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## Press release / Pressemelding

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### **AUSTRAL GROUP S.A.A. CERTIFIED BY FRIEND OF THE SEA**

Austral Group S.A.A., a subsidiary of Austevoll Seafood ASA, produces fishmeal and fish oil as well as canned and frozen products from various pelagic species, including anchovy and pacific mackerel. Fishmeal and fish oil is sourced from anchovies fished in the South Pacific ocean by Austral's own fleet of 37 vessels.

The **Friend of the Sea** audit, conducted by an independent accredited certification body with in-depth knowledge of the audited fishery, focuses on anchovies, horse and pacific mackerel. Certification is given to products from anchovies and pacific mackerel and may only be given following certification at the end of a comprehensive audit process. The certification given to Austral covers fishmeal, fish oil and canned or frozen products from Peruvian anchovy and canned or frozen products from pacific mackerel. Certification ascertains that the fishery is managed according to sustainable criteria and stocks are not overfished.

Peruvian anchovy (*Engraulis ringens*) current status is that it is not overexploited, according to data from the Peruvian Institute IMARPE. The reference point used is spawning biomass, which must be at least 5 million MT. Latest estimates indicate a biomass level of 9.38 million tonnes, almost double the Reference Point. Pacific Mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*) is considered as moderately to fully exploited by FAO 2005. Distribution and abundance of pelagic resources in Peru have been assessed by IMARPE through acoustic surveys since 1975. According to the FAO, discards in the Peruvian seine fisheries are near 2.5% - much lower than the average worldwide – and do not include endangered species.

The Ministry of Production has stated that the Peruvian State is proud of Austral having obtained this certification, as “this gives proof that the entire chain of extraction and process of these resources, Peruvian Anchovy and Mackerel, are managed on an environmentally sustainable basis, involving the industry and the State in the work towards this common objective. Peru thereby shows it handles the regulatory and institutional conditions for the extraction of resources well and that the industry does the same”.

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