



MEL NEWS

Chum
Salmon

This month's
MEL certified
marine products



Marine Eco-Label Japan (MEL) Council

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Dear MEL Partners:

With the voice of September, the fishing season, which had been closed in various places, was lifted and the autumn season started. At the moment, the fishing performance seems to be different by the species or catching places, but I hope it will be suitable for the season. Autumn is also the season for events, but planned events have been postponed one after another due to the extension of the state of emergency. I am worried we will be late in laying the groundwork for "tomorrow," but I think we still need to be patient until getting back to the normal life.

Here are the topics that we would like to share with you as follows:

1. Status of MEL Certification

There will be five certifications added this month - one fishery and four CoC. As special news of this month, Miyagi Coop obtained CoC certification for processing and retail of MEL certified skipjack and albacore tuna with 61 branches belonged to Coop Miyagi and Coop Fukushima.

As a result of Miyagi Coop's certification, full supply chain of MEL has been completed from the fishery and processing through the fish market to the retail stores. In addition, this is the first time for a consumer cooperative to obtain MEL certification, and we look forward to further expansion to other Coops in the future.

2. Voice from Certified Entities

"New MEL fishery certification for pelagic bonito pole-and-line fishing"

Kenzo Kagawa, President of Japan Tuna Fisheries Cooperative Association

The environment surrounding fisheries is sever because of an aging population of fishermen, rising fishing costs and the virus infection. The Japan Tuna Fisheries Cooperative Association is the fisheries cooperative consisting of distant water skipjack and tuna fishermen from Aomori in the north to Kagoshima in the south. It is engaged in nationwide efforts to secure crew members,

take measures against stock management, build substitute vessels, and etc.

Regarding MEL's fishery certification, in response to a request from distant water skipjack pole-an- line fishing fishermen, we obtained the former MEL's fishery certification in December 2015 and had continued it until it was expired. In June 2021, we obtained the new MEL's fishery certification (22 distant water skipjack pole-an- line fishing boats), which was recognized by GSSI. We believe it is of great value to be recognized as the fishing method that can sustain resources under the SDGs concept. With the aim of further increasing the added value and consumption of the target fish of skipjack and albacore tuna, we will work with related organizations to realize such objectives.

The catch of the distant water pole-and-line fishery is mainly skipjack tuna bonito and albacore tuna, which are the species of certification this time. Immediately after the fish is caught, it is frozen quickly in brine solution at - 20 °C and kept frozen in a fish hold at - 45 °C or less, so the freshness of fish is maintained. We process the B-1 grade product, the highest grad of brine frozen method. Following the strict standards, the brine solution is cooled to -20 °C, the temperature is controlled so that it does not rise above -15 °C even if the fish is put into the freezer. It is passed through a cylindrical thrower to equalize the degree of freezing. The B-1 grade has superior quality, particularly when it is used for sashimi or tataki cooking after thawing, it exactly looks like fresh fish on color, texture and flavor. Thus, it is highly evaluated by the market. In addition to B -1, we process the S -1 grade, the one of removing the blood. The skipjack has a peculiar smell and most consumers like it, but some do not like. The S -1 is commercialized in the hope that consumers who dislike the smell can eat; the smell of fish is diluted by removing blood before freezing.

We would like the consumers to enjoy the delicious and very fresh B -1 and S -1 skipjack tuna and albacore tuna caught by the distant water pole-and-line fishing boats with the global standard of stock-friendly fishing method.



Mr. Kenji Kagawa



Nikko-Maru No.21 (499t) of Nikko Marine Co., Ltd.

3. Column

“Expectations for Eco-Label Originating in Japan”

Makoto Inoue, President of Kyokuyo Co., Ltd.

As a comprehensive fishery-based food company, Kyokuyo Group considers the initiatives related to the marine environment and resources, which are the main sources of marine products, to be very important from the perspective of maintaining its business foundation. Based on this philosophy, our company participated in SeaBOS (Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship) in April 2017, where it has been working together with the leaders of the world's fishery companies and scientists toward the realization of sustainable fisheries industry and healthy oceans through the science-based approach. Under this initiative, discussions are held to resolve various issues related to the fishery industries, such as the elimination of IUU fishing and forced labor, collaboration with governments, the reduction of antibiotic use in aquaculture, and the issue of marine plastic waste. “Keystone Dialogue” is held every year, and the top managements of each participating company should decide on specific goals and actions.

Each member company is working to solve problems as the SeaBOS team in order to achieve the same purposes. However, even though it is called a fishery company, the scope of business and the countries and regions in which they operate vary widely, and the way of thinking is also different. After participating in three “Keystone Dialogue” since 2018, I felt that European and Japanese companies have very different approaches: 1) how to set goals 2) how to approach,



Mr. Makoto Inoue

and 3) speed of action. I feel that cultural differences are influenced on this matter. Japanese companies tend to achieve big goals after in-depth discussions and preparations considering various factors, but Western companies tend to set ambitious and grand goals through uniform approaches, and their sense of speed of action and decision making seems to be much faster than Japanese. I also feel there is a difference of the level of interest in environmental issues. It may depend on the policies and cultures of each country, but I think it is resulted from education system.

Under these circumstances, in order to achieve common goals and form consensus, it is necessary to recognize and understand the differences in their respective situations and cultural backgrounds, and to engage in discussions while respecting various ideas. This recognition and understanding, and the importance of respecting diversity, may also apply to the concept of marine eco-label. Since fisheries and aquaculture are conducted in various parts of the world, the eco-label is required to have an approach that respects diversity, not only for the purposes of

sustainable use of fishery resources, conservation of biodiversity, and connecting healthy oceans to the next generation, but also in consideration of various circumstances such as target fish species, fishing methods, and business scale in each region.

Compared to Europe and the United States, Japan still does not have a high level of recognition for the marine eco-label. However, Japan's younger generation including the generation Z, who received education about the global environment and sustainable society at school, are highly aware of the environment and ethical consumption, and are expected to be highly interested in the eco-label. In the next five or ten years, their generation will play an important role in social and economic activities, and awareness of overall society will change, and the eco-label will spread widely. I strongly believe they will send out sustainable Japan's fisheries models and fish-eating culture to the world.

4. Event Participation

• 2021 Connection (Tsunami)! Shiba Park - SDGs Village -

MEL Japan participates on the exhibition, which is held every year collaborating with Japan Fisheries Association. This year, the event was scaled down and held on August 23 under the state of emergency. Even so, we made an appeal of MEL Japan program to people who visited to Shiba Park, the place of event.



At night, Tokyo Tower in the background is illuminated

• Sustainable Exhibition – Choosing and Eating

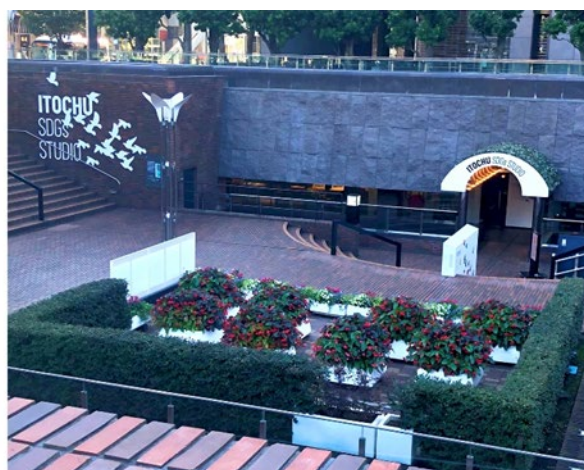
As a part of the AFU no WA (circle of AFU) 2030 Project promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Consumer Affairs Agency, and Ministry of the Environment, we joined the event called "Choosing, eating, and sustainable exhibitions" held at Itochu SDGs Studio in Kita-Aoyama, Tokyo, with the theme of shopping with an emphasis on sustainability. MEL Japan is the member of the AFU no Wa 2030 Project. At this time, we presented our daily activities using PR tools or boards on the table of café space provided by

NTT Data Co., Ltd. We feel that this kind of event has gradually created an atmosphere where visitors can experience a concept of sustainability with relax mood.



おいしいものを安く食べたい。
それは誰にとっても当たり前のこと。
けれどそんな食べものの裏側では
様々な環境への負荷が
かかっているかもしれません。
未来のあなたが、子どもや孫が
本当においしいものを食べ続けるために。
いま、買い物と料理から
サステナブルを考えませんか。

選ぶ、食べる、
サステナブル展



・ Dai-Maru-Yu SDGs Act 5

Under the theme of "Collaborating with the companies based in Ote-machi, Marunouchi and Yuraku-cho, take sustainable action in order to achieve SDGs goals!" we will participate in one of the programs featuring a concept of "sustainable food." This is a long-run event held by Mitsubishi Estate, Nikkei Shimbun Group, and Norinchukin Bank. The organizer took up MEL certification program, and will hold a talk session where Naoya Kakizoe, president of

MEL Japan, Nobuo Nagamoto, chairman of Azuma-cho Fishery Cooperative Association and Nao Mikami, well-known food educator and nomadic cook, will talk about the background, thought, and deliciousness of MEL-certified seafood hoping to bring it to the table of the future. Participants in the event will be able to try cuisine of Chef Mikami's "Bri Oh (King of Yellowtail)".



EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT

Thank you, Kagawa-san! The skipjack of distant water pole-and-line fishery, along with Hokkaido's chum salmon, is one of the largest volume species of the MEL certification. Thanks to this, the entire supply chain from fishery to processing and distribution is now connected. We hope that this will serve the fresh skipjack and albacore tuna being processed into sashimi or tataki cooking not only for foodservice use and but for consumers.

It is an international sense that Inoue-san has experienced in the series of SeaBOS, and it surely helps motivate MEL Japan secretariats who regularly handle with overseas stakeholders. We look forward to his continued guidance and support.

Recently, the term of "FoodTech" has become popular in the media. "FoodTech" refers to the development of new foods, usages and recipes utilizing the latest technologies. Entrepreneurs, major food manufacturers, foodservice operators and home appliance manufacturers are participating in the program, expanding their fields from plant-based to lab-grown meat, smart cooking home appliances, and more. In October 2020, the FoodTech Public-Private Council was established by representatives from industry, government and academia. I expect it will continue to generate a variety of topics.

In the field of fisheries, the practical application of genome-editing fish, onshore aquaculture, lab-grown fish meat, etc. is being promoted. We have to remember this can happen to us, too. I would regard this phenomenon as "Creative Destruction of Food = Innovation," and has proposed that we should respond positively in the era of IT and AI. Change is both a threat and opportunity. I would like to challenge with you.

The weather feels like fall is around the corner. I wish you all the best!

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