



## **IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Accountability.Fish Takes On Fisheries, Oceans Secrecy with New Campaign**

WASHINGTON: Is today's fisheries management system capable of taking on a bigger role in future of ocean governance? Or, is it even effectively managing the sustainability of the world's marine wildlife today?

From Accountability.Fish's perspective, the answer to both questions is no - and the transparency advocacy group is launching a new campaign to challenge the current fisheries management regime to move towards greater accountability and openness.

The campaign involves a series of video advertisements. The first video has been released [and can be seen here](#).

"For the most part, the world's Regional Fisheries Management Organizations operate with an unacceptable level of secrecy, creating a black hole around the monitoring of the sustainability of the world's ocean ecosystems," said Ryan Orgera, Accountability.Fish's Global Director.

"Fisheries management is an obscure area of resource governance. The world's RFMOs want to keep it that way, even if it results in unverifiable processes to measure actual sustainability. We only have their word to go on at the end of the day."

"Keeping NGO observers out of key parts of meetings or threatening their observer status, holding key meetings in out-of-the-way locations, and even outright media bans are standard practices in the RFMO system. These practices serve to reinforce that dependence on their word in this matter. That has had massive implications for workers' rights, local economies and the environment."

"The RFMOs' dismissive attitude towards public scrutiny, however, is something that has fueled our efforts significantly, because the more visibility this secrecy gets,



the more pressure the RFMOs face, and the more defensive and arrogant they become. This campaign aims to push them to the point where they will no longer be able to defend their indefensible governance practices”

Alongside this public campaign, Accountability.Fish will intensify its support for a parallel campaign working with industry and market players to improve observer and media access to RFMO proceedings - The Equal Access Principles (<http://principles.fish>). “Bringing the RFMOs up to an acceptable global standard for accountability and access is an effort that enjoys strong support among market, civil society and environmental organizations worldwide, and we intend to ramp up the effort to increase this support in 2024.”

“The more people become aware of the murkiness and arrogance of the RFMO system and the nations who enable it, the less defensible it becomes. We are winning.”