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Dr. Werner Kiene
 Chair of MSC Board of Trustees
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 Marine House
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Berlin, 31th May 2016

Coordinated by

Christian Mieles
 Managing Director

Inclusion of social standards in MSC

Dear Mr. Kiene

Sustainable fishery and the protection of the oceans are inevitable for sound and vital marine ecosystems and biodiversity in the future. The standards set by Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) contribute to a sustainable exposure to the oceans and seas. Therefore we support the MSC Standards.

As you are surely aware the global fishing, processing and trading of fish does unfortunately not only have positive effects with especially working and social conditions are facing serious impacts. In 2015 the US Government published a report highlighting that fishing & aquaculture business belongs to the eleven most critical areas worldwide that most likely have a risk of human trafficking¹. During the same period, a global player in Thailand has been brought to court for being involved in such activities in the reduction fishery business and the EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries flagged the import status for Thai fish-related products yellow.

The challenge business is facing is related to a lack of transparency at sea, vague assessments of labour conditions in general and different perceptions in terms of minimum requirements which are in alignment with international standards to protect and save humans at work at sea and on land-based facilities.

Until now MSC mainly focuses on ecological and economical issues of fishery. Nevertheless, sustainability standards should comprehend not only ecological and economical dimensions of a product or business but also social ones. Hence we would like to suggest MSC and its members, to take also social issues into a broader account.

The companies signing this document would like to call on MSC to examine the possibility of including the following three ILO (International Labour Organization of the United Nations) standards into its standard framework.

**Federal Association
 of the German Food Trade**
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¹ Trafficking in persons report 2015, US Dept. of State: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/245365.pdf>

In order to ensure the compliance with the social standards, we propose that MSC also establishes and implements specific goals, indicators, tools and measures.

1. Provisions for Fishermen

The standards of the Work in Fishing Convention of 2007 as well as the ILO Work in Fishing Recommendations of 2006 have to be strictly adhered to and ensured by sufficient examination.

2. Provisions for Seafarers

The standards of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention of 2006 have to be strictly adhered to and ensured by sufficient examination.

“The ILO's Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 provides comprehensive rights and protection at work for the world's more than 1.2 million seafarers. The new labour standard consolidates and updates more than 65 international labour standards related to seafarers adopted over the last 80 years. The Convention sets out seafarers' rights to decent conditions of work on a wide range of subjects, and aims to be globally applicable, easily understandable, readily updatable and uniformly enforced. It has been designed to become a global instrument known as the "fourth pillar" of the international regulatory regime for quality shipping, complementing the key Conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).” (ILO)

3. Fish processing

In fish processing, general social and labour standards of ILO have to be strictly adhered to and ensured by sufficient examination. This concerns especially the following standards:

- the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105);
- the Accommodation of Crews (Fishermen) Convention, 1966 (No. 126);
- the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111);
- the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100);
- the Fishermen's Articles of Agreement Convention, 1959 (No. 114);
- the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29);
- the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87);
- the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998;
- the Medical Examination (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 113);
- the Minimum Age (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 112);
- the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138);
- the Occupational Health Services Convention (No. 161) and Recommendation (No. 171), 1985;
- the Occupational Safety and Health Convention (No. 155) and Recommendation (No.164), 1981;
- the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98);
- the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182);
- the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982;
- Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170);
- Chemicals Recommendation, 1990 (No. 177).

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We are looking forward to your response and hope for your positive feedback.

Hoping for the opportunity to further collaborate on this issue we are at your disposal to contribute to the discussions with our experience from lessons learned in order to support a common dialogue.

Yours sincerely,



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