



Case Study: Metlakatla Community Fishery's MSC Certification

Meeting the Demand for MSC Certified Products:

The Metlakatla Indian Community fisheries are located in tribal waters surrounding the Annette Islands Reserve in Southeast Alaska.

The fisheries sell pink, chum, coho and king salmon primarily to European markets. European seafood buyers strongly favor products certified to the Marine Stewardship Council's standard for sustainable fisheries and are willing to pay a price premium for certified products.

The Metlakatla community wanted to protect their important natural resource while maintaining access to this market.

The Certification Solution

Scientific Certification Systems performed a pre-assessment of the fisheries in 2009. In close consultation with stakeholders, SCS developed specific performance indicators for the fisheries' full assessment based on scientific data on salmon fisheries.

SCS assessed the fishery and established that the Annette Islands fisheries met the rigorous MSC sustainability standard. The certification included 22 conditions for which specific actions are required from the fisheries, which will help to further improve the fishery and salmon stocks.

Standing out with MSC certification

In 2011, the fishery became the first wholly tribal-owned and -managed fishery to earn MSC certification.

The certification process helped the community set up sampling programs to ensure healthy fish stocks and created a monitoring and reporting system for endangered, threatened and protected species.



Issues:

- The Metlakatla community wanted to ensure the health of their fishery for future generations.
- They wanted to maintain access to the growing European market for MSC certified products.

The Certification Solution:

- The fishery became the first wholly tribal-owned and -managed fishery to earn MSC certification.
- Certification resulted in an action plan that will further improve the fishery and salmon stocks.

"Our ancestors who came to Annette Island in 1887 were dedicated environmental stewards of the land and the sea and MSC certification confirms our commitment to preserve the legacy we inherited and manage the resource to sustain the fish stocks and our heritage for future Metlakatla generations,"

*– Karl Cook Jr.
Commercial fisherman and tribal member*



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