



GSSI Global Benchmark Tool out for public consultation

Brussels, 21 April 2015

The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) is launching the next public consultation of its updated Global Benchmark Tool for seafood certification schemes. The Global Benchmark Tool aims to make information available across the supply chain to drive change and lower costs.

The public consultation will run from 21 April until 19 May with Expert webinars and a chance to sign up to share your comments online at www.ourgssi.org. GSSI has taken on board the range of comments from the 2014 public consultation to update the Tool, which is now available online. A report of how the 2014 comments have fed into the updated Tool is available on the GSSI website.

Alongside the public consultation, the Tool is being road-tested with a pilot phase that runs until July. Comments from the public consultation, together with lessons from the pilot, will feed into the updated GSSI Global Benchmark Tool that will be launched in autumn 2015.

Quotes:

Anton Immink, Aquaculture Director Sustainable Fisheries Partnership and Vice Chair of the GSSI Aquaculture Expert Working Group states: *"The second period of public consultation will open shortly and I encourage everyone to review the changes made and provide further feedback to GSSI."*

Ron Rogness, Vice President Corporate Relations American Seafoods LLC and GSSI Steering Board and ambassador of the GSSI Fisheries Expert Working Group states: *"The GSSI is a unique and laudable effort on the part of producers, processors, retailers and NGOs to set aside their competitive interests and collectively work toward what should be the fundamental mission of all parties. That is, to reduce the environmental impact of producing and harvesting seafood and to enhance the credibility and reduce the confusion and costs that can occur when there are multiple schemes providing sustainability assurances to consumers."*

Tom Pickerell, Technical Director at Seafish and Vice Chair of the GSSI Process Expert Working Group states: *"During 2014 the GSSI carried out a consultation exercise on the first draft of the tool; the feedback was extensive, wide-ranging and highly detailed. Initially this feedback felt somewhat overwhelming but it was clear that similar issues were recurring. Following a period of reflection on the responses we were able to easily map a pathway of reducing complexity, eliminating duplication and minimising ambiguity. Overall we are confident that the tool has been greatly strengthened and the second round of public consultation will validate our revisions."*

Notes to Editors:

GSSI

GSSI is a global platform and partnership of seafood companies, NGOs, experts, governmental and intergovernmental agencies. The mission of GSSI is to ensure confidence in the supply and promotion of certified seafood as well as to promote improvement in seafood certification schemes. GSSI is co-financed by GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through its develoPPP.de program. GSSI has grown from 17 Funding Partner companies in 2013 to 32 in 2015 and welcomes new partners.

GSSI Global Benchmark Tool

The updated Global Benchmark Tool includes *GSSI Requirements*, which seafood certification schemes need to meet to be recognised by GSSI. These are grounded in the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and FAO Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine/Inland Capture Fisheries and FAO Technical Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification. At the same time the Tool includes *GSSI Indicators*, which allows schemes to show their diverse approach and help stakeholders understand where differences exist. These are grounded in the CCRF and related FAO documents, ISO normative standards and ISEAL codes.

For more information, contact: secretariat@ourgssi.org or visit: www.ourgssi.org