



Contact: Shunji Murakami | shunji.murakami@seafoodlegacy.com | +819059275901

First Oyster Fishery Improvement Project Launches in Japan

Japan's largest consumers' organization and partners to work towards sustainable oyster production in advance of 2020 Tokyo Olympics

January 15, 2020 (日本語版を読む) – The anticipated demand for seafood at the upcoming 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic games continues to drive the growth of sustainable seafood and fisheries initiatives in Japan.

Today, the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU), fishing and processing company Kurahashijima Kaisan, and the organizations Seafood Legacy and Ocean Outcomes (O2) announced the launch of a new fishery improvement project (FIP) in Japan's largest oyster producing region.

The unique topography, tidal currents and water temperatures in the marine areas of Hiroshima Prefecture make it an ideal location for oyster farming and fishing. The region accounts for approximately two thirds of Japan's oyster production — or 20,000 tonnes annually — some of which supplies JCCU, Japan's largest consumer organization comprised of 29 million members.

Established in 1962, the Hiroshima oyster fishery is the oldest in Japan. Those involved in the oyster fisheries have always focused on quality and safety, but with the Olympics on the horizon, participating project companies want to ensure their oysters are also produced and seen as eco-friendly.

Towards this goal, the FIP fishing companies worked with Seafood Legacy and Ocean Outcomes in 2019 to assess their environmental impacts on the marine environment and then developed a workplan to mitigate those impacts going forward. These include monitoring fishery impacts on benthic habitats; decreasing fishery interactions with endangered species, such as loggerhead turtles and the Indo-Pacific finless porpoise; transitioning fishery management to precautionary and science-based strategies; and routine project participant progress meetings.

After completing the improvement work, the participating companies will seek Marine Stewardship Council certification so JCCU can sell Hiroshima oyster product to consumers in Japan using the blue MSC logo.

This is the 4th fishery improvement project in Japan working towards MSC certification, all four of which are led by Seafood Legacy and Ocean Outcomes.

About:

[Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union \(JCCU\)](#) was established in March 1951 as the national federation of consumer co-ops in Japan. Today, about 320 consumer co-ops and consumer co-op unions join JCCU and the total of gross sales of the member co-ops is about 3.5 trillion JPY, with total 29 million members. JCCU is the largest consumers' organization in Japan. As the representative of member co-ops, JCCU communicates with a variety of organizations, advocates consumers' co-operative movement, and makes policy proposals. JCCU also develops and supplies CO-OP Brand Products to its member co-ops, and supports the development of member co-ops' businesses and activities.

[Kurahashijima Kaisan Co., Ltd.](#) is a Japanese company that incorporates the latest technologies and systems for growing oysters, providing safe and quality oysters to customers. The company's priority for safety, trust and traceability has gained them the first Hiroshima prefecture certificate "Assured! Hiroshima Brand," which allows each oyster to be traced back to its point of origin.

[Seafood Legacy](#) is a Tokyo-based social venture established in 2015 specializing in sustainable seafood and fisheries. Seafood Legacy provides sustainable seafood consulting services to marine-related businesses, producers and NGOs to strengthen the connections of marine ecosystems, economies and local communities. Seafood Legacy designs regional solutions which meet international standards and are tailored to the unique Japanese environment via a non-competitive platform designed to solve mutual issues facing various stakeholders.

[Ocean Outcomes \(O2\)](#) is an international organization which works with local communities, fisheries, and the seafood industry to improve the environmental, social and economic sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture operations.

###