Clover Leaf recipe club to get updates on new recipes, which could be the company's attempt to live up to its slogan "Love the taste every time."

Tuna sold under Clover Leaf brand: Albacore, skipjack, and yellowfin—the origin information could not be obtained by Greenpeace.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Clover Leaf has a sustainable seafood policy and information about the company's sustainability initiatives is available on its website (www.cloverleaf.ca).

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Based on the information on the company's website, it is unclear whether Clover Leaf is taking any steps to source from more-sustainable fishing methods. The company does not appear to be making any such effort.



score:
27.8%

Tracing tuna to its source

On Clover Leaf's website, it states that the company has agreed to "traceability standards for capture to plate tracking." It is not clear, however, just how much and what type of information the company is able to obtain.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

Clover Leaf does not have any public commitments to support marine reserves or equitable fisheries.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Clover Leaf brand labels provide the common name and the country of processing of the tuna species.

Verdict

Clover leaf provides lots of information about its sustainability initiatives through the ISSF on its website but it is not clear how these commitments are translating into the company's sourcing more-sustainable and equitable tuna. The company did not respond to Greenpeace's tuna survey and through public information it is not evident that the company's supply lives up to the talk. Clover Leaf continues to sell species that are on the decline and from fisheries that employ destructive methods. In Greenpeace's recently commissioned genetic testing study, the company's "light tuna" cans revealed bigeye being sold in some cans and not others. The company does not disclose that it is selling bigeye tuna in its cans. Clover Leaf should make sure its commitments match its action.



BOLTON ALIMENTARI ITALIA S.P.A.

Brand(s): **Rio Mare**

What started as a one-product company in Italy selling meat in gelatine has grown to be part of a major international company that manufactures and sells products in various countries around the world. The company was founded in Cermante, Italy, and entered into the canned tuna market in 1960 under the name Trinity Alimentari S.p.A., a subsidiary of the Bolton Group. In 2003, the company changed its name to Bolton Alimentari S.p.A.

Bolton Alimentari markets its tuna under the Rio Mare brand. Much of the canned tuna is still processed in Cermante.

Tuna sold under Rio Mare brand: Yellowfin tuna and skipjack tuna, mainly from the Indian Ocean and eastern Pacific Ocean, respectively.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

In May 2010, Bolton committed to a sustainable seafood policy for its canned tuna, which is to be released in January 2011. The details of the policy are not yet finalized.

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Bolton does not source from longline tuna fisheries but its skipjack tuna is from purse seine fisheries that employ FADs.



score:
23.0%

Tracing tuna to its source

Key information about Rio Mare brand canned tuna products can be traced back and the company plans to improve traceability even further in 2011 and share pertinent information with its customers.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

The company currently does not have a commitment to support marine reserve creation or to work towards ensuring fair and equitable fisheries in the fisheries it sources from.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Not all Rio Mare canned tuna products sold in Canada have the species common name on the label. Cans do provide the country of processing. Rio Mare brand labels lack key information to help consumers make more-informed decisions.

Verdict

Until Bolton's seafood policy is released in 2011 it will not be clear just what action the company plans to take to address its tuna supply. The company must first commit to removing yellowfin tuna from sale and make sure its skipjack is FAD-free, while transitioning to a long-term sustainable and equitable supply solution.

PASTENE, INC.

Brand(s): **Pastene**

Pastene describes itself as North America's oldest importer of premium Italian packaged goods. In 2009, the company celebrated its 135th birthday. Pastene sells to a number of major chain stores and independent retailers in the eastern US and Canada, with particular focus on New England and Quebec. The company's Canadian office is located in Ville D'Anjou, Quebec, and it operates as Pastene, Inc., while the company headquarters is in Canton, Massachusetts, and trades as The Pastene Companies, Ltd.

The Pastene website (www.pastene.com) strongly emphasizes the benefits of a "Mediterranean Diet," which "consists of a healthier balance between omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids." Pastene's *tonno* (tuna), sardines, and spiced tunas are described as rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which the company promotes as part of a healthy diet.

Its product line consists primarily of "imported specialty Italian grocery items;" however, much of its tuna products sold in Canada are in fact processed in Thailand and likely fished in the Western and Central Pacific.

Tuna sold under Pastene brand: Yellowfin, tongol, and possibly others.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Pastene does not currently have a sustainable seafood procurement policy. The company has indicated that it has plans to develop one in the near future.



score:
4.1%

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Pastene does not provide any information about the origin of its tuna, fishing method or gear type.

Tracing tuna to its source

Other than the country of processing, no information is known about where Pastene sources its tuna.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing

Pastene has no commitment to ensure its tuna comes from equitable fisheries, nor does the company appear to support marine reserve creation.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Pastene brand labels contain the country of processing and in some cases the common species name.

Verdict

Pastene was unable to provide key information to Greenpeace on its tuna sourcing but the company has engaged its suppliers in an attempt to learn more about where the tuna it sells comes from. The company can only begin the long climb up the stack once its committed to working towards ensuring sustainable supply.



UNICO, INC.

Brand(s): **Unico**

Unico, Inc. is a Canadian company that seeks to provide Mediterranean- and Italian-style products for its consumers. The company is almost a hundred years old and has been both family- and corporately owned over the years until its most recent acquisition, in 1997, by Sun-Brite Foods, Inc.

Unico, Inc. carries a variety of food products under the brand Unico, which means “one of a kind” in Italian. Unico, Inc. declares that it wants its consumers to be “bringing real taste home,” but the company’s failure to reply to Greenpeace’s questionnaire means consumers can’t be entirely sure what they are bringing home in their tuna cans.

Tuna sold under Unico brand: Skipjack, but the origin is unknown.

Commitment to sustainable and equitable seafood

Unico does not appear to have any sustainable seafood commitment.

Excluding tuna from destructive fishing practices

Unico’s website (www.unico.ca) does not indicate that any environmental criteria are taken into consideration when sourcing its tuna.



score:
1.7%

Tracing tuna to its source

Traceability of products is unclear, based on publicly available information.

Promoting marine reserves and equitable fishing:

Unico has made no public commitment to ocean protection or to ensuring its tuna comes from equitable fisheries.

Comprehensive and clear labelling

Unico brand labels fail to provide key information about where and how the tuna species was caught and what exactly the species is.

Verdict

Unico must step up and be more transparent about its seafood procurement to its customers and also to Greenpeace. Unico failed to answer Greenpeace’s tuna survey and thus what exactly is found in Unico brand cans remains a mystery.

International Seafood Sustainability Foundation – Practicing what they preach?

The International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) calls itself “a global partnership among science, the tuna industry and the environmental non-governmental community.” Its mission is to “undertake science-based initiatives for the long-term conservation and sustainable use of tuna stocks, reducing bycatch and promoting a healthy marine ecosystem.” Some of the world’s largest tuna brands (Bolton Alimentari, Bumble Bee Foods, LLC / Clover Leaf Seafoods, MW Brands, Princess, Sea Value, StarKist, Thai Union / Chicken of the Sea, and TriMarine), as well as the WWF (World Wildlife Fund), are partnered in the ISSF.

Greenpeace welcomed the formation of ISSF when it went public in April 2009. ISSF’s policies should be in favour of science-based sustainable management. However, Greenpeace regards many of ISSF’s policies as not sufficiently far-reaching to meet the objectives of sustainable management and is disappointed by the level of real action taken by the member companies to ensure the sustainability of the products in which they trade. Products of ISSF member companies do still contain tuna from stocks where overfishing is taking place, have mostly been caught by purse seiners setting nets around FADs or by longline fisheries, with few regulations in place. Full and transparent traceability for the end customer has not been implemented and many products have been transshipped at sea.

Recently, ISSF has recognized the sustainability concerns around FAD-associated purse seine fisheries and has launched a research programme looking into ways to mitigate unwanted bycatch. While Greenpeace welcomes this initiative, more action to safeguard endangered marine life and tuna stocks is needed right now. There is nothing hindering ISSF companies from taking action to stop the use of FADs in purse seine fisheries, to support the development of sustainable and equitable pole-and-line, handline and other selective fishing methods suitable for the use of coastal communities where appropriate and to improve the rest of their operations/ sourcing to meet the standards of true sustainability.



© Alex Hafford / Greenpeace

PROTECTING THE FUTURE OF TUNA

Fishing not only reduces the populations of target species but can also alter marine food webs and have cumulative impacts on the marine ecosystem, undermining the productive capacity of fisheries.²⁷ Diverse and intact ecosystems are more productive, healthier and more resilient than degraded ones. In light of growing stressors in our oceans, the need is even greater to restore the abundance of sea life and give marine ecosystems a chance to repair themselves. This means preserving critical areas from fishing altogether through creation of a global network of marine reserves.

Marine reserves can restore tuna stocks, protect biodiversity and sustain fisheries all at once.²⁸ One area where action is being taken to protect tuna stocks in marine reserves is in the Pacific. In response to declining stocks and the need to reap higher economic benefits from their tuna resources, eight Pacific Island Countries known as the Parties to the Nauru Agreement⁷ have now banned purse seine fishing for vessels that have licenses with them in 5 large high seas areas of the West

and Central Pacific as of January 1 2011. Greenpeace is calling on the four high seas pockets to be established as fully protected marine reserves. Greenpeace is also calling on retailers and tuna brands to support the moves of the Pacific Island Countries and ensure that they do not source any tuna from the high seas pockets and additional areas closed to purse seining.

Outside the marine reserves we need sustainable and equitable fishing. Greenpeace is campaigning for a move toward more-sustainable ways of catching fish, in particular domestic pole-and-line fishing, which relies on old-fashioned fishing rods. Pole-and-line fishing allows quite specific targeting of skipjack tuna, and responsible fishermen can throw back fish which are still small or of the wrong species. Moreover, pole-and-line fishing is more labour-intensive, creating jobs for local fishermen. Given that lower investments are required, it is also an economical way to catch the fish. Catching fish the way most of it is now caught is neither economical nor sustainable in the long-term. And one thing we can all agree on is that we want tuna in the long-term.

⁷ Parties to the Nauru Agreement: Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea, Federated States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands



Greenpeace is campaigning to close the four high seas areas in the Pacific to all fishing activities. These four areas need to be designated as marine reserves. This is essential to secure sustainable fisheries and protect the marine ecosystem of the Pacific.

Map showing the locations (in orange) of the four Pacific high seas enclaves proposed as marine reserves by Greenpeace²⁶

REFERENCES / ENDNOTES

- 1 Myers, R., and B. Worm. 2003. Rapid Worldwide Depletion of Predatory Fish Communities. *Nature* 423: 280-283.
- 2 Molony, B. 2007. Overview of purse-seine and longline bycatch issues in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. In: Secretariat of the Pacific Community, *Oceanic Fisheries Programme*. Inaugural meeting of the Asia and Pacific Islands Bycatch Consortium. Honolulu, USA, 15–16 February 2007. SPC: Noumea, New Caledonia.
- 3 Lewison, R. L., S.A. Freeman, and L.B. Crowder. 2004. Quantifying the effects of fisheries on threatened species: The impact of pelagic longlines on loggerhead and leatherback sea turtles. *Ecology Letters* 7: 221–231.
- 4 Wallace, B., et al. 2010. Global patterns of marine turtle bycatch. *Conservation Letters* 3 (3): 1–12.
- 5 Molony, B. 2005. *Estimates of the mortality of non-target species with an initial focus on seabirds, turtles, and sharks*. WCPFC-SC1 EB WP-1. Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, Noumea, New Caledonia.
- 6 Bromhead, D., J. Foster, R. Attard, J. Findlay, and J. Kalish. 2003. *A review of the impacts of fish aggregating devices (FADs) on tuna fisheries*. Final Report to the Fisheries Resources Research Fund. Bureau of Rural Sciences, Canberra, ACT, Australia. 122 pp. Accessed May 2010, at: <http://adl.brs.gov.au/brsShop/data/PC12777.pdf>.
- 7 Hallier, J-P, and D. Gaertner. 2008. Drifting fish aggregation devices could act as an ecological trap for tropical tuna species. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 353: 255–64. Accessed May 2010, at: http://hal.ird.fr/docs/00/26/91/72/PDF/Hallier_GaertnerMEPS1780_Prev2.pdf.
- 8 Molony, B. 2005. *Estimates of the mortality of non-target species with an initial focus on seabirds, turtles, and sharks*. WCPFC-SC1 EB WP-1. Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, Noumea, New Caledonia.
- 9 Dulvy, Baum, Clarke, Compagno, Cortés, Domingo, Fordham, Fowler, Francis, Gibson, Martinez, Musick, Soldo, Stevens and Valenti: 2008. You can swim but you can't hide: The global status and conservation of oceanic pelagic sharks and rays. *Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems* 18 (5): 459–482.
- 10 Bromhead, D., et al, 2003. *A review of the impact of fish aggregating devices (FADs) on tuna fisheries: Final report to the Fisheries Resources Research Fund*. Canberra (Australia): Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
- 11 Hall, Martin. 2008. Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, reported in Forbes: http://www.forbes.com/2008/07/24/dolphin-safe-tuna-tech-paperplastic08-cx_ee_0724fishing.html
- 12 WCPFC. 2009. The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Scientific Committee Fifth Regular Session, 10–21 August 2009, Port Vila, Vanuatu. Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Kolonia, Pohnpei. Accessed November 2010, at: <http://www.wcpfc.int/doc/summary-reportpre-edited-version>.
- 13 WCPFC. 2010. The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Scientific Committee Sixth Regular Session, 10–19 August 2010, Nuku'alofa, Tonga. Summary Report. Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Kolonia, Pohnpei. Accessed November 2010, at: <http://www.wcpfc.int/node/2751>.
- 14 IATTC. 2010. *The Fishery for Tunas and Billfishes in the Eastern Pacific Ocean in 2008*. Fisheries Status Report No 7. Inter-American tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), La Jolla, California, USA. Accessed November 2010, at: <http://www.iattc.org/PDFFiles2/FisheryStatusReports/FisheryStatusReport7ENG.pdf>.
- 15 IOTC. 2009. *Report of the Eleventh Session of the IOTC Working Party on Tropical Tunas, Mombasa, Kenya, 15–23 October, 2009*. Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), Victoria, Seychelles. Accessed November 2010, at: www.iotc.org/files/proceedings/2009/wpt/IOTC-2009-WPTT-R%5BE%5D.pdf.
- 16 WCPFC. 2010. The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. Scientific Committee Sixth Regular Session, 10–19 August 2010, Nuku'alofa, Tonga. Summary Report. Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Kolonia, Pohnpei. Accessed November 2010 at: <http://www.wcpfc.int/node/2751>.
- 17 ICCAT. 2010. *Report of the Standing Committee of Research and Statistics, Madrid, Spain, 4–8 October 2010*. International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Madrid, Spain. Accessed November 2010 at: www.iccat.int/Documents/Meetings/Docs/2010_SCRS_ENG.pdf.
- 18 ICCAT. 2008. Report of the 2007 ICCAT Bigeye Tuna Stock Assessment Session. Madrid, Spain, 5–12 June, 2007. SCRS/2007/013. *Collect. Vol. Sci. Pap. ICCAT*: 62 (1): 97–239. Accessed November 2010, at: www.iccat.int/Documents/SCRS/DETRep/DET_bet.pdf.
- 19 IATTC. 2010. The Fishery for Tunas and Billfishes in the Eastern Pacific Ocean in 2008. In: *Proceedings of the 80th Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), La Jolla California, USA, 8–12 June 2009*, pp. 94–96. Document IATTC-80-05. Accessed November 2010, at: www.iattc.org/PDFFiles2/IATTC-80-05-Tunas-and-billfishes-in-the-EPO-2008.pdf.
- 20 Marsh, J. 2009. *Bigeye tuna, Thunnus obesus—Update*. Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Seafood report. Monterey Bay Aquarium, CA, USA. Accessed November 2010 at: www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/content/media/MBA_SeafoodWatch_BigeyeTunaReport.pdf.
- 21 IOTC. 2009. *Report of the Twelfth Session of the Scientific Committee. Victoria, Seychelles, 30 November–4 December, 2009*. IOTC-2009-SC-R[E]. Accessed November 2010, at: www.iotc.org/files/proceedings/2009/sc/IOTC-2009-SC-R%5BE%5D.pdf.
- 22 ICCAT. 2008. Skipjack executive summary. In: *Report of the 2008 ICCAT yellowfin and skipjack stock assessments meeting*. Florianópolis, Brazil, 21–29 July 2008. SCRS/2008/016 – YFT & SKJ Assessment. Accessed November 2010, at: www.iccat.int/Documents/SCRS/ExecSum/SKJ_EN.pdf.
- 23 IATTC. 20. *Tunas and billfishes in the Eastern Pacific oceans in 2008*. Fishery Status Report 7. Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission. La Jolla, California 2010. Accessed July 2010, at: www.iattc.org/PDFFiles2/IATTC-80-05-Tunas-and-billfishes-in-the-EPO-2008.pdf.
- 24 WCPFC. 2010. *Scientific Committee Fifth Regular Session Summary Report*. Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, Scientific Committee Fifth Regular Session, Port Vila, Vanuatu 10–21 August 2009. Accessed July 2010, at: <http://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/2009/5th-regular-session-scientific-committee>.
- 25 IOTC. 2009. IOTC. *Report of the Twelfth Session of the Scientific Committee*. Victoria, Seychelles, 30 November–4 December, 2009. IOTC-2009-SC-R[E]. Accessed November 2010, at: www.iotc.org/files/proceedings/2009/sc/IOTC-2009-SC-R%5BE%5D.pdf.
- 26 Greenpeace. 2008. Closing Time For Overfishing- Creating Pacific High Seas Marine Reserves. <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/Global/international/planet-2/report/2008/5/closing-time-for-overfishing.pdf>
- 27 Smith, MD, et al. 2010. Sustainability and Global Seafood. *Science*, vol. 327, 12 February 2010.
- 28 Roberts, C. 2007. *The unnatural history of the sea—The past and future of humanity and fishing*. Island Press.

GREENPEACE

Greenpeace is an independent, campaigning organisation that uses non-violent, creative confrontation to expose global environmental problems, and to force the solutions which are essential to a green and peaceful future.

Greenpeace Canada

33 Cecil Street Toronto, Ontario M5T 1N1

454 Laurier Avenue East, Montréal, Québec H2J 1E7

6238-104 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 2K9

1726 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, British Columbia V5N 4A3

1 800 320 7183

www.greenpeace.ca