

## SMART HOOK TO TURN THE TIDE ON KILLING SEABIRDS AND TURTLES

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2011:** Smart Tuna Hook inventor Hans Juseit used his presentation at today's Society of Environmental Journalists Conference to ask delegates to help him stop the killing of more than hundreds of thousands of seabirds and turtles every year.

The passionate ex- tuna long-line fisherman and Managing Director of Oceansmart demonstrated that thanks to his innovative hook and shield system the killing of these often endangered species is now a completely unnecessary tragedy.

"The tuna long-line industry has the deaths of countless seabirds and turtles on its hands and is a key threatening process to their long-term survival.

"I've seen how they suffer and can slowly die after ingesting baited hooks from longline tuna fishing vessels," Hans said.

"I realised, as a fisherman, that if I wasn't part of the solution, I was part of the problem.

"Now there is a practical, affordable solution. It is 100% effective. It benefits both the environment and the fishing industry," Hans said.

"There is no downside, just a single question that I'm struggling to answer: why isn't it being used on every tuna long-line fishing boat around the world?"

From his Sunshine Coast home on the east coast of Australia, Hans transformed an idea for a smarter hook into a basic design. He then worked with local fisheries and universities to develop and test the hook.

The innovative hook system became known as the Smart Tuna Hook.

The hook and shield system works by placing a temporary shield over the baited hook. This prevents seabirds and turtles from being able to bite and ingest the baited hook. After the system sinks past the feeding depths of the birds and turtles a galvanic reaction releases the shield.

The shield is made from a mild steel that naturally corrodes within 12 months without releasing any toxins or polluting the environment, as well as locking up carbon.

The Smart Tuna Hook was tested in the waters off the south island of New Zealand, the turtle habitat of Underwater World (Sunshine Coast, Australia) and the Galveston Turtle Facility in Texas (USA).

"The results were just amazing, better than even the scientists expected It had a 100% success rate. No question," Hans said.

“The benefits of using the Smart Tuna Hook are hugely significant, not only to the environment but also to the fishing industry.”

Benefits that can be delivered by adopting the Oceansmart, Smart Tuna Hook:

- A significant increase in the prevention of sea birds and turtles being injured or killed by accidental hooking
- Negates the need to use dangerous and toxic lead swivels
- Increased safety by a reduction of hooking injuries to fishermen
- Increased fishing productivity, thanks to better bait retention,

“The Smart Tuna Hook is easy to use and affordable and can be applied both across large scale fleet operations and on small independent vessels in underdeveloped countries.

“This is a smart and simple solution that, if adopted, will have a tremendous global impact. Possibly eliminating this environmental challenge forever,” Hans said.

“Whether or not we can stop the killing of seabirds and turtles through indiscriminate hooking is no longer a question.

“We can. This is the solution; no down side, win-win for all.

“Why aren’t fishing authorities and Governments enforcing its use?” Hans said.

“I am asking everyone to become part of the solution, if you’re not then you’re part of the problem.”

“To get things started we are giving away thousands of dollars worth of free smart tuna hooks for a limited time to fishermen who are the first to place orders and start fishing smarter.”

“I need your help to inform and lobby these fishing industries, governing bodies and environmental groups to make the right decision – the smart decision and support the use of the Smart Tuna Hook,” Hans said.

“We all can make a difference, with nothing to lose and everything to gain.”

“Let’s stop the killing with the Smart Tuna Hook.”

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**Hans Jusseit can be contacted in person at the Oceansmart display throughout the Society of Environmental Journalists Conference.**

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