

## ***SUSTAINABLE HOKI FISHERY RECOGNITION A PLUS FOR INDUSTRY AND SANFORD LIMITED***

Sanford Limited group managing director Eric Barratt says he is delighted to record what is something of a red-letter day in the New Zealand fishing industry with the announcement this evening of the international certification of the New Zealand hoki fishery as a sustainably managed fishery.

This is excellent news for not only the industry but also for Sanford, in our situation as a prime exporter of this desirable seafood and a company that lives up to its motto of “sustainable seafood.”

The New Zealand hoki fishery is the first major whitefish fishery in the world to be certified in this manner by the Marine Stewardship Council. By whitefish I mean the species that, when filleted, are white and usually boneless – besides hoki, other major species of whitefish are cod, pollock, hake, whiting and haddock.

The Marine Stewardship Council is an independent, global, non-profit organisation which has developed strict standards to promote sustainable management of the world’s fisheries.

The sustainable supply of seafood is an increasing issue with consumers, particularly in Europe. And certification means that consumers, supermarkets, distributors and producers have certainty of constant supply.

New Zealand was always well placed with its world-leading sustainable fisheries management system and accreditation is likely to be sought for the fisheries of other species in New Zealand waters.

With its certification New Zealand hoki will now be specifically identified among other retail products in Europe and will therefore be differentiated from other whitefish species. This is expected to quickly result in more stable and improved prices.

It is encouraging to see the willingness of Unilever to assist and commit to the product and the certification process. That commitment will see expanded consumer awareness and knowledge of New Zealand hoki.

Unilever had experience dealing with the product in the past when it was part of the overall whitefish programme and were satisfied with the high quality produced on board New Zealand owned and crewed freezer vessels.

A great deal of credit has to go to the men and women working on board the vessels of Sanford and other companies, at sea for up to 50 days at a time. It is their commitment to maintain high quality standards that encourages companies such as Unilever to purchase this product.

### ***What this means for Sanford***

The certification first of all reinforces the company's "sustainable seafood" motto, which is also currently supported by:

- Commitment to ISO 14001 EMS accreditation (10 operations are already certified and the final three operations will be completed by July)
- The publication last December of the company's first triple bottom line report
- Ongoing commitment to sustainable development through membership of the New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development.

Additionally, we are today loading a large shipment (part of a total order for 1000 tonnes of product) in Timaru for Unilever for marketing under the retail certification logo of Unilever in Europe. This is the second order in a series that Unilever expects will total more than 4000 tonnes during the year. Sanford's share of that business is expected to be worth well in excess of US\$3 million.

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