The National Tuna Congress will discuss the role of consumers in the sustainability of the species

The third edition of the National Tuna Congress, which the Organization of Associated Producers of Large Tuna Freezers (OPAGAC) holds at the Circulo de Bellas Artes in Madrid from 19 to 20 October, will address in its third edition the role the final consumer can play in contributing to sustainable fishing of this species.

This event will bring together for the first time, the three main associations of the Spanish sector food distribution - ANGED, ACES and ASEDAS - to discuss the essential role of the point of sale in the involvement of the final consumer in sustainability this resource.

To OPAGAC, this Congress must mean a turning point for this product with respect to the final consumer, as it believes that *the time has come that it can choose between products secured sustainable fishing practices or opt for other from illegal, unreported or unregulated, practiced by certain tuna fleets, such as Southeast Asia.*

> Julio Morón, manager director OPAGAC: "while canned tuna is treated as a system based solely on price factor by the distribution product, is denied the consumer freedom of choice, and it is time to change this situation, if we really want to ensure the sustainability of this species"

To this end, the first of two days of this meeting will focus on the responsibility of tuna fishing, which the Spanish tuna fleet has become a protagonist of exception, following the publication of the first standard AENOR (Association Spanish Standardization and Certification). *A standard that establishes the requirements to be met by ships which want to distinguish their catches as* Tuna Responsible Fisheries (APR) *to intermediate operators and the final consumer of the product itself.*

The second day will focus on the sustainability of this sector, a strategic area in which the recent launch Improvement Plan of Fisheries, the result of agreement between OPAGAC and the NGO World Wildlife Fund (WWF), establishes the management framework and best practices to meet sustainability standards set by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) within five years.

During the round tables discussing this subject, *it will highlight the need for the Administration, the tuna companies, unions and consumer organizations and NGOs, which will be represented at the highest level in the different sessions of Congress, share the same objectives to optimize the sustainability of tropical tuna.*

> In the event dedicated sessions will also be developed specifically for the health benefits of tuna, its importance in the practice of sport and healthy living, with the presence of expert nutritionists and leading figures of the Spanish sports landscape

In addition, *there will be the second edition of MasterTuna contest, where renowned chefs and cooking schools of our country live elaborate dishes for the enjoyment of the audience.*

About OPAGAC

Founded in 1982, the Organization of Associated Producers of Large Tuna Freezers (OPAGAC) is an association of companies assemblers 8 freezer tuna seiners. Its fleet consists of 40 ships purse seine tuna catch 300,000 tons per year, 6% of the world catch, and fishing in three major oceans of the world -Atlántico, Indian and Pacific, under the jurisdiction of the four main ORP of this fishery : ICCAT, IOTC, IATTC and WCPFC. Environmental and socioeconomic sustainability and the principle of transparency, are the basis of the activity of OPAGAC.

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Source: OPAGAC