



Seafood Champion Awards

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SeaWeb Announces Seafood Champion Award Finalists

Global seafood advocates and activists focus on technical innovations and social issues to drive seafood sustainability

BOSTON, March 11, 2018—SeaWeb today announced the finalists for the 2018 Seafood Champion Awards, 17 individuals and organizations who exemplify the creativity and commitment to sustainability of seafood leaders around the world.

From an activist who rescued more than 3,000 trafficked fishing workers in Southeast Asia to a nonprofit manager testing blockchain traceability in Fiji's tuna longline sector, and an international company that developed a fish-free salmon feed that really works, these innovators reflect a rapidly evolving seafood marketplace striving for even greater environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

The annual Seafood Champion Awards program recognizes individuals and organizations for excellence in promoting environmentally responsible seafood. Four winners, one in each of four categories, will be announced at a ceremony on June 19 at the SeaWeb Seafood Summit in Barcelona, Spain.

This year's competition showcased vigorous innovation in the seafood sector, with nearly half of submitted nominations supporting individuals or organizations who are using new technologies to deliver improvements to complex global supply chain issues like bycatch, traceability and illegal fishing. For the first time, this year's nominations highlighted significantly more organizations than individuals—a sign that sustainability is becoming more of an institutional mission.

Social and community issues took a front seat this year. "Many of these finalists put a human face on the social issues that are increasingly part of the seafood sustainability discussion," said Ned Daly, SeaWeb Program Director. "From preventing slave labor and supporting women workers to feeding the hungry and helping fishing communities leverage sustainable practices into market access, they show us that the seafood community has the courage to engage in even the most entrenched and difficult problems."

The finalists were selected by a panel of seafood sustainability experts from industry and nonprofit organizations based in Asia, Europe and North America.

The **Seafood Champion Award for Leadership** recognizes people and organizations that bring stakeholders together to improve seafood sustainability or ocean health. The finalists are:

- **Chefs Trading**, a USA-based international seafood import/export company owned and operated by chefs, puts social responsibility, traceability and sustainability at the center of their business. In addition to tagging all their products with traceability information back to the boat, the organization provides a fishery improvement project (FIP) in Costa Rica with both financial and organizational support.
- **David Parker**, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility for Young's Seafood in the UK, is known for his at-sea engagement and improvement work in both wild fisheries and aquaculture. In addition to spearheading innovations such as a project to use LED lights in bottom trawls to reduce bycatch, David volunteers with numerous organizations working for seafood sustainability.

- **Guy Dean**, Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer of Albion Farms and Fisheries, has been involved in the seafood industry for almost 30 years in roles ranging from farmer, harvester, and fisher to processor and distributor. Passionate about the long-term viability of the seafood industry, Guy represents the seafood industry on the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Multi-stakeholder Committee and co-founded Sea Pact, a group seafood companies committed to improving the social, economic, and environmental performance of the global seafood supply chain.
- **SeaShare** is an Alaskan nonprofit organization established by fishermen and other stakeholders to use bycatch to feed the hungry. Over the last 20 years, this collaboration of fishermen, processors, freight, and other partners has donated 45 million pounds of seafood to food banks.

The **Seafood Champion Award for Innovation** recognizes those who identify and apply new solutions to ecological challenges, market needs or sustainability barriers. The finalists are:

- **Bubba Cook**, a manager for World Wildlife Fund's Smart Fishing Initiative, is leading the implementation of blockchain traceability into the tuna longline sector, starting in Fiji. Blockchain will expose illegal supply chains and secure the traceability of legal product in an un-hackable digital ledger, allowing this information to be distributed throughout the supply chain from boat-to-plate and arming consumers with the right information to make their own buying decision.
- **FisheryProgress.org** web platform is a one-stop shop for reliable, verified information about Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) progress. While information related to FIPs had been complex and dispersed, FisheryProgress.org now makes accessing reliable information available on approximately two-thirds of all FIPs globally easy.
- **Gerald Knecht**, President and founder of North Atlantic Seafood, founded Bali Seafood International 10 years ago in Indonesia. Working with impact investors, BSI is building integrated fishery community centers that offer better prices, cold storage, processing and support services, and education directly to small-scale fishing communities that adhere to responsible fishing practices.
- **Pelagic Data Systems (PDS)** is the creator of a groundbreaking vessel tracking system that is completely solar-powered, affordable, and suitable for boats of all sizes. Their Ultra-Light System is a solar powered, autonomous data collection device, approximately smartphone sized, that records vessel location and transmits over a secured cellular network. Since 2014, PDS has launched programs in over 15 different countries.
- **Skretting**, an international company headquartered in Norway, is applying two decades of research and development to formulating fishmeal-free aquaculture feed including a commercially-available salmon feed that will enable the salmon industry to grow and provide more fish to the human population without increasing the pressure on wild fish stocks.

The **Seafood Champion Award for Vision** recognizes distinctive visions that significantly advance the sustainable seafood community. The finalists are:

- **Fair Trade USA** is a nonprofit organization that promotes sustainable livelihoods, protects fragile ecosystems, and builds strong, transparent supply chains through independent, third-party certification. The Fair Trade Certified Seafood Program has engaged over 5,000 fishermen and workers under the Capture Fisheries Standard. Fair Trade certified products are currently found in 20 leading North American retailers including Safeway, Hy-Vee and Whole Foods Market.
- **International Association for Women in the Seafood Industry**, while a new organization, has hit the ground running. In its first year, it held the first ever session dedicated to women in seafood at the World Seafood Congress 2017, created a scholarship exchange for female seafood professionals, and conducted a global survey to help understand the situation. Alongside an active online social media presence, WSI has been instrumental in getting a tricky conversation started.
- **Kampachi Worldwide Holdings** sees development of offshore aquaculture as a pressing environmental imperative, and a tremendous economic opportunity. The company is pursuing environmentally-sound

production of high-value marine fish in offshore sites, using innovative engineering and biology, and working closely with regulators and the conservation community.

- **Open Blue** For over a decade, Open Blue has been systematically revolutionizing the mariculture industry by moving it into the open ocean, far away from sensitive near shore ecosystems. Open Blue's native Cobia fish are cultivated twelve kilometers off the coast of Panama in proprietary SeaStations fully submerged at depths of up to 100 feet. Vertically integrated from egg to plate, Open Blue Cobia became the world's first ASC certified Cobia operation in January 2018.

The **Seafood Champion Award for Advocacy** recognizes the promotion of sustainability, use of the media to raise the profile of sustainable seafood, work to strengthen public policy and resource allocations, and championing of advances in sustainable seafood. The finalists are:

- **Beth Lowell**, Senior Campaign Director at Oceana, directs one of the organization's most ambitious and prominent campaigns: exposing seafood fraud through DNA testing and campaigning for policy change. Lowell's successful work to bring this issue into the public eye helped convince President Obama to appoint a task force in June 2014 to consider potential solutions.
- **Daren Coulston** is a former deep-sea fisherman and businessman who turned to advocacy after talking with Indonesian crew members who were rescued following the sinking of their South Korean vessel in 2010. Working with The University of Auckland, Daren exposed the horrific maltreatment of migrant fishing crew working on South Korean chartered ships. Since then, he has advocated for over 600 Indonesian crew members and secured them approximately \$10 million in back pay.
- **International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF)** is a human rights organization that works with trade unions, faith-based organizations, environmental groups and community organizations to support workers and their families. ILRF began documenting forced labor and human trafficking in the Thai seafood sector in 2012. Since then, its Thai Seafood Working Group has grown from a small coalition of mostly U.S.-based organizations to an internationally-recognized network of over 60 organizations from 15 countries that is influential in government and industry.
- **Patima Tungpuchayakul**, founder of the Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation, has emerged as a key actor in the effort to end slavery at sea in Southeast Asia. In more than two decades as an activist, Patima has helped to create awareness of chronic human rights violations and improve the lives of migrant workers and the laws governing their employment. Between August 2014 and October 2016, Patima rescued 3,000 trafficked workers stranded on remote islands in Indonesian waters by the Thai fishing industry.

For more information on the awards and finalists, go to www.seafoodchampions.org. For more information on the awards ceremony and the Seafood Summit, go to www.seafoodsummit.org.

About SeaWeb

[SeaWeb](#) serves the sustainable seafood community by nourishing a coordinated infrastructure of people and knowledge to guide, inspire and reward the seafood industry's adoption of sustainable practices. SeaWeb is a project of [The Ocean Foundation](#), a unique community foundation with a mission to support, strengthen and promote organizations dedicated to reversing the trend of destruction of ocean environments around the world. SeaWeb produces the Seafood Summit in partnership with [Diversified Communications](#).

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