



## Sea Pact Doubles Number of Grant Recipients This Year

**HALIFAX, CANADA, December 1, 2016** – Sea Pact, a group of nine leading North American seafood companies dedicated to driving stewardship and continuous improvement of social, economic, and environmental responsibility throughout the global seafood supply chain, announces the recipients of their fifth round of project funding grants. New grants will be distributed this year to six organizations advancing seafood sustainability.

All three existing grant recipients will continue, with a six-month extension granted to the University of North Texas (UNT), and full renewed funding granted to the Downeast Institute in Maine, and to Shannon Balfry for research work conducted at the Vancouver Aquarium. The UNT project is continuing to advance research utilizing probiotics as an alternative to antibiotics for improving growth and survival in marine finfish aquaculture. The Downeast Institute grant continues to support work with clammers in the town of Freeport, Maine- approaching improvements on an ecosystem level by addressing invasive green crab predation, impacts of rising seawater temperatures, and enhancing wild and cultured clam populations. And the continuing research project headed by Shannon Balfry is seeking to improve sea lice mitigation within the net-pen farmed salmon industry. The project is having early success evaluating the potential for usage of native species Kelp Perch and Pile Perch to control sea lice populations in place of using antiparasitic agents.

The additional four new Sea Pact grant recipients this year are:

The BC Shrimpers' Association project to mitigate the main bycatch issue of Eulachon in the BC shrimp trawl fishery through the use of LED light technology. Verification of the effectiveness of this selective gear technology aims to support proposed regulatory change, and thus effect improvement on the economic feasibility of the fishery while minimizing the impact of the fishery on the environment including other species.

Responsible Aquaculture Foundation's (RAF) project to help build out the RAF Education Program, an effective Internet-based education platform to provide global training in responsible aquaculture across multiple languages. This project aims to improve the state of aquaculture by disseminating training regarding responsible and effective management of aquaculture farms, hatcheries and other facilities in the seafood production chain.

SafetyNet Technologies' Pisces project to fund experimental trials of light-technology devices to improve catch selectivity for a variety of commercially important species in Europe. This project aims are to 1) improve fishers' ability to only catch targeted species, 2) reduce the capture of endangered and juvenile species, and 3) improve trawling operational efficiency and profitability.

Blue Ocean Gear's project for the development and testing of a smart crustacean trap to help crab and lobster trap fishermen use innovative technology to bring about more sustainable practices. The aims of the use of this smart trap are to be able to minimize fuel usage, increase catch per unit of effort, and help to quickly locate lost or entangled gear.



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“We have had another amazing grant funding cycle with an unprecedented six new grants being awarded this year. All of these successfully funded projects hold a strong relevance to our industry in looking at creating positive change for our sustainable future”, says Guy Dean, chair of the Sea Pact Advisory Council. “We are excited to be able to help facilitate this process as well as highlight what can be achieved when industry members participate together in a precompetitive nature for common goals. Sea Pact congratulates the successful recipients and looks forward to continued positive results from these improvement and research projects.”

Rob Johnson, Managing Director of Sea Pact, comments that “We are very excited to be able to double the number of grant awards this year, with the continued support of our three currently funded projects through one project extension and two full project funding renewals, as well as the addition of four new solution-focused projects being awarded funding for a total of seven concurrent Sea Pact supported projects!”

“Sea Pact has demonstrated a successful model of precompetitive collaboration, and as we further develop as a key leadership platform for industry progress on seafood sustainability, we are extremely pleased to be able to extend our dedication to ‘provide the building blocks’ and expand our grant support to more fisheries and aquaculture improvement projects that are working to affect change in the industry and create real impact on the water,” states Johnson.

## **About Sea Pact:**

Albion Farms & Fisheries, Fortune Fish & Gourmet, Ipswich Shellfish Group, Santa Monica Seafood, Seacore Seafood, Stavis Seafoods, J.J. McDonnell, A.C. Covert and Seattle Fish Co. comprise Sea Pact and all share an active and progressive approach to their sustainability commitments. These nine companies have joined together and are using their collective power to lead and drive improvement of environmental, economic, and social responsibility throughout the seafood supply chain. Sea Pact receives sustainability counsel from non-profit organizations FishWise, Ocean Outcomes, and Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), and is a project under New Venture Funds 501(c)3 non-profit status. To learn more about Sea Pact, visit their website at [www.seapact.org](http://www.seapact.org). Funding opportunities are available through an annual request for proposals, as well as project applications that may be submitted on a rolling basis.