

Thai Union signs public pledge to protect ocean wildlife

02 May 2023 | News

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Thai Union, Thailand’s largest seafood company, became the inaugural company to sign Sustainable Fisheries Partnership’s Protecting Ocean Wildlife pledge. New commitments include identifying the fisheries of highest risk of endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) bycatch and reducing those risks through broad adoption of best practices, 100-per cent observer coverage, support of innovation and science, continuous improvement in supply chains, and public reporting.

“We are proud to be the first company to sign the pledge, and we urge other seafood companies to join us in this commitment. It is only through the efforts of the leaders in our industry that we will achieve the results and ultimate goals in protecting and restoring our endangered marine life,” said Adam Brennan, group director, sustainability, Thai Union.

In March 2023, the Thai Union committed to only sourcing from vessels that are implementing best practices to protect ocean wildlife from bycatch. This commitment was based on research by Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) on the risks to sharks, seabirds, turtles and other marine wildlife in the fisheries that supply the company and analysis by Key Traceability of Thai Union’s tuna fishery improvement projects and in the highest risk fisheries that were identified in the audit. Thai Union’s audit is available to read online.

“It’s great that Thai Union is starting the movement, but reducing bycatch in commercial fisheries will only happen if the entire industry adopts this level of commitment,” said Kathryn Novak, SFP’s biodiversity and nature director. “We

invite other companies to take the pledge. In fact, weâ??re setting a goal to get 10 more companies signed on by World Oceans Day in June.â??

Thai Unionâ??s bycatch audit was undertaken as part of SFPâ??s Protecting Ocean Wildlife initiative, an international, industry-led effort to address marine wildlife bycatch. SFP conducted a review and assessment of Thai Unionâ??s source fisheries using existing sustainability data to determine risks, overlaps with the companyâ??s key products, and where the most impacts can be made to reduce ocean wildlife bycatch.

Sustainable Fisheries Partnership encourages seafood companies to reach out to learn more about reducing ocean bycatch.