Toothfish Fact Sheet

58.5.2 - Heard Island & McDonald Islands

- **2015/16 TAC: 3,405 T**

- **4 VESSELS:**

  ANTARCTIC CHIEFTAN

  ATLAS COVE

  CORINTHIAN BAY

  ISLA EDEN

- **2 OPERATORS:**

  AUSTRAL FISHERIES

  AUSTRALIAN LONGLINE

As at 20/04/2016

Australia's Heard Island and McDonald Islands (HIMI) Patagonian Toothfish fishery began as an exploratory trawl fishery in 1996 and one year later was deemed a commercial fishery by CCAMLR. Initially, longline fishing was banned to protect sea-birds. Successful long-line trials that avoided catching seabirds were held from 2003 to 2006, and longline has since been a permitted method in the fishery, with four longline vessels now operating.

In March 2012, the fishery was certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) as a sustainable and well-managed fishery, and in 2013 was rated as 'Best Choice' by the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch program.

These achievements recognise the elimination of IUU fishing in the area; measures to avoid by-catch of seabirds; protection of the sea bed through Marine Protected Areas; as well as numerous other management measures to protect the environment, toothfish and dependent species.

Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing at HIMI peaked in 1996/97, with over 7,000t of toothfish being taken. However, largely thanks to COLTO; CCAMLR; environmental NGOs; industry; and the Australian and French Governments, this figure was drastically reduced and no IUU fishing has been recorded in the fishery since the 2005-06 season.

The HIMI Marine Reserve was established in 2002 and sets aside 39.6% of fishing grounds shallower than 1000m as a representative, comprehensive and adequate Marine Protected Area.

HIMI longline operators have seasonal restrictions in place, with the core season operating from May 1 to September 30, with the opportunity to fish within an extended season if strict seabird mitigation criteria are met.