



Sea Pact Announces New Grant Recipients

RANCHO DOMINGUEZ, CA, November 17th, 2014 – Sea Pact, a coalition of seafood industry leaders, announces the recipients of their third round of grants. Grants in full will be distributed this month to two organizations doing work in seafood sustainability. The two new grant recipients are the University of North Texas (UNT), for a research project utilizing probiotics as an alternative to antibiotics for improving growth and survival in marine finfish aquaculture, and WWF Chile’s Aquaculture Improvement Project to transition the Chilean farmed salmon industry towards Aquaculture Stewardship Council certification as part of the Global Salmon Initiative.

UNT's Marine Conservation and Aquatic Physiology Laboratory (MCAPL) is conducting research to compare the effectiveness of probiotics (live microorganisms that benefit their host) to antibiotics, in order to increase growth rates and reduce mortality in commercially important marine fish. Trials are presently being conducted for yellowtail amberjack and red drum, but the findings and methods developed will certainly be applicable to other species of marine finfish important to aquaculture. Current mortality rates in some marine fish species can be as high as 90% at the early stages, and use of antibiotics to reduce mortality can lead to the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria and public health concerns. Dr. Ione von Herbing, PhD, from UNT says that “our project to use a probiotic (good bacteria) approach to marine aquaculture will hopefully in the long-term provide a sustainable alternative to antibiotics, in order to protect human and animal health while providing a safe and economical global fish supply.”

Sea Pact is also supporting WWF-Chile’s farmed salmon “AIP2ASC” project, which is developing pre-assessments, gap analyses and workplans to credibly transition salmon production towards meeting the ASC standard for sites involved. Tools developed throughout these comprehensive processes will then be available to other farms interested in transitioning toward ASC, including those of companies that are a part of the Global Salmon Initiative (GSI), a leadership initiative made up of salmon producers who are seeking to provide a global and sustainable supply of farmed salmon, while minimizing their environmental footprint and keeping social issues in mind. WWF-Chile is thrilled that Sea Pact is able to support this work which will undertake key first steps in realizing a credible, transparent and timebound path for companies transitioning to ASC. “WWF-Chile is committed to the environment in Chile and to working with the salmon industry to measurably reduce its impacts”, says WWF- Chile Seafood Program Manager Cristina Torres.

Logan Kock, chairman of the Sea Pact Advisory council, is “particularly proud of the two projects we’ve selected - because they truly define who we are and where we are going. The probiotic project represents our strong belief in innovation, while the WWF project demonstrates our deep interest in furthering responsible aquaculture practices of a species critical to us all.”

About Sea Pact:

Albion Fisheries, Fortune Fish & Gourmet, Ipswich Shellfish Group, Santa Monica Seafood, Seacore Seafood, Stavis Seafood, JJ McDonnell and A.C. Covert and Seattle Fish Co. comprise Sea Pact and all share an active and progressive approach to their sustainability commitments. Sea Pact receives sustainability counsel from non-profit organizations FishWise and Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP). Sea Pact is a project under New Venture Funds 501c3 non-profit status. To learn more about Sea Pact, visit their website at <http://www.seapact.org/>. More funding opportunities will be available in 2015.