

## WWF and Century Pacific Promote Sustainably-Caught Tuna in the Davao Gulf



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The simplest ways of catching tuna are often the most sustainable. Environmental solutions provider World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) has renewed ties with Century Pacific Food, Inc. (CNPF), the Philippines' largest canned food company, to promote artisanal tuna handline fishing in the Davao Gulf.

Considered the country's 10th most productive fishing site, the gulf buoys the economies of five coastal cities and 18 coastal municipalities. Though it employs 19,000 municipal plus 1,000 commercial fishers and annually contributes P1.18 billion to the country's coffers, its fish are in dire straits.

According to a study presented to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in 2008, the Davao Gulf is among the Philippines' most overfished sites. It recently absorbed the bulk of displaced tuna fishers from General Santos.

Expanding on its three-year project to improve small-scale tuna fisheries in Ilocos Norte, WWF, and CNPF will promote sustainable tuna fishing in the Davao Gulf by enhancing local fisheries management and ensuring the economic viability of its handline industry.

Tuna handlines are small, circular reels with a single baited hook – better alternatives to commercial tuna long-lines, which stretch up to 80 km and are rigged with up to 3000 hooks, which often snag sharks, dolphins and sea turtles.

The project shall improve local fisheries governance and meat-handling practices, maximize economic benefits by bridging fishers with preferential foreign markets and establish external support sources.

“Sustainability is business viability. Where will we source our tuna if our own fish stocks crash?” asks Century Pacific Food, Inc. General Manager Greg Banzon. “The business of going green is everybody’s business. Having made good progress with WWF in Ilocos Norte, we believe it’s time to replicate our successes in other areas.”

Today about 52% of Philippine fisheries exports come from tuna. WWF’s Global Oceans Campaign, *Sustain Our Seas*, builds on decades of work to rekindle the health and productivity of the Earth’s chief seafood source – its oceans.

“WWF works to ensure that humanity will always have a steady source of food,” concludes WWF-Philippines President & CEO Joel Palma. “Championing sustainable fishing with CNPF and our BFAR allies is a concrete step towards this.”



**Yellowfin tuna** (*Thunnus albacares*) are some of the country’s most highly-prized fish. Yellowfin tuna sport metallic blue backs, golden flanks, silver bellies and bright yellow fins. Shown is a fisher in the Lagonoy Gulf. **(Gregg Yan / WWF)**



**Tuna** are among the world’s most important marine commodities, feeding millions of people globally while providing affordable protein for millions of Filipinos. Shown are yellowfin tuna being sold at the General Santos fish landing port. **(Gregg Yan / WWF)**



**Circular handline reel** with a lead sinker and a J-Hook. Compared with bag-nets which cordon off entire fish schools or long-lines which stretch up to 80 kilometres, handline reels ensure that only large pelagic predators like tuna or billfish bite. This is a solution to the global problem of bycatch – the unintended capture of non-targeted species which wastes up to 40% of global yields annually. **(Gregg Yan / WWF)**

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