

Audubon GULF - Monitoring of Continued Alignment

Audubon Gulf United for Lasting Fisheries (G.U.L.F.) obtained GSSI recognition on the 4th October 2018, for its Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) Certification Program (version 1.2, 2018). The standard was compared against Section A (Governance), Section B (Operational Management) and D (Fisheries) of the GSSI Global Benchmark Tool (Version 1.0, 2016).

In March 2020, GSSI's Monitoring of Continued Alignment (MOCA) procedure began which comprises a review of any changes in the Scheme's ownership, management or the standard itself. The Independent Experts found that the G.U.L.F. Responsible Fisheries Management (version 1.2, 2018) continues to be in alignment with all GSSI Essential Components. The Benchmark Committee therefore recommended continued recognition, a decision approved by the GSSI Steering Board.

ABOUT THE MOCA PROCESS

The GSSI Monitoring of Continued Alignment (MOCA) process is carried out on a three-year cycle (alternating with the full re-assessment). It starts with a self-assessment by the Scheme Owner, followed by a report to GSSI indicating any changes in the Scheme Ownership, Scheme Management or the Standard itself. With the report, the Independent Experts (IEs) conduct a Desktop Review to provide a recommendation on the continued alignment of the scheme. During the MOCA process, the IEs focus on two main parts to conclude whether the scheme continues to be in alignment with the GSSI Benchmark Tool and can maintain its recognition:

- A. Identification of substantive changes in the reference documents since the recognition to determine if the scheme is still in alignment with all Essential Components of the Benchmark Tool.
- B. Verification of continued evidence of implementation.

The recommendation by the IEs is presented to the members of the Benchmark Committee (BC) for review. Following review by the Benchmark Committee, a notification is sent to the Board and a public announcement is made.



ABOUT THE GSSI BENCHMARKING PROCESS

GSSI's [Global Benchmark Tool](#) provides formal recognition of seafood certification schemes that successfully complete a rigorous and transparent benchmark process, underpinned by the FAO Guidelines. The Tool's [7-step Benchmark Process](#) is voluntary 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. Once a scheme has gone through the Benchmark Process and is found in alignment with the 186 Essential Components, it will be publicly recognized by GSSI and the Benchmark Report will be made available on the GSSI website:

www.ourgssi.org.

ABOUT GULF

Gulf United for Lasting Fisheries (G.U.L.F.) is the sustainable seafood program of Audubon Nature Institute in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Gulf of Mexico fishing industry is one of the most productive in the United States, making the sustainability of the region's fisheries essential to our ecosystem, economy, and culture. Through the management of the G.U.L.F. RFM Scheme, fishery improvement projects, and outreach programs, G.U.L.F. supports our fisheries by making them competitive in the marketplace and educating consumers about the importance of supporting local, domestic seafood. [Read more.](#)

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