



**CONSERVATION ALLIANCE
FOR SEAFOOD SOLUTIONS**

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Winner Announced in the 2018 Seafood Co-Lab Competition

Seafood community turns out in force to vote for solutions to sustainability challenges

Boston, MA (March 12, 2018) – SeaWeb and the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions today announced the winner of the 2018 Seafood Co-Lab competition, an annual event that capitalizes on the collective knowledge of the seafood community to support collaborative innovation.

The winning project, "Chefs for the Blue: Tokyo's top chefs join scientists, journalists, and food culture experts to promote sustainable seafood in Japan," networks Japanese chefs to the global sustainable seafood community to raise awareness about sustainable seafood in Japanese society.

Although seafood has been an essential part of Japanese food culture and history, seafood resources around Japan are on the edge of collapse and the project's organizers believe this may be Japan's last chance to save its food culture and pass a healthy ocean to future generations.

"With its rich food culture, many Japanese are foodies by birth; but few people in Japan are aware of how seriously our seafood resources are being depleted," said Hiroko Sasaki, food journalist and team leader of Chefs for the Blue. "Chefs are powerful influencers to both consumers and producers in Japan. By supporting their sourcing choices with solid science and amplifying their message through the media and strategic outreach, we can shine a light on the problem that will represent an important step to achieving seafood sustainability in Japan."

Because collaboration is not always the first choice or easiest path forward, the Seafood Co-Lab was designed to incentivize cross-sector, cross-industry cooperation. The winning project brings together over 30 top Japanese chefs, working collaboratively with Sasaki, who specializes in Tokyo's culinary scene, food culture and history, in addition to an Associate Professor at Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, the seafood rating nonprofit Sailors for the Sea Japan, and the sustainable seafood consulting firm Seafood Legacy.

In this first year of the Seafood Co-Lab, four teams, selected by a panel of expert judges from a field of over 40 highly-competitive proposals, competed to win \$10,000 and a trip to the SeaWeb Seafood Summit in Barcelona Spain, 19-21 June 2018. The winner was selected by popular vote in a process designed to encourage participation among seafood stakeholders.

Response to the Co-Lab was strong, with more than 5,500 votes from 53 countries counted during a 4-week voting window. "The Seafood Co-Lab is an idea whose time has come," said Co-Lab judge Ethan Lucas, FIP Project Director at FishWise. "The high voter turnout and solid sponsor support shows that the seafood community is ready to engage. And we have an enormous resource of smarts and experience available, ready to be tapped."

The Co-Lab is supported by the conservation community and seafood industry including the following sponsors: Australis, Congressional Seafood, Tequesta Bay, Mook Sea Farm, Organic Ocean, the Global Ghost Gear Initiative, Sea Pact, FishChoice, Sea Delight, and Norpac Fisheries Export.

To learn more about the Seafood Co-Lab, please visit <http://speakingofseafood.org/seafood-co-lab>.

For information about becoming a sponsor of the Seafood Co-Lab, please visit <http://speakingofseafood.org/seafood-co-lab/support-seafood-co-lab>.

About the Seafood Co-Lab producers

The partnership of SeaWeb and the Conservation Alliance opens up great opportunities for staging and promoting this event to the seafood community. SeaWeb serves the sustainable seafood community by nourishing a coordinated infrastructure of people and knowledge through well-known events such as the SeaWeb Seafood Summit. The Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions connects leading conservation groups from North America, South America, Europe, and Japan that work with businesses throughout the supply chain from fishermen and fish farmers to retailers and restaurants. Together, these two organizations can offer winners not just financial and administrative support, but also a unique conduit to the collective expertise of the seafood community.

For more information, visit: www.seaweb.org and <http://www.solutionsforseafood.org>.

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