



Confidence in certified seafood



GLOBAL BENCHMARK TOOL

GSSI increases comparability and transparency in seafood certification and enables informed choice for procurement of certified seafood. GSSI's Global Benchmark Tool, which is based on international reference documents, will identify and recognize robust and credible certification schemes and support other schemes to improve. The Tool consists of performance areas related to scheme governance, operational management (including chain of custody) and standards for aquaculture and fisheries certification.

GSSI's Global Benchmark Tool was developed over a 3-year multi-stakeholder process, with environmental NGOs, global business, independent experts, governmental and intergovernmental organizations, alongside two public consultations and a pilot test. As a result of this inclusive process, GSSI believes the bar being set is both appropriate and achievable.

GSSI does not rank schemes because it believes that supporting a level playing field will best promote solutions to today's complex challenges across the entire seafood supply chain.

GSSI Benchmark Process

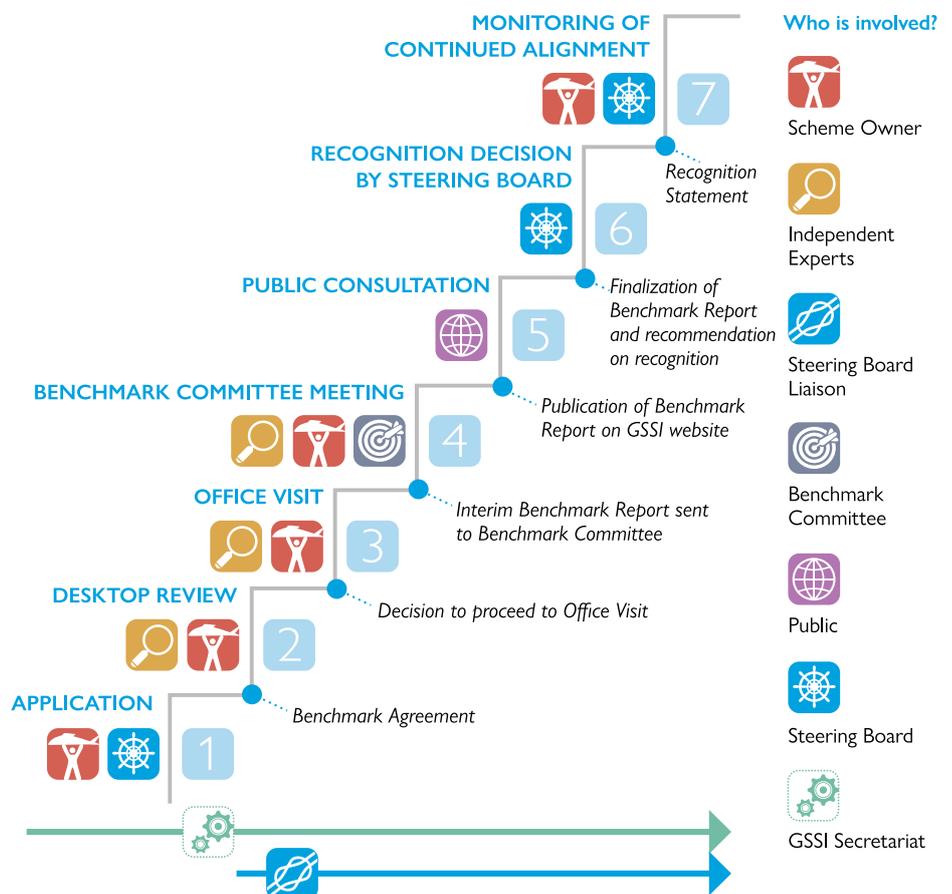
GSSI's 7-step Benchmark Process is open to all certification schemes that wish to become GSSI recognized. The expert-led benchmark process involves objective assessments made against the components laid out in the Benchmark Framework in an independent, impartial and transparent manner.

The process is rigorous and involves close information sharing between GSSI and a scheme. The steps include an Application, Desktop Review, Office Visit, Benchmark Committee Meeting, Public Consultation, Recognition Decision and Monitoring of Continued Alignment.

The 30-day Public Consultation on a Benchmark Report takes place before a scheme achieves recognition. It provides an opportunity for any interested stakeholder to engage in the process as part of GSSI's commitment to transparency. At this point, details of the draft GSSI recognition findings related to the benchmarked scheme, are made public.

From Application to Recognition:

Key steps and responsibilities in the GSSI Benchmark Process



Global Reference Framework for Seafood Certification



GSSI recognition

GSSI delivers recognition of seafood certification schemes aligned with the FAO Guidelines. GSSI will publicly recognize a scheme that has gone through the Benchmark Process and can demonstrate alignment with all GSSI Essential Components* of the Benchmark Tool. Recognition is granted for the scopes of Aquaculture, Fisheries Certification substantiated by clearly identified versions of the standard(s) of the certification scheme.



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GSSI will make information available across the supply chain through its Recognition statement and Benchmark Report on www.ourgssi.org. GSSI's Benchmark Report is made up of a user-friendly PDF Report, with different section overviews and an Executive Summary..



Schemes that are in alignment with GSSI Supplementary Components (not required for GSSI recognition) can show how they meet those parts of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related FAO documents, ISO normative standards and ISEAL codes.

GSSI is not a consumer-facing initiative and does not permit any consumer-facing labelling about its recognition (including using its logo) or make policy for any business or scheme.

*GSSI Essential Components based on FAO *Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine/Inland Capture Fisheries* and FAO *Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification*.

GSSI and sustainability

GSSI's partnership recognizes the lively the definition of sustainability. GSSI drives change towards more sustainable seafood through a multi-stakeholder process. It is a global platform and partnership of seafood companies, NGOs, experts, governmental and intergovernmental organizations working towards more sustainable seafood for everyone. GSSI is doing this through delivering recognition of certification schemes that are aligned with FAO Guidelines.

GSSI does not, however, define sustainable or responsible seafood. It is the accountability of a certification scheme to define the claims it can make in relation to responsible or sustainable seafood.

GSSI does not undertake any accreditation or certification, develop or own any standards. GSSI benchmarks a certification scheme and does not evaluate a fishery or aquaculture operation. It is the scheme accountability to define how applicant operators comply with any claim being made.

GSSI is currently focused on environmental sustainability. The partners recognize the importance of social sustainability and the work of other stakeholders in this area. GSSI is committed to exploring how social sustainability can be defined and addressed in the global seafood supply chain.



For more information, contact:

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