



# Methodology for the 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index

December 2022

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# Foreword

This is the methodology for the **2023 Seafood Stewardship Index**, the third time the World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA) will assess the performance of 30 of the largest and most influential seafood companies globally. In 2021, the second Seafood Stewardship Index was launched at the Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Summit. The 2023 iteration of the benchmark will be published in the autumn of 2023 and show the progress made by the private sector on key topics related to achieving a sustainable seafood industry.

WBA is committed to continuing to work with our Allies and others across the corporate accountability and transparency ecosystem to ensure private sector practices improve over time in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (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](#), the [EU's sustainability reporting standards](#)) but is not yet aligned with the needs of the global sustainable development agenda. Our aspiration is that WBA's benchmark methodologies will 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 coherence and complementarity with the wider corporate reporting ecosystem, including other benchmarks and reporting frameworks – within WBA and beyond.

This document reflects **relevant updates to the methodology** by incorporating both internal learnings and external feedback from companies and other stakeholders following the publication of the second benchmark. Advice was sought from the Expert Review Committee, a group of independent multi-stakeholder experts, through review sessions with specialists and companies and a public consultation process. All updates have been made carefully to **ensure maximum comparability** with previous benchmark results. Consequently, changes have been kept to a minimum.

This document is a result of the learning and review process. It highlights changes at an indicator level and provides an overview of the methodology that will be the basis for the third iteration of the benchmark in 2023. It further outlines changes to the benchmark development process and a timeline.



**Helen Packer**  
Lead  
Seafood Stewardship Index



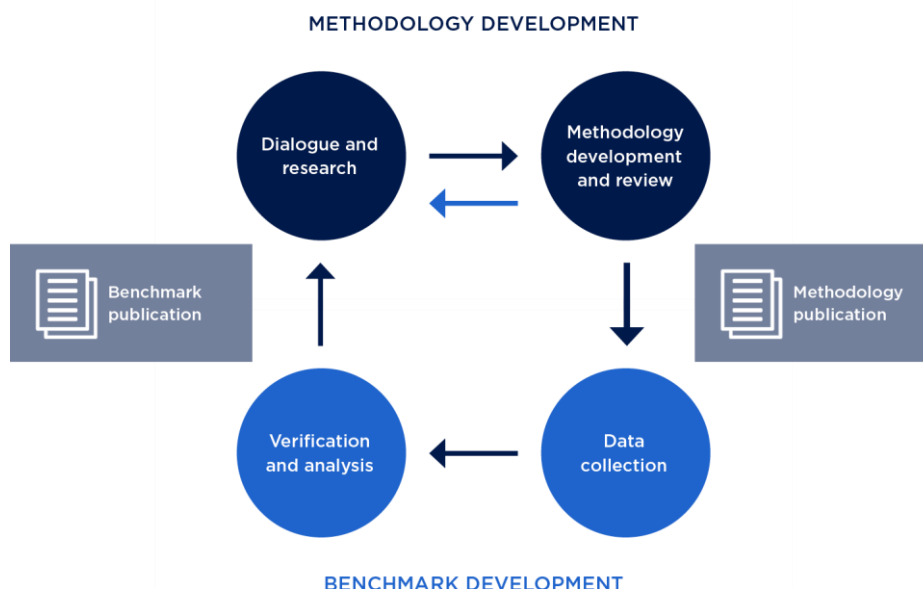
**Rik Beukers**  
Research Lead  
Seafood Stewardship Index



# Seafood Stewardship Index – the benchmark cycle

WBA benchmarks are published according to a benchmarking cycle, which is made up of six steps (Figure 1). Following the publication of each benchmark, we engage in dialogue and research before reviewing our methodology. This dialogue and research step aims to capture learnings and elicit feedback and new insights. It primarily consists of one-on-one discussions with companies and stakeholders as well as a public consultation phase. The next step consists of a methodology review while ensuring a meaningful comparison between iterations of the benchmark.

FIGURE 1: WBA'S METHODOLOGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



## Public consultation process and feedback

The public consultation took place between 1-30 September 2022. We received feedback from three stakeholders: Global Dialogue for Seafood Traceability (GDST), the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC). The feedback was compiled and carefully considered to refine the methodology. In addition, feedback from companies on the methodology and benchmarking process, as well as leading practices from which companies can learn, were taken into account. Table 1 provides an overview of the main input and how it was incorporated. Indicator-specific refinements are outlined below the respective indicators further down in the indicator section of this document. In general, these refinements have no impact on indicator rationale, ensuring comparability between the 2021 Sustainable Seafood Index (SSI) and the 2023 iteration.



TABLE 1: OVERVIEW OF KEY FEEDBACK RECEIVED

Indicator and feedback	Response
<p><b>Leading practices</b> To be able to learn and improve performance, companies want to see what good performance looks like.</p>	<p>Our <a href="#">Insights Report</a>, published on 25 April 2022, shines a light on leading practices across the benchmark’s four measurement areas. It provides a more practical understanding of what ‘good’ performance looks like, across topics as well as sectors and companies. The respective leading practice webpages will be updated and supplemented moving forward.</p>
<p><b>Indicator scoring weights should match company impacts</b> Indicator scoring weights should be different depending on the impacts of the company assessed.</p>	<p>To date, companies have not comprehensively disclosed their various ecosystem impacts, including the scale and proportion of those impacts. Further, for companies with no disclosure, there is no insight into what the key impacts are. Therefore, this approach could not be feasibly applied across all companies in the benchmark.</p>
<p><b>Certification schemes vs. improvement projects</b> It should be clear how the SSI defines sustainable seafood and considers certified products/operations versus those that are from/involved in an improvement project.</p>	<p>The SSI considers that operations and products certified against certification schemes that have been benchmarked by the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) and/or are ISEAL Code Compliant have achieved a higher level of sustainability than those currently involved in an improvement project. This differentiation is reflected in the scoring approach, including the scoring guidelines of various indicators in the ecosystems measurement area. For example, under indicator B1, improvement projects are recognized (under element c.) as contributing to progress towards sustainable seafood. However, (under element d.) improvement projects are not considered as evidence for having achieved sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.</p>
<p><b>B8 (marine ingredients in aquaculture feed)</b> The SSI should clarify what information it wishes to see disclosed regarding the use of marine and alternative ingredients and generally have more precise requirements on this topic.</p>	<p>This indicator has been revised substantially. Companies are required to disclose the forage fish dependency ratio (FFDR) across all their operations, demonstrate a decrease in the FFDR and an increase in the use of trimmings. Companies will also be assessed on targets and progress reporting regarding the use of alternative feed ingredients.</p>
<p><b>C1 and C2 (traceability)</b> These indicators should evolve to reflect best practices, both in terms of commitments and implementation of the GDST standard.</p>	<p>The traceability indicators have evolved to reflect best practices. In terms of a commitment to traceability, we recognise commitments to certification schemes that have associated chain-of-custody requirements. Companies that have set a time-bound target to adopt and implement the GDST standard are also scored higher. Further, for the implementation of traceability, companies with a high level (at least 80%) of seafood certified against schemes with associated chain-of-custody requirements are rewarded, as are those that can demonstrate the implementation of the GDST standard in at least part of their supply chains.</p>
<p><b>A4 (lobbying and advocacy)</b></p>	<p>From the 2021 benchmark, we learned that it is challenging for companies to measure and disclose the <i>impacts</i> of policy advocacy efforts. As a result, this indicator has been refined and focuses on a company’s <i>disclosure</i> of all its advocacy and lobbying activities,</p>



Results and impacts of policy advocacy activities are challenging to assess.	including alignment with nature-positive policies and plans to address any misalignment.
<b>D21 (living wage)</b> The concept of a living wage does not make sense in fisheries that are highly seasonal and employ migrant workers.	We recognise that calculating a living wage in industries that have irregular working hours and employ migrant/seasonal/contracted workers is a huge challenge. However, it is not impossible. If a company demonstrates efforts to understand and determine a living wage initially in collaboration with stakeholders, this is relevant for indicator D10 (living wage fundamentals). For example, the Global Living Wage coalition has developed <a href="#">a living wage benchmark for the seafood processing sector in Vietnam</a> .
<b>D25 (Indigenous Peoples' rights)</b> Respecting the rights of customary resource users is difficult to assess.	This indicator previously assessed whether companies respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and customary resource users. Given that there is no clear definition of customary rights this indicator now only focuses on Indigenous Peoples' rights.

## Expert Review Committee

The development of the methodology for the Seafood Stewardship Index is overseen by an independent multi-stakeholder Expert Review Committee (ERC) (**Error! Reference source not found.**). After the second iteration of the benchmark, Clarus Chu (WWF), Oluyemisi Oloruntuji (MSC) and Duncan Leadbitter (Fish Matter) stepped down and were replaced by three new members, namely Herman Wisse (GSSI), Tom Pickerell (GTA) and Lucy Holmes (WWF). The ERC reviewed the methodology and proposed revisions during sessions in July and August 2022.

TABLE 2: MEMBERS OF THE EXPERT REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD INDEX

Name	Affiliation
Bertrand Charron	Science & Sustainability Communications Manager, Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)
Lucy Holmes	Senior Programme Manager, Seafood Finance, World Wildlife Fund US
Huw Thomas	Director, 3 Pillars Seafood
Jennifer Dianto Kemmerly	Vice President, Global Ocean Initiatives, Monterey Bay Aquarium
John Garner	Retired seafood representative
Robert Blasiak	Researcher, Stockholm Resilience Centre
Tania Woodcock	Project Manager, Ocean Disclosure Project, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership
Sara Golden	Fair Value Chains Advisor, Oxfam
Tom Pickerell	Executive Director, Global Tuna Alliance
Herman Wisse	Executive Director, Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative



# Scope of the benchmark

## Industry scope

The Seafood Stewardship Index focuses on the 30 largest companies that produce seafood or aquaculture feed. Retailers are not in scope of this benchmark. However, given retailers' important position in the seafood value chain and the crucial role they play in making the seafood industry more sustainable, several major retailers are in scope of WBA's [Food and Agriculture Benchmark](#), where they are assessed, among other things, on their progress towards sourcing more sustainable seafood.

## Company scope

The 30 companies in scope of the Seafood Stewardship Index were selected using [five criteria based on the characteristics of keystone actors that WBA used to identify the SDG2000](#). Keystone actors are the largest companies in a given industry that have a disproportionate effect on the structure and function of the system in which they operate.

To allow for comparison and to assess progress, the same 30 companies evaluated in 2021 will be included in the third benchmark. Moreover, as seen in other benchmarks, repeated involvement in a benchmark drives progress.

Based on the inclusion criteria and considering recent mergers and acquisitions, the 30 companies listed in Table 3 will be assessed in the 2023 benchmark.

TABLE 3: COMPANIES IN SCOPE OF THE 2023 SEAFOOD STEWARDSHIP INDEX

	Company	Headquarters	In scope of the Food and Agriculture Benchmark	In scope of the Nature Benchmark
1	Maruha Nichiro	Japan	X	X
2	Nissui Corporation	Japan	X	X
3	Dongwon Enterprise	South Korea	X	X
4	Mowi	Norway	X	X
5	Thai Union Group	Thailand	X	X
6	Mitsubishi Corporation	Japan	X	X
7	Austevoll Seafood	Norway	X	X
8	OUG Holdings	Japan	X	X
9	Nutreco (Skretting)	Netherlands	X	X
10	FCF Co Ltd	Taiwan	X	X
11	Trident Seafoods	United States	X	X
12	Kyokuyo	Japan	X	X
13	Red Chamber Group	United States	X	X



14	Cargill (Aqua Nutrition)	United States	X	X
15	Marubeni	Japan	X	X
16	Cooke Aquaculture and Cooke Seafood USA	Canada	X	X
17	BioMar	Denmark	X	X
18	Parlevliet and Van der Plas	Netherlands	X	X
19	Bolton Group	Italy	X	X
20	Pacific Seafood Group	United States	X	X
21	SalMar	Norway		
22	Charoen Pokphand Foods	Thailand	X	X
23	Nueva Pescanova	Spain	X	X
24	Bright Food Group	China	X	X
25	Nomad Foods	United Kingdom	X	X
26	High Liner Foods	Canada		
27	Labeyrie Fine Foods	France		
28	Royal Greenland	Greenland		
29	Wales Group / Sea Value & Sea Wealth	Thailand		
30	Yokohama Reito (Yokorei)	Japan		

Of the 30 companies in the Seafood Stewardship Index, 24 are also in scope of the SDG2000. The SDG2000 list identifies the 2,000 most influential companies within WBA's seven systems transformations. These 24 companies are also in scope of WBA's Food and Agriculture Benchmark and Nature Benchmark. The food and agriculture system, including the seafood industry, relies heavily on ecosystems, while at the same being 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). The Nature Benchmark will examine how the impacts of business contribute to stable and resilient ecosystems that enable humanity and nature to co-exist within planetary boundaries on biodiversity, climate, land, oceans and water.





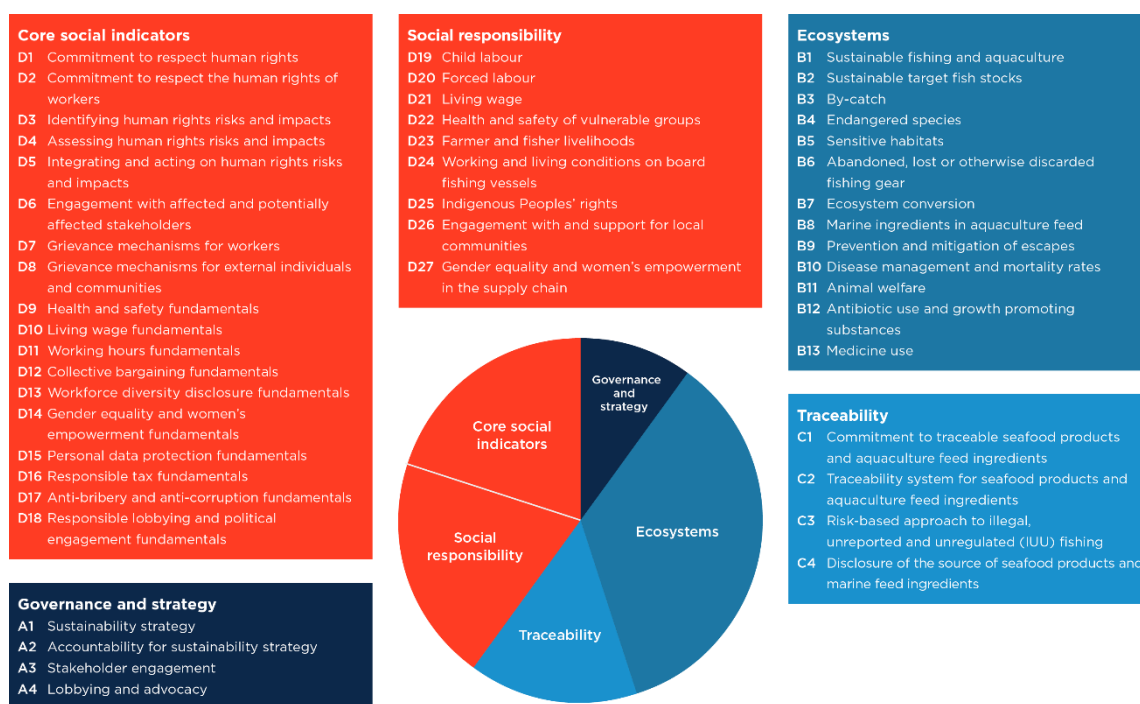
# Outline of the methodology for the 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index

## Methodology overview

The methodology for the Seafood Stewardship Index translates the SDGs as well as sector-specific principles, guidelines and standards into 48 indicators across four measurement areas. These 48 indicators include 18 core social indicators, against which all SDG2000 companies are assessed. They are related to the social responsibility indicators and as such form a single measurement area. See the ‘[Approach to scoring](#)’ section for more on the core social 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 2.

FIGURE 2: 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 part 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 this measurement area that are not applicable to some of the companies in scope.

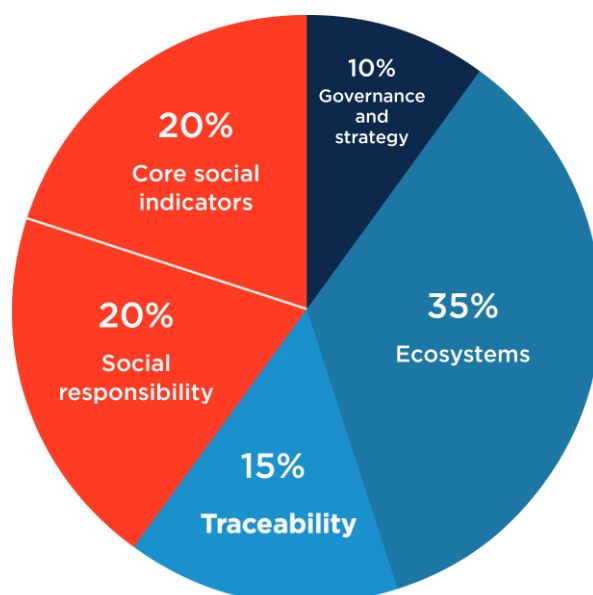


For example, companies that do not farm seafood will not be assessed on how they prevent fish escapes in their operations (indicator B9). Where indicators are deemed not applicable, the weight is redistributed evenly among the remaining indicators in the respective measurement area.

### Approach to weighting

The benchmark uses a weighted approach to calculate companies' scores. This approach builds on the previous Seafood Stewardship Index methodologies and other WBA benchmarks. Weighting is distributed across the different measurement areas to ensure that the measurement framework is balanced and reflects stakeholder priorities. To allow for comparability between the 2023 and 2021 iterations of the benchmark, the same weightings for each measurement area will be applied (Figure 3). This means that the ecosystems measurement area still carries the greatest weight (35%). 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 3: WEIGHTING PER MEASUREMENT AREA (unchanged since 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, whereby 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, the 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 were 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

Companies will be assessed 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 companies a questionnaire. Instead, we will share with companies a draft assessment of their performance, to which they are invited to respond and provide additional information. This additional information 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. For companies that are also in scope of the Food and Agriculture Benchmark and the Nature Benchmark, the research processes for all three benchmarks will be aligned, to ensure a meaningful analysis and smooth engagement with the companies.

## Presentation of results

Companies are ranked overall as well as by measurement area. Each company's performance is summarised in a scorecard, which includes:

- a summary description and performance overview of the company
- the rank and total score in the benchmark
- rank by measurement area



- leading practices in each measurement area
- risks and opportunities across each measurement area
- comparison of performance with the second iteration.

## Timeline

### 2019

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#### October

##### **Launch of the 2019 Seafood Stewardship Index**

*First iteration of the benchmark, presenting key findings on main trends and notable conclusions, tied to industry rankings and company scorecards.*

### 2021

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#### February

##### **Publication of the Methodology for the 2021 Seafood Stewardship Index**

*Outline of the revised indicators and scoring and weighting approaches. Stakeholders, including companies, provide feedback through online webinars and in written form.*

#### October

##### **Launch of the 2021 Seafood Stewardship Index**

*Second iteration of the benchmark, presenting key findings on main trends, leading approaches and notable conclusions, tied to industry rankings and company scorecards.*

### 2022

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#### April

##### **Publication of the 2021 Seafood Stewardship Index Insights Report**

*Detailed analysis of the benchmark results.*

#### September

##### **Public consultation for the Draft Methodology for the 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index.**

*Outline of the revised indicators and scoring and weighting approaches. Stakeholders, including companies, provide feedback through online webinars and in written form.*

#### December

##### **Publication of the Methodology for the 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index.**

*Final overview of indicators, approach to scoring and weighting and timeline for the 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index.*

### 2023

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#### February-May

##### **Data collection for the 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index**

*Data is collected for all benchmark indicators.*



**April-September**

**Data assessment and company engagement for the 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index.**

*Collected data is assessed against all indicators of the methodology. Based on this, companies are given the opportunity to review a draft assessment at the indicator-level.*

**October-November**

**Launch of the 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index**

*The third iteration presents progress made by industry and companies, key findings on main trends and leading approaches, tied to industry segment rankings and company scorecards.*



# Indicators for the 2023 Seafood Stewardship Index

The following sections describe each indicator within the four 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 changes, we have added a section outlining these 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 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).

**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 its most significant impacts and sustainability topics in relation to both its own operations and its value chain.
- c. The company has group-wide targets on key seafood sustainability topics for the most material parts of its value chain.
- d. The company reports consistently on progress against all its targets.



**Sources:** Forum for the Future and WBSCD (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 company's accountability in relation to its contribution to sustainable development objectives and targets. Ensuring capability within decision-making bodies further indicates a company's commitment to transition 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.

**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.

<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: 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 (GRI, 2021).



Companies are expected to engage meaningfully with stakeholders.<sup>3</sup> Engagement processes are 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 an 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 seafood sustainability topics.

**Sources:** GRI 2-29 (2021), 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 it supports, 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 also discloses its action plans to correct any misalignment (SDG targets 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 its seafood sustainability targets.
- c. The company provides evidence of annually applying the framework across all trade associations.

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<sup>3</sup> Meaningful stakeholder engagement is characterised 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.





- d. The company reports any misalignment between the lobbying activities of its trade associations and its seafood sustainability targets.
- 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. This turned out to be complex to assess, 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 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in 2017, about a third of global fish stocks were overfished, while nearly 60% were fully exploited (FAO, 2022). With global fish stocks under increasing pressure, companies need to be transparent about the sustainable management and efficient use of marine resources (SDG targets 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 the percentage of its sustainable fisheries and aquaculture operations and sourcing.
- c. The company has a target for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for 100% of its portfolio and reports progress against this target. In its progress reporting, the company discloses the proportion of its portfolio covered by each certification scheme, improvement project or other sustainability programme.
- d. The company provides evidence that 100% of its portfolio comes from sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

**Sources:** CASS (2021), CEA Consulting (2022), FAIRR (2021), GRI 13 (2022), GSSI (2021), ISEAL (n.a.).

### Certification schemes versus improvement projects

One of the key findings of the 2021 Seafood Stewardship Index showed that, to drive sustainability in the industry, companies use several initiatives around which to develop targets and report progress. Certification schemes and improvement projects are referred to most often. The Seafood Stewardship Index considers that operations and products certified against certification schemes that have been benchmarked by the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative and/or are ISEAL Code Compliant have achieved a higher level of sustainability than those currently involved in an improvement project. This differentiation is reflected in the scoring approach, including the scoring guidelines. For example, under indicator B1, improvement projects are recognized (under element c.) as contributing to progress towards sustainable seafood. However, (under element d.) improvement projects are not considered as evidence for having achieved sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

## 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 chain. 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 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 chain, 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 (2021), MarinTrust (2017), MSC (2022), Seafood Watch (2020), SFP FishSource (2022).

### B3. Bycatch

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

**Rationale:** In addition to catching target species, fishing gear and techniques can also catch non-target species. Between 2010 and 2014, 9.1 million tonnes of fish were discarded each year (FAO, 2019). Bycatch levels do not always have significant impacts, but in some fisheries the percentage of bycatch can significantly affect 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 chain. 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 bycatch 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 chain, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 50% of its portfolio.
- c. 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 bycatch impacts across 100% of its operations and/or supply chain, 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 (2021), MarinTrust (2017), MSC (2022), Seafood Watch (2020), SFP FishSource (2022).



## 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 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 chain, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 50% of its portfolio.
- c. 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 chain, 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 ([2021](#)), IUCN Red List of Endangered Species ([2021](#)), MarinTrust ([2017](#)), MSC ([2022](#)), 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 chain, OR The company reports having achieved certification for at least 50% of its portfolio.
- c. 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 chain, 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 ([2021](#)), MarinTrust ([2017](#)), MSC ([2022](#)), Seafood Watch ([2020](#)), SFP FishSource ([2022](#)).

## 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 (SDG target 14.1).

### Elements:

- a. The company demonstrates a commitment to prevent and reduce ALDFG.
- b. The company implements measures to prevent and reduce ALDFG 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 ALDFG 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 ALDFG across the full scope of its operations and/or supply chain.

**Sources:** FAO ([2009](#)), Global Ghost Gear Initiative ([2020](#)), MSC ([2022](#)), SeaBOS ([2020](#)).

## B7. Ecosystem conversion

**Indicator:** The company demonstrates that it is achieving a deforestation- and conversion<sup>4</sup>-free supply chain for its high-risk commodities.

**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 way 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 deforestation- and conversion-free operations through the sustainable use of soya and palm oil in aquaculture feed production (SDG targets 15.1 and 15.5).

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<sup>4</sup> As defined by the Accountability Framework initiative ([n.d.](#)), 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.



**Elements:**

- a. The company discloses qualitative evidence that it is achieving a deforestation- and conversion-free (DCF) supply chain for its relevant high-risk commodities.<sup>5</sup>
- b. The company discloses the proportion of commodities that are DCF.
- 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 a 100% DCF supply chain for all its relevant high-risk commodities.

**Sources:** AFi (n.d.), ASC Feed Standard (2021), FAO (2021), Forest 500 (2021), GAA (various), GLOBALG.A.P. (2022), GRI 13 (2022), GSI (2020), GSSI (2021), SBTN (2020), SPOTT (2021).

## B8. Marine ingredients in aquaculture feed

**Indicator:** The company demonstrates more efficient use of marine ingredients in aquaculture feed.

**Rationale:** Around 10% of global seafood production is used to produce marine ingredients such as fish oil and fishmeal (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 fishmeal 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 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 reports on the use of marine ingredients by disclosing the forage fish dependency ratio (FFDR) of fishmeal and fish oil used in aquaculture feed production or aquaculture farming across 100% of its operations.
- b. The company provides quantitative evidence of decreasing the FFDR of fishmeal and fish oil used in aquaculture feed production or aquaculture farming across 100% of its operations.
- c. The company provides quantitative evidence of increasing the use of trimmings in aquaculture feed production or aquaculture farming across 100% of its operations.
- d. The company has set a target for the use of alternative feed ingredients and reports progress against its target.

**Sources:** ASC Feed Standard (2021), FAIRR (2022), GAA (various), GLOBALG.A.P. (various), GSI (2020), UNGC (2020).

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<sup>5</sup> Key high-risk commodities in aquaculture: soya and palm oil.



### Key changes and rationale

The elements of this indicator have been revised to assess the progress companies are making on more efficient use of marine ingredients as well as the use of alternative feed ingredients. Companies are required to disclose the FFDR across all their operations, demonstrate a decrease in the FFDR and an increase in the use of trimmings.

## 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 incident if one occurs can minimise these negative environmental impacts (SDG targets 2.5 and 15.8).

### Elements:

- a. The company reports on the species, the number of incident, the location and the number of fish that escaped in 2021 and 2022. The company also discloses its farming operations for which escapes are relevant.
- b. The company did not have major incident in 2021 and 2022.
- c. The company has a policy on incidents that presents a detailed approach to prevent and mitigate incidents.
- d. In the event of an incident, the company presents the measures it took to address the negative impacts of the incident.

**Sources:** ASC ([various](#)), FAIRR ([2022](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GSI ([2020](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), UNGC ([2020](#)).

## 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 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% of its operations.
- c. The company has a target for mortality or survival rates across 100% of its operations and reports progress against its target.
- d. In 2021 and 2022, the company achieved its target.



**Sources:** ASC ([various](#)), FAIRR ([2022](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GSI ([2020](#)), GSSI ([2019](#)), UNGC ([2020](#)).

## B11. Animal welfare

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

**Rationale:** Over the last 20 years, global aquaculture production has doubled. It is estimated that 100 billion fish and 350-400 billion shrimp are farmed for food annually ([Aquatic Life Institute, n.d.](#)). In intensive farming practices, welfare issues arise regarding the slaughter, transport, handling and rearing of fish. Fish farmed under good welfare conditions are less stressed and require less medication or treatment (SDG targets 2.5 and 15.8).

### 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 or targets that address animal welfare issues (in its supply chain where relevant) and reports progress against the targets.
- d. The targets are applicable to all species, geographies and products.
- e. The company's policies and/or targets address all 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 and (vi) limiting long-distance live transport to eight hours or under.

**Sources:** Aquatic Life Institute ([n.d.](#)), ASC ([various](#)), BFAW ([2021](#)), Compassion in World Farming ([n.d.](#)), FAIRR ([2021](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GRI 13 ([2022](#)), GSI ([2020](#)).

## B12. Antibiotic use and growth-promoting substances

**Indicator:** The company is reducing the use of medically important antimicrobials,<sup>6</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).

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<sup>6</sup> As defined by the World Health Organization report ([2019](#)) 'Critically important antimicrobials for human medicine: 6th revision'.





**Elements:**

- a. The company has a policy on reducing the (prophylactic) use of antibiotics and/or growth-promoting substances (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 targets to phase out the use of growth-promoting substances across all species, geographies and products (in its supply chain where relevant) and reports progress against the targets.
- d. The company has targets to phase out the prophylactic use of antibiotics across all species, geographies and products (in its supply chain where relevant) and reports progress 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 (in its supply chain where relevant).

**Sources:** Aquatic Life Institute ([n.d.](#)), ASC ([various](#)), BFAW ([2021](#)), Compassion in World Farming ([n.d.](#)), FAIRR ([2021](#)), FAO ([2011](#)), GAA ([various](#)), GLOBALG.A.P. ([various](#)), GSI ([2020](#)), SASB ([n.d.](#)), 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:**

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

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



### Key changes and rationale

Element c. has been added to reward companies that have reduced medicine use across 100% of their operations. The reduction refers to a two-year period, in order to compare performance with the previous iteration of the benchmark.



## C. Traceability

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

**Indicator:** The company commits to traceable seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients 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 and 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 for chain-of-custody certification (SDG targets 12.2 and 14.4).

**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 achieve 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:** EJF, Oceana, Pew and WWF (2016), GDST (2022), Oceana, Pew, The Nature Conservancy, EJF and WWF (2020).

**Key changes and rationale**

Following the re-organisation of GDST and the three partnership tiers being offered, the elements now differentiate between companies that have endorsed the standard (element b.) and companies that have set a time-bound commitment to adopt the standard (element d.).

## 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 (electronic or paper-based) to trace and verify the origins of seafood products and aquaculture feed ingredients, marine and terrestrial.
- b. The company discloses which key data elements are collected and provides an explanation of how these are verified and shared along the supply chain.



- c. The company demonstrates that it has chain-of-custody certification in place for at least 80% of its portfolio.
- d. The company and its supply chain disclose the percentage of their portfolio (by volume) where the GDST standard has been implemented.

**Sources:** EJF (2020), FAO (2018), Future of Fish (2016), GDST (2022), SALT (2020), WWF (2015).

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

Element c. has been added to recognise chain of custody. Meanwhile, the requirement to disclose 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 recognising relevant certification schemes (e.g. chain-of-custody certification).

### **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 can, in addition to legal requirements, 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 chain 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 high IUU risks, as revealed by its risk assessment.

**Sources:** BRC and EJF (2015), EJF, Oceana, Pew and WWF (2016), (2017), Oceana and UNEP (2018), Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions (2020).

#### **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.



#### 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:**

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

**Sources:** CASS (2019), ISSF (2019), Oceana and UNEP (2018), Ocean Disclosure Project (2022), SeaBOS (2022), UNGC (2019), WWF (2015).



## D. Social responsibility

This measurement area includes two parts. The first part focuses on WBA's core social indicators (D1-D18), a common set of indicators applied across all WBA systems transformation benchmarks. These are supplemented by transformation-specific social inclusion indicators that are relevant to the seafood sector, provided in the second part (indicators D19-27).

### Core social indicators

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 systems transformation methodologies.

To do so, WBA benchmarks integrate a common set of core social indicators into all their systems transformation methodologies to assess whether companies demonstrate 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 policy statement 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 channels/mechanisms (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 channels/mechanisms (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>7</sup> in its own operations and supply chain.

**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 (commitment to respect the human rights of workers) (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 it 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.

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<sup>7</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 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).





**Sources:** Afi (n.d.), ASC (2020), Conservation International (2019), FAO (2018), GAA (2020), GRI 403 (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 focuses 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.

## 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 jobseekers 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 not to use forced labour by codifying this requirement in a supplier code of conduct, or similar document.
- c. In its contractual arrangements with suppliers or supplier code of conduct, the company prohibits suppliers and any third-party recruitment intermediaries from imposing financial burdens on jobseekers 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 103 (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 of movement, 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 focuses 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>8</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 (living wage fundamentals) (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.), FAO (2014), Future-Fit Foundation (n.d.), IDH (n.d.), OECD and FAO (2021), SPOTT (2021), WBA (2021a), WBA (2021d).

<sup>8</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.



### 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:** Fishing is one of the most dangerous occupations in the world. Accident and fatality rates in fishing are high compared to many other sectors. Aquaculture and seafood processing have also been highlighted as hazardous industries. The vast majority of people working in fisheries and aquaculture, including in pre-harvest and post-harvest activities, live in rural, often remote areas in developing countries. About 59% of all children aged 5-17 who are engaged in hazardous work are in the agriculture sector, including fisheries and aquaculture ([FAO, 2019](#)) (SDG target 8.8).

### 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 403 ([2018](#)), ILO ([2001](#)), RSB ([2017](#)), SASB ([n.d.](#)), SPOTT ([2021](#)), WBA ([2021a](#)), WBA ([2021d](#)).

## D23. Farmer 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. The 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 ([n.d.](#)), Impact Institute ([2020](#)), Living Income Community of Practice ([n.d.](#)), Oxfam ([2018](#)), Oxfam ([2021](#)), WBA ([2019b](#)), WBCSD ([2019](#)).

#### **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.

#### **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 in 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 schemes that are in line with relevant ILO conventions in their own operations and/or on vessels in their supply chain (SDG targets 8.5, 8.7 and 8.8).

#### **Elements:**

- a. The company commits, through a policy or code of conduct, to ensuring 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/or supply chain and discloses progress reporting.

**Sources:** amfori BSCI ([2017](#)), Conservation International ([2019](#)), Environmental Defense Fund, Rare/Meloy Fund and Encourage Capital ([2018](#)), ETI ([2016](#)), FAO ([2016](#)), FisheryProgress.org ([2020](#)), GSSI and SSCI consultation document ([2020](#)), ILO ([2007](#)), ISSF ([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 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 and obtain free, prior and informed consent ([FAO, 2014](#)) (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

This indicator previously assessed whether companies respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and customary resource users. Given that there is no clear definition of customary rights this indicator now only 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 chain. 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 chain.
- b. The company demonstrates that it has implemented activities to support local communities and tracks 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 actions it has taken when local communities are impacted by company activities.

**Sources:** Conservation International ([2019](#)), Environmental Defense Fund, Rare/Meloy Fund and Encourage Capital ([2018](#)), FAO ([1995](#)), MarinTrust ([2017](#)), UNGC ([2019](#)).

**D27. Gender equality and women's empowerment 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 D14 (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 for gender equality and women's empowerment in its supply chain.
- d. The company discloses progress against its targets for gender equality and women's empowerment in its supply chain.

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

**Key changes and rationale**

The indicator title has been adjusted, in line with core social indicator D14. While indicator D14 focuses on gender equality and women's empowerment in a company's own operations, this indicator focuses on the supply chain.



# Annexes

## Annex 1: WBA guiding principles

WBA developed a set of principles to guide its work and reflect its values and mission (Table 4). These principles were formed in collaboration with global stakeholders throughout the consultation phase and were refined using input and feedback from roundtable consultations, online surveys and expert meetings.



The principles are divided into three categories: operational principles that explain how WBA functions; benchmark development principles that address how the benchmarks are designed; and content principles that cover what the benchmarks assess. Currently, the guiding principles reflect the outcomes and findings from WBA’s global consultation phase. However, the world is rapidly changing, and additional insights and perspectives are likely to emerge over time. Consequently, these principles may evolve – in consultation with stakeholders – to reflect new findings and realities.

TABLE 4: WBA GUIDING PRINCIPLES

<b>Operational principles</b>	
Inclusive	The WBA actively engages with and involves all stakeholders in building the Alliance and the benchmarks.
Impartial	The WBA and its benchmarks are equally responsive to all stakeholders.
Independent	The WBA and its benchmarks are independent from the industries and companies they assess.
Focused on impact	The WBA and its benchmarks promote dialogue and measure impact on the SDGs to create positive change.
Collaborative	The WBA collaborates with stakeholders and Allies to enhance alignment of corporate performance with internationally agreed sustainability objectives.
Free and publicly available	The WBA is a public good, and its benchmarks and methodologies are free and publicly available to all.
<b>Benchmark development principles</b>	
Relevant	WBA benchmarks focus on sustainable development issues most relevant to industries’ core businesses and on the industries and companies that can make the most significant, actionable and unique contributions to these issues.
Clear in method and intent	WBA benchmarks are transparent about their methodology, development processes and results.
Complementary	WBA benchmarks build upon the work done by others, adding further value with a focus on SDG impact.
Responsive and iterative	WBA benchmarks are updated regularly to reflect evolving stakeholder expectations, policies, developments, and company performance.
<b>Content principles</b>	
Balanced	WBA benchmarks assess both positive and negative impacts that companies might have on the SDGs.
Reflective of societal expectations	WBA benchmarks reflect the extent to which companies’ performance on relevant SDGs aligns with stakeholders’ expectations.
Forward-looking	The WBA and its benchmarks engage and assess companies on their current performance on the SDGs and on exposure to sustainability risks and future opportunities.


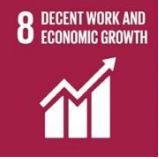


## Annex 2: SDG targets in scope of the benchmark



SDG	Rationale	Relevant targets
 <p><b>1</b> NO POVERTY</p>	<p>Developing countries earn considerably more from seafood exports than from any other major food commodity, such as rubber, cocoa, coffee or sugar (FAO, 2018). Also, about 60% of all international seafood trade originates in developing countries (FAO, 2018). Locating seafood-processing activities and sourcing seafood products from local communities and small-scale producers can contribute to employment and improve people’s livelihoods in low-income countries.</p>	<p>1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.</p>
 <p><b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER</p>	<p>Fish is an extremely nutritious and vital source of protein and essential nutrients, especially for people living in poverty (FAO, 2014). Approximately 3 billion people, mostly in developing countries, are dependent on seafood for their animal protein intake (WWF, 2022). Sustainable seafood production contributes to food and nutrition security on a global level. Ensuring local availability, accessibility and utilisation of highly nutritious seafood can further contribute to food security in local communities.</p>	<p>2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.</p> <p>2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.</p> <p>2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.</p> <p>2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.</p> <p>2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed.</p>







		2A. Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries.
 <p><b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY</p>	<p>Women play an important role in the handling, processing and marketing of fish products (FAO Globefish, 2015). The percentage of women engaged in secondary activities, such as processing work and often for low-paid and very labour-intensive work, can be up to 90% (FAO, 2016). Promoting gender equality in the sector contributes to women's full and effective participation, as well as provides equal opportunities for those who are active across the seafood supply chain.</p>	<p>5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.</p> <p>5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.</p> <p>5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.</p>
 <p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	<p>Around 60 million people are engaged in the primary sector of capture fisheries and aquaculture (FAO, 2018). About 660-880 million people depend on the seafood industry for their livelihoods (FAO, 2017). The industry relies heavily on the labour of low-skilled or unskilled workers. For areas of production with narrow profit margins, measures to advance decent work are needed to protect workers' human rights, secure their physical safety and help improve their status. Labour-intensive activities, such as value-added processing, can also contribute to employment creation and economic growth.</p>	<p>8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value-added and labour-intensive sectors.</p> <p>8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead.</p> <p>8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.</p> <p>8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.</p> <p>8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.</p>



 <p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p>	<p>Global food losses and food waste in seafood supply chains are estimated at 35% (FAO, 2011). In fishing, the efficient use of natural resources requires that target stocks be well managed and that the bycatch and discards that occur frequently are monitored and mitigated, particularly for protected and threatened species. In aquaculture, and generally across the supply chain, responsible production leads to a reduction in food losses and waste discharges.</p>	<p>12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.</p> <p>12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer level, and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.</p> <p>12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimise their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.</p> <p>12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.</p> <p>12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.</p>
 <p>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</p>	<p>Overfishing is considered the second largest threat to the oceans after climate change. In 2014, almost 30% of wild fish stocks were considered overfished, 60% were fully exploited and only 10% could be expected to allow further growth (FAO, 2014). In particular, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is an important threat to marine ecosystems, undermining national and regional sustainability and marine biodiversity measures. Managing fisheries responsibly and ensuring that products come from traceable sources can contribute to the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources.</p>	<p>14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.</p> <p>14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.</p> <p>14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.</p> <p>14.A Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing</p>



		<p>countries, in particular small island developing states and least developed countries.</p> <p>14.B Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.</p>
	<p>Aquaculture has overtaken wild-caught fish in terms of worldwide consumption. If managed poorly, aquaculture can have negative impacts on ecosystems. Sustainable management of aquaculture and efficient use of inputs (e.g. feed, water, therapeutants) can contribute to the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and prevent land degradation and biodiversity loss.</p>	<p>15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.</p> <p>15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.</p> <p>15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species.</p>
	<p>Companies can contribute to this overarching SDG by participating in multi-stakeholder partnerships that work towards a more sustainable seafood industry.</p>	<p>17.16 Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.</p> <p>17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.</p>

## Annex 3: Key concepts and definitions

### *Abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG)*

The FAO refers to abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear and ghost fishing as follows:

- 'Abandoned fishing gear: fishing gear that is deliberately left at sea with no intention by fishers to retrieve it, for whatever reason.
- Discarded fishing gear: fishing gear or parts thereof that is deliberately thrown overboard without any intention for further control or recovery.
- Lost fishing gear: the accidental loss of fishing gear at sea.
- Ghost fishing: the capture of marine organisms by lost, abandoned or otherwise discarded fishing gear or parts thereof. Effectively, the capture of fish and other species that takes place after all control of fishing gear is lost by a fisher. For example, a lost, abandoned or discarded gillnet might continue to fish with consequent mortality to the enmeshed fish. Ghost fishing is often cyclical, and the pattern, duration and extent will depend on a large number of factors including the gear type, water depth, currents and local environment ([FAO, 2009](#)).'

### *Animal welfare*

Animal welfare is the 'physical and mental wellbeing of animals and the freedom to express behaviours that are important to them ([BBFAW, 2019](#)).' Most often, the Five Freedoms (Freedom from Hunger and Thirst, Freedom from Discomfort, Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease, Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour and Freedom from Fear and Distress) are used to demonstrate the attributes of good animal welfare.

### *Antibiotics*

The FAO ([FAO, 2005](#)) defines antibiotics as 'drugs of natural or synthetic origin that have the capacity to kill or to inhibit the growth of micro-organisms. Antibiotics that are sufficiently non-toxic to the host are used as chemotherapeutic agents in the treatment of infectious diseases of humans, animals and plants.'

### *Bycatch*

Bycatch is the 'incidental capture and mortality of non-target marine animals during fishing ([Consortium for Wildlife bycatch reduction, 2014](#)).'

### *Child labour and child work*

'A "child" is anyone under the age of 18 as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A child can "work" at an earlier age than 18 as specified in ILO Convention 138 Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (1973) – i.e. if the age is above the age for finishing compulsory schooling, is in any case not less than 15 years of age (and at 14 years of age in specific circumstances in developing countries) and as long as it is not "hazardous work." "Child labour" is work by people under 18 ("children") that is not permitted (as set out above). "Child work" is work by people under 18 ("children") that is permitted. Child work is carried out by "young workers." ([CHRB, 2020](#))'

### *Conversion-free operations*

The Accountability Framework initiative ([2020](#)) defines conversion-free operations as 'commodity production, sourcing or financial investments that do not cause or contribute to the conversion of natural ecosystems.' No conversion refers to no gross conversion of natural ecosystems, which the Accountability Framework initiative specifies as 'the appropriate policy and goal on this topic for companies and supply chains.'



### *Diseases*

A disease in aquaculture is a 'clinical or non-clinical infection with an etiological agent' (e.g. bacteria, viruses, parasites). In addition to their impact on farmed fish, diseases can be transferred, thereby creating a risk to the health of wild fish in surrounding ecosystems ([FAO, 2007](#)).

### *Endangered species*

Endangered species are threatened with extinction at the population level as determined by authorities and found on lists prepared under international agreements. These include the IUCN Red List with 'vulnerable', 'endangered' or 'critically endangered' status ([IUCN, 2012](#)) and the CITES Appendices I, II and III ([CITES, 2017](#)).

### *Escapes*

Escapes of farmed fish, shrimp and shellfish into the wild 'could lead through interbreeding to the alteration of the gene pools of local crustacean or fish populations. Escapes of non-native species could also lead to competition with native species for food and/or habitat, and possibly have other detrimental ecological consequences. Diseases can also be transmitted from escapees to wild fish ([GAA, 2017](#)).'

### *Forced labour*

'Forced labour refers to situations in which persons are coerced to work through the use of violence or intimidation, or by more subtle means such as accumulated debt, retention of identity papers or threats of denunciation to immigration authorities. Forced labour, contemporary forms of slavery, debt bondage and human trafficking are closely related terms though not identical in a legal sense. Most situations of slavery or human trafficking are, however, covered by the ILO's definition of forced labour (see ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)) ([CHRB, 2020](#)).'

### *Free, prior and informed consent*

Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) is a specific right pertaining to Indigenous Peoples that allows them to 'give or withhold consent to a project that may affect them or their territories. Once they have given their consent, they can withdraw it at any stage. Furthermore, FPIC enables them to negotiate the conditions under which the project will be designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated ([FAO, 2016](#)).'

### *Human rights*

Human rights are 'basic international standards aimed at securing dignity and equality for all. Every human being is entitled to enjoy them without discrimination. They include the rights contained in the International Bill of Human Rights. They also include the principles concerning fundamental rights at work set out in the ILO's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work ([CHRB, 2020](#)).'

### *Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing*

'Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is a broad term that captures a wide variety of fishing activity ([FAO, 2020](#)). IUU fishing is found in all types and dimensions of fisheries; it occurs both on the high seas and in areas within national jurisdiction. It concerns all aspects and stages of the capture and utilisation of fish, and it may sometimes be associated with organised crime. IUU fishing activities are classified as follows:

#### Illegal fishing:

- conducted by national or foreign vessels in waters under the jurisdiction of a state, without the permission of that state, or in contravention of its laws and regulations



- conducted by vessels flying the flag of states that are parties to a relevant regional fisheries management organisation but operate in contravention of the conservation and management measures adopted by that organisation and by which the states are bound, or relevant provisions of the applicable international law, or
- in violation of national laws or international obligations, including those undertaken by cooperating states to a relevant regional fisheries management organisation.

#### Unreported fishing:

- which have not been reported, or have been misreported, to the relevant national authority, in contravention of national laws and regulations, or
- are undertaken in the area of competence of a relevant regional fisheries management organisation which have not been reported or have been misreported, in contravention of the reporting procedures of that organisation.

#### Unregulated fishing:

- in the area of application of a relevant regional fisheries management organisation that are conducted by vessels without nationality, or by those flying the flag of a state not party to that organisation, or by a fishing entity, in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures of that organisation, or
- in areas or for fish stocks in relation to which there are no applicable conservation or management measures and where such fishing activities are conducted in a manner inconsistent with state responsibilities for the conservation of living marine resources under international law.'

#### *Indigenous rights*

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted in 2007, provides legal rights for peoples with Indigenous origins or identity and establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples of the world ([UN, 2007](#)).

#### *Livelihoods*

'Livelihoods allow people to secure the basic necessities of life, such as food, water, shelter and clothing ([CHRB, 2020](#)).'

#### *Living wage*

'There are numerous definitions of a living wage, but the core concept is to provide a decent standard of living for a worker and his or her 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 ([CHRB, 2020](#)).'

#### *Local communities*

A local community is defined as 'persons or groups of persons living and/or working in any areas that are economically, socially or environmentally impacted (positively or negatively) by an organisation's operations. The local community can range from persons living adjacent to an organisation's operations to those living at a distance who are still likely to be impacted by these operations ([GRI, 2016](#)).'

#### *Marine ingredients*

Marine ingredients are mainly used for human consumption and animal feed and are derived from 'forage fish and marine organisms such as fish, krill, shellfish and algae ([MarinTrust, 2020](#)).' Within the



scope of the Seafood Stewardship Index, marine ingredients also include wild-captured fish as well as organisms from freshwater fisheries and aquaculture.

#### *Medicine use*

'Any substance or combination of substances presented for treating or preventing disease in animals or which may be administered to animals to restore health, and correct or modify physiological functions in animals ([FAO, 2019](#)).'

#### *Small-scale producers*

Small-scale producers include fisheries and aquaculture operations along with self-employed smallholders operating locally and accessing local fish resources to harvest or prepare fish for direct consumption within local households and commercial sale ([FAO, 2012](#); [FAO, 2015](#)).

#### *Supply chain*

Supply chains are seen as the 'route that the seafood takes from the time that it is in contact with a fisher/farmer to the final product form that it takes when it is sold to the end consumer (British Standards Consortium, 2017).' When the Seafood Stewardship Index indicators refer to supply chains where a company is active, this includes all its seafood supply chain business relationships. This means that companies are expected to look beyond tier 1 suppliers. For marine and terrestrial ingredients that are used for aquaculture feed production, supply chains can be seen as the route that ingredients take from harvesting to the final product. This supply chain also includes companies that sell aquaculture products that have been farmed with feed produced from these marine and terrestrial ingredients.

#### *Target catch*

Target catch refers to 'catch of a species, a particular size or sex, or an assemblage of species that is primarily sought in a fishery, such as shrimp in a shrimp fishery or mature female fish in a roe fishery. The definition of targeted catch within a fishery is not static, as in a multispecies fishery, the mix of species targeted and caught may change over time ([FAO, 2005](#)).'

#### *Terrestrial ingredients*

Terrestrial ingredients in aquaculture feeds are animal and vegetable products from land-based sources. Examples of terrestrial ingredients are poultry and livestock by-products (e.g. meat, bone meal), cereal grains and oils (e.g. soya, rice bran, palm oil).

#### *Traceability*

The Seafood Stewardship Index addresses full traceability of seafood products, as well as marine and terrestrial ingredients for aquaculture feed production across the supply chain. This includes both internal and external traceability. Internal traceability includes tracking and preserving of information about batches or units of seafood through a company's facilities, such as aggregating, disaggregating, transforming, transporting or otherwise altering of batches of seafood. External traceability refers to 'the ability to track key data elements and other information about a seafood product as it moves between trading partners and through the supply chain. At a minimum, external traceability is one-up, one-down traceability ([Future of Fish, n.d.](#)).'

#### *Vulnerable groups*

Vulnerable groups in the food and agriculture sector are particularly at risk of occupational injury and illness and include migrant and temporary labourers, women and young farmers.

#### *Well-managed fisheries*

A well-managed fishery meets the FAO definition of fisheries management and demonstrates an 'integrated process of information gathering, analysis, planning, consultation, decision-making,



allocation of resources and formulation and implementation, with enforcement as necessary of regulations or rules which govern fisheries activities in order to ensure the continued productivity of the resources and accomplishment of other fisheries objectives ([FAO, 1997](#)).’ For assurance, companies sourcing seafood often look for sources that are certified.







			Governance and strategy				Ecosystems													Traceability & IUU				Social responsibility									
Name	Date	Authors	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	B13	C1	C2	C3	C4	D19	D20	D21	D22	D23	D24	D25	D26	D27	
World Economic Forum's Toward Common Metrics and Consistent Reporting of Sustainable Value Creation	2020	WEF		•																													
SASB standards	2018	SASB			•																												
<b>SEAFOOD-/OCEAN-SPECIFIC PRIVATE SECTOR GUIDANCE AND TOOLS</b>																																	
WWF Traceability Principles for Wild-caught Fish Products	2015	WWF																		•	•		•										
Future of Fish 5 core functions of traceability principles	2016	Future of Fish																			•		•										
Principles for investment in Sustainable Wild Capture Fisheries	2018	Consortium of impact investors and NGOs			•			•	•	•	•									•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions Common Vision	2019	CASS					•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•					•	•	•	•										
UN Global Compact Sustainable Ocean Principles	2020	UN Global Compact	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•										•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
UN Global Compact Sustainable Ocean Principles: Aquaculture Practical Guidance	2020	UN Global Compact	•	•	•	•	•						•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
UN Global Compact Sustainable Ocean Principles: Fisheries Practical Guidance	2021	UN Global Compact	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•									•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Global Dialogue for Seafood Traceability (GDST) standard	2020	GDST																		•	•		•										
Social Responsibility Assessment Tool	2019	Conservation International																						•	•	•	•	•		•	•		
Risk assessment and control of IUU fishing for the marine insurance industry	2018	PSI & Oceana																				•											
Risk Assessment and Verification of Catch Certificates under the EU IUU Regulation	2016	Oceana, Pew, WWF and EJP																				•											



			Governance and strategy				Ecosystems													Traceability & IUU				Social responsibility																			
Name	Date	Authors	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	B13	C1	C2	C3	C4	D19	D20	D21	D22	D23	D24	D25	D26	D27											
PAS 1550: Exercising due diligence in establishing the legal origin of seafood products & marine ingredients	2017	British Standards Institution																																									
Fisheryprogress.org Social Policy	2020	FisheryProgress.org																																									
Seafood Task Force Code of Conduct + Vessel auditable standard	2018	Seafood Task Force																																									
Seafish Risk Assessment for Sourcing Seafood	2020	Seafish																																									
Aquatic Animal Health Code	2019	World Organization for Animal Health																																									
FISHWELL report: Welfare indicator for farmed Atlantic Salmon	2018	FISHWELL																																									
Roadmap for Improving Seafood Ethics (RISE)	2019	FishWise																																									
Traceability Principles for Wild-Caught Fish Products	2015	WWF																																									
Key Aquatic Animal Welfare Recommendations for Aquaculture	2020	Aquatic Life Institute																																									
<b>SEAFOOD-SPECIFIC CORPORATE REPORTING FRAMEWORKS</b>																																											
Ocean Disclosure Project	N/A	SFP																																									
ISSF Conservation Measures and Commitments	2020	ISSF																																									
GSI Sustainability Report - Sustainability Indicators	N/A	GSI																																									
Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI)	2017	BSCI																																									
Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) Base Code	2016	ETI																																									
GRI Universal standards	2020	GRI																																									



			Governance and strategy				Ecosystems													Traceability & IUU				Social responsibility										
Name	Date	Authors	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	B13	C1	C2	C3	C4	D19	D20	D21	D22	D23	D24	D25	D26	D27		
ISSF Pro-Active Vessel Registry	N/A	ISSF							•	•											•	•												
GRI Sector Standard for Agriculture	2022	GRI					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
<b>SEAFOOD-SPECIFIC RATINGS &amp; CERTIFICATION STANDARDS</b>																																		
Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Fisheries Standard	2018	MSC						•	•	•	•	•																				•		
MSC & ASC Chain of Custody standard	2019	MSC																			•			•	•				•					
Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) shrimp standard	2019	ASC			•					•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•			•			•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		
Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) salmon standard	2019	ASC					•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•			•			•	•	•	•			•	•	•		
Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) Feed Standard	2021	ASC						•	•	•	•				•						•		•	•			•			•				
Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) BAP Salmon Farms standard	2017	GAA			•					•	•		•	•	•	•					•			•	•	•	•			•	•			
Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) BAP Finfish and Crustaceans Farms	2017	GAA			•					•	•		•	•	•	•					•			•	•	•	•			•	•			
Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) BAP Feed Mills standard	2020	GAA			•								•	•	•						•			•	•	•	•			•	•			
IFFO RS/MarinTrust Global Standard for Responsible Supply of Marine Ingredients	2017	MarinTrust					•	•	•	•	•										•	•		•	•	•	•			•	•	•		
Fair Trade USA Capture Fisheries Standard	2018	Fair Trade						•	•	•	•										•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	
Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard (RFVS)	2020	Global Seafood Assurances							•	•											•	•		•	•	•	•							
Global Salmon Initiative key indicators	N/A	Global Salmon Initiative											•	•	•	•												•			•	•		
Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Fisheries standard v4	2020	Seafood Watch						•	•	•	•																							



			Governance and strategy				Ecosystems													Traceability & IUU				Social responsibility									
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Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Aquaculture standard vA4	2020	Seafood Watch									•			•	•	•			•	•													
Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Salmon Fisheries standard vS2	2020	Seafood Watch						•	•	•	•																						



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