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Statement by Gail Shea Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada

## **Government of Canada Advocates Continued Action on Sustainable Management of Atlantic Bluefin Tuna**

**OTTAWA, ONTARIO--(Marketwire - June 2, 2010)** - The Honourable Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, today issued the statement below, following the conclusion of informal meetings held in Barcelona, Spain between a number of Atlantic bluefin tuna-harvesting countries. Canada along with other participating countries re-affirmed their commitment to implementing the concrete measures to which they agreed at the last annual general meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) in November 2009:

"When harvesting Atlantic bluefin tuna, scientific advice must be followed and the rules strictly enforced if we want to ensure the survival of the stocks. I have continued to reiterate this message both publicly and in bilateral discussions with other countries. It's relatively simple, but it requires political will and the commitment to follow through. I have communicated this point clearly to my ICCAT counterparts once again in recent correspondence.

"Canada has led the way over the last several years in following the science advice and implementing the recommendations of ICCAT. Our Atlantic bluefin tuna fishery is the best managed fishery of its kind in the world today, and we are starting to see the positive results of those efforts. Additionally, Canada's Ambassador for Fisheries Conservation has been actively engaged in bilateral discussions with ICCAT member countries, including those not present at the Barcelona meetings, to demonstrate Canada's commitment to stronger management of Atlantic bluefin tuna.

"ICCAT Members agreed to important, concrete measures in November 2009, and they must now follow through on these commitments. Most importantly, ICCAT Members who fish Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna must adhere to ICCAT scientific advice and take decisive action on conservation and management, such as the full implementation of the Catch Documentation System, a more effective management of fishing effort, and complete and accurate reporting. The implementation of those measures is absolutely needed for the sustainability of Atlantic bluefin tuna stocks.

"Ultimately, the responsibility lies with individual States to implement concrete and achievable measures in order for regional fisheries management organizations to be truly effective and successful. That's what we expect from each and every ICCAT Member. We are encouraged to see our partners holding firm on their commitments, and I intend to continue to work in the interests of Atlantic bluefin tuna and the responsible Canadian fishers who depend upon it."