

WHY ISSF PARTICIPATION MATTERS FOR TUNA SUSTAINABILITY ADVOCATES

How ISSF Company Participation Delivers Conservation Outcomes

The active participation of seafood companies through ISSA membership is fundamental to ISSF's model of change. This collaboration accelerates science-based solutions, drives the verifiable implementation of best practices, and strengthens tuna fisheries management at both the company and RFMO levels. ISSF and its participating companies help advance NGO-prioritized sustainability goals, including in the areas of:

- ✓ Traceability
- ✓ Data collection
- ✓ IUU fishing prevention
- ✓ Harvest strategies
- ✓ Observer coverage
- ✓ Bycatch mitigation (ETP species)
- ✓ Ocean health and marine pollution prevention
- ✓ Transparency

For environmental NGOs advocating for more responsible fishing, transparent supply chains, ecosystem-based fisheries management and more, the participation of tuna companies in ISSF is a critical mechanism for delivering real world impact.

The Value of ISSF Participation

The International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) is a science-based, multi-stakeholder initiative that includes environmental NGOs, scientists, and industry working side-by-side to improve tuna fishery practices and ocean health. The International Seafood Sustainability Association (ISSA) is a global coalition of tuna companies that have made a public and independently verified commitment to sustainability. Through their ISSA membership, tuna companies voluntarily implement the conservation measures of ISSF, while making the Foundation's transformative research and advocacy possible.

Governed by a diverse Board of Directors and guided by its Scientific Advisory and Environmental Stakeholder Committees, ISSF ensures that conservation priorities align with global sustainability goals and reflect input from leading scientific experts and environmental NGOs.

ISSF companies contribute to progressing outcomes in these areas by:

- Funding solutions-focused science – Supporting research, on-the-water trials, and innovations such as electronic monitoring, biodegradable FADs, and best-practice training for skippers.
- Implementing science-based best practices – Committing to more than 30 ISSF conservation measures that address FAD management, bycatch reduction, vessel tracking, IUU fishing prevention, and more—often exceeding RFMO requirements.
- Ensuring independent verification – Undergoing annual third-party audits, with results published to provide NGOs and stakeholders with transparent, credible data on company performance.
- Enhancing transparency through data tools – Supporting platforms like the [ProActive Vessel Register \(PVR\)](#) and [Vessels in Other Sustainability Initiatives \(VOSI\)](#), which track vessel-level adoption of best practices including:
 - Use of non-entangling and biodegradable FADs
 - Observer or electronic monitoring coverage
 - MSC or FIP participation
 - Bycatch mitigation for sharks, turtles, and seabirds
 - Tuna retention policies
- Advocating for stronger global fisheries management – Engaging with RFMOs to strengthen policies and standards across tuna fisheries.

How NGOs Can Leverage ISSF Participation to Advance Sustainability

NGOs can engage with ISSF and its participating companies to accelerate progress toward shared sustainability objectives. Company participation in ISSF offers:

- A transparent, effective mechanism for driving measurable progress and accountability
- Opportunities to align industry practices with marine conservation priorities
- A platform to convert pledges into verifiable, science-based action

Ways NGOs Can Engage:

- ▶ **Require verified compliance**
Ask partners to ensure tuna suppliers validate adherence to ISSF conservation measures through ISSF company participation and annual independent audits.
- ▶ **Prioritize PVR and VOSI vessels**
Promote sourcing from vessels listed on these platforms to enhance transparency and incentivize best practice adoption.
- ▶ **Integrate ISSF tools in partnership oversight**
Use ISSF data, audit reports, and tools to track progress, support reporting, and identify areas for improvement.
- ▶ **Leverage ISSF participation**
Highlight ISSF participating companies and vessels listed on PVR and VOSI as examples of industry partners demonstrating credible, transparent sustainability leadership.

In this way, NGOs can help shape a seafood sector that is accountable, science-driven, and committed to the long-term health of tuna stocks and marine ecosystems.