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CONSERVATIONISTS, MARKET PLAYERS ENDORSE COMMON PRINCIPLES TO
OPEN UP FISHERIES DECISION-MAKING

GLOBAL - Calling for the immediate opening of international fisheries management bodies' deliberations to public accountability and scrutiny, a global coalition of conservationists and fisheries market players has endorsed a common set of principles, the Equal Access Principles, for ensuring increased open access to the proceedings of the world's Regional Fisheries Management Organizations.

"The level of secrecy, and the active discouragement of observer participation and media reporting of RFMO decision-making has severe consequences for the environment and the economy. By making it easier to shed light on the extractive behaviors of industrial fishing interests, and to ensure representation of citizen, environmental and market interests in RFMO deliberations, these Principles are crucial to the safe transition of our marine environment as we move from 'fisheries management' to 'oceans management'," said Ryan Orgera, Global Director of Accountability.Fish, which initiated the Principles and is an original signatory along with:

- Global Tuna Alliance
- Causa Natura
- Low Impact Fishers of Europe
- The Ocean Foundation
- Pew Charitable Trusts
- Rema Foods, Inc.
- Sciaena
- Shark Guardian
- Shark Project

"Adoption of the Equal Access Principles takes on new urgency following the agreement on a new UN high seas treaty," added Orgera, who noted that a treaty has yet to be ratified and that its implementation could take years. "Even with a signed treaty, if industrial fishers are given a green light by the RFMOs to overfish for, say five years, the effects on the oceans could become irreversible." That's why we need a broad coalition to come on board to change the game before irreparable damage is done, and why I'm pleased with this broad-based group of initial endorsers."

The full set of Equal Access Principles can be found at www.principles.fish