



June 15, 2022

To the members and audiences of the 2022 United Nations Ocean Conference:

Please accept the following statement on behalf of FishWise to support the “2022 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development”.

Oceans are critical to sustaining human life, both as an important source of protein and for economic vitality. Seafood supply chains require healthy oceans and people to prosper, and these supply chains are the mechanism through which both nutritious food and fair livelihoods can be generated. If supply chains operate in unsustainable ways—whether through exploitation of ocean resources or of workers and their communities—industry, people, and the planet suffer. Ocean ecosystems cannot be sustained, and the fair and equitable treatment of seafood workers and their communities assured, unless seafood supply chains are transformed to ensure that all can prosper.

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing represents one of the most complex issues confronting the world today. Complex systems are dynamic by nature and made up of interdependent parts. This is true in ecological systems, market systems, and social systems. To change or transform a system requires more than individual or unilateral action. Complex systems problems require collaboration and coordination to achieve positive change. Addressing IUU fishing, associated labor and human rights abuses, and inadequate fisheries management will improve security, economic prosperity, and food security for the millions of people who depend on fisheries for their livelihoods. Helping fishers, governments, and enterprises to produce and trade in legal, sustainable, and labor-friendly products for global businesses is also a win-win for developing countries and consumers while sustaining biodiversity and putting developing countries on a path to self-reliance.

This is why FishWise’s mission is to sustain ocean ecosystems and the people who depend on them by transforming global seafood supply chains. By “transforming,” we mean holistic change—where the seafood industry prospers by assuming responsibility for the long-term sustainability of ocean ecosystems and for the fair and equitable treatment of workers and their communities.

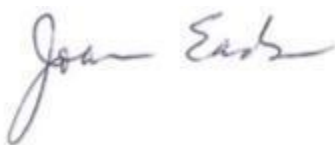
Solutions to Enduring Seafood and Ocean Conservation Challenges

The seafood industry has serious impacts on the health of oceans and the welfare of its workers, but it also has the potential to make an enormous contribution to the health of our planet and its inhabitants. FishWise partners with seafood retailers such as Albertsons Companies, Target, and Hy-Vee to enact sound and measurable changes in companies' seafood sourcing, in collaboration with mid-supply chain companies and producers. Nearly two decades of productive industry engagement has enhanced our own credibility and reputation and built a rich body of experiences from which FishWise, our partners, and our colleagues may draw to advance leadership in the field.

FishWise is also known for its commitment to collaboration, often holding multi-stakeholder meetings to innovate solutions to complex problems. USAID recognized this skill as central to selecting FishWise to lead the Seafood Alliance for Legality and Traceability (SALT), where we bring together social, environmental, tech, and government stakeholders. FishWise also plays a key role in the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy Advisory Network, Food Marketing Institute (FMI) Seafood Strategy Leadership Council, and Seafood Task Force External Stakeholder Advisory (ESA) group, which together include government officials, industry representatives, consultants, NGOs, and academics working to solve the multifaceted problem of illegal seafood harvesting.

As an organization working to sustain ocean ecosystems and the people who depend on them by transforming global seafood supply chains, FishWise is eager to learn from and contribute to the United Nations Ocean Conference Dialogues. We appreciate the opportunity to include statements and input from non-governmental organizations, like ours, who dedicate themselves to combating these global challenges facing our oceans and strengthening the sustainability of global seafood supply chains.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joan Eads", written in a cursive style.

Joan Eads
Interim Executive Director, FishWise