



OVERVIEW

Seafood sustainability programs are valid only to the extent that they are measured against internationally recognized scientific standards. The application of these standards must be through a transparent public process that considers the impact of sustainability policies on human communities, and does not add unnecessary costs. This is the basis of Ocean Beauty's sustainability policy. It can be stated as adhering to the following six principles:

1. Internationally recognized standards are the only acceptable basis of sustainability efforts.
2. Peer-reviewed science is central to all meaningful standards.
3. Sustainability efforts must be measureable against those standards.
4. Policy management must be public and transparent.
5. Human community welfare must be included in all sustainability policies.
6. Incremental costs specific to sustainability efforts should be borne only when absolutely necessary to implement a program consistent with the above five principles.

Ocean Beauty supports all sustainability efforts that are consistent with these six principles. This document does not represent a comprehensive accounting of the individual actions we take on behalf of sustainability; rather its purpose is to lay out our general guiding philosophy as concisely and simply as we can.

OUR SIX SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES IN DETAIL

1. Internationally recognized standards

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations has created the *FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*. This is the only internationally recognized set of standards for the responsible and sustainable harvest of wild-capture and aquaculture fisheries. Over 70 nations are signatories to it, including the United States and most of the largest fishing nations.

Ocean Beauty believes that the FAO Code is the only proper basis for responsible and sustainable fisheries management. It is objective, international, comprehensive, and consistent with the six principles listed above. For these reasons, we use the FAO Code as the basis for our sustainability policy. The vast majority of well-managed fisheries base their management upon it, as do most NGO-based sustainability schemes.

A summary and full text of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries can be found at:

<http://www.fao.org/focus/e/fisheries/codecond.htm>

2. Peer-reviewed science

Our industry cannot afford to make decisions based on anything other than the best possible science. The scientific review process must trump all political or regional considerations or we run the risk that sustainable seafood will be marginalized through suspect or compromised science. There is nothing more basic to the long-term goals of sustainability than our unwavering support for scientific fisheries management.

3. Measurability

The ability to measure progress is fundamental to any good management structure. Without rigorous measurement of actual progress against agreed-upon standards and definitions, all sustainability efforts will be futile. Unless we base our measurement on the broadest and most objective standards available, and agree to a definition of the term “sustainability”, we cannot measure progress. Currently the FAO Code is the only source that provides us with the clarity needed to succeed. Without consistent standards and definitions chaos and bad management are inevitable.

4. Public and transparent management

Public process is our only real safeguard against politicizing the process or basing it on bad science. Without this our sustainability efforts will fail, both in actual management and in public perception.

5. Human community welfare

Sustainability is bigger than a measure of fisheries biomass or ecological progress. We are in the business of providing food to the world’s growing population and in the process providing broad support to the communities in which we operate. The FAO Code acknowledges this in section 6.2, where it reads *“Fisheries management should promote the maintenance of the quality, diversity and availability of fishery resources in sufficient quantities for present and future generations in the context of food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable development”*. It is our goal to increase the amount of seafood the world can produce in an environmentally conscientious manner, and in the process further human societal sustainability.

6. Cost containment

Careful management of the costs associated with sustainability is absolutely necessary in order for the effort to succeed, but currently there are few cost controls in place and little apparent effort to create them. Adding costs to the supply chain without properly acknowledging the impact on consumers and

other stakeholders is an irresponsible and unsustainable business practice. Adoption of the FAO Code comes at no cost.

It is not our goal to avoid paying our share of a strong international seafood sustainability system. On the contrary, we welcome our part in the effort, and hope that all parties in our industry will strongly support it. However, expenditures have to be evaluated strictly according to their worth and necessity. We will resist needless costs that are introduced into the system, whether they are hard costs or administrative soft costs. We manage every aspect of our business this way, and believe that serious cost scrutiny is essential to meaningful and lasting sustainability efforts as well.

CONCLUSION

We take no formal position regarding any specific seafood sustainability policy other than our own. However, most of the seafood sustainability approaches that are out there now fail to meet our criteria. They generally fail in how they manage costs or how they apply standards: either they burden the system with unnecessary costs, or they modify or ignore the existing international standards. As a customer-driven organization, we will support any feasible sustainability scheme that our customers rely upon, but we will still use our philosophy as the basis of how we operate.

Ocean Beauty Seafoods has been in business for over 100 years. We understand the importance of sustainable fisheries – after all, without them we would not be in business. But in order to succeed in creating long-term sustainability we will need to combine the requirements of the natural environment, of human communities, and the business of fishing and processing into one cohesive plan. That cohesive plan is what we are working towards, and is the motivation for this document.