

# GUIDANCE FOR COMPANIES ON ENVIRONMENTALLY AND SOCIALY RESPONSIBLE SEAFOOD

REVISED  
MARCH 2024



CONSERVATION ALLIANCE  
FOR SEAFOOD SOLUTIONS

[SOLUTIONSFORSEAFOOD.ORG](https://SOLUTIONSFORSEAFOOD.ORG)

The journey to environmentally and socially responsible seafood depends on businesses across seafood supply chains making concerted efforts to improve in a transparent and accountable manner.

Whether your company is just starting its sustainability journey or further along the path, the Guidance for Companies can be used to guide, support, and evolve your efforts.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## About the Guidance, 2024 Edition:

The 2024 Guidance on Environmentally and Socially Responsible Seafood for Companies (“Guidance for Companies”) is urging the industry to put human and labor rights on par with environmental responsibility. Developed with comprehensive input from industry experts and the nonprofit community, this guidance is intended as a north star for any business committed to environmentally and socially responsible seafood.

## Brief History:

In 2009, the Alliance released guidelines for environmentally responsible seafood which focused on sustainability. Our goal is that by 2030, at least 75% of global seafood production is environmentally responsible or making verifiable improvements and safeguards are in place to ensure social responsibility. As of 2023, we are [at 46%](#) and making good progress. But, to achieve our goals, more companies need to start their journeys, and many of those with existing commitments need to engage in broader, more transparent efforts and processes.

## What is social responsibility - and why now?

In recent years, revelations about trafficking and labor rights abuses in fisheries have necessitated an expansion in priorities. The 2024 Guidance marks the first time that the 16-year-old Alliance is calling on the industry to put the “human factor” – fair pay, safe working conditions, and equitable opportunities – on par with a decades-long sectoral focus on environmental sustainability. The Guidance will help businesses safeguard against unethical practices and reputational risks in their supply chains.

## Where can we start?

This Guidance and its supporting documents provide key principles to help guide seafood companies’ sustainability and social responsibility journeys; a due diligence model to create, implement, and strengthen your sustainable seafood policy over time; a center with [nearly 100 actionable resources](#) for companies to inform their work and measure progress, including sustainable seafood commitments made by dozens of companies like Aldi and Pepsico; and [45 real-world examples](#) demonstrating how businesses of various sizes and types across seafood supply chains, including retailers, restaurants, and fish co-ops, have successfully implemented steps to protect the ocean, people, and communities.

## How do I get involved?

The Alliance’s Global Hub is an international community of organizations and subject area experts working to change the way seafood gets from boats and farms to plates. The Global Hub is open to any organization, group, business, academic institution, or individual expert working toward the Alliance’s vision of a world with an abundance of seafood where workers, communities, and our ocean all thrive. Membership is free, but we ask for in-kind contributions of ideas, expertise and, most importantly, time! One of the many perks of membership is an opportunity to provide input on and publicly endorse Alliance community outputs, like the Guidance! For membership questions, contact Meaghan Hudgins at [meaghan@solutionsforseafood.org](mailto:meaghan@solutionsforseafood.org).

# ABOUT THE CONSERVATION ALLIANCE FOR SEAFOOD SOLUTIONS

The [Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions](#) (“the Alliance”) is a global community of over 140 organizations that believes seafood production is a powerful driver of change for the health of our ocean and the well-being of communities around the world. The [Alliance’s Vision](#) is a world with an abundance of seafood in an environment where workers, communities, and our ocean can all thrive.

## ABOUT THE GUIDANCE FOR COMPANIES

The Alliance first created guidance to help businesses develop and implement sustainable seafood policies in 2008. Fifteen years later, the landscape the seafood sector operates within has evolved dramatically. Environmental and social responsibility have become a critical part of doing business, so our guidance must reflect this reality.

The Guidance on Environmentally and Socially Responsible Seafood for Companies (“Guidance for Companies”) was developed with comprehensive input from industry experts and the nonprofit community. This guidance is intended for any business that wants to begin or further its journey towards [environmentally and socially responsible seafood](#), regardless of where it may be in the supply chain or sustainability journey.

To achieve the Alliance’s [2030 goals](#), more companies need to start their journeys, and many of those with existing commitments need to engage in broader, more transparent efforts and processes.

This Guidance for Companies and supporting documents provide the following:

- key principles to help guide seafood companies’ sustainability journeys; A due diligence model to create, implement, and strengthen your sustainable seafood policy over time that’s based on globally accepted frameworks, including the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s \(OECD\) Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct \(OECD Guidance\)](#), [International Labor Organization conventions](#), and the [United Nations \(UN\) Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).
- sustainable seafood policies and action plans; and
- real-world examples of how businesses of various sizes and types across seafood supply chains have implemented key steps to protect the ocean, people, and communities.

## EXAMPLES

Throughout this document, boxes like this one provide anonymous, real-world examples of how businesses have incorporated this guidance into their operations.

EXAMPLES

# KEY PRINCIPLES

Eight fundamental principles – which are broadly supported by the responsible seafood movement – underpin this guidance.

1

**It's a Journey:** Responsible seafood is a cyclical journey – not a race you complete by crossing a finish line. Factors like climate change, evolving science, and regulatory and management changes<sup>1</sup> will shape your actions and commitments to responsible seafood over time.

2

**Set Your Vision, Then Act:** It's critically important you set an overarching vision, goals, and targets that result in measurable, time-bound commitments. Once your vision, goals, and targets are set, you implement specific action plans to make positive progress.

3

**Embed Throughout the Organization:** Your environmental and social responsibility commitments are strategically important to your business interests. Embedding your commitments in all applicable functions of your company, governance structure, and daily operations will benefit your supply chain, reduce risk, and demonstrate your business integrity. Rolling out commitments and policies is only the first step. They must also be embedded in a company's governance structure and daily operations.

4

**Do Your Due Diligence:** Due diligence is the ongoing process you carry out to identify and respond to the actual and potential impacts of your operations and supply chain<sup>2</sup>. The OECD Guidance<sup>3</sup> provides a framework to develop and strengthen your due diligence systems and processes and is fundamental to achieving effective outcomes.

5

**Iteration is Necessary:** Iteration is the process of doing something repeatedly, often to make improvements. Regular assessment and adjustment of your work is normal and should be expected. As circumstances evolve, progress is made, and priorities change, your goals and targets should be periodically revisited. Action plans will also evolve as needed.

6

**Communicate and Collaborate:** Consistent, ongoing communication is crucial for ensuring all stakeholders know your goals, targets, actions, and outcomes, including each stakeholder's role in achieving them. Communication will also facilitate more meaningful collaboration and support for your efforts.

1-European Commission. "Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence," February 23, 2022.

[https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/doing-business-eu/corporate-sustainability-due-diligence\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/doing-business-eu/corporate-sustainability-due-diligence_en).

2- OECD. "OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct Flyer," 2018.

<https://mneguidelines.oecd.org/Flyer-RBC-Due-Diligence.pdf>.

3- The OECD's Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct is "the first government-backed reference on due diligence which is relevant for all types of companies operating in all countries and sectors of the economy."

(Source: <https://mneguidelines.oecd.org/Flyer-RBC-Due-Diligence.pdf>)



7

**Be Accountable and Transparent:** Sustainability commitments are transparent and accountable when a company monitors and reports on its progress. Accountability and transparency are fundamental and essential elements of transformative sustainability policy and practices. Being transparent and accountable can help businesses with market access, customer demand, assurance of supply, and meeting commitments.



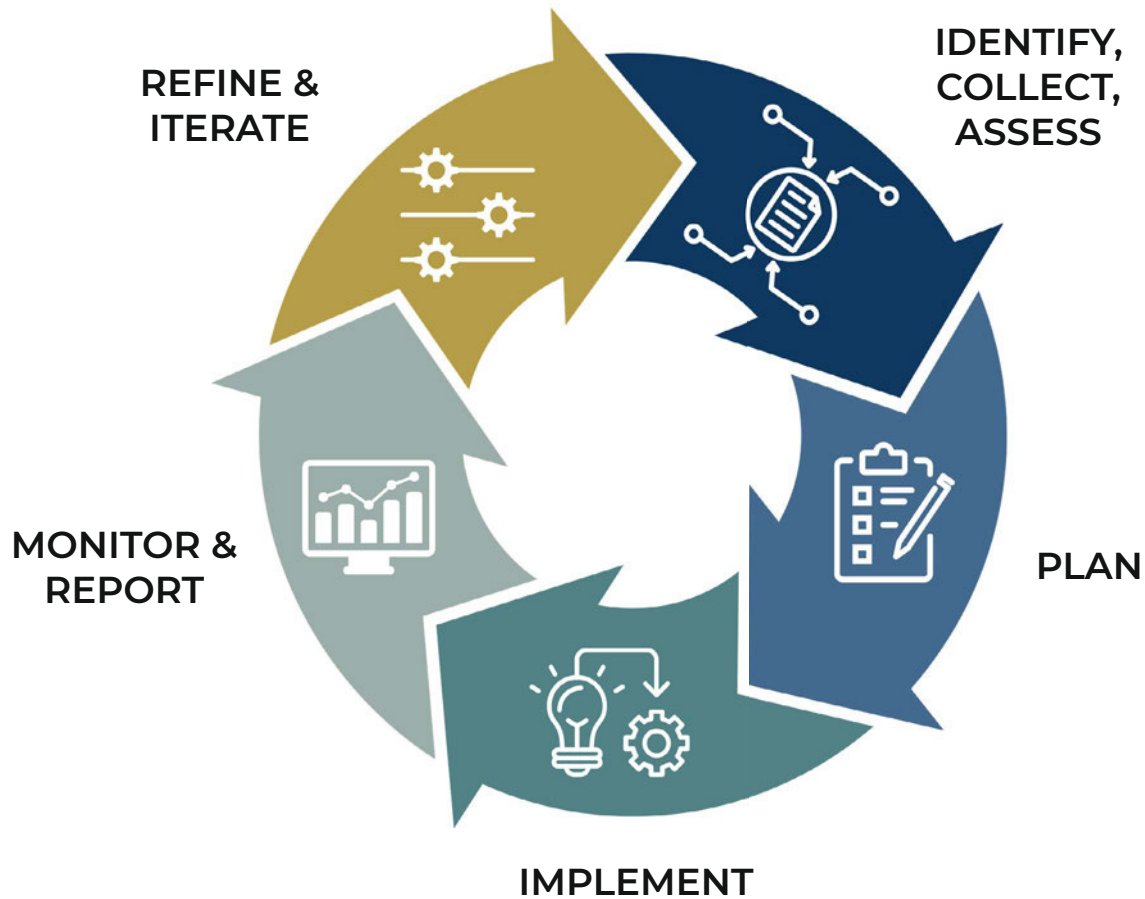
8

**Act Across Your Spheres of Influence:** Your company has direct influence over its products, indirect influence on the supply chain, and the ability to influence larger systemic issues through advocacy and pre-competitive collaborations. Companies should work toward improvements across all three spheres of influence.



# GUIDANCE FOR COMPANIES

This section describes a due diligence approach to develop, implement, and evolve sustainable seafood policies that protect the ocean, people, communities, and aquatic animals. The illustration below should be viewed as a model, and your company may need to adjust and revisit its priorities throughout this journey.



This section will help you:

- **Identify, Collect, and Assess** the environmental and social impacts of your company and supply chain.
- **Plan** your vision, goals, targets, and corresponding action plans.
- **Implement** your action plans.
- **Monitor and Report** your progress and outcomes.
- **Refine and Iterate** your journey to environmentally and socially responsible seafood.

# IDENTIFY, COLLECT, AND ASSESS



# IDENTIFY, COLLECT, AND ASSESS

First, you'll need to create a process to identify, collect data on, and assess the environmental and social impacts of your company and supply chain. Once you have this information and data, you can prioritize your work based on risk, impacts (actual and potential), and business priorities. This process is one that you'll revisit regularly.

## DATA COLLECTION

A robust due diligence approach includes regularly collecting data to establish a picture of your company's and supply chain's actual or potential impacts. The goal is to understand what you are buying and its performance against both key environmental and social criteria, as assessing environmental and social risks each requires different approaches. Data collection should include worker perspectives. Data collection will be an ongoing exercise and should, at a minimum, include the elements listed in the [Data Collection Checklist](#).

## PRIORITIZATION

When you can't address all actual or potential impacts immediately, you should prioritize your actions. Using data as a guide, carry out a scoping exercise to identify where in your operations and supply chain environmental and social impacts are most likely present and most significant. Elements to consider in a prioritization exercise may include:

- Ability to affect change
- Financial constraints
- Highest volume species purchased
- Targeting products where stocks need most improvement for assured supply
- Diversity and inclusion
- Country of origin, shipping distance, and carbon footprint

Action plans should then be developed for those priority areas. Once the most significant impacts are identified and addressed, you can focus on other important risks and impacts.

## COMMUNICATION

At this stage, most of your communication will be internal. You should communicate with colleagues, staff, and key vendors the reasons for your efforts and their important roles in ensuring success.

## EXAMPLES

A large-volume retailer is improving the traceability of its fresh tuna supply chain by:

- expanding its key data elements (KDEs) for tuna so they align with the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST) standard,
- communicating the new KDE requirements to its tuna vendors,
- troubleshooting verification issues with vendors as that arise, and
- dedicating resources and working with vendors to pilot an electronic traceability program.

### **Additional Examples**

[Large Volume Seafood Foodservice Company](#)

[Restaurant Chain](#)

[Midsize Importer and Wholesaler](#)

[Large-Volume Importer and Processor](#)

[Small Wholesaler](#)

[Single Location Sushi Restaurant](#)

[Co-Op](#)



# PLAN



# PLAN

Next, plan your vision, goals, targets, and corresponding action plans. Once you understand your current risks and impacts, you should define or refine your company's vision, goals, and targets for environmentally and socially responsible seafood.

## CREATE VISION, GOALS, AND TARGETS

A vision reflects your company's environmentally and socially responsible seafood aspirations. Goals and targets serve the vision by clearly defining what you seek to achieve within a designated time frame.

For example, a goal could be that your company (or a part of your company) will source 100% environmentally responsible seafood (or certain products), and the target is the date you aim to achieve the goal. Your sustainability goals could focus on a subset of your company's total activities. They should be ambitious but measurable and achievable within a defined period. Also, for some fisheries and farms, the goals can be results-based. For others, they might need to be advocacy-based.

Your goals should be as specific as possible. For example, if a goal is focused on certain products, it should include details like wild-caught, farmed, fresh, frozen, shelf-stable, private label, branded, value-added, nonfood items such as pet food and supplements, specific menu items, etc. Goals related to social responsibility should:

- Include worker-driven objectives based on credible international standards.
- Be supported by an effective traceability policy and processes that, at a minimum, include data on the existence of an independent trade union or representative workers organization.
- State clear expectations for suppliers and verify compliance.
- Include a clear and timely remediation process and contingency plans when necessary.
- Specify quantitative targets and timelines for achievement where appropriate.

Topics that a company may target can include:

- Advocacy – Direct and indirect advocacy, is a critical component of improving seafood supply chains.
- Animal welfare – How we improve the lives of the seafood we source is an important and growing area of interest for many governments and businesses.
- Climate resilience – While companies can focus on many aspects of climate change and its impacts, resilience is the topic that impacts most companies.

- Environmental responsibility – A fundamental first step in any responsible seafood commitment is setting transparent, public goals about the environmental responsibility of your seafood.
- Gender and racial equity – The gender and racial equity challenges in the seafood industry disproportionately affect women and people of color. The time to center their voices in addressing these challenges is now.
- Human rights and due diligence – A robust due diligence process is required to fully uncover and address human rights issues and risks in supply chains.
- Social responsibility – While a company’s supply chain may never be 100% free of all social issues, it is still critically important to set quantitative goals (e.g., worker voice mechanisms on 100% of vessels.)
- Sourcing and procurement – Sourcing policies and commitments can be highly effective tools for changing behavior, managing risk, and communicating expectations to vendors.
- Traceability – Traceability is a spectrum, and all companies, regardless of their roles in seafood supply chains, have a role to play in improving traceability.
- Verification – Verifiable progress monitoring and reporting is a fundamental and essential element of any credible, transformative sustainability policy and practice.

## CREATE ACTION PLANS

Once you set your goals and targets, create and implement corresponding action plans. Action plans should describe 1) the activities you’ll undertake, 2) the timeframe to carry out the activities, and 3) the process to measure and track progress. You can also order your action plans based on your prioritization work. Robust action plans include:

- Specific goals and targets based on the outputs of your assessment and prioritization efforts.
- An outline of the activities your company will undertake to address your goals and targets.
- Concrete sourcing and procurement commitments.
- Procurement options may include seafood that’s certified, rated, and engaged in improvement projects.
- A process for measuring progress against your goals and targets.

## EMBED AND COMMUNICATE

At this stage, your company’s Code of Conduct and/or Sourcing Policy should be updated to communicate your vision, goals, and targets for environmentally and socially responsible seafood. In addition, your Code of Conduct should be published online and communicated during business engagements. Once completed, your policies, goals, and action plans should be integrated into supplier agreements.

## EXAMPLES

A large retailer (with dedicated sustainability staffing and resources) only sells seafood certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP).

- The retailer expects farm suppliers to ensure sustainable production and sourcing throughout the supply chain, including final processing plants, farms, hatcheries, and feed mills.
- Tuna purchases must comply with the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF)'s conservation measures, including those adopted in collaboration with relevant tuna Regional Fishery Management Organizations and from vessels registered on the Proactive Vessel Register.
- The retailer has also set a goal to help protect, more sustainably manage, or restore at least 50 million acres of land and one million square miles of ocean by 2030.
- If it is discovered that the company is procuring species that have an adverse impact on Endangered, Threatened, or Protected (ETP) species, the company will attempt to work with the supplier to find alternative species. If that is not possible, the company will cease sourcing that species from the supplier.

### Additional Examples

[Global Seafood Purchaser and Processor](#)

[Large-Volume Retailer](#)

[Large-Volume Processor](#)

[Large-Volume Seafood Processor](#)

[Large-Volume Retailer](#)

[Midsize Importer and Wholesaler](#)

[Large-Volume Importer](#)

[Single Location Restaurant](#)

[Small-Volume Wholesaler](#)

[Co-Op](#)



# IMPLEMENT



# IMPLEMENT

Now it's time to implement your action plans to prevent, mitigate, and remediate<sup>4</sup> the actual or potential impacts of your company and supply chain. There may be legal or other circumstances that require you to stop certain purchases or activities. Based on the priorities you defined for your company, work toward improvements in your spheres of influence: direct, indirect, advocacy, and collaboration.

## DIRECT INFLUENCE

- Assign and communicate who is responsible for implementing the action plans in your company.
- Implement your action plans to address the priority risks and impacts identified in the Identify, Collect, and Assess phase and the Plan phase.
- Adjust business practices and budgets so you can effectively implement your action plans. For example, you may need to adjust your sourcing policies. If a severe adverse impact is identified in a source and can't be remedied, it may be necessary to remove a supplier or procurement source.
- Engage directly with suppliers and producers to improve practices by
  - Working with your vendors to collect standardized data.
  - Working with clients to better understand social responsibility risks within your supply chain and sharing lessons learned publicly.
  - Financially supporting a credible Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) or Aquaculture Improvement Project (AIP).
  - Help innovative and responsible aquaculture operations succeed in the market by communicating needs and expectations.
  - Working with suppliers to implement robust and credible grievance and remediation mechanisms for workers, including involving them in the design.

<sup>4</sup>-OECD. "OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct," 2018.  
<https://mneguidelines.oecd.org/OECD-Due-Diligence-Guidance-for-Responsible-Business-Conduct.pdf>.

## INDIRECT INFLUENCE, ADVOCACY, AND COLLABORATION

- Participate in pre-competitive collaborations and NGO platforms to advance environmental and social responsibility reforms. Examples include:
  - Voicing support for policies at the local, state, national, or international levels by writing letters, making calls, or attending meetings.
  - Asking vendors, trade associations, and other influential actors to speak up about a policy issue.
- Collaborate with other companies and conservation or human rights organizations to develop solutions to wild and farmed seafood challenges. Examples include:
  - Providing input to strengthen certification and ratings programs.
  - Participating in roundtables on key issues, such as traceability.
  - Joining pre-competitive collaborations.
  - Supporting research on improvements to fishing or aquaculture practices.
  - Supporting credible worker engagement and grievance mechanisms (e.g., providing access to the internet at sea)
- Engage with governments, RFMOs, and other regulatory bodies to advance environmental and social responsibility across fisheries and farms from which you source.
- Engage with governments and international organizations on human rights, labor rights, and sustainable livelihood expectations. Examples include:
  - Sharing best practices, approaches, and tools you find successful in supply chain sustainability programs.
  - Identifying risks and solutions in partnership with national and international trade unions.
  - Sending clear, unified messages to national governments about human and labor rights by working collaboratively and leveraging businesses' role in providing employment opportunities and economic development.
  - Advocating for policies that enable safe and fair working conditions.

## COMMUNICATION

If you haven't already communicated your plans to all partners and stakeholders (including colleagues, staff, vendors, suppliers, and customers), the implementation stage is the time to do so. In addition, your full sustainable seafood statement (vision, goals, targets, and action plans) should be published on your website, NGO partner websites, and your place of business.

## EXAMPLES

A South Pacific-based processing company is working to address social responsibility issues in its supply chain. The company's efforts include:

- placing women in conventionally male occupations such as trainee positions in the maintenance and engineering department and on tuna fishing vessels;
- supporting cadetships for women to study at a maritime college and at sea to become captains or chief engineers;
- examining other traditionally all-male positions (such as fuel bunkering, slipways, and gear maintenance) to see where women can be employed; and
- exploring new approaches to support maternity and childcare needs.

### **Additional Examples**

[Large-Volume Importer and Processor](#)

[Large-Volume Retailer](#)

[Midsize Importer and Wholesaler](#)

[Large-Volume Importer and Processor](#)

[Single Location Restaurant](#)

[A Company's Remediation Process](#)

[Three Companies Climate-Related Efforts](#)

[National Chain](#)

[Large-Volume Retailer](#)

[Large-Volume Retailer](#)



# MONITOR AND REPORT



## MONITOR AND REPORT

Monitoring occurs alongside implementation because understanding your effectiveness is critical to understanding when you need to adjust and revisit your priorities, targets, action plans, etc.

## MEASURE AND MONITOR

A monitoring and verification process should include:

- A methodology and metrics to measure and verify progress against each goal, target, and activity.
- Systems and processes to collect data. Activities to improve collection and access to data should be in your action plans when it's limited.
- A schedule for reviewing and potentially revising action plans.

## PUBLICLY REPORT PROGRESS

Publicly reporting your progress and outcomes annually, even if your sustainability outcomes are not met, will help build trust with your customers. For example, progress updates can be published on your website, social media, annual reports, newsletters, and other publications. These updates should summarize your progress toward your goals and targets, completed action plans and outcomes, and plans for the next year or reporting period. It is essential to be transparent about the intended reporting frequency, even if you haven't met your goals. When reporting progress, be as accurate as possible and provide evidence for all claims.

## EXAMPLES

A large-volume retailer monitors and reports its progress on the percentage of products that meet its environmental sourcing policy. The retailer:

- provides, trainings to employees and vendors;
- takes action in response to social responsibility risks identified in its supply chain;
- uses a third party to review progress toward its commitments;
- has a GDST-compliant electronic traceability platform and collects production information on every purchase order; and
- publishes information about its activities and progress toward its Sustainability Plan Targets and Global Tuna Alliance commitments.

### Additional Examples

[Large-Volume Importer and Processor](#)

[Single Location Restaurant](#)

[Co-Op](#)



# REFINE AND ITERATE





## REFINE AND ITERATE

You'll need to regularly refine and iterate your journey to environmentally and socially responsible seafood. Indeed, your due diligence approach will evolve as successes, failures, challenges, and opportunities occur.

## ONGOING ASSESSMENT

Data collection, tracing, analysis of data, and progress tracking should be ingrained across your operations. This will allow you to effectively monitor progress, improve processes, determine what additional efforts are needed, and identify emerging or growing risks and impacts.

## CHANGING PRIORITIES

The due diligence approach is an iterative process where you regularly review your goals, targets, and action plans to monitor your progress and reflect on how they can be improved. Ongoing monitoring and assessment may reveal a change in priorities is needed. For example, you may need to concentrate on new, developing, or previously unaddressed issues.

As you work toward achieving your commitments, new (or revisions to existing) action plans will likely be required. When you achieve a commitment, you should consider developing a new commitment or improving upon the ambition of the current commitment to drive further improvements to fisheries and aquaculture.

Since environmentally and socially responsible seafood is an ongoing journey, it is understood that some goals will not be met quickly. For that reason, it is even more important to report on your efforts and progress and the challenges in achieving your targets.

## EXAMPLES

A large-volume retailer is a multi-species buyer with an allocated budget for responsibility.

- The retailer has a standard operating procedure that is reviewed and revised annually, and it reports all outcomes to the Board.
- Results are also shared publicly to ensure full transparency.
- Any amendments are clearly signposted and if no changes are made to the strategy, the rationale is clearly elucidated.

### **Additional Examples**

[Midsize Wholesaler](#)

[Large-Volume Importer and Processor](#)

[Single location Restaurant](#)

[Tribal Fishery](#)

## CONCLUSION

Achieving environmentally and socially responsible seafood is a journey that requires transparent and accountable efforts from all businesses in the supply chain. By conducting due diligence, you can identify and prepare for any potential environmental or social impacts your operations and supply chain may cause.

Whether your company is just beginning this journey or has already made progress, this document will guide, support, and enhance your efforts. In addition, as our understanding of environmental and social sustainability evolves, this document and related resources will too.

Lastly, you don't have to embark on or continue this journey alone. The Alliance's [Global Hub](#) is an international community of organizations and subject area experts working to change the way seafood gets from boats and farms to plates. The Global Hub is open to any organization, group, business, academic institution, or individual expert working toward the Alliance's vision of a world with an abundance of seafood where workers, communities, and our ocean all thrive.



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## WORKING GROUP

The Alliance wishes to recognize the dedication and perseverance of the Guidance for Companies Working Group. Members represent a range of experience and knowledge and include practitioners, academics, labor, and regional experts. In addition to cited works, much of this document is based on the Working Group's expertise. The Working Group approved the Guidance for Companies by a supermajority vote. Thank you!

Michelle Beritzhoff-Law	Fishwise
Shawn Cronin	Seafood Watch
Helen Packer	World Benchmarking Alliance
Ruth Hoban	New England Seafoods
Aiko Yamauchi	Seafood Legacy
Stacy Schultz	Fortune Fish and Gourmet
Tom Pickerell	(At time of writing) Fisheries Director, Pew Charitable Trusts Current Global Ocean Director, WRI
Andy Hickman	SEA Alliance

## STAKEHOLDER INSIGHT INTERVIEWS

The scope of this project required additional input from experts throughout the industry and nonprofit community. The following individuals and organizations provided insight and feedback throughout the process. Their inclusion in this list does not imply support or endorsement.

Peter Adame	Lusamerica Fish
Christina Callegari	SeaChoice
Dana Cleaveley	SeaChoice
Michael Cohen	Business Development & Sustainability Consultant
Claire Dawson	OceanWise
Maisie Ganzler	BAMCO
Alexandra Golub	Acme Smoked Fish
Rob Snyder	Acme Smoked Fish
Michael Griff	World Wildlife Fund U.S.
Sam Grimley	SeaPact
Julie Kuchepatov	SAGE
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Cari McCall	Walt Disney Parks & Resorts
Shunji Murakami	UMITO Partners
Adrianna Sanchez	Seafood Ninja
Chris Shearlock	Thai Union
Mallika Talwar	(formerly) Greenpeace
Cecilia Valenza	Aquatic Life Institute
Sophika Kostyniuk	Aquatic Life Institute
Hamish Walker	Seattle Fish Company
Georgia Worrall	SEA Alliance (consultant)

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIP	Aquaculture Improvement Project
BAP	Best Aquaculture Practices
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FIP	Fishery Improvement Project
GDST	Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability
Guidance for Companies	Guidance on Environmentally and Socially Responsible Seafood for Companies
HRDD	Human Rights Due Diligence
IUU	Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing
KDEs	Key data elements
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD Guidance	OECD's Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SKUs	Stock Keeping Units
SSI	Seafood Stewardship Index
The Alliance	The Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions
UN	United Nations

## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- **Risk** means the likelihood of adverse impacts on people, the environment, and society that enterprises may cause, contribute to, or to which they are directly linked.
- **Environmentally responsible** identifies the practices and behaviors that seek to credibly address, reduce, or eliminate negative impacts to the planet and aim for continual improvement.
- **Decent work** is defined as “productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity.”<sup>5</sup>
- **Improving** refers to fisheries involved in credible FIPs<sup>6</sup> and farming operations engaged in AIPs.<sup>7</sup>
- **KDEs** means key data elements, which includes the fundamental information a business must collect for its seafood products.
- **Our ocean** includes all bodies of water, including freshwater and marine ecosystems.
- **Seafood** includes animals, plants, and algae caught or farmed in freshwater or saltwater environments.<sup>8</sup>
- **Socially responsible** identifies the practices and behaviors that seek to credibly address negative impacts to people of all genders and social statuses and aim for continual improvement.
- **Sustainable** and **sustainability** refers to the UN’s established definition, “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”<sup>9</sup>
- **Traditional knowledge**, according to the UN, “is the foundation of indigenous peoples’ identities, cultural heritage, civilizations, livelihoods, and coping strategies over several centuries. Its promotion, protection, and preservation [are] fundamental for the sustainability of the livelihoods of indigenous peoples, their resilience to human-made and natural disasters, and the development of their communities. It is also at the core of the rights of indigenous peoples.”<sup>10</sup>

5-European Commission. “Employment and Decent Work.” Accessed January 24, 2023. [https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/sustainable-growth-and-jobs/employment-and-decent-work\\_en](https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/sustainable-growth-and-jobs/employment-and-decent-work_en).

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# DATA COLLECTION CHECKLIST

Detailed data collection on seafood products is critical for knowing if you are meeting your commitment. It also contributes to protecting your long-term supply of seafood. Understanding your products and where they come from enables you to assess the sustainability of your products, measure changes, and take action to improve supply over time.

All companies can strengthen their seafood purchasing by adopting traceability and product information policies that begin with commitments to basic practices and that continuously improve as industry best practices evolve.

The information listed below is the bare minimum to collect and monitor for environmental responsibility commitments. It enables companies to use the most common free resources, such as Seafood Watch ratings, Oceanwise ratings, etc. and is necessary to meet some international legal requirements.

For an extensive list of KDEs, please refer to the [Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability](#).

<b>WHAT:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scientific name</li> <li>• U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Common Name or FAO Name</li> <li>• Volume of product purchased</li> <li>• Supplier name</li> </ul>
<b>WHERE:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishery location within a country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ)</li> <li>• FAO Major Fishing Area, RFMO, or high seas name if the fishery operates outside of EEZs</li> <li>• Country where farming occurs.</li> <li>• Country of Original Labeling/Country of Origin, meaning the country where the last processing occurred<sup>11</sup></li> </ul>
<b>HOW:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild-caught or farmed</li> <li>• Fishing or aquaculture production methods used</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup>-USDA. "Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) Frequently Asked Questions | Agricultural Marketing Service." Accessed December 9, 2023.  
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/cool/questions-answers-consumers>.

## Human Rights Due Diligence

To support companies addressing Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD), expanding your data collection beyond just the basic product KDEs outlined above is important.

Data collection for HRDD is a multi-tiered process, starting with assessing risk to prioritize action to collecting and verifying supply chain information, policies, and practices for worker engagement. A company's data collection process may look like this:

- Risk assessments that utilize product-level information cross-referenced with risk databases, such as the [Seafood Social Risk Tool](#) or [Withhold Release Orders Findings](#).
- Stakeholder engagement and supplier deep dives into policies and practices of upstream actors. This work can align with social indicators from a benchmark, such as the [World Benchmarking Alliance's Seafood Stewardship Index](#).)
- Vessel-level analysis using [Global Fishing Watch](#) to review indicators such as time at sea and at-sea transshipment.
- Collecting data from workers using the [Social Responsibility Assessment Tool](#).



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CHECKLIST

Companies should collect additional information about their products and supply chain(s) to support specific traceability, risk assessment, and improvement efforts. You may need to work with local NGOs or producers to gather this information. Companies may not need to collect this data for every product. At present, this information includes but is not limited to the following:

<b>WHO:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Producer and processor names.</li><li>• Flag state and unique identification number of vessels (e.g., International Maritime Organization or Maritime Mobile Service Identity).</li><li>• Catch certificate, fishing vessel license, or both.</li><li>• Name of the fishing vessel(s), and where transshipment occurs (port or at sea). If transshipment occurred at sea, the identifying information of the vessels involved in the exchange.</li><li>• Chain of custody certification.</li></ul>
<b>WHAT:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quantities of product at the time of harvesting/production, landing (if wild caught), and processing.</li><li>• Unique identifiers (e.g., lot numbers, batch codes, serial numbers, etc.).</li><li>• For aquaculture, details on feed sources, including the basic information listed above for all wild inputs to the feed.</li><li>• Name of FIP or AIP.</li><li>• Products and/or supply chains at high risk for illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing or human rights and labor abuses, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trafficking in Persons tier for the country where the product is harvested and processed.</li><li>• For wild-capture, the IUU status of the country where the product was harvested.</li></ul></li></ul>

**WHERE:**

- For aquaculture, name and GPS location of farms.
- For wild-capture, port/location of landing and vessel satellite tracking records.
- Country of origin labeling.<sup>12</sup>
- Date(s) of fishing or aquaculture production.
- Date(s) of landing (and transshipment, if applicable).
- Date(s) of processing.

Companies should also consider how they collect information. The seafood industry has historically operated using paper-based systems to track product information. Companies must work toward electronic, automated data capture and traceability systems to allow for real-time information sharing. Moreover, since data collection is so intensive, it's in companies' interest to both work collaboratively on data collection and share it publicly to inform and prioritize action.

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<sup>12</sup>-USDA. "Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) Frequently Asked Questions | Agricultural Marketing Service." Accessed December 9, 2023.  
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/cool/questions-answers-consumers>.

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