



GLOBAL DIALOGUE on Seafood Traceability

Leading Companies Promote Groundbreaking Seafood Traceability Standards

Advancing Responsible Sourcing While Lowering Costs Through Good Data

Seafood is a key source of protein for 4.3 billion people and provides income to hundreds of millions of families, communities, and businesses around the world. In fact, seafood is the most globalized sector of the food industry, bringing products to consumers from every corner of the planet. But globalized production and trade also includes risks, such as seafood fraud and mislabeling, labor abuses, and challenges for managing complex supply chains to ensure products are responsibly sourced. In fact, new regulations in the U.S. and Europe demand that the seafood industry step up its effort to track seafood imports and prevent illegal fishing. That is why our companies are helping the seafood industry take a major step toward building trust and increasing transparency by establishing the first-ever global voluntary standards for seafood traceability.

Voluntary industry standards for traceability are urgently needed to help companies ensure that the products they buy and sell come from sources that are legal, sustainable, and ethical. Technologies and systems already exist that make it possible to trace seafood products from “boat to plate,” but they employ dozens (or even hundreds) of different approaches that prevent systems from exchanging data efficiently. Reliable and affordable seafood traceability will only become a reality once basic technical standards are established to make systems “interoperable” across the thousands of producers, processors, traders, packagers, wholesalers, and retailers that make up the worldwide seafood industry.

**To ensure the future of the seafood industry and our oceans,
setting interoperable traceability standards is not optional.**

That is why our companies are helping lead the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST), bringing together more than five dozen companies from around the world and across seafood supply chains to create the first-ever global standards for seafood traceability. The GDST has been convened and supported by WWF, one of the world’s leading conservation groups, and the Global Food Traceability Center of the Institute of Food Technologists, a world-class center of excellence on traceability. After more than two years of technical work, we are now beta testing these new standards, preparing for the formal release of “GDST 1.0” at the annual seafood industry expo in Boston this March.

As industry-led norms, the GDST standards will help our companies do better business by defining the key data elements that should accompany seafood products as they move through supply chains as well as design specifications to allow for information to be shared digitally and seamlessly. Once broadly implemented across the industry, these standards will facilitate trade and greatly increase the returns on investment as we continue to modernize our traceability practices.

These global standards have the power to positively change how seafood is bought and sold around the world, and our companies are already starting to take action. Commitment to deliver will require time and some investment, but in turn will positively impact the landscape of the industry and with it bring increased benefits to all in the supply chain. Increased efficiencies and risk-reductions will also heavily outweigh the costs and will strongly benefit our companies at the bottom line by ensuring that our products and brands continue to be known for their quality and competitive prices as well as their industry-leading responsible sourcing practices.

Seafood traceability cannot be accomplished by any one company or organization alone. The new GDST traceability standards are a collaborative effort that will benefit the entire seafood industry. Our companies are already starting to work with our supply chain partners to make this a reality. We encourage all businesses and stakeholders with an investment in seafood to join us in working to sustain the future of our industry.

Sincerely,



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