



Annual Report **2025**

Navigating Sustainability Together

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A Message **From Leadership**



Ingrid Kelling

Co-Chair



Trent Hartill

Co-Chair

Once again, 2025 was a year of transition and renewed focus, one that has underscored the importance of strong governance, collaboration, and our shared commitment to responsible seafood. We are grateful for the strength and partnership of the GSSI community during this time.

Throughout this year, GSSI has remained firmly anchored in its mission to provide confidence, clarity and choice in seafood certification. Thanks to the dedication of our Secretariat, Steering Board, and partners across the value chain, we continued to deliver against our mandate with professionalism and integrity.

We were pleased to welcome four new partners into the GSSI network this year, further strengthening our multi-stakeholder platform and reinforcing the value of pre-competitive collaboration.

Benchmarking remains the heart of our work. In 2025, we continued monitoring the alignment of recognised schemes, ensuring that credibility and robustness remain central to the GSSI framework. The new partnership with MarinTrust represents another important step toward broader engagement and visibility across the seafood supply chain.

Beyond benchmarking, GSSI's voice has remained active in global dialogue. From moderating discussions at international forums, spanning from Colombia to Boston, Norway, and Spain, to delivering observer statements and

actively engaging in leading sustainability platforms, we have continued to champion transparency and inclusive solutions. Our commissioned research on Animal Health & Welfare in Aquaculture, alongside ongoing engagement in FAO processes, reflects our commitment to addressing emerging issues with rigor and thought leadership.

We were also proud to convene and co-host events that brought stakeholders together around critical topics including blue foods, public perception, data, and leadership. These conversations reaffirm the importance of trusted tools and aligned approaches in navigating an increasingly complex sustainability landscape.

As Co-Chairs, we are especially grateful for the steady dedication of the GSSI team and the constructive guidance of our governance bodies this past year. Their commitment has ensured continuity, upheld our standards, and positioned GSSI for its next chapter.

Looking ahead, our focus remains clear: to safeguard the integrity of benchmarking, to foster alignment and efficiency across the system, and to support a seafood sector that is increasingly transparent, responsible, and resilient. Thank you to our partners, recognized schemes, and stakeholders for your continued trust and collaboration. Together, we are building the foundations for a more sustainable future for seafood.

Let's keep moving forward.

The background of the slide is a close-up, artistic photograph of blue water with soft, undulating ripples. The lighting creates a gradient of blues, from deep navy to lighter, shimmering tones where the water catches the light.

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2025 in **Numbers**

2025 in Numbers

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Building Partnerships
for Impact

In 2025, GSSI welcomed **4 new Partners on board.**



“Sustainability is rooted in trust, transparency, and collaboration and guaranteed through multi-level traceability. As a Funding Partner of GSSI, we reaffirm our commitment to the highest sustainability, traceability, and social responsibility standards and rely significantly on GSSI’s benchmarking. Its relationship with SSCI touches another of our core interests – social responsibility. This partnership enables us to drive meaningful progress in responsible sourcing by working with GSSI to continuously evolve the benchmarks to continue to be both relevant and challenging and beneficial to all stakeholders from one end of the supply chain to the other.”

Renee Perry

Vice President, CSR & ESG



“At Aquanaria, sustainability and excellence go hand in hand at every stage of our production. Joining GSSI strengthens our dedication to the highest international standards in aquaculture, ensuring that our sea bass are not only of the finest quality but also responsibly produced. This partnership allows us to collaborate with industry leaders, share best practices, and actively contribute to transparency and sustainability in the seafood sector.”

Pedro Sánchez

Commercial Director



“We are delighted that MarinTrust is joining GSSI as an Affiliated Partner. I have no doubt that MarinTrust’s deep knowledge of the marine ingredient value chain will greatly complement GSSI’s scope and serve as the bridge linking fisheries and aquaculture. I expect this partnership to support MarinTrust’s efforts to increase the availability of certified marine ingredients by utilizing GSSI-recognised schemes.”

Francisco Aldon

CEO



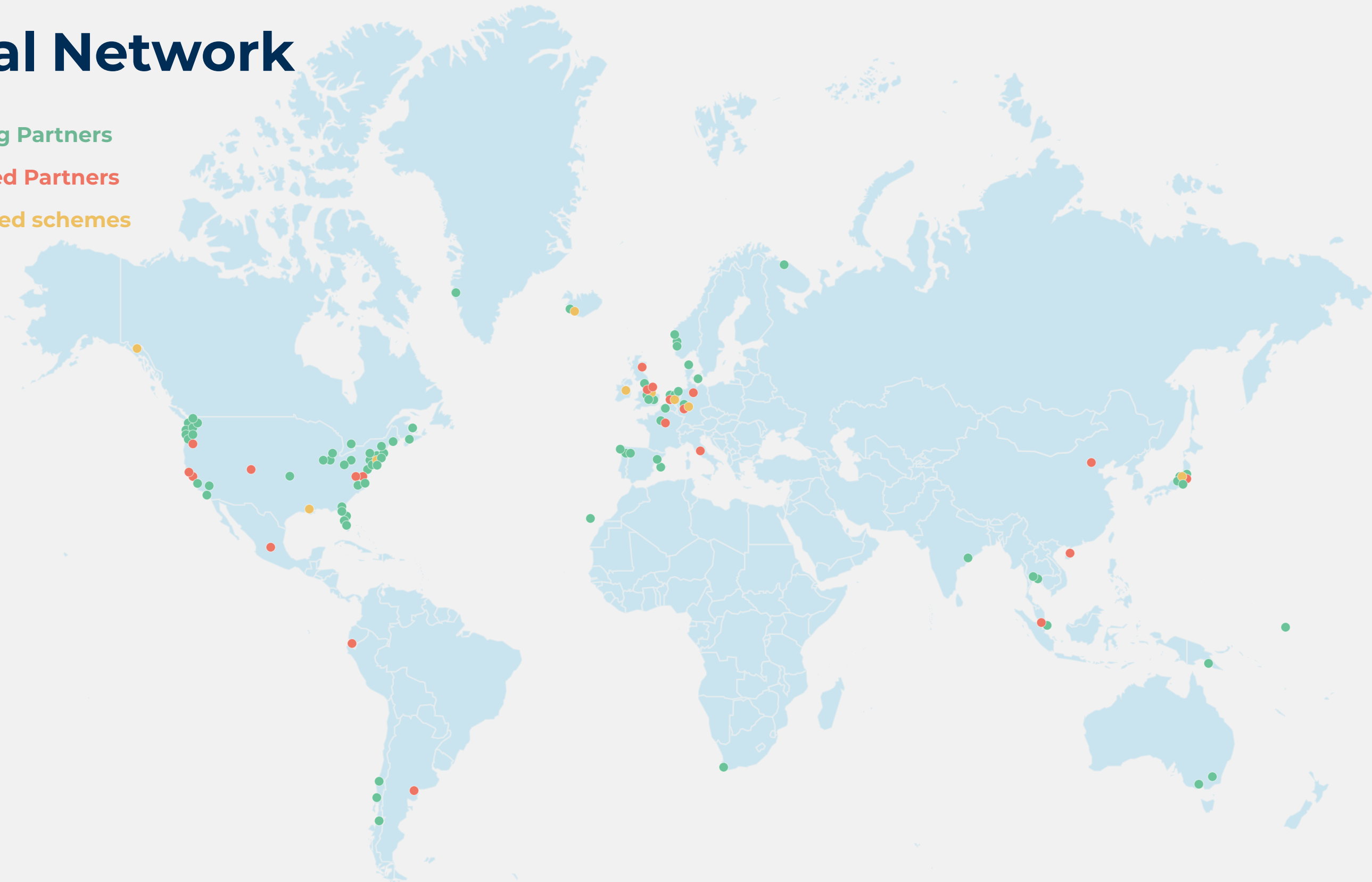
“Partnering with GSSI is a key step in strengthening the integrity of our industry. As we keep improving our sustainable practices, GSSI offers a trusted benchmark that helps guide us and empowers our customers to make informed choices. GSSI’s work to standardize and push seafood sustainability forward is invaluable to the whole supply chain, and we’re excited to be part of that journey.”

Rich Riggs

Co-Founder

Our Global Network

- 64 Funding Partners
- 23 Affiliated Partners
- 7 recognized schemes

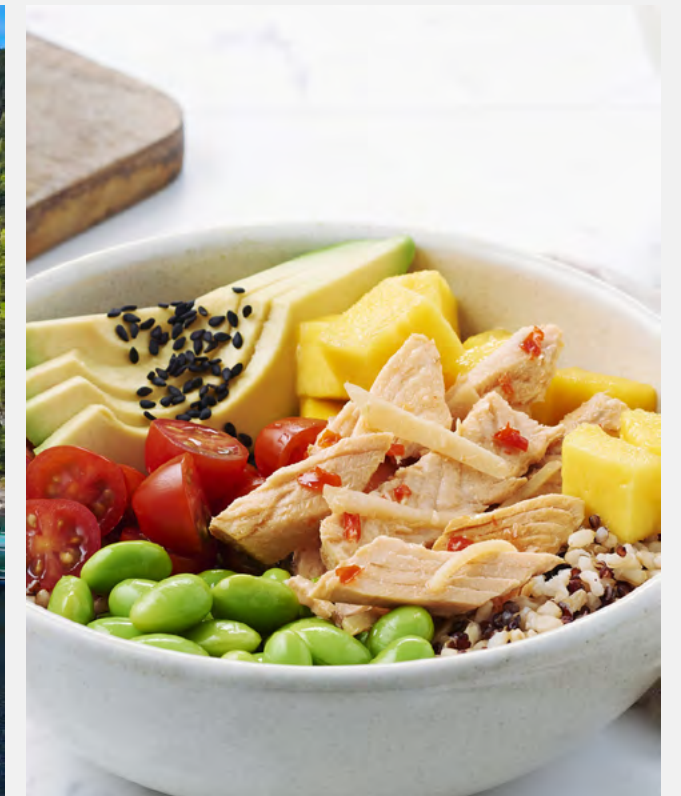
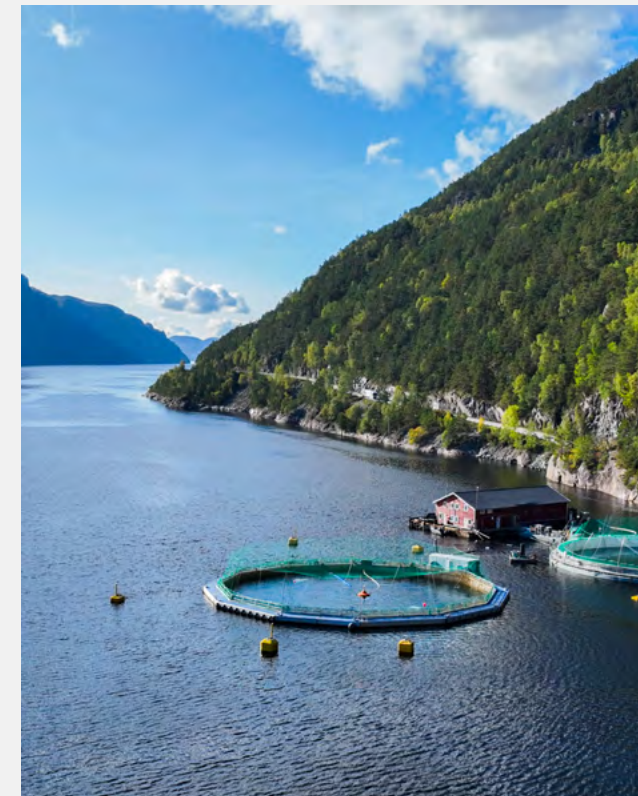




The Spotlight Series

GSSI shines a light on the change-makers of the industry through our Spotlight Series, to accelerate the push for more sustainable seafood.

Check out our latest Episodes!



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Setting the Standard:
The Global Benchmark Tool

Continued Recognition Through MOCA

In 2025, five certification schemes completed our Monitoring of Continued Alignment (MOCA) process under the Global Benchmark Tool v2.0. This annual review confirms that each scheme continues to meet all Essential Components, demonstrating ongoing alignment with internationally recognised best practice and FAO-based guidelines for responsible fisheries and aquaculture certification.

Each of these schemes underwent rigorous independent review to verify that governance, operational procedures and certification standards continue to meet GSSI's criteria, reinforcing market confidence in their credibility and the integrity of certified seafood. The remaining recognized schemes will be carrying out the MOCA process in 2026.



Certified Seafood International (CSI, formerly RFM)

Responsible Fisheries Management Fisheries Standard v2.2 continues to align with GSSI Global Benchmark Tool v2.0.



Marine Eco-Label Japan (MEL Japan)

Aquaculture Management Standard (v2.0, 2022) and Fisheries Management Standard (v2.0, 2018) remain aligned with GSSI Global Benchmark Tool v2.0.



Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)

ASC Salmon Standard (v1.4) and ASC Shrimp Standard (v1.3) continue alignment with all GSSI Essential Components.



Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)

MSC Fisheries Standard (v2.0) continues alignment with all GSSI Essential Components.



Iceland Responsible Fisheries Foundation (IRF)

Fisheries Management Standard v2.1 remains recognised by GSSI under the Global Benchmark Tool v2.0.

Standards collaboration

In 2025, GSSI strengthened its impact across the marine ingredients value chain through a key alignment with MarinTrust. As of August 2025, fisheries certified under standards benchmarked by the GSSI Global Benchmark Tool now automatically satisfy the fishery assessment pre-requisite of MarinTrust's Whole Fish Fisheries Criteria Version 3. This first-of-its-kind recognition eliminates duplicate assessments, simplifies certification pathways for small pelagics fisheries, and enhances supply chain efficiency, all while maintaining robust assurance standards. This milestone underscores GSSI's role as a trusted benchmark framework and reflects our ongoing commitment to supporting credible, responsible sourcing across seafood and feed value chains.



"We are pleased that the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) has achieved the recognition. GSSI is the first benchmark tool MarinTrust recognises in this way. This fruitful collaboration will help reduce duplication, increase availability of approved raw material sources and ultimately increase the availability of certified marine ingredients."

Laura Courage

Assurance and Risk Manager at MarinTrust

Partner Perspective

Thoughts from Latiefa Behardien

Chief Technology and Sustainability Officer, Woolworths Foods, Woolworths South Africa

Woolworths is a global leader in responsible retail. How can the sustainable seafood movement, and GSSI in particular, keep driving progress in seafood sustainability?

For more than 20 years, seafood certification has shown how markets can drive real environmental change. Retailer commitments, strong certification schemes, NGO advocacy, and benchmarking initiatives have helped move seafood sustainability from a niche concern to a mainstream expectation. Since 2000, we've seen clear improvements in fisheries management, aquaculture practices, and supply chain transparency.

This progress should be recognised. Market-based reform works. It remains one of the core strengths of the sustainable seafood movement.

The movement is now entering a more complex phase. The toughest challenges left, including fair resource allocation, inclusion of small-scale producers, human rights, and climate resilience, are less technical and more political. They raise issues of equity, sovereignty, and shared responsibility that certification alone was never designed to solve. At the same time, growing fragmentation between NGOs and industry risks weakening our collective influence just when alignment matters most.

Maintaining momentum therefore requires evolution: from market transformation alone toward system alignment, coherence, and collective influence.

Against this backdrop, GSSI is uniquely positioned to lead the next era of seafood sustainability and create systemic change. As a neutral, multi-stakeholder platform focused on benchmarking and equivalency, GSSI provides the shared language, credibility framework, and governance structure necessary to maintain trust and unify diverse actors across the value chain.

By expanding its benchmarking lens, for example, by including retailer procurement policies, GSSI can better align producers, markets, and civil society. In doing so, it can help keep the sustainable seafood movement coherent, credible, and ready to address the more complex political and systemic challenges shaping its future.

Latiefa Behardien

Chief Technology & Sustainability Officer, Woolworths Foods, Woolworths South Africa



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Connecting
with **Community**

Hosted & Co-Hosted Events



North Atlantic Seafood Forum Sustainability Summit

GSSI was proud to host the Sustainability Summit at the North Atlantic Seafood Forum, convening experts from across the value chain to explore the future of blue foods. Discussions focused on public perception, the importance of data and transparency, and the leadership needed to advance a responsible seafood sector. The dialogue reinforced a clear message: collaboration and innovation remain central to delivering measurable progress in seafood sustainability.



Seafood Expo North America GSSI-GDST Reception & Steering Board Meeting

In connection with Seafood Expo North America, GSSI co-hosted a reception alongside GDST and convened its annual Steering Board meeting. These engagements provided an important platform for exchange with partners, recognized schemes, and stakeholders, fostering alignment on shared priorities and strengthening relationships across the responsible seafood community.



Seafood Expo Global Partner and Scheme Meeting & SSCI Technical Working Group

During the Seafood Expo Global, we had the opportunity to meet with our GSSI Partners and recognized schemes, strengthening collaboration and alignment on our shared goals.

Together with the Consumer Goods Forum, GSSI launched a Seafood Social Responsibility Technical Working Group. More than 15 organizations, including certification bodies, manufacturers, and NGOs, came together to identify solutions to mitigate risks and strengthen working conditions and ethical business practices across seafood supply chains, both at sea and ashore. This initiative marks an important step in advancing social responsibility in the sector.



Global Forums & Conferences



GSSG Galicia Forum

At the GSSG Galicia Forum in Vigo, GSSI moderated an NGO roundtable exploring how civil society defines sustainability, aligns efforts with certification schemes, and leverages next-generation tools to accelerate progress toward a more responsible seafood sector.



Responsible Seafood Summit

At the Responsible Seafood Summit in Cartagena, GSSI contributed to a panel on strengthening support for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. The discussion highlighted practical examples, from community-focused producers to market access initiatives, demonstrating both the challenges and innovation present in this space. GSSI underscored the role of its Global Benchmark Tool and Seafood MAP in driving transparency and comparability, while emphasizing the need for more coordinated and tangible action to support small-scale producers in global supply chains.



Catch Welfare Platform Conference

GSSI participated in the 3rd Catch Welfare Platform Conference in IJmuiden, where scientists, regulators, buyers, and producers gathered to advance catch welfare practices. Discussions emphasized how improved welfare standards can enhance both fish wellbeing and product quality, and highlighted the importance of continued research and innovation. Engagements with industry leaders and research institutions showcased practical advancements in onboard practices, vessel design, and gear innovation that support both welfare and broader sustainability objectives.



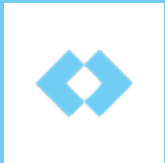
FAO COFI: Fish Trade – Observer Engagement

As an observer to the FAO Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (COFI:FT), GSSI submitted statements reflecting the perspectives of its partners. The Sub-Committee provides a global forum to address the technical and economic dimensions of international fish trade, from production to consumption, and GSSI's participation ensures that private sector insights contribute to intergovernmental dialogue on sustainable seafood trade.



Cross-Cutting Themes

Across GSSI's engagements this year, **three clear themes** consistently emerged



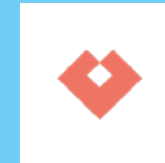
Collaboration

Collaboration was central to progress. From the Sustainability Summit at the North Atlantic Seafood Forum to the launch of the Seafood Social Responsibility Technical Working Group with the Consumer Goods Forum, stakeholders across industry, civil society, and certification bodies aligned on shared solutions to advance responsible seafood systems.



Inclusion

Inclusion, particularly of small-scale producers and diverse stakeholder voices, was highlighted at the Responsible Seafood Summit and in GSSI's observer contributions to the FAO Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, reinforcing the importance of ensuring global policy and market frameworks reflect on-the-ground realities.



Data, transparency, and welfare

Data, transparency, and welfare also surfaced repeatedly, from discussions on credibility and public trust to science-based advancements presented at the Catch Welfare Platform Conference. Together, these themes underscore GSSI's commitment to collaborative, inclusive, and evidence-based approaches to strengthening seafood sustainability worldwide.

Advancing Research, Knowledge & Thought Leadership



Supporting Small-Scale Fisheries through Market-Based Tools

In partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), GSSI recently contributed to a global study examining the role of ecolabelling and certification in supporting small-scale fisheries and aquaculture.

The study provides high-level insights into how market-based tools can better reflect the realities of small-scale producers and help strengthen sustainable and inclusive aquatic food systems. Its findings were welcomed by FAO's Sub-Committee on Fish Trade and are expected to inform ongoing discussions on potential future technical guidance.



Research Publication: Animal Health & Welfare in Aquaculture – Gap Analysis

GSSI, in collaboration with The Center for Responsible Seafood (TCRS), commissioned Natural Justice to develop *Animal Health & Welfare in Aquaculture – Gap Analysis*. The report provides a comprehensive review of aquatic animal welfare considerations across shrimp, salmon, and tilapia farming, identifying current practices and areas for further alignment and improvement. As animal welfare gains increasing prominence within seafood sustainability discussions, this publication serves as an important reference point to inform dialogue, support continuous improvement, and strengthen credibility across aquaculture value chains.



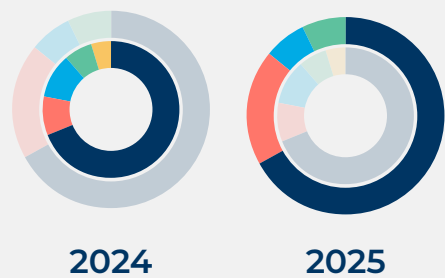
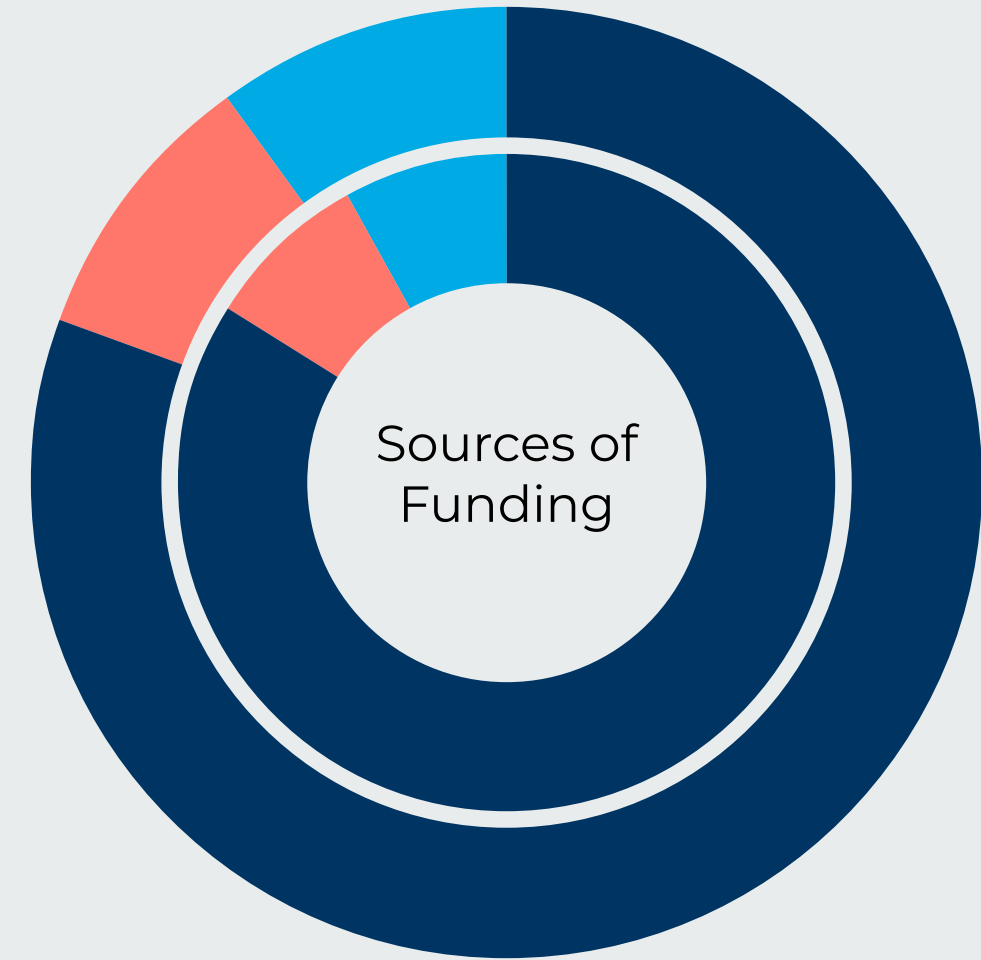
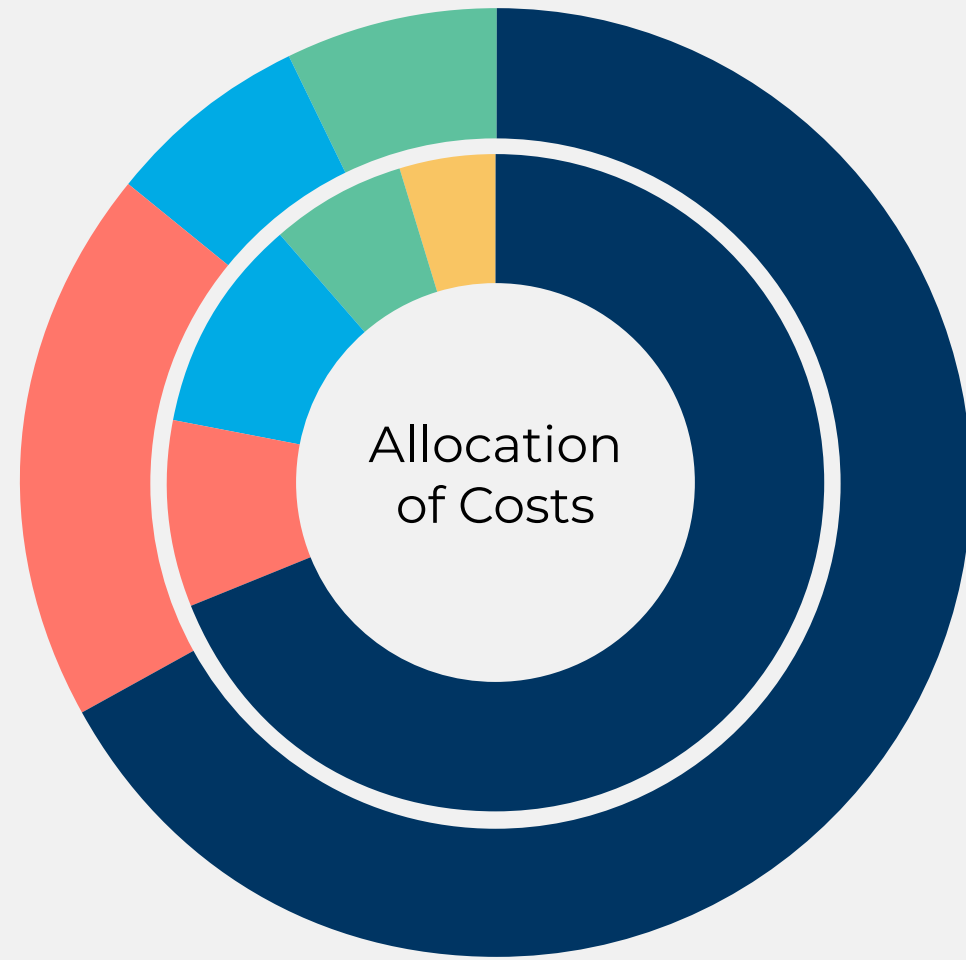
Opinion & Media Engagement

In an opinion article published in *Industrias Pesqueras*, Laura Del Castillo Munera highlighted the need for deeper collaboration to achieve meaningful transformation in fisheries and aquaculture. The article underscored that long-term sustainability depends on building stronger connections between the public and private sectors, large and small operators, and local communities and global markets. By promoting alignment, shared responsibility, and inclusive approaches, the sector can enhance its contribution to a more resilient and sustainable future for aquatic foods and the communities that depend on them.

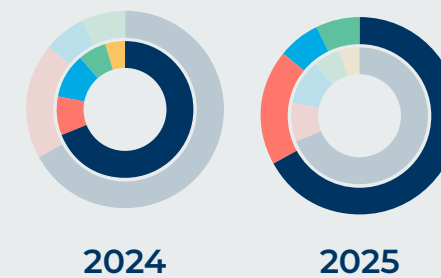


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Finance



Allocation of Costs	2024	2025
Team	50.8071	39.1643
Benchmarking	66.103	111.661
Marketing & Travel	78.065	40.700
Office overheads	48.728	34.231
Ext. Support & Advice	33.619	-



Sources of Funding	2024	2025
Funding Partners	485.250	579.776
Benchmark Fees	46.438	67.600
Project Funding	44.920	70.953

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Governance



GSSI

Steering Board Members

Annika Mackensen, GIZ

Elizabeth Claridge, Ahold Delhaize

Francisco Aldon, MarinTrust

Fridrik Fridiksson, Brim

Gert le Roux, Woolworths

Han Han, China Blue Sustainability Institute

Ingrid Kelling (Co-Chair), University of Herriott-Watt

Kelley K. Bell, FishWise

Lisa van Wageningen, IDH Trade

Marcelo Hidalgo, FIA PNG

Matt Thompson, New England Aquarium

Nianjun Shen, FAO

Nuno Cosme, Group Nueva Pescanova

Sévrine Bethy, Sodexo

Trent Hartill (Co-Chair), American Seafoods

GSSI

Secretariat

April Blackwood

Branding & Communications Manager

Basile Fischer

Outreach and Partnership Manager

Dorine Witvoet

Office Manager

Georgia Armitage

Benchmark Manager

Laura del Castillo Munera

SDG Impact Manager

Oyvind Ihle

CEO

Looking Ahead

Strengthening Credibility and Responding to Emerging Priorities.

As GSSI moves into 2026, our focus is on reinforcing credibility while responding to the evolving sustainability landscape. Expectations across the seafood sector continue to expand, with growing attention to animal welfare, social responsibility, feed impacts, traceability, and climate resilience. Addressing these interconnected priorities will be central to our work in the year ahead.

GSSI will continue refining its Framework to reflect emerging risks and market expectations, while safeguarding the rigor and neutrality that underpin trust in its work. Particular emphasis will be placed on strengthening assurance, enhancing technical capacity, and ensuring clear, transparent governance processes that maintain confidence among stakeholders.

In an increasingly complex sustainability environment, stakeholders are seeking greater clarity, interoperability, and reduced duplication. GSSI will advance alignment efforts and improve how its tools and insights support practical decision-making for retailers, producers, schemes, and partners worldwide.

Insights from a stakeholder interview study conducted in 2026 will help inform priorities and communication in 2026. Stakeholders can expect clearer articulation of GSSI's role, more proactive engagement, and structured opportunities to contribute to shaping the organization's forward direction. Through these efforts, GSSI will continue to strengthen its contribution to a more transparent, resilient, and trusted global seafood system.



**Join the
Global
Sustainable
Seafood
Initiative
now**



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