

Statement of Purpose for the Establishment of MLF Japan

Bass fishing has great potential; unfortunately, this potential has not been fully realized in our country until now. Major League Fishing (MLF) has expanded its partnerships around the world, providing a platform for local tournaments to step up to the highest level of competition in the United States, the bass fishing capital of the world. This has enabled anglers around the world, including tournament participants as well as fans, to share values through "fishing" and to deepen friendships based on mutual understanding. Bass fishing, which appeals to people of all ages and both sexes, can be enjoyed together and also promotes world peace. Not only does it build a bridge of friendship between the United States and Japan, but it also expands and strengthens our ties with people around the world.

Fishing has been an activity of humankind since the age of hunting and gathering. At the same time, there have been many episodes of fishing in the world ever since. Fishing is not simply fishing for food, but has developed as a hobby and culture, and can even be called a common culture among all humankind, both in the East and the West.

In 1925, the first black bass was released into Lake Ashi in Japan by businessman Tetsuma Akaboshi. In light of the food situation at the time, there were great expectations for black bass as a food fish. However, they were also expected to play a role as game fish. Since Japan's opening to the West, our predecessors had been eager to introduce Western culture in order to strengthen the country's wealth and military power, and it remains one of the American-derived cultures widely cherished in our country today. In the United States, black bass are present in lakes in a wide range of regions, and while they serve as food, the culture of bass fishing has taken root among many people, from professional fishing tournaments with big prize money to traditional leisure activities for all generations and genders in the regions.

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of black bass in Japan, we have decided to introduce MLF's international program to help the potential of bass fishing flourish in our country. As we look toward the next 100 years, bass fishing will be a symbol that can serve as a bridge for further friendship between Japan and the United States. At the same time, by providing a direct link to the stage in America, we intend to further promote an environment where bass professionals can become self-sufficient in tournament winnings, something we have long sought to achieve. We sincerely hope that by raising public awareness of bass fishing in Japan, we can

improve the industry's treatment as a whole and inspire children who aspire to become future bass professionals. We will continue to make steady and strong progress toward achieving this goal.

The MLF is the only organization in the world that already offers a clear pathway to the highest level of bass fishing tournaments. Anglers from around the world have the opportunity to earn invitations to the MLF's most prestigious events through competitions in partner countries, which fosters mutual understanding and ensures recognition of winners from all participating countries in an international competitive environment. The MLF's efforts to bring anglers together on the world stage is a great challenge to unite the world through bass fishing, and as Major League Fishing Japan (MLF Japan), we will continue to strengthen our friendship with anglers not only in the U.S., but around the world. At present, the MLF has 19 partner countries, including Japan, and together with the growing number of countries, we will contribute to the promotion of world peace and the further development of bass fishing culture.

Bass fishing is a sport that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. How wonderful it would be if our children could enjoy bass fishing with local anglers in the great outdoors of the U.S. We aim to create a future where people from North and South America, Asia, Africa, Europe, and Oceania, along with veteran and young anglers from our country, compete in fishing tournaments on the MLF stage, and audiences can enjoy their performance through real-time video streaming. In the name of mutual exchange and understanding, we aim to encourage improvements to the designation of invasive alien species, while fully considering the impact on ecosystems. Given the potential of bass fishing culture to contribute to international exchange, we will actively advocate for the easing of regulations related to designated invasive alien species and for the introduction of exceptional measures limited to tournament contexts. We will continue to engage proactively in these efforts and make proposals to support the development of bass fishing culture. We would also like to highlight Japanese anglers who are active in the United States, the home of bass fishing. They are not only samurai fighting overseas, but also ambassadors of international goodwill.

MLF Japan is committed to providing a venue for exchange between Japanese of all ages and people from around the world, thereby raising awareness of bass fishing in Japan and taking steps to deepen friendship that will surely contribute to world peace.

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