

Amsterdam, 11th December 2014

GSSI Steering Board agrees to revise the structure of the GSSI Benchmark Tool

After careful consideration of the comments received during the public comment period and from its partners, the GSSI Steering Board made a unanimous decision to revise the GSSI Global Benchmark Tool. The GSSI Global Benchmark Tool is designed to deliver transparency and promote improvement by encouraging seafood certification schemes to meet the *GSSI Requirements* and *GSSI Indicators*.

Seafood certification schemes that undergo the benchmarking process and are found to be in compliance with all of the *GSSI Requirements* will be formally recognized by GSSI. The *GSSI Requirements* are grounded in the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and 'FAO Guidelines'.

The benchmarking process will also verify and communicate if recognized seafood certification schemes have implemented *GSSI Indicators*. The *GSSI Indicators* are grounded in the CCRF and related FAO, ISO and ISEAL documents. The *GSSI Indicators* will allow schemes to demonstrate the diversity of their approach and help stakeholders understand where differences exist.

The GSSI Steering Board will be providing technical guidance to the GSSI Expert Working Groups about how to apply the agreed structure to complete the revision of the GSSI Global Benchmark Tool. This will be followed by a Pilot Testing Program and further opportunity for public comments.

For more information about GSSI, please visit: www.ourGSSI.org

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Notes to Editors:

The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) is comprised of retailers, food services, manufacturers, harvesters and farmers, non-governmental organizations, academics and intergovernmental organizations. GSSI is developing a common, consistent and global benchmark tool to ensure confidence in the supply of certified seafood as well as to promote improvement in certification schemes.

Reference documents for the GSSI Global Benchmark Tool:

- The FAO Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine/Inland Fisheries, and The FAO Technical Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification ('FAO Guidelines')
- The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and related FAO documents
- ISO normative standards and
- ISEAL codes