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Media Advisory

For immediate release -

TRADE MINISTERS JOIN FORCES ON WTO FISHING SUBSIDIES

WHO: The following participants are scheduled to appear at the media event:

José Fritsch, Special Secretary for Aquaculture and Fisheries (Brazil)

Ignacio Walker, Minister of Foreign Affairs (Chile)

Peter Mandelson, Commissioner (European Communities, DG-Trade) (tbc)

Jim Sutton, Minister for Trade Negotiations (New Zealand)

Domingo Panganiban, Secretary of Agriculture (Philippines)

Mamadou Diop, Minister of Trade and Commerce (Senegal)

Robert Portman, US Trade Representative (United States)

Monique Barbut, Director of the division of technology, industry and economics, UNEP

James P. Leape, Director General, WWF International

WHAT: The ministers will make brief statements in support of WTO fishing subsidy rules that help combat overfishing while supporting trade and sustainable development.

Monique Barbut: "Dealing with subsidies is vital for eradicating poverty and delivering a more durable and more stable environment. Many local people rely on fish for their livelihoods and as a key source of protein needed for health and well being. Over exploitation by fishing fleets, fuelled by harmful subsidies, can drive these people into ever greater poverty as well as lead to massive degradation of the marine environment."

James P. Leape: "Trade ministers in Hong Kong should review and strengthen the WTO negotiating mandate on fishing subsidies. This is an extraordinary opportunity to improve the health of our oceans and the livelihoods of fishermen in some of the world's poorest countries. We should not let it slip."

WHEN: Wednesday December 14th, 11: 00 to 11.45 am.

WHERE: Theatre 1, Press Centre, WTO HK Convention and Exhibition Centre.

For further information:

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WWF– World Wide Fund For Nature (also known as World Wildlife Fund)

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