



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

FOR CLEAN SEAS' HAGEN STEHR

Australian aquaculture pioneer Hagen Stehr AO has been awarded a prestigious international award for his efforts in sustainable seafood production.

Mr Stehr – chairman of Port Lincoln-based Clean Seas Tuna Limited – was presented with a Friend of the Sea Award 2008 at the worldwide Infofish Conference in Bangkok today (Friday, May 30).

The honour follows Clean Seas' creation of an artificial breeding regime for the Southern Bluefin Tuna, which will allow sustainable production of the premium species. Professor Abigail Elizur of the University of the Sunshine Coast has been part of the science advisory committee actively involved in the reproductive and genetic aspects of the project, which is also supported by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC).

Italian Mr Vito Gulli – the CEO of sustainable North Atlantic fishing group Generale Conserve – also received a Friend of the Sea Award.

“The Friend of the Sea Award aims at encouraging and motivating seafood companies to lower their impact on the environment and on exploited stocks,” said Friend of the Sea director, Dr Paolo Bray.

“Some tuna stocks are endangered, however some companies are also making efforts to keep their production sustainable. Furthermore, tuna and pelagic species' fisheries have generally a lower impact than white or groundfish fisheries, because of negligible impact on seabed, higher selectivity, and species resilience. This is why Friend of the Sea decided to deliver this year the award at Infofish.

“The two winners of the Friend of the Sea Award 2008 both share a life of experience in the tuna fishing, farming and processing business and a belief that tuna can be produced in a sustainable way.”

In presenting the Friend of the Sea Award, Dr Bray said Mr Stehr had led Clean Seas to become the first organisation in the world to create an artificial breeding regime for the Southern Bluefin Tuna.

“The closure of its lifecycle will allow sustainable production of this premium endangered species,” Dr Bray said.

‘The breeding breakthrough should give Clean Seas the ability to at least duplicate Australia’s Southern Bluefin Tuna annual quota within the next few years and to dramatically grow the aquaculture industry without impacting the wild stocks.

‘Mr Stehr’s achievement shows the potential of the farming industry for improvement towards sustainability and should motivate others in the seafood business to follow, in an effort to reduce or possibly eliminate their environmental impact.

‘His comprehensive environmental engagement is also leading Clean Seas towards being carbon neutral by the end of June and made the company the first one in the Southern Hemisphere to obtain ISO 14001 Environmental Management certification.’

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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