



## Canada: From Ocean to Plate

EURO 5.000      Sector: *PROJECT*

profil

Partner: Ecotrust Canada, Tasha Sutcliffe, Program Director

Beteiligte: Fischer, Fischverarbeiter, Groß- und Einzelhandel

Ökologie: Besserer Schutz der Fischbestände durch verantwortliche Fischerei

Ökonomie: verbessertes Marketing durch transparente Vermarktung von Qualitätsprodukten

Kultur: Kommunikation zwischen Produzent und Konsument, Förderung der Identifikation mit lokalen Strukturen

Maßnahmen:

\* Entwicklung der technischen Infrastruktur

\* Testphase im ökonomischen Kontext

\* Koordination der Akteure in der Wertschöpfungskette

A report by Tasha Sutcliffe

Consumers are growing increasingly concerned about where their food comes from, both for their own safety and the sustainability of the planet. To meet market demand Ecotrust Canada is designing a new seafood traceability system.

In partnership with local fishermen and processors, Ecotrust Canada is exploring the design of a cost-effective system that will meet new standards for seafood traceability which are expected to be introduced by the European Union in 2010. Soon, all seafood imported into EU countries will have to be traceable back to the vessel upon which it was caught. Fisheries and Oceans Canada is considering similar rules.

Governments, in fact, are largely responding to consumer demand and environmental activists

who are increasingly using market incentives to green industries. The goal of seafood traceability is to quash the market for illegally caught fish and provide financial incentives for fishermen to harvest fish in a responsible manner.

Ecotrust Canada is interested in designing a system that can be used and maintained by fishermen themselves, without being another financial burden. Indeed, a traceability system could even be designed to provide competitive advantages in the way fishermen market and brand the seafood caught on their vessels.

The novelty of our bottom-up approach is that we want to marry an online traceability system with social networking tools, allowing fish harvesters to connect directly with seafood lovers online. Traceability will include a system to tag seafood at-sea or as it is landed, and then to track the

seafood using the coded tags through every stage of the value chain, from the fishing boat to processor, wholesaler and retailer. A centralized, digital hub for tracking seafood will allow each operator in the value-chain to access and input information about the seafood. Ultimately, at the retail end, fishmongers could market the seafood as coming from specific vessels, fishermen and fishing communities—a level of transparency which consumers are increasingly demanding.

Along with the online tracking, our traceability system will also include social networking to would allow seafood lovers to connect directly to fish harvesters and other operators in the supply chain. Consumers will be able to go online, and through a coded tag, find out which fisherman and vessel caught their seafood. They could then read fishermen’s profiles online, and learn more about the sustainability and eco-certifications of various fisheries. There will also be the ability for consumers and fishermen to communicate and share stories or recipes about their seafood experiences.

Seafood traceability provides a number of benefits to the various players in the seafood value chain. Traceability:

#### Fishermen

- allows fishermen to personally brand their catch, and build up their own, independent reputation in the market place
- connects fishermen more directly to retailers and consumers, and increases their knowledge of market trends
- meets new regulatory requirements regarding food safety and sustainability in a cost-effective way
- Fish Processors
- provides processors with a means to use market feedback to differentiate between low and high quality fish harvesters, and to pay higher prices to fishermen who show more pride in their product
- meets new regulatory requirements regarding food safety and sustainability in a cost-effective way
- facilitates co-branding between fishermen and processors of seafood products
- Retailers/Restaurants

- provides a user-friendly and cost effective way to get information to consumers about where their seafood comes from
- facilitates story-telling and more personalized merchandising of seafood products to consumers

#### Consumers

- allows consumers to directly connect with seafood harvesters, providing them with a more genuine, personalized experience
- creates a forum for seafood lovers to share stories, concerns, issues and recipes about their favourite seafood
- increases their trust in the seafood that they are eating in terms of its safety, quality and sustainability

Ecotrust Canada is launching its traceability project by piloting it among a select number of fisheries on Canada’s West Coast. We are working with fishermen, processors, and retailers to create a system that works for Chinook salmon, spiny dogfish, Pacific halibut and ling cod—all fisheries that are important to the economy of Vancouver Island. We have established partnerships with salmon trollers and local hook-and-line fishermen involved in the integrated groundfish fishery that includes dogfish, lingcod, halibut, rockfish and sablefish. We are also working with several fish processors and brokers to create a pilot system.

After rigorous testing and refinement with these select fisheries, we plan to expand the traceability system to include most West Coast fisheries and to create partnerships with other industry associations and government.

#### Partner:

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