

VIDEO INCLUDED

# This Is How Researchers Can Benefit From the Ocean Stewardship Fund



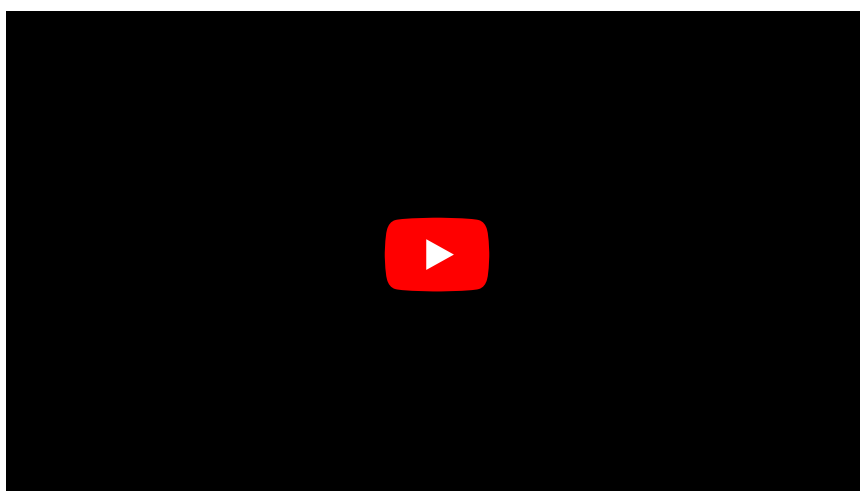
The world's leading sustainable seafood ecolabel, the MSC, has increased its Ocean Stewardship Fund to close to two million BP by redirecting a proportion of funds from the sale of products with the blue fish label into research and projects aimed at ending overfishing.

With world leaders convening this week in Oslo for [Our Oceans 2019](#), the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is increasing its commitment to global action to end overfishing. Its [Ocean Stewardship Fund](#) announced at last year's Our Oceans summit, will receive an additional 5% of annual royalties earned from the sale of MSC labelled products. This ongoing commitment increases the Fund's value by around £950,000 per year in addition to the £1 million seed funding announced in 2018. The Fund is now open

to applications for research and work that will accelerate and maintain progress in sustainable fishing around the world, particularly in the Global South.

## Sustainable Fishing

Rupert Howes, the MSC's Chief Executive, said: "Healthy oceans are essential to the environment, economies and communities. We've seen incredible progress in sustainable fishing, particularly in the Northern hemisphere. Yet the rate of overfishing continues to increase at an alarming rate, particularly in the Global South. We urgently need to accelerate action and drive change at scale."



*Samuel Longestein, Captain of the Sea Harvest and seafood buyers at Woolworths, South Africa talk about their pride and care in catching and selling wild hake with the blue MSC label.*

The MSC is committed to doing more to empower scientists, fisheries, businesses and governments in a collective effort to safeguard oceans and seafood supplies. That's why we're going beyond the commitments made last year. Funds from the sale of every product sold with the blue MSC label will now go directly into projects and research to safeguard oceans for future generations."

## Action on Overfishing

Taking action on overfishing is one of the key topics on the agenda for Our Ocean 2019. In 2018, the United Nations estimated that a third of the world's fish stocks have now been exploited beyond sustainable limits – up from a tenth in 1974.

The fund is open for applications to support fisheries that are either on their journey to become sustainable or maintaining their sustainable practices. The fund will also be available for innovative scientific research to help improve sustainable fishing practices. Applications to the Fund must be submitted by 15 December 2019.

## Committed to the cause

The Ocean Stewardship Fund is part of the MSC's wider commitment to engage fisheries responsible for 20% of the world's wild-caught seafood in the MSC programme by the end of 2020 and 30% by 2030 in line with the [UN's Sustainable Development Goal 14 \(SDG14\), Life Below Water](#).

Through the Ocean Stewardship Fund, the MSC aims to support:

1. Fisheries transitioning towards sustainability, particularly small-scale fisheries and those in the Global South. In its first year, the Transition Assistance Fund will support the fisheries in Indonesia, Mexico and South Africa which are already participating in the MSC-run Fish For Good programme aimed at helping fisheries develop sustainable practices and engaged in MSC's pilot programme for fisheries in transition to MSC certification.
2. Fisheries that are conducting research to meet best practice. The [Science and Research Fund](#) will award grants to research projects that will benefit fisheries in the MSC programme. For the 2019-2020 funding round, the MSC will particularly welcome projects that focus on ghost gear or endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species.
3. Fisheries who have maintained MSC certification for at least 10 years and are making long-term commitments to sustainability. The [Recertification Assistance Fund](#) will contribute to the cost of recertification.

## About the MSC

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is an international non-profit organisation. Our vision is for the world's oceans to be teeming with life, and seafood supplies safeguarded for this and future generations. Our ecolabel and certification programme recognises and rewards sustainable fishing practices and is helping create a more sustainable seafood market.

The MSC ecolabel on a seafood product means that:

- It comes from a wild-catch fishery which has been independently certified to the MSC's science-based standard for environmentally sustainable fishing.
- It's fully traceable to a sustainable source.

More than 370 fisheries in over 36 countries are certified to the MSC's Standard. These fisheries have a combined annual seafood production of over eleven million metric tonnes, representing almost 15% of global marine catch. More than 38,000 seafood products worldwide carry the MSC label. For more information visit [www.msc.org](http://www.msc.org)

The MSC programme could not exist without the many fishers around the world who work to safeguard stocks, ecosystems and their own livelihoods.â€