Darden Restaurants Announces Commitment to Action at 2011 Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting

Darden, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership and Publix Super Markets, Inc. recognized for their commitment to rebuilding world fisheries in support of aquaculture sustainability

ORLANDO, Fla., Sept. 21, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Today at the Clinton Global Initiative's (CGI) Seventh Annual Meeting, Darden Restaurants formally announced the company's three-year commitment to rebuilding troubled fisheries through Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs). Initial FIP work will be in and around the Gulf of Mexico with partners Publix Super Markets and Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP).

(Logo: http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20050203/FLTH026LOGO)

Darden's recognition stems from CGI's Commitments to Action, where members are encouraged to propose concrete plans to address global challenges as a means of translating practical goals into meaningful results. According to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), nearly a third of global fish stocks are over-exploited, depleted, or recovering while 50 percent of stocks are fully exploited. Darden's submission, "Catalyzing Industry to Rebuild World Fisheries," was selected as an exemplary approach to addressing challenges in the environment and energy cluster, and includes commitments to combat illegal fishing, enhance productivity and reduce negative ecological impact.

"As one of the largest buyers of seafood in the world, Darden is an industry leader in supporting healthy ecosystems for future generations. Through this commitment, Darden is taking action to create change within the seafood supply chain by building alliances with governments, conservation advocates, and communities to develop and implement fishery improvement. We hope others will look at what Darden has achieved and committed to, and as a result, take action," said Jim Cannon, CEO, SFP.

As part of its Commitment to Action, Darden will lead the creation of an alliance of companies, nongovernmental organizations and other groups, including SFP and Publix Super Markets, to support targeted fishery improvement projects. Darden and its partners’ commitments address the fishery crisis and its potential to undermine global food supply.

"We are honored the Clinton Global Initiative recognizes our efforts to preserve world marine ecosystems that benefit our environment, fishing communities and people around the globe who rely on seafood as a sustainable source of protein," said Ian Olson, Darden’s director of sustainability. "We will continue to work with SFP and other organizations to build on the success of our commitment to sustainable aquaculture."

Other Darden contributions in support of fishery and aquaculture sustainability include: co-founding the Global Aquaculture Alliance to promote aquaculture best practices; partnering with the New England Aquarium to provide current data regarding wild-capture fish and aquaculture species; and supporting work in Caribbean and Canadian fisheries to enhance lobster stocks and ensure a sustainable livelihood for fishermen.

"Seafood sustainability is an effort that must be championed not just within our company, but also throughout our industry," said Publix Director of Environmental and Sustainability Programs, Michael Hewett. "We recognize that only through a unified effort, and with the support of the seafood industry, will sustainability efforts truly advance. That is why we have partnered alongside organizations such as Darden and the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership, with whom we share a common vision to improve fisheries and move the seafood sustainability conversation forward."

About Darden

Darden Restaurants, Inc., (NYSE: DRI), the world's largest full-service restaurant company, owns and operates more than 1,900 restaurants that generate more than $7.5 billion in annual sales. Headquartered in Orlando, and employing approximately 180,000 people, Darden is recognized for a culture that rewards caring for and responding to people. In 2011, Darden became the first full-service restaurant company ever to be named to the FORTUNE “100 Best Companies to Work For” list. Our restaurant brands — Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze and Seasons 52 — reflect the rich diversity of those who dine with us. Our brands are built on deep insights into what our guests want. For more information, please visit www.darden.com.

About SFP
Founded in 2006, the mission of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership is to maintain healthy ocean and aquatic ecosystems, enhance fishing and fish-farming livelihoods and secure food supplies. To learn more, visit [www.sustainablefish.org](http://www.sustainablefish.org) and [www.fishsource.org](http://www.fishsource.org). SFP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

### About Publix

Publix is privately owned and operated by its 149,000 employees, with 2010 sales of $25.1 billion. Currently Publix has 1,039 stores in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama and Tennessee. The company has been named one of FORTUNE’s “100 Best Companies to Work For in America” for 14 consecutive years. In addition, Publix’s dedication to superior quality and customer service is recognized as tops in the grocery business, most recently by an American Customer Satisfaction Index survey. For more information, visit the company’s website, [www.publix.com](http://www.publix.com).

### About the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI)

Established in 2005 by President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) convenes global leaders to devise and implement innovative solutions to some of the world’s most pressing challenges. Since 2005, CGI Annual Meetings have brought together nearly 150 current and former heads of state, 18 Nobel Prize laureates, hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations, major philanthropists, directors of the most effective nongovernmental organizations, and prominent members of the media. These CGI members have made more than 2,000 commitments, which have already improved the lives of 300 million people in more than 180 countries. When fully funded and implemented, these commitments will be valued in excess of $63 billion. The 2011 Annual Meeting will take place Sept. 20-22 in New York City.

This year, CGI also convened CGI America, a meeting focused on developing ideas for driving economic growth in the United States. The CGI community also includes CGI U, which hosts an annual meeting for undergraduate and graduate students, and CGI Lead, which engages a select group of young CGI members for leadership development and collective commitment-making. For more information, visit [www.clintonglobalinitiative.org](http://www.clintonglobalinitiative.org).

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