

Media Release
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Australian start up saving Seabirds, Turtles and Fishermen!

Over 300,000 seabirds and turtles are hooked and die unnecessarily every year, a direct result of trying to eat Long Line Tuna fishing baits, that is due to become a thing of the past.

And it is all down to an Australian invention that is now attracting a lot of attention as it undergoes rigorous and independent scientific testing in international waters.

Sunshine Coast Company Ahi Enterprises, trading as Oceansmart, has been working towards an effective solution to reduce this toll.

Ahi CEO Hans Jusseit says the solution has come from within the industry itself.

By working closely with the Long Line fishing industry the team at Ahi (Oceansmart) have developed and patented the Smart Tuna Hook (Winner of the ABC new Inventors).

Through 'outside the box' thinking and great design, the Smart Tuna Hook renders the (Long Line) bait inaccessible to seabird or turtle species, thus saving their lives and allowing the bait to sink, without lead, to the feeding depth of the intended catch, mainly tuna and Swordfish.

"The aim is to conserve the species that are not being targeted and to increase the efficiency for the fishing operators"

"Because the industry has quotas on some species like Southern Bluefin Tuna, The Smart Tuna Hook enables the targeted fish to be caught more efficiently making the entire industry more environmentally friendly, more viable as well as safer without the need to have lead weights on their lines."

The challenge may soon be keeping up with global demand. When asked about the promising early trial results, Mr Jusseit was keen to keep cool heads although many observers are excited.

"Yes it is true that if we conclude the initial results it bodes very well with a huge reduction in seabird deaths," he said.

“This is why we hold extensive trials. To ensure the results continue throughout, taking in different fishing grounds, and broader weather conditions.”

The Long Line fishing industry, (which sets a massive 2 billion hooks per year) is eagerly awaiting the results out of South Africa.

“And what of the initial results? “Well, good news for the Long line fishing Industry the independent trials have shown the Smart Tuna Hook reduces seabird (albatross & petrels) by-catch by 80-90% with no detrimental effect on fishing operations, no increase in cost or effort” Hans Jusseit says. He is pleased to say it’s a win/win for all, including Australian innovation.

Further catch trials will continue into December 2014 in an effort to obtain further significant results.

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**For more information on Ahi Enterprises
And the Smart Tuna Hook Innovation**

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