CASE STUDY

POSITIVELY GROUNDFISH
In the late 1990s, the previously abundant US West Coast groundfish fishery was headed towards collapse. It was declared a federal disaster in 2001.

Dedicated to the recovery of the fishery, boats were pulled out of the water and in partnership with NGOs and fishery councils the fishery’s operations were turned around.

In 2014, MSC certification provided valuable recognition of this transformation, but further work was needed to rebuild consumer awareness and market demand.

The ‘fishery’ actually comprises 17 fisheries and 13 species across California, Oregon and Washington.
The only way to get groundfish back in consumer minds and shopping baskets was a solid marketing campaign and the support of groundfish stakeholders.

Bringing together distributors, NGOs and fishery councils, Positively Groundfish, a multi-partner collaboration, was born.

Mission: To tell the positive story of sustainable West Coast Groundfish, to cultivate consumer appreciation and support the long-term economic success of the local fishing industry and communities.

Founding partners
Marketing activities are due to take place year-round, peaking during summer-months, for a decade.

**Focus**
Promoting MSC-certified rockfish and sole.
- Least consumer-recognition.
- Biggest potential for influence.

**Activities**
Lower volume, deeper engagement including sampling opportunities, outreach work and consumer events.

**Target audience**
West Coast USA initially. Rest of USA and international in future.
- Primary audience: Foodies, protein-lovers, health-oriented older couples.
- Secondary: chefs, buyers, bloggers.
Launched
2018 is the first year of Positively Groundfish marketing activities.

Progress
Long-term marketing activities are being reinforced by regular consumer surveys.

Official
Positively Groundfish officially incorporated and had its first Board meeting in August 2018.

Gaining traction
Applied for and received the National Marine Fisheries Service’s Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant.