

Speech:

The certification of roughy was without doubt one of the biggest news stories in the fishing industry ever, and I mean globally. Few fisheries around the world has spark such controversy or had such a bad reputation as Orange roughy.

It is the classic story of boom, bust and as Tim mentions in his book, one of redemption. And it is the redemption piece we are all here tonight to celebrate.

Sustainability is a word that gets bandied about a lot. However, it was one thing to say your sustainable, but quite something else prove you are, but that's exactly what these three OR fisheries have done. They have measure themselves against the worlds most rigorous, independent, transparent, science based process for determining sustainability and can now proudly say we too are MSC certified.

The roughy story in New Zealand is an amazing story of improvement, and one that I am very keen to tell. And also one that I am very keen to defend. If you are not in the business of supporting fisheries that have improved, acknowledging them, you are simply not looking forward.

For the past 20 years MSC has helped recognise sustainable fishing practices around the world. As we understand more about sustainable fishing, as demand for sustainable seafood grows, more fisheries are changing for the better. They are recovering fish stocks, reducing impacts and putting better management in place. That means many fisheries with bad reputations are becoming sustainable. But that is exactly what we want. And when these fisheries do improve, we should stand up and recognise them. Positive change, means healthy oceans.

10 % of the worlds fisheries are MSC certified, an amazing achievement, but there is so much work to do yet. And if we are honest with ourselves a lot of the worlds fisheries are in bad shape. We need more examples like roughy to inspire fisheries around the world to do better.

You guys in New Zealand do get a hard time, and you seem to have been getting a particularly bad time of late. Do you know why? It is because everyone expects you to be the best in the world at this stuff. The New Zealand public, your consumers and conservation groups all expect you guys to be the best. And when I listen to you all speak, you have that same expectation of yourselves.

Being the best comes criticism, do you think I would miss an opportunity to rubbish the all blacks at any perceived drop in performance. Of course, not. NZ fisheries are doing well, 75% deepwater fisheries landing (50% total NZ catch) are certified, pretty amazing achievement, Unfortunately though you won't be able to rest on your laurels, conservation groups will continue to give you a hard time. And whether you think this criticism is justified or not, you need to continue keep doing what you are. Improve all aspect of the fisheries management, be world leading, prove you are sustainable and when it comes time to celebrate, like we are doing today, make heaps of noise about it. Communication is the key.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge everyone involved in the certification of this fishery. By reading Tim's book you will get a sense of the amount of work and investment has gone into ensuring this fisheries sustainability. And from my side I would also like to give a quick call out to George Clement and acknowledge his commitment to seeing NZ fisheries continued to be recognised as worlds best through the MSC program.

Now anywhere in world whether it be in China, Australia or the US, customers purchasing roughy carrying the MSC blue tick, can be assured that the product is from a world class sustainable fishery.