



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

25 March 2011

Ref: AFMA F2009/0752

Mr Ian McLeod
Managing Director
Coles
PO Box 480
GLEN IRIS VIC 3146

Dear Mr McLeod

Coles' sustainable fish sourcing initiative

On 17 March 2011 Coles announced changes in the way you will source some fish products to assist customers in making more sustainable choices. The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) is the agency responsible for the sustainable management of Commonwealth fish resources on behalf of the Australian community. We welcome any initiatives that enable consumers to make well informed decisions about the sustainability of their seafood.

Australian fisheries are recognised as being among the world's best managed. Our fisheries are managed for long-term sustainability and consumers of Australian wild-caught seafood can be confident that they are eating a sustainable and healthy product.

Unfortunately, some previous initiatives by retailers and non-government conservation organisations have failed to ensure that they have the best available information on the sustainability of various fisheries. Similarly, many initiatives fail to recognise that many fish species are comprised of numerous discrete populations and hence overfishing in other parts of the world does not impact on the sustainability of the Australian harvest. These failures have unfairly damaged well managed and sustainable Australian fisheries and denied consumers the opportunity to make well informed choices.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with you and your partner in this initiative to ensure that you have the best available information on the sustainability of Australian fisheries. AFMA has a strong commitment to evidenced-based decision making and we would be willing to direct you to the detailed scientific reports that underpin our management.

We are pleased that Coles has announced that it will be assessing fisheries under the 'Ecological Sustainability Evaluation of Seafood' (ESES) criteria. However, I am very concerned that Coles' recent decision to delist Yellowfin Tuna and Orange Roughy has failed to follow these criteria with respect to the sustainability of relevant Australian fisheries.

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The most recent Fisheries Status Report from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) classifies Australian wild caught Yellowfin Tuna from the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery as being '*Not Overfished*' and '*Not Subject to Overfishing*' (i.e. the stock is healthy and the catch is sustainable). This fishery currently catches more than 99% of the total Australian Yellowfin Tuna catch. The sustainable catch limits set for the relevant fishery have the support of fisheries experts from the World Wildlife Fund (your partner in this initiative) as well as world-recognised scientists from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and ABARES and the recreational and commercial fishing industry.

The most recent ABARES Fisheries Status Report also shows that none of the five AFMA-managed Orange Roughy stocks are subject to overfishing. While several stocks were subject to overfishing historically, all stocks are now managed under a stringent recovery plan with strict catch limits based on sound, independent scientific advice from CSIRO. This means that consumers can be confident that Australian-caught Orange Roughy is a sustainable product.

Unfortunately, many wild capture fisheries elsewhere in the world are in poor shape. It was unclear from the press release whether Coles and/or WWF will be assessing the sustainability credentials of all imported wild-caught and aquaculture products to be sold in your supermarkets. To enable your customers to make a well-informed choices I am hopeful that the sustainability of all fishery and aquaculture sources will be considered not just Australian wild-capture fisheries.

In closing I reiterate our support for initiatives to ensure sourcing of sustainable seafood and offer AFMA's assistance in ensuring that you have the best available information on the sustainability of Australian-caught seafood.

Yours sincerely



Dr James Findlay
CEO



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25 March 2011

Ref: AFMA F2009/0752

Mr Michael Luscombe
Managing Director and CEO
Woolworths Limited
PO Box 8000
Baulkham Hills NSW 2153

Dear Mr Luscombe

Woolworths' sustainable fish sourcing strategy

On 17 March 2011 Woolworths announced changes in the way you will source some fish products to assist customers in making more sustainable choices. The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) is the agency responsible for the sustainable management of Commonwealth fish resources on behalf of the Australian community. We welcome any initiatives that enable consumers to make well informed decisions about the sustainability of their seafood.

Australian fisheries are recognised as being among the world's best managed. Our fisheries are managed for long-term sustainability and consumers of Australian wild-caught seafood can be confident that they are eating a sustainable and healthy product.

Unfortunately, some previous initiatives by retailers and non-government conservation organisations have failed to ensure that they have the best available information on the sustainability of various fisheries. Similarly, many initiatives fail to recognise that many fish species are comprised of numerous discrete populations and hence overfishing in other parts of the world does not impact on the sustainability of the Australian harvest. These failures have unfairly damaged well managed and sustainable Australian fisheries and denied consumers the opportunity to make well informed choices.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with you and your partners in this initiative to ensure that you have the best available information on the sustainability of Australian fisheries. AFMA has a strong commitment to evidenced-based decision making and we would be willing to direct you to the detailed scientific reports that underpin our management.

I am concerned that Woolworths' recent decision to delist Australian-caught Yellowfin Tuna and Orange Roughy has failed to take account of the best available science on the sustainability of the relevant Australian fisheries. The most recent Fisheries Status Report from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) classifies Australian wild caught Yellowfin Tuna

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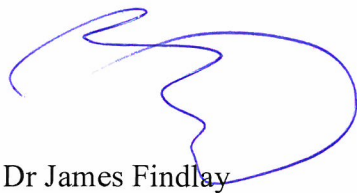
from the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery as being '*Not Overfished*' and '*Not Subject to Overfishing*' (i.e. the stock is healthy and the catch is sustainable). This fishery currently catches more than 99% of the total Australian Yellowfin Tuna catch. The sustainable catch limits set for the relevant fishery have the support of world-recognised scientists from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and ABARES and fisheries experts from World Wildlife Fund as well as the recreational and commercial fishing industry.

The most recent ABARES Fisheries Status Report also shows that none of the five AFMA-managed Orange Roughy stocks are subject to overfishing. While several stocks were subject to overfishing historically, all stocks are now managed under a stringent recovery plan with strict catch limits based on sound, independent scientific advice from CSIRO. This means that consumers can be confident that Australian-caught Orange Roughy is a sustainable product.

Unfortunately, many wild capture fisheries elsewhere in the world are in poor shape. It was unclear from the press release whether Woolworths and its' partners, the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Foundation and the Marine Stewardship Council, will be assessing the sustainability credentials of all imported wild-caught and aquaculture products to be sold in your supermarkets. To enable your customers to make sustainable fish choices I am hopeful that the sustainability of all seafood products will be considered not just Australian wild-capture fish.

In closing I reiterate our support for initiatives to ensure sourcing of sustainable seafood and offer AFMA's assistance in ensuring that you have the best available information on the sustainability of Australian-caught seafood.

Yours sincerely



Dr James Findlay
CEO