

2010 Seafood Summit convenes in Paris in January



Wednesday, 04 November 2009 16:57

THE world's largest and longest-running sustainable seafood conference will be held in Paris in January with fisheries scientist Daniel Pauly as keynote speaker.

Registration is now open for Seafood Choices Alliance's 2010 Seafood Summit, "Challenging Assumptions in a Changing World." The Summit will be held for the first time in Paris, France, from January 31 to February 2 and is Seafood Choices Alliance's largest annual event, attracting nearly 500 delegates from 35 countries in 2009. Seafood Choices Alliance is an international program of SeaWeb that provides leadership and seeks to create opportunities for change across the seafood industry and ocean conservation community. Melanie Siggs, vice president of sustainable markets for SeaWeb, said: "It is a testament to the hard work and foresight of many in the seafood industry that the word 'sustainable' now has a rightful place in business plans and practices. But markets and conditions are constantly changing. As such, we believe it is important to test our assumptions regularly. By ensuring all stakeholders have a place at the table, the Summit allows for ripe, creative discussions that challenge long-held assumptions, paving the way for practical solutions."

Professor Daniel Pauly has been confirmed as the keynote speaker for the 2010 Seafood Summit. Pauly is a distinguished fisheries researcher and Director of the University of British Columbia's Fisheries Centre. He is a Principal Investigator of the Seas Around Us Project and on the board of marine conservation organization Oceana. He has co-authored over 500 scientific articles, book chapters and shorter contributions, including the pinnacle work "Fishing Down Marine Food Webs" and more recently "Beyond Duplicity and Ignorance in Global Fisheries" and the book Darwin's Fishes.

The Summit returns to Europe for the first time since the 2008 Barcelona conference, and comes at a critical time for the European Union, as the reform of Europe's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) gathers momentum. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), more than 70 percent of the world's fish populations are either fully exploited or depleted. In Europe, two-thirds of fish populations are declining, including some of the most popular species such as cod, plaice and sole. However optimism for their recovery may be justified, according recent science papers—if appropriate practices are put in place. The goal of the 2010 Summit, "Challenging Assumptions in a Changing World," is to foster dialogue and partnerships among industry, conservationists and members of academia that challenge existing paradigms and leads to real change and a global seafood industry that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

The 2010 Seafood Summit will feature panels, workshops and presentations on current issues in certification, aquaculture, developing world fisheries, sustainability in Asian markets, tuna conservation efforts, traceability and illegal fishing, ocean acidification and more.

"The Seafood Choices Summit has a clear track record of success, built on years of hard work by many in the seafood industry, NGOs, aquariums and other institutions," said Jim Cannon of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership and Intrafish's 2009 Person of the Year. "It is the premier global event for learning about the latest news on seafood sustainability, understanding existing and emerging tools, and contributing new ideas. If you are looking for serious answers to serious questions, the Summit should be your first port of call."

For the first time, the Summit will be preceded by a special half-day event focused on tuna. On January 30, panels and speakers will explore the issues surrounding the current challenges facing tuna fisheries, as some scientists estimate that Mediterranean bluefin tuna populations are just 18 percent of what they were in 1970.

In addition to the Summit half day focused on tuna, field trips to two French fisheries are being organized after the Summit. The trips to Normandy and Langeudoc-Roussillon will allow participants an insight into two French fisheries and the efforts being undertaken to ensure the resources are managed sustainably.

For a complete list of the Seafood Summit's panels, presentations and workshops, and for information on registration and sponsorship, visit www.seafoodsummit.org. Fellowships are available for media, fishermen, conservation organizations and students.