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Contact:

Anjali Saxena

212-660-6759

[asaxena@dcinyc.com](mailto:asaxena@dcinyc.com)

## **MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL LAUNCHES CONSUMER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD**

### **MSC Campaign Calls on Public to Join Sustainability Movement, Help Preserve Seafood as Renewable Food Source**

Seattle, WA, September 14, 2011 — The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), which maintains the world's leading certification and ecolabel program for sustainable fishing and seafood traceability, has launched a public awareness campaign calling on consumers to support and raise awareness for sustainable seafood. Since the MSC first launched a global standard in 1999, the program has rapidly gained momentum. Today, the estimated retail value of seafood products bearing the MSC sustainability logo exceeds U.S. \$1.5 billion, with market forces driving the transformation of fishing practices for a sustainable future. The consumer awareness campaign is the latest MSC initiative to ensure that seafood remains a renewable food source for future generations.

“More than two billion people worldwide rely on seafood as their sole or primary source of protein and half a billion people depend on fishing and the seafood trade for their livelihoods. The world cannot simply stop eating seafood or cease to fish – these are not viable options,” said Kerry Coughlin, MSC's Americas Regional Director. “With nearly 12,000 MSC-certified seafood products currently available through retail and restaurant partners, it's time for consumers to make choices that take the sustainable seafood movement to the next level.”

The MSC campaign shows people that it's easy to make sustainable seafood part of their lifestyle. The campaign promotes simple yet effective steps such as making a personal commitment to eat sustainable seafood, supporting stores and restaurants that offer seafood products with the blue MSC sustainability seal, and talking to friends, family and the community about the importance of preserving the world's fish stocks. The campaign toolkit, available for download at [www.eatsustainableseafood.org](http://www.eatsustainableseafood.org) includes MSC's new product finder (<http://www.msc.org/where-to-buy/product-finder>), which helps identify and locate certified sustainable seafood worldwide.

In showing support for seafood sustainability, consumers underpin the commitment of hundreds of businesses and fisheries globally who have committed to MSC certification of seafood. Just a few examples are Walmart, Costco, Whole Foods Market, Target and Kroger in the United States, and Loblaw in Canada. Top universities such as Notre Dame, UC Berkeley, and Pomona College have become certified to serve and promote MSC-certified seafood in their dining facilities. Participants include fisheries and businesses of all sizes. To date, 48 percent of total commercial fisheries in the U.S. and Canada by volume landed are MSC-certified or are in assessment. The far-reaching economic and environmental effects of MSC certification can be seen worldwide. There is the Mexican fishing village where certification led to such benefits as paved roads and a hospital, while an Oregon fishery significantly improved habitat impact with adjustments to fishing gear.

“When consumers purchase seafood bearing the MSC label they can rest assured that it was fished in a sustainable way and can be traced back to exactly where it was caught. As more consumers ask for reliable proof in making seafood selections, sustainability is apt to become an even greater business priority,” said Ms. Coughlin. “We can then look towards a future where the health of the world’s oceans and fish stocks has been assured for the long term.”

### **About the Marine Stewardship Council**

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is an international non-profit organization set up to promote solutions to the problem of overfishing. The MSC runs the only certification and ecolabelling program for wild-capture fisheries consistent with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards and the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization guidelines for fisheries certification. The FAO ‘Guidelines for the Eco-labeling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries’ require that credible fishery certification and eco-labeling schemes include:

- Objective, third-party fishery assessment utilizing scientific evidence;
- Transparent processes with built-in stakeholder consultation and objection procedures;
- Standards based on the sustainability of target species, ecosystems and management practices.

The MSC has offices in London, Seattle, Tokyo, Sydney, The Hague, Glasgow, Berlin, Cape Town, Paris, Madrid and Stockholm. In total, over 250 fisheries are engaged in the MSC program with 130 certified and over 128 under full assessment. Another 40 to 50 fisheries are in confidential pre-assessment. Together, fisheries already certified or in full assessment record annual catches of close to nine million metric tonnes of seafood. This represents over 10 per cent of the annual global harvest of wild capture fisheries. Certified fisheries currently land over five million metric tonnes of seafood annually – close to six per cent of the total harvest from wild capture fisheries. Worldwide, nearly 12,000 seafood products that can be traced back to the certified sustainable fisheries bear the blue MSC ecolabel. For more information on the work of the MSC, please visit [www.msc.org](http://www.msc.org).