



July 28th, 2026

MEL Council

MEL NEWS VOL. 100, Special Issue (ENGLISH EDITION)

MEL News was launched in April 2018, the council's second year, as a communication tool to share the council's activities both domestically and internationally. It began distribution in a web-based monthly report format and reached its 100th issue in July (the English edition began distribution in April 2020, totaling 76 issues).

Currently, the number of Japanese distribution addresses is about 600, mainly among members, certified holders, and review personnel. Considering that we request forwarding and sharing within each address, we believe that thousands of people have read the content, and we sincerely appreciate your concern regarding MEL.

I am preparing to compile the footsteps of issues 1~100 into a separate issue that also serves as a "History of the MEL Council," but this month's issue was planned as a special issue. I have written this lengthy article with many thoughts packed in, but I would be truly grateful if you could read it.

1. Here is a summary of the main events.

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| 2016 | The need to transform Japan's seafood eco-label into an international standard was politically proposed. After discussions at the hastily formed 'Expert Study Group on International Standardization of Fisheries Ecolabels,' the (General Incorporated Association) MEL Council was established. |
| 2017 | The Basic Fisheries Plan included the important fisheries policy 'Promotion of Fisheries Eco-labels,' and the Policy Planning Division of the Fisheries Policy Planning Department of the Fisheries Agency of Japan became the responsible department. |
| 2018 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MEL Fisheries Management, Aquaculture Management, and CoC Standards have come into effect.• MEL News was launched. |

- Applied to GSSI for approval of the MEL certification standards.
- The MEL Advisory Board was established.
- 2019 • **The first MEL certification came into effect, and the first MEL certificate awarding ceremony was held. (Five companies and organizations adopted the March 6 declaration: 'Certifiers collaborate to enhance the presence of Japan's seafood eco-labels')**
- **GSSI approved the MEL certification standards (ninth in the world, first in Asia)**
- 2021 • **The cumulative number of MEL certification validations has reached 100.**
- **The MEL Ambassador System was launched. The ambassadors' mission was to participate in various MEL events and share their experiences with their social media followers. (11 members appointed through public recruitment in the first term)**
- 2022 • **The department responsible for fisheries eco-label certification was transferred from the Policy Planning Division of the Fisheries Policy Planning Department to the Fisheries Processing Industries and Marketing Division, and a 'Certification Promotion Team' was established.**
- **It agreed to mutually recognize CoC certifications with CSC, the scheme owner of the U.S. RFM.**
- 2023 **MEL was the second in the world to be recognized for GSSI's new standard (Benchmark Tool Ver.2.0).**
- 2024 **The production volume of MEL-certified seafood (FY2023) reached 450,000 tons (330,000 tons from capture fisheries, 120,000 tons from aquaculture), accounting for 12% of Japan's total production.**
- 2026 • **At the regular MEL general assembly, the MEL compound feeds and fishmeal and fish oil standards were approved, and efforts toward implementation began. MEL became the world's first scheme covering four sectors: fisheries, aquaculture, CoC, and compound feeds.**
- years • **At the 19th Marine Nation Promotion Merit Awards Ceremony for Marine Day 2026, the MEL Council was recognized for its contributions to the sustainable use of seafood and received an award from the Prime Minister.**
- **Special issue of MEL News No. 100 was distributed.**

2. We will share messages received from stakeholders.

From the dawn of MEL to today, we have received messages from everyone who has supported us in various situations. We have posted the manuscripts along with photos in the order they were received.

"MEL as a Place for Mutual Learning"

Hiroyuki Matsuda
Chairperson of the Board of Earthwatch Japan
(former President of the Ecological Society of Japan)
Professor Emeritus at Yokohama National University



Professor Hiroyuki Matsuda

In 2018, when MEL News was launched, I was appointed chair of the MEL Advisory Board. Having served as a committee member for the World Heritage sites of Shiretoko and Yakushima and UNESCO's MAB (Man and the Biosphere) program, I share the common trait of environmentally conscious international certification. Regions registering UNESCO ecoparks and geoparks face common challenges with MEL certification, such as explaining the benefits of registration and bearing costs.

MAB plans and geoparks emphasize places where registered sites can learn from each other. At MEL, the "March 6 Declaration for the Sustainable Use of Seafood" (3.6 Declaration) was adopted in 2019, and connections among certifiers were positioned as one of the values. This is an initiative not found in other seafood eco-labels. A unique feature of MEL News is that it includes not only information dissemination from the MEL Council but also articles written by certified organizations, which is a distinctive feature of similar public relations. This initiative aligns with partnership goals, the 17th goal of the SDGs, and we hope this feature will continue to be leveraged going forward.

"On the Publication of MEL News Issue 100 — Expectations for MEL"

Fisheries Agency of Japan Secretary-General Hitoshi Fujita
Congratulations on the publication of the 100th issue of MEL News.

Since the establishment of the system in 2007, MEL has steadily developed as Japan's first seafood eco-label certification, and this year marks the 10th anniversary of the



Secretary-General
Hitoshi Fujita

MEL Council's founding. Initially, MEL was handled not in the current Fisheries Processing Industries and Distribution Division but in the Policy Planning Division, and I fondly remember working with President Kakizoe as Planning Manager toward the GSSI approval.

In recent years, it has been introduced as a good example of a certification system that considers small-scale fisheries at FAO seminars, and its international recognition has been increasing. Furthermore, further development is anticipated, such as mutual recognition with U.S. distribution processing certifications and initiatives for compound feeds and fishmeal and fish oil standards that contribute to the promotion of

sustainable aquaculture.

On this major milestone of the 100th issue, we hope that MEL's use as a certification system supporting sustainable fisheries and expanding exports of Japanese seafood will expand both domestically and internationally. The Fisheries Agency of Japan will continue to support the development of MEL by promoting certification systems and supporting certification acquisition.

"As a certification body, we want to shine Japan's fisheries industry together with MEL."



President
Masayuki Takahashi

Masayuki Takahashi,
President, Japan Fisheries Resource Conservation
Association

Congratulations on the 100th issue of MEL News. Our association has been responsible for auditing MEL since its inception. MEL is a certification designed with consideration for Japan's fisheries, which catch a wide variety of seafood, as well as the distribution and processing industries that handle them.

Additionally, aquaculture was included in the scheme. From the very beginning, it was promoted to

ride the trend of events like the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. At this time, global movements such as the SDGs are spreading, and it seems that people's interest in MEL is increasing. I believe this is thanks to the efforts of President Kakizoe and everyone supporting MEL from inside and outside the country. Compared to Western countries, where more people are not ordering uncertified seafood at restaurants, the situation in Japan still seems to be far from sufficient. On the other hand, it is encouraging that obtaining certification has become important when exporting seafood overseas, and combined with national policies to promote exports, awareness of MEL among stakeholders has increased. Together with MEL, we will do our utmost as a certification body to shine Japan's fisheries industry and contribute to the society.

"On the 10th Anniversary of the MEL Council"

Yoshitsugu Fujii

Managing Director (CEO), Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union

We sincerely congratulate the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the General Incorporated Association MEL Council.

Since fiscal year 2012, the Japan Consumers' Co-op Union has adopted MEL certification and started supplying "Seared Straw-Grilled Bonito Tataki" with the MEL



**Managing Director
Yoshitsugu Fujii**

logo. In 2022, the expansion continued to products supported by cooperative members, such as "Fluffy Dried Whitebait" and "Sakaiminato Salmon," and in 2025, "Okinawa Iheya Island Mozuku" was added. Currently, there are 39 CO/OP products bearing the MEL logo, and the supply amount to cooperative members in fiscal 2025 is expected to reach 3.32 billion yen, making it an important product group supporting responsible procurement within the Japanese Consumers' Co-op Union.

When the MEL Council was established in 2016, the Japan Consumers' Co-operative Union was engaged in extensive discussions on ethical consumption and responsible procurement. In this context, we had high hopes for MEL, which supports the realities of Japan's diverse fisheries and aquaculture industries, to establish international recognition and trust as a mechanism to communicate sustainable initiatives to consumers.

Subsequently, MEL certification received GSSI's recognition in December 2019, establishing it as a seafood eco-label originating in Japan and gaining international credibility. We hope that Japan will continue to develop further as a bridge connecting

Japan's rich marine blessings and fish-eating culture to the future, and the Japan Consumers' Co-operative Union will continue to walk this path together.

"The Path Taken by Seafood Eco-Labels"

Nobuyuki Yagi

**Specially Appointed Professor at the University of Tokyo
Division of University Corporate Relations
and Research Institute of Planetary Health**

Today, MEL has become one of the most successful seafood eco-label certification systems internationally, but the journey has been far from smooth.



Prof. Nobuyuki Yagi

First, in 2005, the FAO discussed guidelines for eco-labeling seafood products, where developed countries eager to adopt them sharply clashed with developing countries seeking to block them. I still remember being on the ground in Rome as part of the Japanese government delegation, where I persuaded developing countries that the program was a voluntary initiative without legal binding force. And in a last-minute battle, the guidelines were adopted. Later, MEL was established in Japan in 2007, and in 2016, Mr. Kakizoe became President and revamped operations. In 2019, GSSI officially recognized that this operation was in accordance with the FAO guidelines. And in 2023, this was updated and continues to the present. I want to pay tribute to MEL, which has overcome one hurdle after another to develop. From now on, the focus will be on returning to the origins of FAO's discussions and how to advance building partnerships including developing countries. I look forward to further development of MEL.

"Expectations as the Creator of MEL"

Toshirou Shirasu

Advisor, Japan Fisheries Association

1. During my tenure as President of Japan Fisheries Association, the biggest challenge for MEL was obtaining approval from the International Certification Authority (GSSI) to ensure the scheme owner's independent organization and international standardization.
2. In 2016, Mr. Kakizoe, who has long served as president of Nissui Corporation and is well-versed in Japan's seafood industry and internationally renowned, appointed him president of the MEL Council as the main body for the eco-label system independent from Japan Fisheries Association, marking the beginning of the current MEL.
3. Over the past ten years, the MEL Council has expanded its scope into capture fisheries, aquaculture, processing and distribution, as well as feeds and related fields, while steadily advancing GSSI's recognitions, showing our sincere respect for President Kakizoe's leadership.
4. Going forward, within the global trend of sustainable resource utilization and SDGs, MEL is not merely a certification system but is expected to contribute to the development of Japan's fisheries industry by enhancing the social value of seafood.



Toshirou Shirasu, Advisor

We sincerely thank everyone for their messages. The feedback from various angles resonated with me. Once again, we recognize that we are halfway along the way, and we will do our best to get as close as possible to your expectations. We sincerely ask for your continued support of MEL from politicians, government officials, members, certification holders, reviewers, and consumers.

3. Report from Certified Holders

As a pioneering initiative for Japan's seafood eco-label, we had the Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations, which worked hard to obtain certification for autumn salmon set net fisheries, reflecting on their efforts. You can really feel the difficulty of trying something new for the first time. Our involvement with MEL

came ten years after the Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations began working toward obtaining eco-label certification. Indeed, as a senior mentor to MEL, I have received various teachings that have led me to where I am today.

"Hokkaido and the Fisheries Eco-Label"

**Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations
Counselor, Sales Department 2, General Manager Hiroki Kurachi**



**Hiroki Kurachi, Counselor,
Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries
Cooperative Association**

In May this year, the Japan Meteorological Agency made major revisions to its 'Disaster Prevention Weather Information.' This is to make the alert level expression easier to understand, but it is evidence that extreme weather and disasters have become so familiar that the government is reviewing the standards. Hokkaido is no exception; in addition to heavy winter snow and high summer temperatures, coastal water temperatures have risen beyond the level of global warming, to the point where some scholars describe it as "ocean boiling." Amidst this, last year the end of the "Kuroshio Great Meander," which lasted eight years, was announced. Hokkaido has also been significantly affected, so we are hoping for a recovery in the situation from this year onward.

<Hokkaido and the Eco-Labels>

We began working on the seafood eco-label in the spring of 2007, and it has been about 20 years. At that time, the term 'eco-labels' had just begun to be heard, and we were in a state of trial and error, studying the philosophy and certification standards of eco-labels. In particular, there was a significant gap between overseas certifications rooted in stewardship—the principle of 'properly managing God's gifts'—and Japan's fisheries philosophy of resource management, which is surrounded on all sides by rich fishing grounds and has a long history. Although tremendous efforts were spent bridging that gap, only time passed.

The turning point came in 2016 when the Marine Eco-Label Japan Council (hereafter, MEL Council) was established, marking the full-scale launch of the "Japan-originated seafood eco-label." Many of the aforementioned gaps have been resolved thanks to the persistent negotiations between the MEL Council and international organizations, taking

into account fisheries in East Asia, including Japan, in accordance with international standards, for which we are very grateful. As a result, two years after the application began, in 2019, Hokkaido's autumn salmon set-net fishery obtained MEL fishery certification.

Additionally, the inclusion of seafood eco-labels in the procurement standards for ingredients at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics greatly increased social awareness. Encouraged by this, in Hokkaido, Tomakomai Fisheries Cooperative's hokki obtained fisheries management certifications in 2021, herring from Ishikari Bay Fisheries Cooperative and hokke from Rishiri and Rebun Islands in 2022, and currently, four fisheries have obtained certifications. Amid this trend, awareness of eco-labels is gradually increasing among end-user consumers, and I feel that more companies are actively handling eco-label products at sales outlets, such as co-ops and mass retailers.



[Hokkaido Domestic TV Commercial]



[Ishikari Bay Fisheries Cooperative Fresh Grill Pack]

<The Future of Hokkaido and Eco-Labels>

Hokkaido's autumn salmon had been around 40,000~50,000 tons in recent years, but last year saw a major drop in production, ending the season at 14,000 tons. On the other hand, it is truly gratifying to see more fish species that have appeared on your table, such as Pacific saury exceeding 30,000 tons for the first time in seven years, and squid stocks improving for the first time in three years. However, regarding recent resource management, I feel that in Hokkaido, where much of the sea surface borders the border, due to the ever-changing marine environment and increased fishing pressure from neighboring countries, management has become more difficult than before.

Meanwhile, due to fuel risks triggered by the Iran situation and the prolonged surge in imported raw material costs caused by the weak yen, high-quality domestic seafood, including from Hokkaido, has begun to be re-evaluated. In this environment, as the Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations, we will work with the coastal regions to conserve the marine environment more than ever before, and we intend to support sustainable fishing activities while protecting not only MEL-certified fish species

but also Hokkaido's fishery resources. Additionally, with the support of our business partners, we will expand the spread of seafood eco-label products and strive to raise awareness of eco-labels among our nationwide food education activities. We intend to continue working on each of our best practices, starting with what we can, so that Hokkaido's fisheries can continue to thrive for many years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Kurachi. I recall the initiatives meeting held the year after the launch of MEL not only with the Fisheries Cooperative, but also with government and research institutions from Hokkaido, held in the University of Tokyo's conference room. Autumn salmon fishing has changed dramatically compared to back then, and we hope to work together to think and improve how to respond to the northward migration of warm-water fish and changes in certification targets.

4. Columns by Stakeholders

ASMI is an Alaskan seafood promotion organization whose activities are widespread and deeply embedded in Japan, but it was once the scheme owner of the Alaska RFM. Last year, when we recruited overseas MEL members, we received the first application and is an organization with strong ties to Japan in certification and promotion.

This time, we received contributions from Jeremy Woodrow, Executive Director of ASMI, and Mark Fina, Chair of ASMI's Certified Seafood Committee (CSI Board Member).

"A Testament to Our Shared Commitment to Sustainable Fisheries"

**ASMI Executive Director
Jeremy Woodrow**



Jeremy Woodrowさん



ASMIのロゴ

On behalf of the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI), I would like to extend our warmest congratulations to Marine Eco-Label Japan (MEL) on the publication of a monumental 100th issue of your newsletter. As MEL's very first international member, we take immense pride in celebrating this milestone alongside you, reflecting on our shared journey toward a sustainable future for global responsible fisheries.

ASMI is a public-private partnership between the State of Alaska and the Alaska seafood industry and we operate as the state's official marketing organization for all Alaska seafood. We are dedicated to increasing the economic value of the Alaska seafood resource by promoting our wild, natural, and sustainable seafood worldwide through comprehensive marketing, consumer education, and industry support. ASMI's International Program manages 10 regional programs, currently executing dynamic marketing activities across 55 countries worldwide. Among these global regions, Japan stands as one of the very first and most historically significant markets where ASMI has continuously maintained its dedicated presence.

The relationship between the industries of Alaska and Japan is both historic and foundational. For decades, Alaska has proudly supplied high-quality, nutritious wild seafood, harvested under the responsible, science-based fisheries management, to the Japanese market. This enduring partnership is deeply rooted in collaboration; indeed, the very birth of the commercial frozen Alaska pollock surimi processing and the refinement of various roe products for culinary enjoyment were forged through the pioneering cooperation between Japanese seafood companies and Alaskan producers.

While global seafood market dynamics have diversified in recent years—driven by currency fluctuations, economic shifts, and surging international demand—Japan remains one of Alaska's most vital and cherished markets. Our connection goes far beyond just a trade; it is a bond built on mutual respect for the ocean's bounty and the culinary traditions that honor it.

This shared respect is aligned with Alaska's core identity. In 1959, the visionary architects of the Alaska State Constitution mandated that all fish, wildlife, and natural resources be utilized and developed on the sustained yield principle. This constitutional cornerstone laid the foundation for the rigorous, science-based responsible fisheries management that defines Alaska Seafood industry today, ensuring our oceans remain healthy and abundant for generations to come.

Driven by this ethos, ASMI launched the Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) Certification program in 2011 to provide credible, independent assurance of our sustainable practices. Over the years, this unique program has evolved and expanded far beyond Alaska's borders. Today, it has matured into an international scheme managed by Certified Seafood International (CSI). It is our sincere hope that this exceptional program will continue to flourish, promoting the global adoption of certified sustainable

seafood. In this endeavor, the collaboration between MEL and CSI is of paramount importance. By working together, we expect the enduring bond between MEL, CSI, ASMI, and responsibly harvested seafood products in Japan and Alaska waters to continue inspiring and positively influencing the global seafood industry.

Once again, congratulations to MEL on reaching your 100th newsletter milestone. We wish all the staff, members, and stakeholders of Marine Eco-Label Japan continued growth, good health, and abundant prosperity.

" Shaping Our Future: A Shared Vision for Sustainable Fisheries"

Chairperson of the ASMI Certified Seafood Committee

Mark Fina



Mark Fina



CSI logo

It is a profound privilege to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Marine Eco-Label Japan (MEL) on the spectacular milestone of your 100th newsletter issue. As we look back on this incredible journey, we also eagerly anticipate another momentous occasion on the horizon—MEL's upcoming 10th

anniversary. Maintaining consistent excellence while developing your program is a testament to the dedication of the entire MEL team and your members. On behalf of the ASMI (Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute) Certified Seafood Committee, and as a Board Member of Certified Seafood International (CSI), I am deeply honored to stand beside you, not just as global partners, but as close friends who share a vision for the future of the oceans' bounty.

For readers of this newsletter who may be new to how these organizations connect, I would like to introduce the mission and distinct character of the CSI program, which our Committee at ASMI proudly champions. Rooted in the rich legacy of Alaska's Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) model, CSI is an independent international scheme built upon a simple yet powerful premise: providing a credible, science-based, affordable, and practical responsible fishery assurance. We evaluate fisheries and supply

chains against rigorous international standards to ensure that seafood is harvested responsibly to maintain healthy fisheries and marine ecosystems. Our standards and programs are benchmarked to the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries by the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI).

However, what truly defines CSI—and why our ASMI Certified Seafood Committee so strongly supports it—is its core philosophy. While our assurance is a pathway to market access, we believe that a seafood certification program should never overshadow those who it serves. CSI is designed from the ground up to be a silent champion for your brand. We recognize that the true value of seafood lies in the hands of the fishermen who harvest it, the workers and communities that support it, and the businesses that deliver it to the table. CSI's mission is not to sell a certification logo, but to provide a robust, transparent verification that elevates your brand and the unique products you serve. It's yours to tell the story of their origins and identities and the skill and craftsmanship behind them. We exist to help you tell those stories with confidence.

You are reading this column because you believe that certified seafood can play a critical role in maintaining our oceans as a spectrum of marine environments, each an enduring source of its unique and varied attributes and benefits. To secure this long-term vision for marine resources and the coastal communities that depend on them, we are working to move sustainability from a niche luxury to the baseline of the entire industry.

It is precisely this vision that aligns CSI and ASMI so beautifully with MEL. Our organizations share the exact same core values and deep sense of responsibility. We all understand that sustainable fisheries management must respect regional characteristics, support the livelihood of local fishermen, and maintain the highest standards of integrity. Our ongoing collaboration is born out of this mutual understanding. With our aligned vision, we strive to create a harmonious network that rewards local dedication with global recognition, ensuring that the most deserving rise to the top of the international marketplace.

As MEL celebrates this 100th newsletter issue and prepares to usher in a new decade to build on its remarkable achievements, I want to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to this partnership. We look forward to growing alongside you, working hand-in-hand to tackle new challenges, and fostering a sustainable seafood community we are all proud of.

Once again, congratulations to everyone at MEL on this historic milestone. May the future bring you continued success, resilience, and boundless prosperity.

Thank you very much for your contributions despite your busy schedules, Jeremy and Mark. For the MEL Council, it is an unparalleled honor and happiness to be able to share this important milestone with two close friends together in MEL News magazine. Building on the trust between Alaska and Japan, built on the efforts of our predecessors, we hope to lead the world's sustainable fisheries industry together.

5. Held MEL Auditors Training (CPD)

The CPD training for the first half of this fiscal year was conducted online at the Technofa Kawasaki Training Center Key Studio on July 6-7. Sixteen people participated, and in Part 1, a new menu item called "Improving the Quality of Auditing" was held online, divided into four groups under Instructor Tsunemichi Aoki, where participants participated in group discussions (online). Including the content of their presentations, I felt a significant improvement.

As society's expectations for seafood eco-labels are expanding year by year, not only the MEL Council as a scheme owner but also the judges must engage in self-improvement beyond these trends. This coincided with the upgrade of certification standards for capture fisheries, aquaculture, and CoC certifications, which are considered standard training programs. The sincere attitude of the participants, along with the rich training, has led to improved MEL evaluation capabilities.

The second half of the CPD training is scheduled to be held in February.

6. The MEL Council was recognized as a recipient of Marine Nation Promotion Merit Awards

On July 20, the Marine Day commemorative event was held at the Tokyo International Cruise Terminal. At the opening ceremony of the first part, a video message from Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi was followed by heartfelt addresses about the sea by Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Yasushi Kaneko, Minister of State for Ocean Policy Jiro Akama, and the Nippon Foundation Chairman Takeju Ogata.

In the second part, the 19th Marine Nation Promotion Merit Awards Ceremony, four individuals, two high schools, and the MEL Council were selected, and the Prime Minister presented a certificate of commendation along with a commemorative medal from Minister Akama. This is also thanks to the support of all involved, and we sincerely thank you and will continue our efforts to meet your expectations.

Additionally, the Fisheries Agency of Japan shared updates from the event on social media. Additionally, the MEL Council exhibited at a concurrently held experience event,

and as Tokyo experienced its first extremely hot day of the summer, the staff deepened exchanges especially with families and children who attended.



Group photo with Ministers Kaneko and Akama, and recipients of Marine Nation Promotion Merit Awards

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The MEL Council will mark its 10th anniversary since its founding in December 2026 this year. During this time, thanks to your support, we have reached a certain level of international standardization, which was the mission given to MEL at its inception. Additionally, the "Japan-originated seafood eco-label recognized by the world," which we have promoted as a banner of our activities, is gaining prominence alongside the global expansion of fish consumption and the growth of Japanese seafood exports. In addition to the scheme that included the three certification standards aimed for at launch—capture fisheries, aquaculture, and CoC—we were able to add new certification standards for fish compound feeds and fishmeal/fish oil. What has yet to progress as hoped is the penetration among consumers. We will expand our activities by experiencing products with the MEL logo, interacting with staff at various events, linking

with children's sustainable education such as outreach classes, and building followers through social media for MEL ambassadors.

For the special issue No. 100, we asked the Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations, which played a pioneering role in the MEL certification, to handle the "Report from the Certified Holder," and for the "Column by the Stakeholders," we asked ASMI (Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute), which gladly accepted from overseas as the first member, allowing us to share this milestone. We sincerely thank you for taking the time to add flowers to this special issue.

Additionally, in January 2027, we plan to hold a commemorative workshop for the 10th anniversary of the MEL Council, aiming to share MEL initiatives and the current state of Japan's sustainable fisheries industry with the world. I sincerely appreciate your continued support.

MEL Council Secretariat

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