

Toward Sustainable Fisheries

Sotaro USUI

Abstract

Usufuku Honten Co., Ltd. is a fishing company founded in 1882, headquartered in Kesenuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan. The Tōhoku Earthquake in 2011 heightened our awareness of the importance of energy, food, and the connections between people.

In the aftermath, we embraced the motto "Coexistence with the Sea" to share our awareness with the public. We explore new approaches to fisheries management to rejuvenate Japan's declining fishing industry and infuse it with vitality, charm, and sustainability. We also carry out campaign activities on a daily basis.

In 2012, we founded the "Association to Promote the Kesenuma Fish Products in School Lunches," advocating for the inclusion of locally sourced seafood in school meals. We also conduct nutritional education initiatives for children, both domestically and internationally, emphasizing the importance of the primary industry and its link to the food we consume and our daily essentials.

In 2020, we became the world's first company to obtain MSC certification for Atlantic bluefin tuna fishery. Moving forward, we are committed to enhancing the traceability systems for seafood products and promoting the idea of sustainable fisheries and supply chains, both domestically and internationally.

I firmly believe that our responsibility lies in upholding relevant international and domestic agreements aimed at protecting the Earth's environment, while also spearheading new initiatives in tuna fishing in Japan.

Speaker Profile

Sotaro Usui was born in 1971 in Kesenuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan. After graduating from university, he served as a commissioner for the Japan Tuna Fisheries Cooperative Association in the Canary Islands, Spain. In 1997, he joined the family business, Usufuku Honpo Co., Ltd., and in 2012, he assumed the position of the fifth president. The company achieved global recognition in 2020 by becoming the first in the world to obtain MSC certification for Atlantic bluefin tuna fishing.

He previously served as the chairman of the National Association of Young Ship Owners in the Distant Waters Tuna Fisheries. Currently, he is the representative of the Association to Promote the Utilization of Kesenuma Fishes in School Lunches, a director of the Kesenuma Fisheries Cooperative Association, and a promoter for the Fisheries Agency on fish-based diet matters.