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The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative
GSSI has a vision of more sustainable seafood for everyone.

GSSI is on a mission to ensure confidence in the supply and promotion of certified seafood as well as promote improvement efforts in seafood sustainability globally.
A Letter From the Co-chairs

In 2023, GSSI welcomed Trent Hartill as the new Co-Chair to join Ingrid Kelling. Trent replaced Judy Panayos who served as Co-Chair in 2022. Ingrid Kelling holds a Ph.D. in sustainable and ethical aquaculture trade and currently leads a research team at Heriot-Watt University focusing on improving social sustainability in seafood supply. Trent Hartill is Vice President of Fisheries and Sustainability for American Seafoods. In this role he focuses on regulatory and legislative actions that affect the company, and the Alaska pollock or Pacific whiting fishery in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. He also coordinates the fishery, social and labor certifications for company as well as sustainability initiatives for the North American catcher processor sector.

Ingrid Kelling
Co-chair of the GSSI Steering Board

A word from Ingrid

As we reflect on another year of driving forward sustainability in the seafood industry, I am extremely grateful for the commitment shown by my fellow Board members, as well as the GSSI Secretariat.

First and foremost, I would like to take a moment to pay homage to Judy, an exceptional Co-Chair whose leadership has been instrumental in guiding our organization. Judy, as you embark on your new role at Sodexo, please know that your contributions here have left an indelible mark, and we wish you nothing but the best in your future endeavors. On that note, I extend a warm welcome to Trent, who joins me as my new Co-Chair. Trent and I have already had the pleasure of working closely together, and I am confident that together we will strengthen GSSI’s mission. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Board for their continued dedication. As we bid farewell to Angel this coming year, as well as to Sonia, Jennifer, John, Laurent, and Flavio over the previous year, we thank them for their invaluable service. Additionally, I extend a warm welcome to our four new Board members, whose fresh perspectives and expertise will undoubtedly enrich our collective efforts.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to Lisa for her unwavering dedication over the past year. Stepping in at short notice, Lisa has not only maintained momentum but also lead the expansion of our team in alignment with our opportunities. Your hard work has not gone unnoticed, Lisa, and we are immensely grateful for your

“We will continue to make a meaningful impact in creating a more sustainable future for our waterways and all those who depend on them.”

Ingrid Kelling, Co-chair of the GSSI Steering Board
contributions. In our pursuit of excellence, we have undertaken a thorough search for a new CEO, and I am pleased to announce that there will be further updates on this front in the near future.

Looking ahead, we have some truly exciting developments in store for Seafood MAP that we cannot wait to share with you all. With your continued support and dedication, GSSI is on track for growth and success this year. Together, we will continue to make a meaningful impact in creating a more sustainable future for our waterways and all those who depend on them.

A word from Trent

I am both thrilled and humbled by the opportunity to lead GSSI as co-chair alongside Ingrid. The organization is perhaps best known for its Global Benchmark Tool, which is critical in leveling the playing field for certified seafood and supporting clarity, confidence, and choice in the marketplace. And while the role and value of the Benchmark Tool is more important than ever, perhaps the greatest value of GSSI is the role it plays in convening the seafood industry supply chain around a pre-competitive platform. The power of the GSSI Partnership is bringing together voices and perspectives from the global seafood industry and collectively identifying the greatest challenges and opportunities for our seafood industry. As the global industry reacts and adapts to socio-economic challenges this partnership platform serves to elevate the most important sustainability issues for the entire seafood industry. Without our GSSI Partners, we wouldn’t have a level playing field, a partnership with SSCI that benchmarks social responsibility schemes or progress on improving the sustainability journey for small scale producers.

So, I want to personally thank all the current Partners who have invested in making GSSI a success and value the opportunity to engage and tackle the challenges facing the seafood industry. And for those companies and non-profits out there that aren’t Partners, I invite you to become one and have a seat at the table helping to work towards providing more sustainable seafood for more people.

“The power of the GSSI Partnership is bringing together voices and perspectives from the global seafood industry and collectively identifying the greatest challenges and opportunities for our seafood industry.”

Trent Hartill, Co-chair of the GSSI Steering Board
GSSI turned 10 in 2023. Many thanks to all our supporters who have contributed to our success over these years. We’ve come a long way. Our global engagements (Partners, Scheme Owners, and other stakeholders), tools, and solutions have expanded. That said, we need to challenge ourselves to do more (and look at doing what we do even better).

In February, I was honored to accept the Executive Director role at GSSI. Many wonder, why “interim”? The answer is simple - geography. As relocation is not an option, GSSI ultimately needs a leader closer in time and space. However, that is no reflection of the great value I see in GSSI and the fervor with which I support it. In fact, my involvement began in 2017 as Vice President of a Funding Partner and then as a Steering Board member. Given this familiarity with GSSI’s staff and its evolution, I was able to jump into the role with enthusiasm.

We all know change is inevitable. In my mind, one hallmark of success for individuals and organizations alike is adapting to it with a positive, flexible, solution-oriented mindset. We must evolve to stay relevant. Recent years have been trying for everyone. First, a global pandemic. Then, rising inflation, interest rates, and labor shortages. GSSI recognizes the pressure these events have placed on some of our Partners. So, above all else, our sincere gratitude for the continued support of us and our mission.

Like many of you, we had some transitions this year. Some staff who had been with GSSI for quite a few years left for new opportunities. We are proud to say that we hired and onboarded some outstanding new team members full of talent, experience, and enthusiasm. Team and Steering Board dedication and perseverance were central to these and all other 2023 accomplishments.

Our team worked diligently to improve our stakeholder engagement, value proposition, and explore deeper how the seafood supply chain can utilize and benefit from our solutions. Materials were updated to add clarity on what we bring to the table (for sustainability and its business case). We also increased staff to better engage our Partners, Scheme Owners, and the SSCI.

Additional things we are working on for this year into next include: refreshing our social media strategy and webinar content to focus less on GSSI updates and more on leveraging relationships and providing a stage for Partners, convening more often to provide opportunities to discuss key challenges and solutions at webinars and panels organized by GSSI, providing relevant information on emerging issues, and impact measurement - data collection on continuous improvement and...
After listening to seafood leaders from around the world this year, it became evident that **GSSI’s purpose is more relevant than ever.**

Lisa Goché, Interim Director of GSSI

Our commitment to promoting seafood, continuous improvement, and helping businesses thrive is reflected in 5 solutions: pre-competitive partnerships, environmental and social benchmarks, the Seafood MAP, and communication campaigns. Why does this matter? It’s about preserving resources, yes. Without them, we won’t have an industry in the future. Seafood is vital. Responsibly done it prevents or eradicates food insecurity, overfishing, and human rights abuses. Equally important, best practices have direct economic benefits. A sustainable seafood industry = jobs, community development, higher export values, business continuity, profits, and a host of other pluses.

Full benefit realization requires a comprehensive strategy for procurement, sales and marketing embracing not just food safety, quality and price, but also improver programs, certification, ESG policies, supplier performance monitoring, verification and continuous improvement. Such an approach enhances confidence in the supply chain, market share, profits, and reputation at the company, community, and country levels. Growing the verifiably responsible seafood supply becomes a driver for long-term success.

Particularly in light of increasing scrutiny from consumers, governments, NGOs, and the media.

I have been in the seafood industry for decades in the wild fisheries, aquaculture and feed sectors, beginning in my native state of Alaska, USA. I have the privilege of constantly learning and wearing many hats, including production, QA, operations, auditing, procurement, sales, executive management, finance, and more. This sector fills me with excitement and passion. It’s endlessly fascinating and complex. Working with diverse groups around the world to make a positive difference is one of the most meaningful gifts this industry has given me. In my experience, there is no more important impact platform than GSSI and its collaborative multi-stakeholder groups. Together, we can all help preserve and grow this critically significant industry that offers so much.

As GSSI’s engagements and initiatives expand around the world, we are endlessly grateful for your continued support and resilience. We invite you to lend your voice and connect ever more closely with each other, and us, in our efforts to accelerate our collective progress.
1 The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative

1.3 10 Years of GSSI

2023 marked the **10-year anniversary** for the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative.

A decade ago, a handful of global seafood companies, retailers, and NGOs signed on to develop a first-of-its kind global benchmark tool for seafood certification schemes. Today, GSSI proudly recognizes 8 seafood certification schemes and boasts a network of over 100 diverse Partners across 27 countries and 6 continents. To commemorate this significant milestone in the industry, 2023 was dedicated to honoring "10 Years Of GSSI" and recognizing the invaluable contributions of the Partners who have shaped the organization into what it is today.

During the **Boston Seafood Expo**, GSSI held a 10-year anniversary reception. It was great to connect with familiar faces and celebrate the success of the past decade, together.
1.4 A Network of Sustainability Leaders

**AFFILIATED PARTNERS**

18

**FUNDING PARTNERS**

75
The GSSI Global Partnership
The GSSI Global Partnership

GSSI is made up of a global multi-stakeholder partnership, comprised of thought leaders from the seafood sector working to identify challenges, influence direction, and lend their voice toward making a positive difference.

United by a common purpose, we drive forward more sustainable seafood for everyone and preserve our aquatic resources for the future.
Conxemar shares with GSSI the commitment to global sustainability and responsible management of fisheries resources and seafood products, in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. Like GSSI, Conxemar keeps a close relationship with the FAO. The FAO has co-organized an International Congress in Vigo, as a prelude to the International Frozen Seafood Exhibition Conxemar, for more than 10 years. We are very pleased to join GSSI, to collaborate and share ideas in the promotion, commercialization, and transformation of sustainable seafood products in its three aspects (social, environmental, and economic).

Yobana Bermúdez, General Manager of Conxemar

As a company that operates globally and promotes the sustainable use of fisheries resources, we are happy to partner with GSSI and support the organization’s activities. We look forward to working with the various domestic and international companies and organizations participating in GSSI, to promote the spread of sustainable seafood.

Kyokuyo Co., Ltd.
The Fishin’ Company is the largest importer of tilapia in the world and one of the largest importers of frozen fish, with offices and processing sites located around the world. The Fishin’ Company provides a wide range of sustainably-sourced, wild-caught and farm-raised seafood products that are MSC and BAP certified, including species such as tilapia, salmon, cod, swai, haddock, snow crab, and mussels.

"What role has GSSI played in the development of Fishin’ Company’s sourcing policy?"

GSSI has played an important role in the Fishin’ Company’s evaluation and adoption of sustainability certifications relevant to the fisheries and farms we source from globally. As the seafood sustainability movement continues to evolve, and new challenges are presented to us, we are excited to continue to call on GSSI’s benchmarking to guide us on the most cost-effective and impactful certifications to use so we can ensure our sourcing continues to have positive impact in the world.

Keith Fleet, Fishin’ Company

Iberostar Hotels & Resorts is a leading hotel chain that is committed to developing a responsible tourism model, focused on caring for both people and the environment. It has more than 100 four- and five-star located in the most popular vacation destinations in Europe, Africa and America.

"Why is sustainable seafood sourcing so important for the hospitality sector and how can partnerships, like GSSI, help support this?"

Sustainable seafood sourcing is of great importance for the hospitality sector, particularly in coastal tourism destinations, where our influence on consumer preferences and seafood demand is significant. As key players in the tourism industry, we have the power to drive positive change by promoting responsible sourcing and consumption practices. Through our purchasing decisions, promotional activities, and engagement with local communities, we can shape market dynamics and foster a transition towards sustainability. Partnering with organizations like GSSI empowers us to make informed sourcing decisions, uphold the highest standards of sustainability, and contribute to the well-being of marine ecosystems and coastal communities. Together, we are committed to creating a more sustainable future for our planet and future generations.

Yago Doson, Blue Foods Specialist – Global, Iberostar
Cabomar is one of Europe’s premier operators specialised in tailor-made seafood products in private label in frozen, fresh and chilled. Selling in more than 20 markets from Galicia (Spain, EU) since 2006. Cabomar knows that continuous improvement and an innovative mindset are a must.

How does Cabomar prioritize sustainability in its seafood sourcing practices?
We are fully dedicated to upholding our sustainable sourcing policy and avoiding any involvement in Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fisheries. The diligent efforts put forth in Fishery Improvement Projects are truly deserving of recognition, as the seafood industry must transition to a more efficient and sustainable fishing model sooner rather than later.

Luis Bugallo, Responsable Area Produccion, Cabomar

Based in Brooklyn, New York, Acme Smoked Fish Corporation (Acme) is a fourth-generation, family-owned smoked fish purveyor. Since the company’s beginnings in the early 1900s, Acme has been committed to providing the highest quality of seafood specialties in an expanding number of varieties, from customer favorites like Smoked Nova, Pickled Herring and Whitefish Salad to innovative new products like Sashimi-style Smoked Salmon, ready-to-eat Poke Bowls, and Smoked Atlantic Salmon Candy.

Why does Acme Smoked Fish support GSSI’s Seafood MAP?
Acme Smoked Fish is eager to support GSSI’s Seafood MAP project because we are invested in the collective improvement of small scale fisheries around the globe and committed to uplifting the livelihoods of the communities who depend on those fisheries. Seafood MAP is working to improve market access through transparency and storytelling, and we are proud to participate in part by putting Acme’s pin on the map.

Alexandra (Alex) Golub, Sustainability Manager, Acme Smoked Fish
Ahold Delhaize is one of the world’s largest food retail groups, a leader in supermarkets and e-commerce, and a company at the forefront of sustainable retailing. Each of Ahold Delhaize’s brands shares a passion for delivering great food, value and innovations, and for creating inclusive workplaces that provide rewarding professional opportunities.

Aqua-Spark is a holding company of innovative, novel solutions to some of aquaculture’s biggest challenges, supported by a growing group of global investors committed to our future food system. Aqua-Spark is on a mission to move the aquaculture industry towards healthy, sustainable, affordable production with comparable financial returns.

“Why is the investment sector becoming more integral to the sustainable aquaculture conversation?”

Billions of dollars in capital expenditure are required to support the aquaculture sector’s transition to become more sustainable, healthy, and affordable. Long-term capital deployed by ESG-focused asset managers and values-aligned investors is particularly important to enable the many new technologies, business models, and sustainable practices that have entered the space in the last decade to reach their potential in facilitating systems-level impact.

Lissy Smit, CEO, Aqua-Spark

“GSSI help Ahold Delhaize with its sustainability commitments?”

The GSSI Global Benchmark Tool is a key tool in our sustainable seafood approach for our own brand products. The independence of the benchmarking process, and the connection to the FAO Guidelines, gives us confidence in recommending GSSI-recognized environmental certification schemes to our suppliers.

Elizabeth Claridge, Biodiversity and product sustainability, Ahold Delhaize
GSSI and the UN SDGs
GSSI and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 goals adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015 to guide global efforts towards sustainable development. The SDGs are intended to be achieved by 2030, and they require the collective efforts of governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals around the world.

GSSI works to ensure all organizational efforts are closely aligned with the UN's efforts to promote the achievement of the SDGs, and to address the challenges facing the world's waterways, resources and the communities that depend on them.
3.1 Credible Collaboration

GSSI continues to actively collaborate with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UN FAO) to operationalize internationally agreed guidelines, promote the implementation of the UN SDGs, and minimize duplication of efforts in the sector.

Reading Tip
In Episode 4 of GSSI’s Spotlight Series, we hear from Dr. Audun Lem, Ph.D. of the UN FAO on Blue Transformation — FAO’s vision for aquatic food systems. Audun shares what Blue Transformation means and the role that the FAO believes it will play in the future of seafood and those that rely on it.

Read it here
4.1 The Global Benchmark Tool

Confidence in Certified Seafood

GSSI’s Recognition Processes is now operating under Version 2.0 of the Global Benchmark Tool. The new version of the Tool focuses on the following three areas:

- Clarification of Benchmark Component language
- Reduction of the number of Components, with the aim to reduce complexity while maintaining the benchmark standard
- Inclusion of new FAO Guidelines, as Supplementary Components in line with the original development of the Benchmark Framework

As part of the revision from Version 1.0 to 2.0, the GSSI’s Benchmark Procedures were updated to give a detailed outline of the content, requirements, and background of the Tool’s process.

Find the Benchmark Procedures here


What is re-recognition?
When GSSI makes updates to the Global Benchmark Tool, recognized schemes then must go through the recognition process again to ensure they are operating in alignment with the updates to the Tool’s framework.

The recognition process is carried out in 7-steps and designed to be independent, impartial and transparent. The expert-led process involves objective assessments made against performance areas covering scheme governance, operational management (including chain of custody) and standards for aquaculture and fisheries certification.
The Benchmark Process

Application
The Benchmark Process begins once a Scheme Owner decides to apply for recognition and contacts the Secretariat, who provides an overview of the process.

Desktop review
This step helps to assess the Scheme Owner’s capability to proceed and successfully complete the Benchmark Process within the expected timeframe.

Office Visit
The Office Visit may be conducted by the Process IE or both IEs, depending on the outstanding issues of the Desktop Review.

Benchmark Committee Meeting
The Benchmark Committee acts as the ‘Quality Assurance’ for the work undertaken by the IE team in the Desktop Review and Office Visit.

Public consultation
If recognition is recommended by the Benchmark Committee, the Scheme Owner’s approval is required to publish the Benchmark Report for a four-week Public Consultation.

Recognition decision by steering board
The Steering Board is briefed by the Steering Board Liaison on the Benchmark Report and the Benchmark Committee’s recommendation for recognition.

Monitoring of continued alignment
GSSI ensures continued alignment of recognized schemes with GSSI Essential Components through an annual reporting process of relevant changes.
4.2 GSSI – SSCI Collaboration
Collaborating for Social Responsibility

The GSSI and The Consumer Goods Forum’s Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI) collaboration led to the co-development of two scopes within the SSCI Social Benchmark Tool covering at-sea operations and primary production (aquaculture). **The Tool provides the seafood industry with a list of credible third-party auditing, monitoring, and certification programs.**

In 2023, GSSI joined the SSCI at the Seafood Expo North America for an engaging panel session on the role of social certification programs & the SSCI Benchmark in addressing social compliance in seafood harvesting and production.

**Reading Tip**
Check out this new informative one-pager about the GSSI-SSCI Collaboration.

Find it here
The Impact

How the SSCI works to create a responsible seafood sector

Driving improvement

Schemes have an incentive to improve and the social sustainability of vessel workers improve as a result.

Transparency

Stakeholders are engaged through public consultations and scheme benchmark progress is publicly available.

Credibility

The industry has one clear and trusted reference point for which schemes meet the bar.

Collaboration

SSCI criteria have been developed by the industry and market, based on collaborative, multistakeholder engagement.
4.3 Seafood MAP

Collective Action Towards a Sustainable Seafood System

Following a busy year of sector-wide collaboration and platform design and development, GSSI proudly presented the first version of the Seafood MAP website at the Barcelona Seafood Expo. The Seafood MAP website celebrates the end of the platform’s collaborative design phase. On the website, you can explore the mission, innovative framework, and vibrant community.

Pin on the MAP

To further develop the Seafood MAP community, stakeholders are now able to subscribe to the Seafood MAP mailing list and submit an application to have their pin on the map on the seafood MAP website. These pins showcase sustainability initiatives from producers, buyers, and programs from around the world who are part of the Seafood MAP community.

Reading Tip

Check out this article by The Fish Site highlighting the importance of the Seafood MAP and how it is supporting global sustainable seafood.

Read it here
Your Pin on the Map

Learn more here
Governance
5.1 GSSI Steering Board

- **Annika Mackensen**
  Advisor Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture, GIZ

- **Ángel Matamoro Irago**
  Chief Corporate Social Responsibility and Institutional Relations Officer, Nueva Pescanova Group

- **Han Han**
  President, China Blue Sustainability Institute

- **Nianjun Shen**
  Senior Fisheries Officer, FAO

- **Marcelo Hidalgo**
  Sustainability Director, FIA PNG

- **Ingrid Kelling**
  Assistant Professor of Sustainable and Ethical Seafood, Heriot-Watt University

- **Adriana Sanchez**
  Responsible Seafood Strategy Director, Iberostar Hotels’ Wave of Change
5.1 GSSI Steering Board

New Members:

- **Gert Le Roux**
  Aquaculture and Fisheries Specialist at Woolworths
  South Africa

- **Lisa van Wageningen**
  Program Manager of Aquaculture at IDH, Sustainable Trade Initiative

- **Sévrine Bethy,**
  Food Safety and Responsible Sourcing Manager at Sodexo

- **Trent Hartill**
  Vice President of Fisheries and Sustainability for American Seafoods

Departing Members:

- **Flavio Corsin**
  Director of Partnerships, Aqua-Spark

- **Jennifer Dianto Kemmerly**
  Director of Global Fisheries and Aquaculture, Monterey Bay Aquarium

- **Judy Panayos**
  Senior Director, Sustainability Supply Management, Sodexo

- **Laurent Develle**
  EVP Group General Counsel and Head of Corporate Affairs, Regal Springs

- **John Garner**
  Retired Seafood Executive

- **Sonia Cordera**
  Deputy Director, Food Crops and Ingredients, IDH – The Sustainable Trade Initiative
5.1 GSSI Secretariat

April Blackwood
Branding and Communications Manager

Basile Fischer
Partnership Officer

Dorine Witvoet
Office Manager

Laura Del Castillo Munera
SDG Impact Manager

Lisa Goché
Interim Executive Director

Georgia Armitage
Benchmark Manager

Departing Members:

Eva Mudde
Departing SDG Impact Manager

Eva van Heukelom
Departing Partnership Manager

Meghan Haupt
Departing Benchmark Manager
5.3 The GSSI Charter

Stichting Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) is incorporated as a foundation under the law of The Netherlands. The GSSI rules of governance and code of conduct are summarized in the GSSI Charter, a document used to ensure consistency in governance, transparency of process, and commitment and integrity of GSSI Participants.

You can access the Charter on our website

Download Charter V3.1
Finance
Balance Sheet
December, 2023

Fixed Assets € 23401
Intangible Assets € 15755
Fixed Assets € 1784
Financial Fixed Assets € 5861
Current Assets € 187477
Projects € 23800
Receivables € 48433
Cash € 115244

Activa (Total Assets) € 210878
Foundation Assets € 167626

General Reserve (Retained Earnings) € 167626

Short-term Liabilities € 43252
Accounts Payable € 17590
Taxes and Social Security Premiums € 7439
Other Liabilities And Accrued Expenses € 3500
Invoiced In Advance € 7500
Salaries € 7223

Passiva (Total Liabilities) € 210878