



GSSI Expert Working Groups get the Global Benchmark Tool ready for an autumn launch

Rome, 10 July 2015

The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI)'s Expert Working Groups met at the FAO in Rome from 7-10 July to update the Global Benchmark Tool, before its launch planned for autumn 2015.

GSSI Expert Working Groups on Process, Aquaculture and Fisheries have been drilling down on priority sector issues to further update GSSI's Global Benchmark Tool. Since 2013 they have come together to exchange knowledge and collaborate on topics shaping the seafood sector's future.

Over four days, 33 international experts from across GSSI's stakeholders, reviewed and assessed over 300 technical comments aimed at improving the latest Tool, which has been widely welcomed. The comments were received during GSSI's latest public consultation, which ran from April to June.

Independent Experts also presented their early findings in Rome from the Tool's pilot phase, which is being carried out with the support of 8 seafood certification schemes from 7 countries worldwide. The pilot is due to end on 31 July and lessons learned from the pilot will be shared in a public Report.

The Tool is now being updated based on the public comments and lessons from the pilot's road-test before going live. Through its Global Benchmark Tool for seafood certification schemes GSSI is working towards building confidence in certified seafood. It will contribute to minimizing the overall environmental impact of how we catch, grow and deliver seafood to meet a growing global demand.

Aldin Hilbrands (Director of Aquaculture, IDH), Steering Board Ambassador to the GSSI Expert Working Group on Process, comments: *"With a few others, I started the GSSI project back in 2012. The development and growth of the initiative since then has been extremely encouraging. Bringing together so many experts with their various backgrounds has not always been an easy task. But in Rome I have been able to witness GSSI's true strength: tremendous expertise paired with a strong will to accomplish a common objective in a true spirit of collaboration. It has been a unique experience and demonstrates the collective power of this platform going forward."*

Notes to Editors:

GSSI is a global platform and partnership of seafood companies, NGOs, experts, governmental and intergovernmental organizations. 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.

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