



# Seafood Stewardship Index

**Updated methodology – report for public consultation**

August 2022

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# Foreword

Companies across all sectors must live up to their social and environmental responsibility, taking the urgent action needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

WBA is committed to continuing to work with our Allies and others across the ecosystem to ensure practices of the private sector improve over time in line with the SDGs – and that corporate sustainability data remains a public good. The current corporate reporting standard ecosystem is maturing (e.g., [GRI 13 standard for Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fishing](#), [EU's sustainability reporting standards](#)) but is not yet aligned with the needs of the global agenda. Our aspiration is that WBA's benchmark methodologies serve as roadmaps to set out what good looks like based on societal expectations and the latest scientific research. It is therefore vital that our methodologies are continuously updated to:

- ensure they remain relevant and in line with societal expectations;
- ensure coherence and complementarity with the wider corporate reporting ecosystem, including other benchmarks and reporting frameworks- within WBA and beyond.

In 2021, the Seafood Stewardship Index methodology was substantially revised in order to 1) integrate learnings from the first iteration (2019); 2) reflect evolving industry standards and best practices); and 3) ensure internal consistency across all WBA benchmarks. This year, the benchmark methodology will only be subject to minor revisions and refinements, which this public consultation is focusing on. We took an approach of keeping changes to minimum, to allow us to compare company performance across time.

This document presents suggested changes at an indicator level and provides an overview of the revised methodology that will be the basis for the third iteration of the index in 2023. All suggested updates have been made carefully and in line with WBA's methodology review principles to ensure maximum comparability with benchmark results of previous iterations.

**We invite all benchmark stakeholders to review and share their comments with us by sending feedback to [r.beukers@worldbenchmarkingalliance.org](mailto:r.beukers@worldbenchmarkingalliance.org) by 30 September 2022.** Building on the feedback received, the finalised methodology will be published in Q4 of this year.



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# Summary of suggested changes

## Revised indicators

To ensure comparability with previous iterations of the benchmark, most indicators have remained the same and only minor changes are proposed. Therefore, we are only seeking feedback on the indicators that have been revised. For indicators overlapping with the Food and Agriculture Benchmark, which is also undergoing a revision of its methodology, the Seafood Stewardship Index follows the changes made as a result of the Food and Agriculture Benchmark revision process. These changes are summarised in the Table 1.

TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF INDICATOR CHANGES AND RATIONALES

Indicator	Suggested change	Rationale	Alignment with other benchmarks
A2. Accountability for sustainability strategy	Added one element requiring companies to disclose the individuals responsible that are accountable for the implementation of the sustainability strategy as well as their position within the organisation.	To align with the Food and Agriculture Benchmark and the Nature Benchmark.	Food and Agriculture  Nature & Biodiversity
A4. Policy and advocacy	Replaced with a new indicator A4. Lobbying and advocacy.	From the 2021 benchmark, we learned that it is challenging to measure and disclose <i>impacts</i> of policy advocacy efforts. As a result, we suggest using the indicator recently developed for the Nature & Biodiversity benchmark on this topic which focuses on companies' <i>disclosure</i> of all its advocacy and lobbying activities, including alignment with nature-positive policies and plans to address any misalignment.	Food and Agriculture  Nature & Biodiversity
B8. Marine ingredients in aquaculture feed and use of alternative ingredients	Added one element to reward transparency of the raw materials use aquaculture feed.	To ensure that we ask the same level of transparency from feed companies as with other companies in the benchmark.	NA



B13. Medicine use	Added one element on company disclosure of a reduction in the total use of medicines.	To reward companies that reduced the medicine use across their operations.	NA
C1. Commitment to traceable seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients.	The elements have been modified so the indicator now differentiates between endorsement and adoption of the GDST standard, and whether companies have set a time-bound target for adoption of the standard. Furthermore, companies that commit to implementing traceability with chain of custody certification are rewarded.	This has been updated based on our improved understanding of various levels of commitments to the GDST standard as well as how Chain of Custody standards compare to GDST.	NA
C2. Traceability system for seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients	Added one element to recognize chain of custody/certification standards.  Removed the requirement to disclose percentage of portfolio that is GDST compliant along with a clear workplan to address the gap.	Making this indicator better able to capture what traceability systems companies have in place while also recognizing relevant standards (e.g., chain of custody certification).	NA
C3. Risk-based approach to illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing	Added one requirement to disclose the results of the IUU risk assessments.  Added one requirement for companies to disclose the steps they are taking address and mitigate identified IUU risks.	Refining indicator to remove overlapping elements and add clarity between the various elements.	NA
D19. Child labour	Separated the requirements related to own operations vs. supply chain.  Removed the monitoring element.  Added a requirement on age verification processes for the company's own operations.	To align with the Food and Agriculture Benchmark.	Food and Agriculture





D20. Forced labour	<p>Separated the requirements related to own operations vs. supply chain.</p> <p>Whereas the indicator previously focused on the retention of personal documents and restriction of workers' freedom, added an element regarding financial burdens on workers.</p> <p>Added a requirement for companies to demonstrate how they work with suppliers.</p>	<p>Improve alignment with ILO recommendations.</p> <p>Increased focus on the supply chain as this is where cases of forced labour more frequently occur. In addition, last year's research also demonstrated that companies are more likely to report these numbers for their supply chain.</p>	Food and Agriculture
D21. Living Wage	Added one element to capture corporate disclosure on the share of workers in a company's operations and/or supply chain that are paid a living wage.	This allows stakeholders to understand progress of a company on this topic.	Food and Agriculture
D23. Farmers and fisher livelihoods.	Indicator amended to have a stronger focus on livelihoods and living income in particular. Made the expectations of the indicator more concrete supports companies in the indispensable journey to improve farmer and fisher livelihoods.	The topic of living income is gaining traction in the food and agriculture sector and directly linked to the resilience and participation of small-scale producers in the global food market.	Food and Agriculture
D24. Indigenous people's right	This indicator replaced the previous D25 indicator Indigenous and customary rights.	To increase alignment with the Nature benchmark on this topic.	Nature & Biodiversity

## Revised approach to scoring

In previous iterations of the Seafood Stewardship Index, a conditional scoring approach was applied to all indicators, where companies could only meet an element if previous elements were met. However, based on learnings from other WBA benchmarks and stakeholder feedback received, the Food and Agriculture Benchmark scoring guidelines have been adapted to an unconditional (i.e., non-cumulative) scoring approach. This means that companies can receive a score for any element they meet, irrespective of whether they meet other elements. To ensure alignment, the Seafood



Stewardship Index has adopted an unconditional scoring approach for indicators that are also in the Food and Agriculture benchmark.

For most of the seafood-specific indicators, this conditional scoring approach will be maintained to allow for comparability between the 2023 benchmark and the 2021 benchmark.

This means that both scoring approaches are used in this revised methodology.

### **Using draft assessment instead of questionnaires**

For the next iteration of the benchmark, WBA will not issue a questionnaire to companies to supplement data collection but will instead share a draft assessment. Companies are invited to review the draft assessment and provide additional information, where relevant. This new approach will allow for deeper engagement with companies while guiding them to where their input is needed. The elements set out for each indicator provide the guidance for corporate expectations.



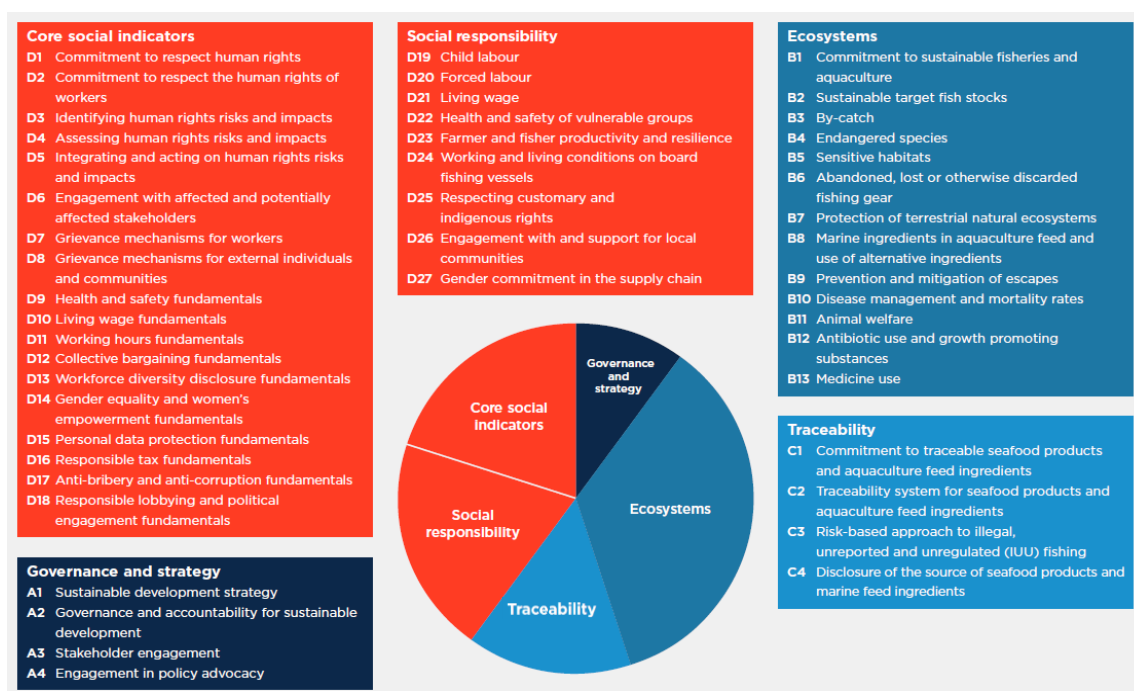
# Seafood Stewardship Index

## Methodology overview

Seafood plays a crucial role in nourishing populations and supporting livelihoods all over the world, especially in developing countries. Yet despite the global importance of seafood in providing nourishment and employment and its potential contribution to a sustainable food system, fisheries and aquaculture face a number of social and environmental challenges such as overfishing, antibiotic resistance and unethical labour practices. Private sector action is crucially needed to address these challenges. Taking a holistic approach, companies in the benchmark are assessed across the measurement areas of governance and strategy, ecosystems, traceability and social responsibility. The methodology for WBA's Seafood Stewardship Index translates the UN Sustainable Development Goals as well as sector specific principles, guidelines and standards into 47 indicators. The indicators and scoring guidelines serve as a roadmap to guide companies through the transformation journey by identifying the areas of attention alongside clear expectations for companies.

An overview of the current indicators is shown in Figure 1 (unchanged compared to previous methodology).

FIGURE 1. OVERVIEW OF INDICATORS IN THE FOUR MEASUREMENT AREAS



## Ensuring a meaningful assessment

Given the role and influence of the 30 benchmarked companies in the seafood industry, every company has a role to play in all four measurement areas. As such, all 30 companies are assessed on each measurement area. However, some indicators in the "Ecosystems" measurement area are specific to either fishing, aquaculture or aquaculture feed production, or the degree of influence and impact





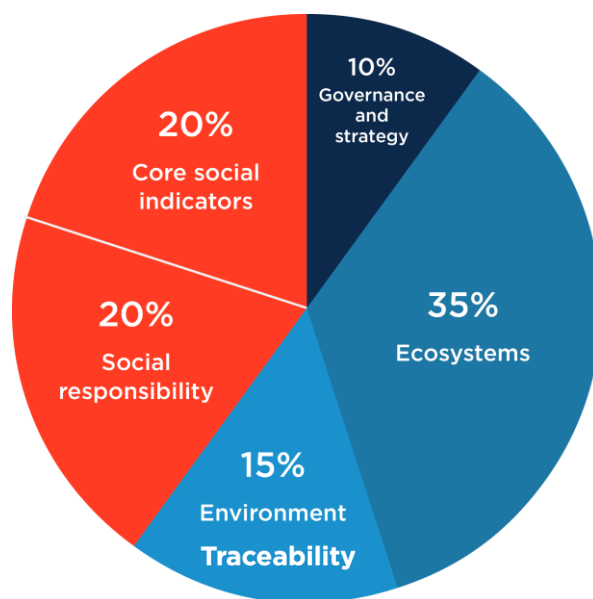
on certain topics varies. There are, therefore, a limited number of indicators in the ecosystem measurement areas that are not applicable to some of the companies in scope.

For example, companies that do not farm seafood will not be assessed on how they prevent fish escapes in their operations (indicator B9). Similarly, companies that produce aquaculture feed and do not farm seafood in own operations or are not assessed on indicators B11 (animal welfare) and B12 (antibiotics use and growth promoting substances). Where indicators are deemed not applicable, the weight is redistributed evenly amongst the remaining indicators in the respective measurement area.

## Approach to weighting

The benchmark uses a weighed approach to calculate companies' scores. This approach builds on the previous Seafood Stewardship Index methodologies and other WBA benchmarks. Weighting will be distributed across the different measurement areas to ensure that the measurement framework is balanced and reflects stakeholder priorities. To allow for comparability between the third iteration of the benchmark and the 2021 benchmark, we propose to use the same weightings for each measurement area. This means that the ecosystems measurement area still carries the greatest weight (35%), due to the importance of the related issues. The social responsibility measurement area and the core social indicators have a weight of 20% each. Traceability accounts for 15%. The governance and strategy indicators have a weight of 10%.

FIGURE 2. WEIGHTS PER MEASUREMENT AREA (unchanged compared to previous methodology)



Measurement area	Weight (%)	Indicators	Weight per indicator (%)
A. Governance and strategy	10	4	2.50
B. Ecosystems	35	13	2.69
C. Traceability	15	4	3.75
D. Social responsibility	20	9	2.22
Core social indicators	20	18	1.11



## Approach to scoring

A set of guidelines for each indicator is used to score companies. Each indicator has a fixed scale by which the company receives a score depending on the scoring criteria. WBA scores have a 0–2 range: a score of 0 reflects no performance and a score of 2 reflects best performance. Each indicator is assessed against a set of predefined criteria related to the 'elements' that reflect what is expected of the company and what it will be assessed and scored on.

In previous iterations of the Seafood Stewardship Index, a conditional scoring approach was applied to all indicators, where companies could only meet an element if previous elements were met. However, based on learnings from other WBA benchmarks and stakeholder feedback received, the Food and Agriculture Benchmark scoring guidelines have been adapted to an unconditional (i.e., non-cumulative) scoring approach. This means that companies can receive a score for any element they meet, irrespective of whether they meet other elements. To ensure alignment, the Seafood Stewardship Index has adopted an unconditional scoring approach for indicators that are also in the Food and Agriculture benchmark.

For most of the seafood-specific indicators, this conditional scoring approach will be maintained to allow for comparability between the 2023 benchmark and the 2021 benchmark.

This means that both scoring approaches are used in this revised methodology.

The core social indicators are assessed differently as they have been developed to apply to all industries and focus on fundamentals. They represent expectations that all companies should be meeting but are not necessarily 'leading practices' or proxies for good performance. As such, they follow a different scoring approach and each indicator is limited to 1 point and broken into the following levels:

- Met: the company met all the elements for a particular indicator (1 point)
- Partially met: the company met some elements for a particular indicator (0.5 points)
- Not met: the company did not meet any of the elements for a particular indicator (0 points).

## Data collection

WBA will assess companies against all indicators of the methodology based on relevant data from a company's and other third party disclosure. Unlike previous iterations of the Seafood Stewardship Index, WBA will not send a questionnaire, but share a draft assessment of the company's performance with companies to which companies are invited to engage and provide additional information. Additional information provided by companies will be used to complete the assessment. All data used for the benchmark is already public or could be made public. Only data at the company parent/group level and provided to WBA in the English language will be considered. The 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index will include corporate data for 2021–22.

## Presentation of results

Companies are both ranked in total, as well as by measurement area. The performance of each company is summarised in a scorecard, including:

- a summary description and performance overview of the company



- the rank and total score in the benchmark
- rank by measurement area
- leading practices of the company's performance for each measurement area
- risks and opportunities across each measurement area
- comparison of performance with the second iteration.

## Alignment with other WBA benchmarks

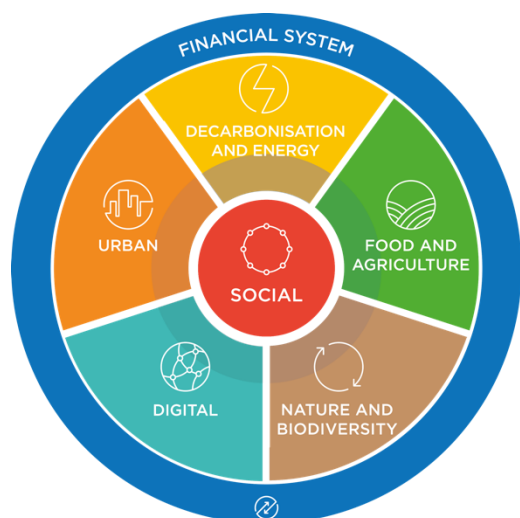


FIGURE 3. WBA'S SEVEN SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARK

WBA has adopted a systems-based approach to developing benchmarks to transform seven areas (Figure 3).

The food and agriculture sector, including the seafood industry, is one of the most critical sectors when it comes to nature impacts. Therefore, all seafood companies that are in scope of the Food and Agriculture Benchmark (23 out of the 30 companies in scope of the Seafood Stewardship Index) are also in scope of WBA's Nature Benchmark.

The sector relies heavily on ecosystems, while at the same time our global food system is the primary driver of biodiversity loss ([UNEP, 2021](#)). Food production is already a key contributor to climate change, deforestation, biodiversity loss and freshwater depletion, with almost half of global food production

relying on exceeding the planet's environmental boundaries ([SRC, 2020](#)). Without dedicated measures, these impacts could increase by 60–90% by 2050 ([PIK, 2018](#)). As such, pressure is mounting to ensure food systems are central to the COP27 agenda, held in November 2022.

Due to the interlinkages between the Food and Agriculture and Nature systems, the 350 food and agriculture companies (including 23 out of the 30 companies in scope of the Seafood Stewardship Index) will be assessed against the updated Seafood Stewardship Index and Food and Agriculture Methodologies as well as the new [Nature methodology](#). The research processes for all three benchmarks will be aligned, to ensure a smooth meaningful analysis and a smooth process of engagement with the companies.

WBA's Nature methodology was launched in April 2022. It has sought to build on existing standards and best practice while also recognising and trying to fill in some of the gaps. WBA's Nature Benchmark aims to guide companies through that critical transformation, by assessing 1000 of the most impactful companies on nature by 2023. It will examine how the impacts of business contribute to stable and resilient ecosystems which enable humanity and nature to co-exist within planetary boundaries on biodiversity, climate, land, oceans and water.



# Draft indicators 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index

The following sections describe each indicator within the four different measurement areas.

The indicators follow a standard format:

- **Topic:** a short descriptor of the issue.
- **Indicator:** sets out the topic-specific outcomes expected of the company.
- **Rationale:** sets out the reason why the topic is included in the benchmark and why it is crucial for a sustainable seafood industry and the SDGs.
- **Elements:** set out the indicative scoring guidelines against which companies will be assessed for the indicator.
- **Sources:** lists the key existing initiatives that the indicator aligns with or builds upon.

For each of the proposed change, we have added a section outlining the key changes and rationale.

## A. Governance and strategy

### A1. Sustainability strategy

**Indicator:** The company has sustainability objectives and targets embedded in its strategy and business model.

**Rationale:** A corporate sustainability strategy prioritises and embeds sustainability objectives and targets and helps the company to deliver on key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It facilitates the company's ability to adapt and change through forward planning, increasing its resilience, managing risks and protecting workers, the company and society at large (SDG target 12.6). I

**Elements:**

- a. The company discloses its process for identifying and prioritising its most relevant sustainability impacts as well as the outcome of this process, in relation to its sustainability strategy.
- b. The company has a sustainability strategy, covering sustainability topics across all three benchmark measurement areas (ecosystems, traceability, and social responsibility) in relation to both its own operations and its value chain.
- c. The company has group-wide targets on key sustainability topics for the most material parts of its value chain.
- d. The company reports consistently against all its targets.

**Sources:** Forum for the Future and WBCSD ([2021](#)), GRI 2-22, 2-23, 3-1, 3-2, 3-3 ([2021](#)), IFAC et al. ([2020](#)), UNDP ([2021](#)), WEF ([2020](#)).



## A2. Accountability for sustainability strategy

**Indicator:** The company has a governance system that includes highest level responsibility and accountability for its sustainability objectives and targets. Senior executive members have incentives to reward the effective delivery of relevant company strategies and initiatives.

**Rationale:** Linking sustainable development objectives and targets to roles and remuneration is important to ensure the accountability of the company in relation to its contribution to sustainable development objectives and targets. Ensuring capability within decision-making bodies further indicates a company's commitment to transitioning to a sustainable future (SDG target 12.6).

### Elements:

- a. The company discloses having persons, teams or committees within the company who are responsible for the implementation of its sustainability strategy.
- b. The company provides evidence of assigning decision-making and oversight responsibility for its sustainability strategy to the highest governance body<sup>1</sup>.
- c. The company provides evidence of linking performance criteria in senior executives' remuneration policies to its sustainability targets and objectives.
- d. The company provides evidence that its highest governance body has expertise with respect to the company's most material sustainability topics across all three benchmark measurement areas (ecosystems, traceability, and social responsibility).

**Sources:** GRI 2-10, 2-12, 2-13, 2-14, 2-17 (2021), IFAC et al. (2020), UNDP (2021), WEF (2020).

### Key changes and rationale

Element d) has been added to identify responsible individuals and their position(s) within the organisation.

## A3. Stakeholder engagement

**Indicator:** The company engages with stakeholders<sup>2</sup> on sustainable development issues and incorporates the outcomes of these activities in its strategy and operations.

**Rationale:** Serving the interests of all stakeholders is key to businesses' long-term success. Regular engagement with stakeholders contributes to the company's understanding of diverse and frequently opposing perspectives, drives innovation and helps to shape robust and inclusive approaches. Companies are expected to engage meaningfully with stakeholders. Engagement processes are

<sup>1</sup> Highest governance body: Formalised group of individuals responsible for the strategic guidance of an organisation, the effective monitoring of management and the accountability of management to the broader organisation and its stakeholders with the highest authority in the organisation. In some jurisdictions, governance systems consist of two tiers, where supervision and management are separated or where local law provides for a supervisory board drawn from non-executives to oversee an executive management board. In such cases, both tiers are included under the definition of highest governance body. (GRI, 2021)

<sup>2</sup> Stakeholders, as defined by GRI Standards: individuals or groups that have an interest that is affected or could be affected by the organisation's activities. This includes, but is not limited to, local communities, civil society, governments, workers and employees.

Meaningful stakeholder engagement is characterized by two-way communication and depends on the good faith of participants on both sides. It is also responsive and ongoing and includes in many cases engaging with relevant stakeholders before decisions are made.

Company engagement with stakeholder groups should include frequency and channels.



expected to produce a clear output or action and an acknowledgement of how stakeholder inputs are used (SDG target 12.6).

**Elements:**

- a. The company discloses an overview of the issues raised during its stakeholder engagement activities.
- b. The company discloses its process for identifying relevant stakeholders across its value chain.
- c. The company discloses its process for engaging with stakeholder groups, including frequency and channels, beyond its materiality assessment or a similar equivalent.
- d. The company discloses the outcomes of its stakeholder engagement activities and their integration into its sustainability strategy.
- e. The company's stakeholder engagement covers its most material sustainability topics across all three benchmark measurement areas (ecosystems, traceability, and social responsibility).

**Sources:** GRI 2-29 ([n.d.](#)), IFAC et al. ([2020](#)), SASB ([n.d.](#)), UNDP ([2021](#)), WEF ([2020](#)).

#### **A4. Lobbying and advocacy**

**Indicator:** The company advocates sustainable seafood policies and regulations and discloses any misalignment with its lobbying activities as well as the measures it takes to address misalignment.

**Rationale:** Both individually and through trade associations, companies should advocate sustainable seafood policies and regulations. A company that operates sustainably does not finance trade associations that undermine policies aimed at improving social responsibility and environmental sustainability in the seafood industry. It conducts regular due diligence on the trade associations they support, and fully discloses the names of the associations and alignment of their lobbying activities with policies and regulations that support social responsibility and environmental sustainability in the seafood industry. It discloses their action plans to correct any misalignment (SDG target 12.6 and 14.2).

**Elements:**

- a. The company discloses a list of trade associations of which it is a member for all jurisdictions in which it operates.
- b. The company discloses a clear and detailed framework for assessing alignment of its trade associations with sustainable seafood policies.
- c. The company provides evidence of annually applying the framework across all trade associations.
- d. The company reports any misalignment between the lobbying activities of its trade associations and policies that support social responsibility and environmental sustainability in the seafood industry.
- e. The company discloses an action plan to address misalignment which includes clear escalation steps.
- f. The company discloses clear deadlines for each of its escalation steps and consistently reports on their application.
- g. The company discloses an annual review of all the advocacy activities it has undertaken.

**Sources:** GRI 2-28, 11.22 ([2021](#)), UN PRI ([2018](#)), WBA ([2021b](#)), WEF ([2020](#)).





### Key changes and rationale

Indicator A4 has been revised to account for advocacy activities and how these are linked to lobbying activities. Additionally, the previous A4 indicator on policy advocacy was focused on measuring results and impacts of individual company's policy activities proved difficult to measure, especially because companies engage in policy advocacy collectively.

## B. Ecosystems

### B1. Sustainable fishing and aquaculture

**Indicator:** The company demonstrates sustainable fishing and aquaculture operations and/or the sustainable sourcing of seafood and aquaculture feed ingredients.

**Rationale:** To safeguard fish populations and marine biodiversity, companies need to contribute to sustainably managed marine aquatic resources. According to the FAO, in 2017 about a third of the global fish stocks were overfished, while nearly 60% were fully exploited ([FAO, 2020](#)). With global fish stocks under increasing pressure, companies need to be transparent about the sustainable management and efficient use of marine resources (SDGs 14.2 and 14.4).

#### Elements:

- a. The company provides qualitative evidence of a commitment to sustainable fishing and aquaculture with reference to environmental sourcing criteria.
- b. The company provides quantitative evidence of increasing its sustainable fisheries and aquaculture operations and sourcing.
- c. The company has a target for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, and reports progress against this target.
- d. The company's target covers 100% of its portfolio.
- e. The company provides evidence that 100% of its portfolio comes from sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

**Sources:** CASS ([2021](#)), FAIRR ([2021](#)), GRI 13 Topic 13.23 ([2022](#)).

### B2. Sustainable target fish stocks

**Indicator:** The company is reducing its impacts on stocks of target species through activities that ensure and support science-based management.

**Rationale:** Seafood companies involved in fishing or sourcing from wild fish stocks show stewardship by sourcing from stocks that are well managed and/or conducting fishing activities that do not lead to overfishing and ensure the long-term sustainability of fish resources. In the case of overfished stocks, companies can help restore and rebuild fish stocks in the shortest time feasible through improved and effective harvesting regulations and improved catch methods (SDG targets 14.2 and 14.4).

#### Elements:

- a. The company discloses examples of activities to reduce impact or improve the management status of target species fish stocks in its operations and/or supply chains. Examples of



activities are improvement projects, gear modification, closing of fishing areas, policy advocacy to support the development and adoption of harvest strategies, participating in collective industry platforms (e.g., ISSF, Global Tuna Alliance) and supporting data collection programmes.

- b. The company quantitatively reports on progress of the activities it undertakes to reduce impact or improve the management status of target species fish stocks, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 50% of its portfolio.
- c. The company has assessed target species fish stocks and discloses the management status of target species fish stocks in its operations and/or supply chains, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 80% of its portfolio and discloses the proportion per certification scheme.
- d. The company demonstrates how it mitigates impacts across 100% of its operations and/or supply chains, OR The company reports having achieved certification for 100% of its portfolio and discloses the proportion per certification scheme.

**Sources:** CASS ([2021](#)), FAO ([1995](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), MarinTrust ([2017](#)), MSC ([2018](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) FishSource ([2020](#)).

### B3. By-catch

**Indicator:** The company is reducing its impacts on by-catch species.

**Rationale:** In addition to catching target species, fishing gear and techniques can also catch non-target species. At least 7.3 million tonnes of by-catch are caught incidentally each year ([Consortium for Wildlife Bycatch Reduction, 2014](#)). By-catch levels do not always have significant impacts, but in some fisheries the percentage of by-catch can significantly impact the sustainability of a species and can far outweigh the size of the target catch (SDG targets 14.1 and 14.2).

**Elements:**

- a. The company discloses examples of activities to reduce bycatch in its operations and/or supply chains. Examples of activities that companies can undertake are improvement projects, using more selective fishing gear and methods, collecting data or supporting data collection (e.g. through 100% observer coverage), and providing crew training on by-catch mitigation and release practices.
- b. The company quantitatively reports on progress of the activities it undertakes to reduce bycatch in its operations and/or supply chains, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 50% of its portfolio.
- c. The company has assessed by-catch levels and risks across its entire portfolio, including its operations and supply chain. The company publicly discloses the results of that assessment, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 80% of its portfolio and discloses the proportion per certification scheme.
- d. The company demonstrates how it mitigates by-catch impacts across 100% of its operations and/or supply chains, OR The company reports having achieved certification for 100% of its portfolio and discloses the proportion per certification scheme.



**Sources:** CASS ([2021](#)), FAO ([1995](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), MarinTrust ([2017](#)), MSC ([2018](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) FishSource ([2020](#)).

#### B4. Endangered species

**Indicator:** The company is reducing its impacts on endangered species.

**Rationale:** Fishing and aquaculture companies can impact endangered species through their direct operations. Companies should also refrain from harvesting and trading endangered species to prevent their extinction (SDG targets 15.1 and 15.5).

**Elements:**

- a. The company discloses examples of activities to reduce its impact on endangered species in its operations and supply chain. Examples of activities could include improvement projects, modifying fishing techniques, reducing wildlife interactions in aquaculture, or not catching or sourcing endangered species.
- b. The company quantitatively reports on progress of the activities it undertakes to reduce impacts on endangered species in its operations and/or supply chains, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 50% of its portfolio.
- c. The company has assessed its impacts on endangered species in its operations and supply chain, referring to endangered species in line with international agreements such as the IUCN Red List or CITES. The company publicly discloses the results of the assessment, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 80% of its portfolio and discloses the proportion per certification scheme.
- d. The company demonstrates how it mitigates impact on endangered species across 100% of its operations and/or supply chains, OR The company reports having achieved certification for 100% of its portfolio and discloses the proportion per certification scheme.

**Sources:** CASS ([2021](#)), CITES ([2021](#)), FAO ([1995](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), IUCN Red List of Endangered Species ([2021](#)), MarinTrust ([2017](#)), MSC ([2018](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), SFP FishSource ([2020](#)).

#### B5. Sensitive habitats

**Indicator:** The company is reducing its impacts on sensitive habitats.

**Rationale:** Habitats are a vital element of ecosystems yet are easily disrupted by fishing and aquaculture activities and often hard to restore. Where seafood operations are found to significantly impact sensitive habitats, companies are expected to protect these habitats from the potentially negative impacts of their operations (SDG targets 14.2, 15.1 and 15.5).

**Elements:**

- a. The company discloses examples of activities to reduce its impact on sensitive habitats in its operations and supply chain. Examples of such activities are changing to alternative fishing techniques, refraining from fishing or aquaculture activities in or near protected areas, or ensuring that aquaculture feed ingredients are sourced from areas with no negative impacts on surrounding habitats.



- b. The company quantitatively reports on progress of the activities it undertakes to reduce impacts on sensitive habitats in its operations and/or supply chains, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 50% of its portfolio.
- c. The company has assessed its impacts on sensitive habitats across its entire portfolio, including its operations and supply chain. The company publicly discloses the results of that assessment, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 80% of its portfolio and discloses the proportion per certification scheme.
- d. The company demonstrates how it mitigates impact on sensitive habitats across 100% of its operations and/or supply chains, OR The company reports having achieved certification for 100% of its portfolio and discloses the proportion per certification scheme.

**Sources:** CASS ([2021](#)), FAO ([1995](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), MarinTrust ([2017](#)), MSC ([2018](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), SFP FishSource ([2020](#)).

## B6. Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear

**Indicator:** The company prevents and reduces abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear.

**Rationale:** Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG), often referred to as “Ghost Gear”, represents a substantial portion of ocean plastics. The estimated annual amount of ALDFG in oceans is estimated to be at least 640,000 tonnes ([FAO, 2018](#)). ALDFG can also refer to discarded or lost equipment from aquaculture operations. Plastics are major polluters of natural ecosystems, with associated toxins and microparticles disrupting soils, waterways, oceans and human food chains ([Barilla Foundation, 2019](#)) (SDG target 14.1).

### Elements:

- a. The company demonstrates a commitment to prevent and reduce ADLFG.
- b. The company implements measures for preventing and reducing ADLFG in its operations and supply chain.
- c. The company has conducted an assessment that demonstrates in which part of its operations and/or supply chain ADLFG is a risk. The company publicly discloses the results of that assessment.
- d. The company demonstrates results and impacts of measures it has implemented for preventing and reducing ADLFG across the full scope of its operations and/or supply chain.

**Sources:** FAO (2009), MSC ([2018](#)), Global Ghost Gear Initiative (2020), SeaBOS (2020).

## B7. Ecosystem conversion

**Indicator:** The company demonstrates that it is achieving deforestation and conversion<sup>3</sup>-free supply chains for its high-risk commodities.

<sup>3</sup> As defined by the Accountability Framework Initiative, conversion is the change of a natural ecosystem to another land use or profound change in a natural ecosystem's species composition, structure, or function. Deforestation is one form of conversion.



**Rationale:** Land use change through the conversion of natural habitats is among the most significant drivers of biodiversity loss in terrestrial ecosystems. Agricultural production alone is responsible for 80% of global deforestation ([WWF, 2020](#)). Such commodity-driven tropical deforestation where forests are cleared to make for land to grow crops or raise cattle is responsible for approximately 5% of global greenhouse gas emissions ([Ceres, 2020](#)). In the aquaculture industry, soya and palm oil are key ingredients in aquaculture feed production. Seafood companies can work towards achieving conversion-free operations through the sustainable use of soya and palm oil in aquaculture feed production (SDGs 15.1 and 15.5).

**Elements:**

- a. The company discloses qualitative evidence towards achieving deforestation and conversion-free (DCF) supply chains for its relevant high-risk commodities<sup>4</sup>.
- b. The company discloses the proportion of commodities that are DCF-free.
- c. The company has a DCF target, and reports progress against it.
- d. The company's DCF target covers all its high-risk commodities.
- e. The company discloses evidence that it has achieved 100% DCF supply chains for all of its relevant high-risk commodities.

**Sources:** Afi ([n.d.](#)), ASC ([various](#)), CDP Forests ([2021](#)), FAO ([2021](#)), Forest 500 ([2021](#)), Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), Global Salmon Initiative (GSI) ([2020](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), SBTN ([2020](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), SPOTT ([2021](#)).

## B8. Marine ingredients in aquaculture feed and use of alternative ingredients

**Indicator:** The company demonstrates more efficient use and/or reductions in the use of marine ingredients in aquaculture feed for carnivorous species and develops alternative ingredients.

**Rationale:** Around 10% of global seafood production is used to produce marine ingredients such as fish oil and fish meal ([FAO, 2020](#)). Both are nutritious ingredients and important components in the production of aquaculture feed for carnivorous species. However, there are concerns about the contribution of fish oil and fish meal production to overfishing and the potential competition for fish resources between feed production and human consumption. Aquaculture feed-producing companies can actively contribute to improving the sustainability of feed production through more efficient use (e.g., by improving feed conversion rates) and/or reductions in the use of marine ingredients and/or by developing alternative ingredients with similar nutritional values and a lower environmental impact (SDG targets 12.2, 14.4 and 15.5).

**Elements:**

- a. The company discloses qualitative information about the use of marine ingredients in aquaculture feed production or aquaculture farming, such as the forage fish dependency ratio (FFDR).
- b. The company discloses a detailed breakdown of all (marine, terrestrial and other) raw materials in its aquaculture feed.

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<sup>4</sup> Key high-risk commodities: beef, palm oil, soy, cocoa, coffee.

- c. The company demonstrates multiple examples for more efficient use and/or reductions in the use of marine ingredients in aquaculture feed through the use of alternative ingredients to fulfil the omega- 3 feed requirements.
- d. The company demonstrates multiple examples in use commercially in its operations that contribute to more efficient use and/or reductions in the use of marine ingredients in aquaculture feed through the use of alternative ingredients to fulfil the omega- 3 feed requirements.

**Sources:** ASC ([various](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GSI ([2020](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), UNGC ([2020](#)).

#### **Key changes and rationale**

Element b) has been added to reward transparency of the raw material composition of aquaculture feed to ensure that we ask the same level of transparency from feed companies as with other companies in the benchmark

### **B9. Prevention and mitigation of escapes**

**Indicator:** The company prevents escapes and, in the event of an escape, mitigates the impact.

**Rationale:** Escapes can negatively impact wild fish populations and environments. A company that has mechanisms in place to prevent escapes and mitigate the impact of an outbreak if one occurs can minimise these negative environmental impacts (SDG targets 2.5 and 15.8).

#### **Elements:**

- a. The company reports on the number of outbreaks and the number of fish that escaped in 2021 and 2022. The company also discloses for which of its farming operations escapes are relevant.
- b. The company did not have major outbreaks (more than 1500 fish) in 2021 and 2022.
- c. The company has a policy on outbreaks where it presents a detailed approach to prevent and mitigate outbreaks.
- d. In case of each outbreak, the company presents the measures it has taken to address negative impacts of the outbreak.

**Sources:** ASC ([various](#)), Collier FAIRR Protein Producer Index Methodology ([2020](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GSI ([2020](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), UNGC ([2020](#)).

#### **Question for the public consultation**

In the previous iteration, companies with 0 escapes were found as they only had closed systems where outbreaks are not relevant. In addition to salmon farming, for which farming systems and/or species should reporting on fish escapes be considered as relevant





## B10. Disease management and mortality rates

**Indicator:** The company discloses mortality rates across its operations and demonstrates its efforts to prevent and manage diseases.

**Rationale:** Mortality or survival rates can be used as performance-based indicators for managing diseases in aquaculture. By disclosing disease management plans and mortality or survival rates across its operations, the company demonstrates transparency about how diseases are being managed (SDG target 12.4).

### Elements:

- a. The company discloses information about disease management plans.
- b. The company discloses its approach to manage diseases and reports mortality or survival rates across 100% its operations.
- c. The company has a target for mortality or survival rates across 100% of its operations and reports against its target.
- d. In 2021 and 2022 the company achieved its target.

**Sources:** ASC ([various](#)), Collier FAIRR Protein Producer Index Methodology ([2020](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GSI ([2020](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), UNGC ([2020](#)).

## B11. Animal welfare

**Indicator:** The company is committed to improving aquatic and farm animal welfare.

**Rationale:** More than 70 billion land animals are farmed for food annually, with two thirds in conditions that prevent them from moving freely or living naturally. A 100 billion fish are farmed for food annually with prevalent welfare problems in their slaughter, transport, handling and rearing, for which the severity and duration of distress is often high ([Fishcount, 2012](#)).

### Elements:

- a. The company has a policy that addresses animal welfare issues (in its supply chain where relevant).
- b. The company discloses evidence of processes such as third-party certifications or third-party audits.
- c. The company has a target(s) that addresses animal welfare issues (in its supply chain where relevant).
- d. The targets are applicable to all species, geographies and products.
- e. The company's policies and/or targets address all of the following key animal welfare issues for each species: (i) phasing out close confinement (ii) ending routine mutilations (iii) ensuring pre-slaughter stunning (iv) avoiding genetic engineering and cloning (v) encouraging natural behaviours through species-specific enrichment (vi) limiting long-distance live transport to eight hours or under.



**Sources:** Aquatic Life Institute ([n.d.](#)), ASC ([various](#)), BBFAW ([2021](#)), Collier FAIRR ([2021](#)), Compassion in World Farming ([n.d.](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GSI ([2020](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), World Animal Protection ([2021](#)).

## B12. Antibiotics use and growth promoting substances

**Indicator:** The company reduces the use of medically important antimicrobials<sup>5</sup>, and specifically prohibits the prophylactic use of antibiotics and growth-promoting substances.

**Rationale:** Antibiotic use is prevalent in the food and agriculture sector, with around 75% of antibiotics in the United States alone used on farm animals. This number is projected to increase by 22% by 2030 ([FAIRR, 2017](#)). Antimicrobial resistance is a significant public health threat, with governments and other stakeholders across the world calling for a decrease in the use of antibiotics in livestock and aquaculture production (SDG target 12.4).

### Elements:

- a. The company has a policy on reducing the (prophylactic) use of antibiotics and/or growth promoting substances.
- b. The company discloses evidence of processes such as third-party certifications or third-party audits.
- c. The company has targets to phase out the use of growth-promoting substances across all species, geographies and products, and reports against the targets.
- d. The company has targets to phase out the prophylactic use of antibiotics across all species, geographies and products, and reports against the targets.
- e. The company discloses a reduction in the total use of antibiotics classified as medically important antimicrobials across all species, geographies and products.

**Sources:** Aquatic Life Institute ([n.d.](#)), ASC ([various](#)), BBFAW ([2021](#)), FAIRR ([2021](#)), Compassion in World Farming ([n.d.](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GRI, GSI ([2020](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), SASB ([n.d.](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), UNGC ([2020](#)), World Animal Protection ([2021](#)).

## B13. Medicine use

**Indicator:** The company discloses quantitative information about the use of medicines to manage diseases and demonstrates how it is reducing medicine use within its operations.

**Rationale:** Diseases are an element of aquaculture operations that require strict and effective management to prevent their spread and adverse impacts on the farm and beyond. A company can report quantitative information about the use of medicines and medicinal treatments and demonstrate what it is doing to reduce medicine use in its operations, including alternative, non-medicinal, treatments (SDG target 12.4).

### Elements:

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<sup>5</sup> As defined by the World Health Organization ([2019](#)) Critically important antibiotics for human use 6th revision



- a. The company discloses its medicine use and medical treatments used across 100% of its operations.
- b. The company discloses a reduction in the total use of medicines across 100% of its operations.
- c. The company discloses has implemented alternative medicinal treatments, and reports about the use of the treatments across 100% of its operations.

**Sources:** Aquatic ASC ([various](#)), Collier FAIRR ([2020](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GSI ([2020](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), UNGC ([2020](#)).

#### Key changes and rationale

Element b) has been added to reward companies that have reduced medicine use across 100% of its operations.

## C. Traceability

### C1. Commitment to traceable seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients

**Indicator:** The company commits to traceable seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients (marine and terrestrial) in its own operations and supply chain.

**Rationale:** Companies are legally required to trace the source of their seafood products and marine feed ingredients. Current import regulations such as the United States' Seafood Import Monitoring Program and the European Union's IUU regulation have inherent weaknesses. These include not always covering all seafood products or supply chains, or not integrating a robust verification process (EJF, Oceana, PEW, WWF, [2016](#) and [2020](#)). Therefore, companies are expected to go beyond legal compliance and have traceability systems that comprehensively monitor and verify seafood products, marine and terrestrial feed ingredients across their entire portfolio. The Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST), a business-to-business platform, has developed a global standard for tracking seafood products from point of origin to point of sale. Over 60 companies and organisations participated in developing the standard, and more than 80 companies have endorsed or adopted the standard. To achieve fully traceable seafood products and marine feed ingredients, companies commit to electronic and interoperable traceability, in line with the GDST standard, or commit to implement chain of custody standards. Companies can also commit to traceability through their commitment to certified seafood given the associated requirement to chain of custody certification.

#### Elements:

- a. The company has a general commitment to traceable seafood and marine feed ingredients.
- b. The company endorses the GDST standard.
- c. The company has a time-bound target to traceable seafood and marine feed ingredients through chain of custody certification.
- d. The company has a time-bound target to adopt the GDST standard.

**Sources:** CRS ([2016](#)), Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), Oceana, Pew, WWF ([2016](#)), GDST ([2020](#)), Oceana, Pew, The Nature Conservancy, EJF, WWF ([2020](#)), RTRS ([2017](#)), WRI ([2020](#)).



### Key changes and rationale

For company commitments to GDST, we propose a distinction between endorsement and adoption, and whether companies have set a time-bound target for adoption of the standard. Also, companies that commit to implementing traceability with chain of custody certification are also rewarded.

### Questions for public consultation

Should this indicator assess companies' commitments to traceable terrestrial feed ingredients, given that indicator B7 (Ecosystem conversion) requires companies to disclose progress towards achieving deforestation and conversion-free (DCF) supply chains for their relevant high-risk commodities, which implicitly requires having traceability in place in those supply chains?

If yes, what traceability standards should we be looking for when it comes to traceability of terrestrial ingredients?

Should the indicator differentiate between commitments to traceability through their commitment to certification (i.e., chain of custody standard) and commitments to the GDST standards?

Are there traceability standards that should be recognized for element c) other than chain of custody standards associated with certification schemes?

## C2. Traceability system for seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients

**Indicator:** The company demonstrates a traceability system for seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients (marine and terrestrial) in its own operations and supply chain.

**Rationale:** Buyers of seafood products, importing market countries and other stakeholders want to see evidence that seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients are fully traceable, all the way to the source, whether a farm or a fishery. For aquaculture feed companies this also refers to terrestrial ingredients used for feed production. This requires accurate data about actors in the supply chain, production methods, sustainability practices and compliance with regulations, to eliminate unsustainable and illegal practices. To qualify as robust, a traceability system must include mechanisms to verify the information used and inputted into the system along the whole supply chain. Traceability systems, when designed according to a set of robust criteria such as the GDST, are key for capturing product data that meets both market and regulatory requirements. Robust traceability also underpins claims that a seafood or aquaculture feed company makes about the origins of raw material in its seafood products and aquaculture feed (SDG targets 12.2 and 14.4).

### Elements:

- a. The company provides a description of systems in place to trace and verify the origins of seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients, marine and terrestrial (electronic or paper-based).
- b. The company provides an explanation of which key data elements are collected and how these data are verified and shared along the supply chain.
- c. The company and all of its supply chains have chain of custody certification.



- d. The company and its supply chain disclose the percentage of their portfolio where GDST have been implemented.

**Sources:** CRS (2016), EJP (2020), FAO (2018), Future of Fish (2016), GDST (2020), Sustainable Alliance for Legality & Traceability (2020), WWF (2015), RTRS (2017), WRI (2020).

#### **Key changes and rationale**

Element c) has been added to recognize chain of custody/certification standards, and the requirement to disclose percentage of portfolio that is GDST compliant along with a clear workplan to address the gap has been removed from element d). This makes this indicator better able to capture what traceability systems companies have in place while also recognizing relevant standards (e.g., chain of custody certification).

#### **Questions for public consultation**

Which chain of custody/traceability certification standards should this indicator recognize (e.g., GSSI benchmarked standards, ISO 22005:2007)?

Should this indicator reward a company that does not have a traceability system verified through chain of custody certification? If so, how?

How should this indicator recognize companies with part, or all of their portfolio certified to one of those standards? For example, reward 1 point for companies >50% portfolio certified, 1,5 point for companies >80% portfolio certified and 2 points for companies 100% portfolio certified.

### **C3. Risk-based approach to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing**

**Indicator:** The company uses a risk-based approach to assess and mitigate IUU fishing issues across its operations and supply chain.

**Rationale:** IUU fishing is a key issue in the global seafood industry. IUU catches are estimated to account for 11–26 million tonnes of fish annually, with a value of between USD 10 billion and USD 23 billion (FAO, 2016). To eliminate IUU products from the global seafood market, seafood companies, in addition to legal requirements, can put in place risk assessment procedures to assess and mitigate IUU risks in their operations and supply chains (SDG target 14.4).

#### **Elements:**

- a. The company provides general information about how it mitigates risks for IUU fisheries across its operations and supply chains but has not conducted an IUU risk assessment.
- b. The company demonstrates it has a risk assessment tool in place to conduct IUU risk assessments across 100% of its operations and supply chain.
- c. The company discloses the results of the risk assessment.
- d. The company discloses the steps it has taken to address and mitigate identified IUU risks, based on its risk assessment.

**Sources:** CRS British Retail Consortium (BRC), EJP (2015), Oceana, UN Environment Programme (UNEP) (2018), EJP, Oceana, Pew, WWF (2016), (2017).



### Key changes and rationale

Element c) now also includes a requirement to disclose the results of the IUU risk assessments. Element d) has been added to understand what steps companies have taken to address and mitigate identified IUU risks.

### Question for public consultation

If a company has high portion (e.g., 90%) or 100% of its portfolio from certified sources, should it have to demonstrate having a risk assessment tool in place?

## C4. Disclosure of the source of seafood products and marine feed ingredients

**Indicator:** The company discloses the source of its seafood products and marine feed ingredients.

**Rationale:** A company that publicly discloses the source of its seafood products and marine feed ingredients demonstrates transparency about its portfolio. By being fully transparent about the source of its products, a company shows responsibility and accountability for its operations (SDG targets 12.2 and 14.4).

### Elements:

- The company discloses a general overview of the source of its seafood products and marine feed ingredients in its operations.
- The company discloses an overview, but not for all its products, including information about species and geographic location.
- The company discloses an overview, but not for all its products, including information about species and geographical information, and management status of each of its sources.
- The company publicly discloses a full overview of the source of all its products, including information about geographic location, species and management status.

**Sources:** Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions (CASS) (2019), Future of Fish (2016), GDST (2020), ISSF (2019), Oceana, UNEP (2018), Ocean Disclosure Project (ODP) (2020), SeaBOS (2020), UNGC (2019), WWF (2015).

## D. Social responsibility

### Core Social Indicators

### Integration of core social indicators into the benchmark

WBA's [social transformation](#) focuses on incentivising companies to meet societal expectations of responsible business conduct that leaves no one behind. By respecting human rights, providing decent work and acting ethically, companies can support the SDGs, address inequalities and contribute to a sustainable future for all. A key part of this is embedding the 'leave no one behind' principle in the system transformation methodologies.

To do so, WBA benchmarks integrate a common set of core social indicators into all WBA system transformation methodologies to assess whether companies are demonstrating a sufficient commitment to responsible conduct. These indicators are used to assess companies, regardless of the





sector in which they operate, based on publicly available information, to drive transparency about responsible business conduct. The core social indicators are supplemented by industry-specific social indicators that are relevant to the seafood sector.

## Respect human rights

### D1. Commitment to respect human rights

**Indicator:** The company publicly commits to respecting all internationally recognised human rights across its activities.

### D2. Commitment to respect the human rights of workers

**Indicator:** The company publicly commits to respecting the principles concerning fundamental rights at work in the eight ILO core conventions as set out in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. It also has a publicly available statement of policy committing it to respect the human rights of workers in its business relationships.

### D3. Identifying human rights risks and impacts

**Indicator:** The company proactively identifies its human rights risks and impacts.

### D4. Assessing human rights risks and impacts

**Indicator:** Having identified its human rights risks and impacts, the company assesses them and then prioritises its salient human rights risks and impacts.

### D5. Integrating and acting on human rights risks and impacts

**Indicator:** The company integrates the findings of its assessments of human rights risks and impacts into relevant internal functions and processes by taking appropriate actions to prevent, mitigate or remediate its salient human rights issues.

### D6. Engaging with affected and potentially affected stakeholders

**Indicator:** As part of identifying and assessing its human rights risks and impacts, the company identifies and engages with stakeholders whose human rights have been or may be affected by its activities.

### D7. Grievance mechanisms for workers

**Indicator:** The company has one or more channel(s)/mechanism(s) (its own, third party or shared) through which workers can raise complaints or concerns, including in relation to human rights issues.

### D8. Grievance mechanisms for external individuals and communities

**Indicator:** The company has one or more channel(s)/mechanism(s) (its own, third party or shared) through which individuals and communities who may be adversely impacted by the Company can raise complaints or concerns, including in relation to human rights issues.

## Provide and promote decent work

### D9 Health and safety fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company publicly commits to respecting the health and safety of workers and discloses relevant data. It also places health and safety expectations on and monitors the performance of its business relationships.



#### D10. Living wage fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company is committed to paying its workers a living wage and supports the payment of a living wage by its business relationships.

#### D11. Working hours fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company does not require workers to work more than the regular and overtime hours and places equivalent expectations on its business relationships.

#### D12. Collective bargaining fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company discloses information about collective bargaining agreements covering its workforce and its approach to supporting the practices of its business relationships in relation to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

#### D13. Workforce diversity disclosure fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company discloses the percentage of employees for each employee category by at least four indicators of diversity.

#### D14. Gender equality and women's empowerment fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company publicly commits to gender equality and women's empowerment and discloses quantitative information on gender equality and women's empowerment.

### Act ethically

#### D15. Personal data protection fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company publicly commits to protecting personal data and has a global approach to data privacy.

#### D16. Responsible tax fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company has a public global tax approach and discloses its corporate income tax payments on a country-by-country basis.

#### D17. Anti-bribery and anti-corruption fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company publicly prohibits bribery and corruption and takes steps to identify and address bribery and corruption risks and incidents.

#### D18. Responsible lobbying and political engagement fundamentals

**Indicator:** The company has an approach to lobbying and political engagement and has related controls in place.

### Seafood-specific social responsibility indicators

#### D19. Child labour

**Indicator:** The company eliminates and prevents child labour<sup>6</sup> in its own operations and supply chain.

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<sup>6</sup> Child labour' in this indicator is defined as a situation in which a child is too young to work or is engaged in work that is hazardous or otherwise unacceptable or unpermitted for people under 18. This is different from decent work by young workers between 15 and 18 that is permitted, which is legal youth employment. A child is anyone under the age of 18, as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. ILO Convention C138 – Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (1973) specifies that a child aged under 18 can work if it is above the

**Rationale:** Worldwide, 70% of child labour is found in the agriculture sector – one of the most dangerous in terms of work-related fatalities and disease ([ILO, 2017](#)). The principle behind the effective abolition of child labour is to stop all work by children that jeopardises their education and development ([ILO, 1973](#)). Child labour also occurs in the seafood industry, mostly in informal and small-scale fishing, aquaculture or processing activities. Fishing activities, in particular, are considered hazardous work, where children can be exposed to extreme conditions and risks. The indicator builds upon indicator D2 (SDG targets 8.7 and 8.8).

#### Elements:

##### Own operations

- a. The company provides evidence that it verifies the age of workers recruited in its own operations to ensure that they are not engaged in child labour.
- b. If a case of child labour is found in its operations, the company describes how it develops, participates in or contributes to remediation programmes for transition from employment to education, enabling children to attend and remain in education or describes how it improves working conditions for young workers.

##### Supply chain

- c. In its contractual arrangements with suppliers or supplier code of conduct, the company includes child labour requirements, including a prohibition on using child labour and verifying the age of workers recruited.
- d. The company describes how it works with its supply chain to eliminate child labour and to improve working conditions for young workers where relevant.
- e. The company provides an analysis of trends demonstrating progress in relation to eliminating child labour from its supply chain.

**Sources:** AFi ([n.d.](#)), ASC ([2020](#)), Conservation International ([2019](#)), FAO ([2018](#)), GAA ([2020](#)), GRI ([2018](#)), GSSI and CGF ([2020](#)), KnowTheChain ([2020](#)), MarinTrust ([2017](#)), Seafood Task Force ([2018](#)), Shift Project Ltd and Mazars LLP ([2015](#)), UNGP ([n.d.](#)), WBA ([2021a](#)), WBA ([2021d](#)), World Bank ([n.d.](#)).

#### Key changes and rationale

Elements regarding the company's own operations and supply chain have been divided to allow for a separate assessment.

While a monitoring element has been removed, a requirement on age verification processes for the company's own operations has been added in element a).

In line with the [CHRB methodology](#), element e) now focusses on the supply chain as this is where cases of child labour more frequently occur. Last year's research also demonstrated that companies are more likely to report these numbers for their supply chain.

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age for finishing compulsory schooling and is not younger than 15 (or 14 in specific circumstances in developing countries) and as long as the work is not 'hazardous'. This indicator assesses the prevention of child labour; safe working conditions for young workers under 18 are assessed in indicator D22. Health and safety of vulnerable groups.



## D20. Forced labour

**Indicator:** The company eliminates and prevents forced labour in its own operations and supply chain.

**Rationale:** The majority of employment created by the seafood industry requires low or unskilled labour. The use of forced labour (often migrant workers) in supply chains is known to occur regularly and is often linked to IUU, particularly in South-east Asia ([FishWise, 2018](#), [ILO, 2022](#)). While recent reports and media coverage have mainly focused on Thailand, forced labour is a problem throughout the world ([Seafish, 2015](#)). Specific international guidelines exist (notably, ILO Convention 188 – Work in Fishing Convention, 2007) but are not ratified and poorly implemented and enforced. Therefore, elimination of forced labour is one of the key challenges that the private sector can help address by putting in place risk assessments and grievance mechanisms (SDG targets 8.7 and 8.8).

### Elements:

#### Own operations

- a. The company indicates that job seekers and workers do not pay any recruitment fees or related costs to secure a job (Employer Pays Principle), and that it does not retain workers' personal documents or restrict workers' freedom of movement.

#### Supply chain

- b. The company requires its suppliers to not use forced labour by codifying it in a supplier code of conduct, or similar document.
- c. In its contractual arrangements or with suppliers or supplier code of conduct, the company prohibits suppliers and any third-party recruitment intermediaries from imposing financial burdens on job seekers and workers by collecting recruitment fees or related costs, and from retaining workers' personal documents or restricting workers' freedom of movement.
- d. The company discloses how it works with its supply chain to eliminate at least one of the following: imposing recruitment fees, retaining personal documents or restricting workers' freedom of movement.
- e. The company provides an analysis of trends demonstrating progress in relation to eliminating forced labour in its supply chain.

**Sources:** ASC ([2020](#)), Conservation International ([2019](#)), Fair Trade USA ([2018](#)), FAO ([2016](#)), GAA ([2020](#)), GRI ([2016](#)), GSSI and CGF ([2020](#)), ILO ([1930](#)), ILO ([2007](#)), KnowTheChain ([2020](#)), MarinTrust ([2017](#)), Seafood Task Force ([2018](#)), Shift Project Ltd and Mazars LLP ([2015](#)), UNGC ([n.d.](#)), UNGP ([n.d.](#)), WBA ([2021a](#)), WBA ([2021d](#)), World Bank ([n.d.](#)).

### Key changes and rationale

Elements regarding the company's own operations and supply chain have been divided to allow for a separate assessment.

Whereas the indicator previously focused on the retention of personal documents and restriction of workers' freedom, requirements regarding financial burdens on workers have been added to align



with ILO recommendations. Element d) further requires companies to demonstrate how they work with suppliers on one or more of these topics.

As with indicator D19. Child labour, element e) now focusses on the supply chain as this is where cases of forced labour more frequently occur. Last year's research also demonstrated that companies are more likely to report these numbers for their supply chain.

## D21. Living wage

**Indicator:** The company pays all its workers a living wage<sup>7</sup> and requires its suppliers to do the same.

**Rationale:** The majority of employment created by the seafood industry requires low or unskilled labour. Workers in both primary and secondary production are therefore among the most vulnerable, often lacking sustainable livelihoods and disproportionately exposed to income insecurity and poor working conditions because of a lack of social protections. Many fishers, fish farmers and workers in processing operations are identified as working poor ([FAO, 2016](#)). This indicator builds upon indicator D10 (SDG target 8.5).

### Elements:

- a. The company discloses a target for paying a living wage across its direct suppliers.
- b. The company describes how it determines a living wage for the regions where it sources.
- c. The company discloses the percentage of workers across its own operations or direct suppliers that are paid a living wage.
- d. The company indicates that it has achieved paying a living wage for all its workers across its own operations.
- e. The company indicates that it has achieved paying a living wage across its direct suppliers.

**Sources:** ETI ([n.d.](#)), OECD and FAO ([2021](#)), FAO ([2014](#)), Future-Fit Foundation ([n.d.](#)), IDH ([n.d.](#)), RSPO ([2020](#)), SPOTT ([2021](#)), WBA ([2021a](#)), WBA ([2021d](#)).

### Key changes and rationale

Element c) has been added to capture corporate disclosure on the share of workers in a company's operations and/or supply chain that are paid a living wage.

## D22. Health and safety of vulnerable groups

**Indicator:** The company identifies and addresses health and safety risks to vulnerable groups in its operations and/or supply chain.

**Rationale:** The agriculture sector is one of the most dangerous in terms of rates of work-related fatalities, non-fatal accidents and occupational diseases, the burden of which falls disproportionately on workers in developing countries and vulnerable groups. Almost 60% of the 1.3 billion agricultural workers are in developing countries (ILO, 2000), and almost half are women. In addition, the sector is characterised by casual or seasonal employment and a high involvement of migrant and underaged

<sup>7</sup> There are numerous definitions of a living wage, but the core concept is to provide a decent standard of living for workers and their family. A living wage is sufficient to cover food, water, clothing, transport, education, health care and other essential needs for workers and their family, based on a regular work week not including overtime hours.

workers, often in hazardous conditions. About 59% of all children aged 5–17 who are engaged in hazardous work are in the agriculture sector (FAO, 2019). (SDGs 3, 6, 8 and 16)

**Elements:**

- a. The company recognises the specific health and safety risks to vulnerable groups.
- b. The company identifies vulnerable groups in relation to health and safety.
- c. The company assesses the health and safety risks to vulnerable groups.
- d. The company provides evidence of support activities that improve the health and safety of vulnerable groups.

**Sources:** ETI ([n.d.](#)), FAIRR ([2021](#)), FAO ([2014](#)), FSC ([2015](#)), Future-Fit Foundation ([n.d.](#)), GRI ([2018](#)), ILO ([2001](#)), RSB ([2017](#)), SASB ([n.d.](#)), SPOTT ([2021](#)), WBA ([2021a](#)), WBA ([2021d](#)).

### **D23. Farmers and fisher livelihoods**

**Indicator:** The company improves the livelihoods of farmers and fishers through activities aimed at increasing income and resilience.

**Rationale:** Of all those engaged in fishing and fish farming, most are in developing countries, and the majority are small-scale, artisanal fishers and aquaculture workers. It is estimated that about 90% of all people directly dependent on capture fisheries work in the small-scale fisheries sector. Of this percentage, half are women. As such, small-scale fisheries serve as an economic and social engine, supporting food and nutrition security, employment and other multipliers to local economies while underpinning the livelihoods of coastal communities. The ability of farmers and fishers to earn a living income is critical to ensure their viability and economic success ([Oxfam, 2018](#)) (SDG targets 2.3, 2.A, 8.2 and 14.A).

**Elements:**

- a. The company demonstrates that it has identified living income benchmarks for some commodities and/or regions.
- b. The company discloses how it assesses living income gaps.
- c. The company demonstrates activities to improve farmer resilience through its procurement practices and supply chain relationships for some commodities and/or regions.
- d. The company demonstrates that it adopts pricing practices that contribute to a living income for some commodities and/or regions.
- e. Company demonstrates that it supports increasing farmers and fishers' bargaining power.
- f. The company reports on the impact of some of its activities to improve income.

**Sources:** AFI ([n.d.](#)), IDH The Sustainable Trade Initiative ([n.d.](#)), Impact Institute ([2020](#)), Oxfam ([2018](#)), Oxfam ([2021](#)), WBA ([2019b](#)), WBCSD ([2019](#)), Living Income Community of Practice ([n.d.](#)).

#### **Key changes and rationale**





The indicator has been amended to have a stronger focus on livelihoods and living income in particular. Making the expectations of the indicator more concrete supports companies in the indispensable journey to improve farmer and fisher livelihoods.

Elements a) and b) focus on the identification and assessment of living income gaps, while elements c), d) and e) focus on specific interventions companies can undertake to support an increased, more stable and equitable income.

#### **Question for public consultation**

What considerations should we take into account as we apply this indicator to the seafood sector?

### **D24. Working and living conditions on board fishing vessels**

**Indicator:** The company demonstrates that it has measures in place to ensure decent working and living conditions on board fishing vessels within its own operations and/or supply chain.

**Rationale:** Working on fishing vessels is labour intensive and considered one of the world's most dangerous occupations, responsible for more than 24,000 casualties per year ([FAO, 2016](#)). Fishing companies and buyers can help improve working and living conditions on board fishing vessels by supporting the development and implementation of social responsibility standards that are in line with relevant ILO conventions in their own operations and/or on vessels in their supply chains (SDG targets 8.5, 8.7 and 8.8).

#### **Elements:**

- a. The company commits, through a policy or code of conduct, to ensure decent working and living conditions on board fishing vessels.
- b. The company demonstrates that it monitors for compliance and discloses monitoring results.
- c. Based on the monitoring results, the company demonstrates how improvements are implemented.
- d. The company provides evidence that improvements have been implemented across 100% of its operations and discloses progress reporting.

**Sources:** amfori BSCI ([2017](#)), Conservation International ([2019](#)), Environmental Defense Fund, Rare/Meloy Fund, Encourage Capital ([2018](#)), Ethical Trading Initiative ([2016](#)), FAO ([2016](#)), FisheryProgress.org ([2020](#)), Global Seafood Assurances ([2020](#)), GSSI and SSCI consultation document ([2020](#)), ILO ([2007](#)), ISSF ([2020](#)), KnowTheChain ([2020](#)), Seafood Task Force ([2018](#)), UNGC ([2019](#)).

### **D25. Indigenous peoples' rights**

**Indicator:** The company respects indigenous peoples' rights and obtains affected Indigenous Peoples' free, prior and informed consent regarding whether and how to carry out projects.

**Rationale:** Indigenous peoples have equal rights to economic resources defined by law. Industrial seafood operations need to recognise and respect the indigenous peoples' rights when sharing or targeting the same resources. Where there is joint use of fisheries and aquatic resources by industry and indigenous peoples, it is important for companies to respect local access and allocations or agreements with free, prior and informed consent (SDG targets 1.4, 2.1 and 14.B).



**Elements:**

- a. The company has a commitment to respect Indigenous Peoples' rights or references the relevant part(s) of ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples or the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- b. The company discloses its processes to identify and recognise the rights of Indigenous Peoples when activities in its own operations may impact their rights, and describes how it obtains Indigenous Peoples' free, prior and informed consent regarding whether and how to carry out projects.
- c. The company requires its business relationships to identify and recognise affected Indigenous Peoples and to obtain their free, prior and informed consent regarding whether and how to carry out projects.
- d. The company describes how it works with its business relationships to improve their practices in respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**Sources:** CCSI (2020), FAO (2014), GRI 411 (2021), IFC (2012d), UNGP (2021).

**Key changes and rationale**

The indicator previously assessed whether companies are also respecting the rights of customary resource users. When it comes to the rights of local users, there is reference to the rights of local communities or the rights of indigenous peoples, and customary rights are not often referred to, likely due to a lack of universal definition. Therefore, this indicator now focuses on indigenous peoples' rights.

**D26. Engagement with and support for local communities**

**Indicator:** The company has a process for engaging with local communities impacted by its own operations and supply chain and demonstrates activities that address the issues raised as a result of that engagement.

**Rationale:** Seafood companies can have significant impacts – both positive and negative – on local communities through their own operations and supply chains. Companies interact with local communities through their environmental impacts such as air, land or water pollution, economic impacts through the provision of decent employment and training opportunities, and cultural impacts by respecting local customs and participating in local cultural activities. Negative impacts on local communities should be addressed according to a robust engagement process with the affected communities, including grievance and remediation mechanisms, and followed by concrete actions to address those impacts (SDG targets 2.3 and 2.A).

**Elements:**

- a. The company demonstrates examples of engagement with communities in its own operations and supply chains.
- b. The company demonstrates that it has implemented activities to support local communities, and tracks progress of the results and impacts of these activities.
- c. The company discloses its processes to identify and engage with local communities when activities in its own operations and supply chain may impact local communities.



- d. The company discloses the outcomes of its engagement with local communities, and describes what activities it has taken when local communities are impacted by company activities.

**Sources:** ASC (2020), Conservation International (2019), Environmental Defense Fund, Rare/Meloy Fund, Encourage Capital (2018), FAO (1995), GAA (2020), GRI 413 (2016), MarinTrust (2017), UNGC (2019).

## **D27. Gender commitment in the supply chain**

**Indicator:** The company drives gender equality and women's empowerment in its supply chain.

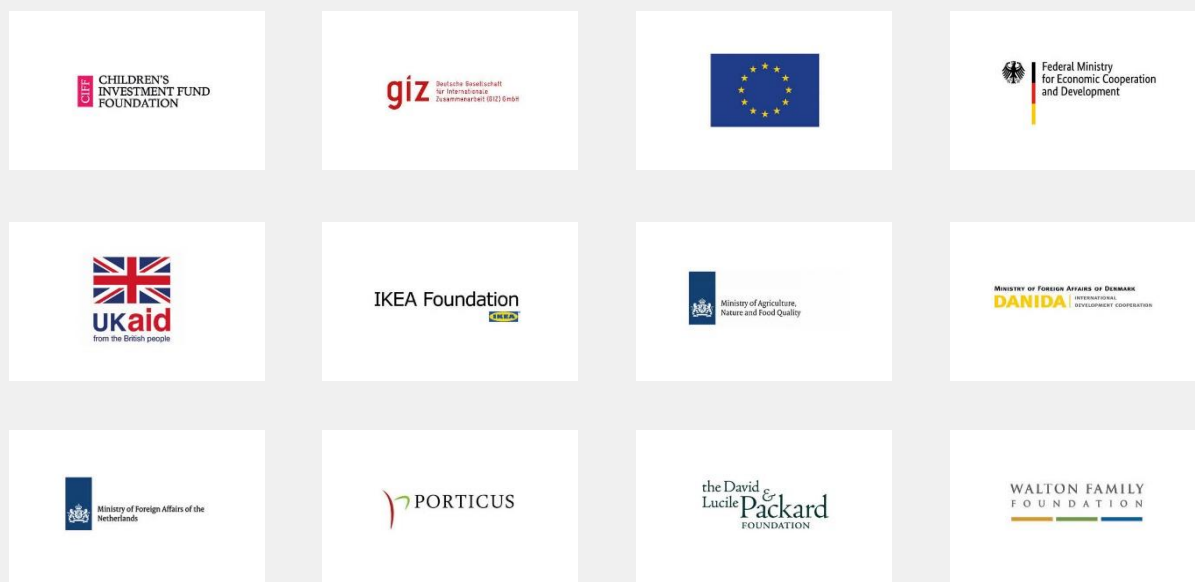
**Rationale:** It is estimated that women make up 50% of the global fishing and aquaculture workforce (primary production and post-harvest operations) (FAO, 2020). However, women commonly suffer from discrimination, abusive treatment, violence, sexual harassment, and poor and unsafe working conditions. Gender equality and women's empowerment should therefore be a key consideration for companies in the seafood industry. Core social indicator 14 (gender equality and women's empowerment fundamentals) requires companies to address this issue in their own operations. Therefore, this indicator focuses on supply chain performance by expecting companies to require their suppliers to work towards gender equality and women's empowerment and consider the needs of their women workers (SDG targets 5.1, 5.5 and 8.5).

### **Elements:**

- a. The company has a commitment to drive gender equality and women's empowerment within its supply chain.
- b. The company requires its suppliers to undertake a gender needs assessment.
- c. The company has targets on gender equality and women's empowerment in its supply chain.
- d. The company discloses performance data against the targets it has on gender equality and women's empowerment in its supply chain.

**Sources:** A Conservation International (2019), FAO (2013), FAO & Globefish (2015), GRI 204 (2016), GRI 414 (2016), Women's Empowerment Principles (n.d.), WBA (2020).





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