

Japan  
Fisheries  
Association



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## Views and Opinions of Japan's Fisheries Industry

### ICFA Resolution

## ICFA calls on the international society for the elimination of rootless negative rumors on seafood from the disaster area in Japan

The International Coalition of Fisheries Associations (ICFA), an international non-governmental organization, called on the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to help eliminate rootless negative rumors on seafood from the eastern and northern areas of Japan severely affected by the great earthquake and tsunami in March 2011.

ICFA submitted to the FAO the ICFA Resolution to Support Restoration of the Japanese Seafood Industry Affected by the Mega Earthquake and Tsunami, adopted at its annual meeting in Rome on October 6, 2011, and asked for cooperation for the restoration of fisheries in Japan.

The resolution was delivered by ICFA Executive Secretary Alastair Macfarlane to Mr. Arni Mathiesen, Assistant Secretary General of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Division at the 13th Session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), held February 20-24 at Hyderabad in India.

During the FAO Sub-Committee session, references were made to the ICFA resolution. Some Contracting Parties requested the FAO for the provision of scientific information and the propagation of CODEX guidelines so that consumers can be informed of objective information.

Following is the full text of the resolution.

### ICFA Resolution to Support Restoration of the Japanese Seafood Industry Affected by the Mega Earthquake and Tsunami

The International Coalition of Fisheries Associations (ICFA) met on 5-7 October 2011 in Rome. ICFA members heard a presentation on post-tsunami, earthquake and nuclear disaster recovery efforts by the Japanese government as well as seafood industry.

The International Coalition of Fisheries Associations (ICFA) recognized

The mega earthquake and tsunami devastated eastern

and northern Japan in March 2011 and has caused tremendous damage to a vast area, particularly to the fishing communities in the affected area.

The nuclear accident caused by the earthquake and tsunami has also affected the industry particularly in relation to the concern on safety of products including seafood.

Despite safety of the fish guaranteed by the Japanese authorities concerned through monitoring and inspections, sales of the seafood have decreased drastically due to rootless negative rumors.

ICFA, therefore:

**Supports** restoration of the Japanese seafood industry by cooperating in dissemination of information to users of seafood of the world, so that they have a correct understanding of the situation regarding the safety of the Japanese seafood.

**Requests and urges** the FAO to continue to communicate with each member country regarding the safety of Japanese seafood.

\*ICFA was established in 1988 as a non-governmental organization having fisheries associations of fishing countries as members. At present, major fishing nations from all the continents, except Africa, are its members. Its stated mission is to ensure conservation of the oceans and maintain fisheries based on the basic concept that the oceans are the major source of food for mankind. Its concrete activities include pursuing understanding and support of the position of the fisheries industry at various international fora, by consolidating the position of the fisheries industry in member countries.

## Seafood Expo Osaka

### 9th Osaka Seafood Show attracted a record number of participants

-- Visitors also showed a substantial increase from last year

The 9th International Seafood & Technology Expo, Osaka--the largest seafood show in western Japan--was organized by the Japan Fisheries Association February 14-15 at the ATC Hall in Osaka.

A total of 210 major firms occupying 204 booths participated in the show from the Kansai area centering on Osaka, and other western Japan areas. This marked the largest number of participants in the nine expos held so far. About 85 firms made their first entry in the show.

During the two-day period, a total of 13,473 visitors attended, which largely exceeded the 11,489 visitors to the previous expo in 2011. Active business negotiations took place.

About 1,100 items of seafood and fisheries-related equipment and technologies were exhibited, including

seafood, seasoning, processing and distribution equipment, hygienic control equipment and sushi-related merchandize.

In the show, held under the slogan "Restoration of Fisheries in Japan from Osaka," 13 companies participated from the northern Japanese prefectures severely affected by the earthquake/tsunami last March.

On behalf of the organizer, JFA President Toshiro Shirasu expressed the strong hope that the message for expanding seafood consumption spreads from Osaka, a large commercial city known for its vital food culture.

In the JFA booth, panels were exhibited and pamphlets were distributed on JFA's assistance for promoting fish consumption and encouraging employment in the fisheries sector. The JFA handed out to visitors a considerable number of pamphlets introducing various species of fish, the cooking methods and a JFA exam to test knowledge on fish.

During the show, various seminars were held concurrently, such as "Sushi Expo 2112," "How to serve more delicious sashimi," and "Useful suggestions for cooking fish with a microwave."

In parallel with the expo, a Special Learning Session on Fish for elementary school pupils was held by the JFA's Fish Diet Promotion Center in a building adjacent to the expo site, in which about 150 children participated. The pupils attended the seminar to study about fish, observe fish in a mobile aquarium and also visit some booths in the show. The seminar rooms were filled with lively voices of children who found the joy of knowing about fish.



MEL Japan booth at Osaka Expo

## MEL Japan News



### MEL Japan is gradually gaining wider consumer acceptance

Marine Eco-label Japan (MEL Japan), the first marine eco-labeling scheme in Japan launched in December 2007, has been steadily gaining wider consumer acceptance through publicity activities including press releases, various demonstrations and events. Following are major developments relating to MEL Japan in recent months.

#### 1. New product with MEL Japan logo developed

JF Jusan Fisheries Cooperative in Aomori Prefecture, northern Japan, which obtained MEL Japan certification, has developed a new product "common freshwater clam shucked meat plus extracts." Amid increasing consumer attention in recent years on the health effects of common freshwater clam ingredients, including ornithine, the cooperative intends to appeal the product for a wide-range of use. It carries with it the logo of MEL Japan--

symbol that ensures the product is friendly both to the resources and the environment.

The new product contains two packs--one with 25 grams of shucked shellfish and another with 50 grams of clam extracts. Rice dishes for five persons can be prepared using a pack each of clam meat and extract. The product is priced at Y1,050 and can be preserved frozen.

## 2. Sampling and sales of skipjack tuna caught by distant-water pole-and-line fishery

Sampling and sales of skipjack caught by distant-water pole-and-line fishery, which received MEL certification, were conducted on December 6 and 9 at Ishihara Suisan Marine Station in Yaizu, Shizuoka Prefecture, west of Tokyo. Products such as first-grade brine frozen skipjack, "tataki" (half grilled) products using skipjack and albacore tuna, and medium-class albacore "toro" (fatty part), all with MEL-Japan labels, were displayed in ice cases. Cooking staffers at Shizuoka Prefecture's Seafood PR Division were engaged in the preparation of this event. The organizers hope to promote skipjack caught in this fishery at supermarkets and other retail outlets in the days ahead.

## 3. Five types of MEL-certified fisheries publicized at 2nd Tosa Fish Festival

The 2nd Tosa Fish Festival was held on January 22 at Kochi Port in western Japan. At the MEL Japan booth on the festival site, the secretariat publicized five types of fisheries in Kochi Prefecture--skipjack trolling, alfonsino driftnet, alfonsino angling, alfonsino hand-line (using feather jig), and mackerel vertical longline.

This event targeting ordinary consumers was aimed at expanding the consumption of seafood produced in Kochi Prefecture. According to Kochi government officials, more than 4,000 people, including children, visited the event site.

At the MEL Japan booth, about 300 serving samples of spotted mackerel sashimi taken by a MEL Japan-certified fishery were distributed. Sampling was very popular with the visitors. To children, balloons with the MEL-Japan logo were handed out.

## 4. Participation in the Supermarket Trade Show

MEL Japan participated in the 46th Supermarket Trade Show 2012 held at the Tokyo Big Sight Feb. 1-3. Visitors to the show numbered 84,360. MEL Japan publicized, in two booths, its certified fisheries and their products, centering on the sampling of seafood from the Jusan Lake common freshwater clam fishery, the sandlance boat seine fishery in Aichi Prefecture, and the distant-water skipjack pole-



MEL Japan booth at Tosa Fish Festival



Half-grilled skipjack



Campaign at Sunshine Supermarket



Mackerel sampling



A variety of seafood displayed for sale

and-line fishery. Enthusiastic questions were posed by many potential buyers about MEL Japan products and its certification program.

### 5. Mass retailer in Kochi gives publicity to MEL Japan

Sunshine Co., a mass retailer doing business mainly in Kochi Prefecture, western Japan, publicized MEL Japan on Jan. 29 at its three sales outlets in the prefecture. The Kochi Prefecture Fisheries Cooperative Association, which obtained MEL Japan certification, organized the sales campaign fair in cooperation with retailers in the prefecture. At the fair, sashimi of alfonso and spotted mackerel were offered for sale. Expectation was high that this fair would prompt mass retailers to market these two species.

A similar fair is scheduled to take place on March 24-25 at Marui Westland, a mass retailer in Okayama Prefecture near Osaka. Publicity of MEL Japan's program and certification process (using panels, leaflets, a DVD demonstration, and other materials) is planned at this event.

## Topics

### JFA sets up fish consumption promotion network to boost fish diet in Japan

The Fish Promotion Center of the Japan Fisheries Association launched its "Let's Eat Fish Network" in February this year with a view to collect information on ways to boost fish consumption and strengthen cooperative relations among people related to the seafood industry.

In a press conference on February 8, JFA Managing Director Toshinori Saito expressed the hope that this network serves "to coordinating various efforts we have been making so far to promote the fish diet in Japan."

The network is composed of internet communications and job coordination, with the registration of various parties promoting fish consumption, ranging from production, processing and consumption. Fisheries organizations, and companies as well as schools and consumer organizations became members. On February 15, the network mailed its first online magazine to registrants with topics on fish diet.

Saito explained that "although there is need for an increased fish diet, consumption has not yet been so much activated in Japan. As reasons for the slow growth in fish diet, consumers tend to consider fish expensive and not easy to handle. The idea to establish this network has been promoted since the center was established last year."

It is possible for registrants to send their requests and information regarding the fish diet promotion project. The organizer of the network hopes to establish cooperation among participants such as on educational activities at schools and cooking institutions and to request assistance at seafood sales sections of mass-

retailers.

Marine Eco-label Japan (MEL Japan) also will take part in this undertaking. The center will promote activities for boosting the fish diet in Japan in cooperation with the campaign group, Food Action Nippon.

In June the JFA intends to organize the first symposium on seafood consumption for the members of the network.

### OECD official says global seafood value-chain is undergoing a drastic change

Carl-Christian Schmidt, Head of the Fisheries Policies Division of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Trade and Agriculture Directorate, delivered a lecture in Tokyo in February under the theme of "Globalization of Fisheries and Aquaculture."

The lecture session was organized by the Research Institute of Natural Capital at the Japan Fisheries Association's conference room, with the cooperation of the Japanese government's Fisheries Agency.

In the lecture, Schmidt pointed out that the value-chain of seafood is now undergoing a drastic change worldwide as demand for seafood has been enlarged on a global scale and seafood trade liberalization has been advanced.

He cited concrete instances of ongoing globalization in all the sectors of fisheries, aquaculture, processing and distribution. Along with this trend, producers and retailers are expanding their business scale through corporate integration, increasing their influence on the global distribution of seafood, he said.

Based on this observation, Schmidt suggested the possibility that various issues will come to the forefront in the days ahead, including trade tariffs on seafood, government subsidies to the fisheries sector, resource management, and certification of seafood that could constitute non-tariff trade barriers.

He reported that the OECD is now undertaking an analysis on how government financial assistance, such as fisheries subsidies and preferential taxes, will impact fisheries resources.

There will be varying degrees of impact by fisheries subsidies depending on whether resource management is based on total allowable catch (TAC) and other regulatory measures.

The results of the OECD analysis will likely be taken into account in the process of negotiations on seafood trade at the World Trade Organization (WTO), Schmidt said.

In the question-and-answer session that followed the lecture, Joji Morishita, counselor of the Japanese government's Fisheries Agency, commented that the OECD is an ideal forum to address various issues pertaining to fisheries because it can undertake calm and objective analysis with no conflicts of interest among countries because it does not itself manage catch quotas nor make binding decisions through voting.

Morishita thus expressed the hope that the OECD plays a leading role in making a breakthrough on various issues, unlike the WTO where there are conflicts of interest among member countries.