



AT A GLANCE

Confidence in certified seafood



Terms and Definitions

BMZ

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

CCRF

FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

FAO

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FAO Guidelines

FAO Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine/Inland Capture Fisheries and FAO Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification

GIZ

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

GSSI

Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative

Global Benchmark Tool

The Tool is made up of 3 parts: a Benchmark Process, the steps a scheme goes through to be recognized by GSSI; a Benchmark Framework showing *GSSI Essential Components* and *GSSI Supplementary Components*; and a result – a statement of GSSI Recognition and a Benchmark Report

GSSI Essential Components

Criteria grounded in the CCRF and the FAO Guidelines, which a seafood certification scheme needs to meet to be recognized by GSSI

GSSI Supplementary Components

Criteria grounded in the CCRF and related FAO documents, ISO normative standards and ISEAL codes. They show a seafood certification scheme's diverse approach and help stakeholders understand where differences exist. A seafood certification scheme does not need to meet them for GSSI Recognition.

ISEAL (Alliance)

Global membership association for sustainability standards

ISO

International organization for standardization

NGO

Non-governmental organization

OIE

World Organization for Animal Health

Seafood certification scheme

An organization in the seafood sector, which is responsible for the processes, systems, procedures, and activities related to standard setting, accreditation, and implementation of certification

WTO

World Trade Organization

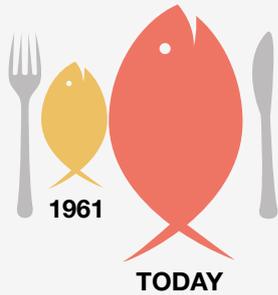




GSSI is a global platform and partnership of seafood companies, NGOs, experts, governmental and intergovernmental organizations working towards more sustainable seafood for everyone.

Seafood matters:

Production



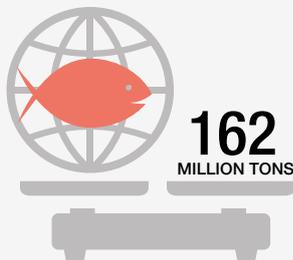
Per capita fish consumption has **more than doubled** since 1961



By 2030, world fish production to increase by more than 20 million tons to 187 million tons

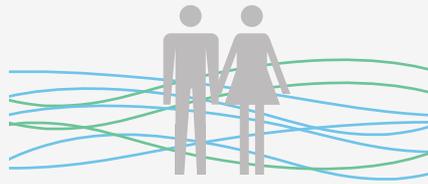


Aquaculture production: estimated average **8.5% yearly growth** between 1980-2013



2013: global fish supply estimated at 162 million tons or **average of 19.6kg/capita**

Employment



58 MILLION PEOPLE

58 million people **directly employed** in fisheries and aquaculture

About **200 million** direct and indirect employment opportunities along seafood value chain from harvesting to distribution, with livelihoods of about 10-12% of the global population dependent on the sector

Nutrition

Fish make up **17% of global population's intake** of animal protein and provide essential nutrients, vitamins and omega-3 fatty acids



WHO recommends to eat **at least 2 portions of fish** per week

Exports and Imports

Developing countries provide the majority of seafood exports. Developed countries, namely the US, Japan and EU are major importers of fish and fishery products. Demand for certified seafood products primarily comes from these markets.



GSSI's story so far

The problem

As seafood production increases to meet rising global demand, so have concerns of members of the seafood supply chain, consumers and environmental NGOs over the impact that production is having on the environment. One way of providing assurances of more sustainable practices in both aquaculture production and wild capture fisheries is the use of seafood certification schemes. But the increase of schemes has led to confusion among producers, retailers and consumers over how to recognize a credible seafood certification scheme. This confusion is making decision-making more difficult, and seafood more costly, for everyone.

The solution

The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) is a unique solution to this problem. For the first time members of the seafood supply chain, NGOs, governmental and intergovernmental

organizations and a number of independent experts have come up with a collective, non-competitive approach to provide clarity on seafood certification and ensure consumer confidence in certified seafood.

They've done this by following the reference documents at the heart of the process: the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF), the FAO Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine/Inland Capture Fisheries and the FAO Technical Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification (FAO Guidelines). GSSI used this foundation to create a Global Benchmark Tool for seafood certification schemes.

GSSI's Global Benchmark Tool includes *GSSI Essential Components* that are based on the CCRF and the FAO Guidelines and which seafood certification schemes must meet to be recognized by GSSI. GSSI has also created *GSSI Supplementary Components*,

which show a seafood certification scheme's diverse approach and help stakeholders understand where differences exist. They are defined by the GSSI Expert Working Groups and grounded in the CCRF and related FAO documents, ISO normative standards and ISEAL codes.

This shared solution will make information available across the seafood supply chain to drive change and lower costs. For producers, it means more options to choose the scheme that is right for them and reduce the need for multiple audits. For seafood buyers, it means simpler, more consistent data to guide their purchasing decisions. And for NGOs it means more open and checked information to help promote environmental sustainability.

Through its Global Benchmark Tool GSSI works towards its collective objective to minimize the overall environmental impact of how we catch, grow and deliver seafood to meet a growing global demand.

This is how all the pieces fit together:



*FAO Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine/Inland Capture Fisheries and FAO Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification.

GSSI headlines

GSSI vision: more sustainable seafood for everyone

GSSI mission: ensure confidence in the supply and promotion of certified seafood as well as to promote improvement in the seafood certification schemes

GSSI objectives:

- provide an international multi-stakeholder platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange in seafood sustainability
- develop an internationally agreed set of *GSSI Components* to measure and compare the performance of seafood certification schemes, in order to facilitate their implementation and use
- build, operate and maintain a common, consistent and global benchmark tool for seafood certification schemes
- reduce cost by eliminating redundancy and improving operational efficiency of seafood certification schemes thereby increasing affordability and flexibility within the supply chain

GSSI aims high:

- GSSI has grown from 17 Funding Partner companies in 2013 to 32 in 2015 and welcomes new partners
- GSSI is encouraging seafood certification schemes to go through its Global Benchmark Tool
- GSSI aims that by 2020, 30% of seafood catch/production (tons of raw fish/shellfish per year) will be certified to a GSSI recognized scheme

GSSI does:

- drive change towards sustainability through a multi-stakeholder process
- deliver recognition of seafood certification schemes aligned with the FAO Guidelines
- increase comparability and transparency in seafood certification
- enable informed choice for procurement of certified seafood

GSSI does not:

- undertake any accreditation or certification
- develop or own any standards
- rank certification schemes
- define sustainable or responsible seafood
- permit any consumer facing labelling about its recognition
- make policy for any business or scheme

A word on social issues:

GSSI is currently focused on environmental issues. GSSI partners recognize the importance of social issues and the work of global organizations in this area. Going forward GSSI is committed to exploring how social issues may be addressed in the seafood supply chain.



FAO Guidelines and GSSI's Global Benchmark Tool

FAO member countries have signed up to the FAO Guidelines with the private sector and other stakeholders actively participating in the process.

The FAO is a committed partner to GSSI and supports the development of a common benchmark for seafood certification schemes to create a level playing field.

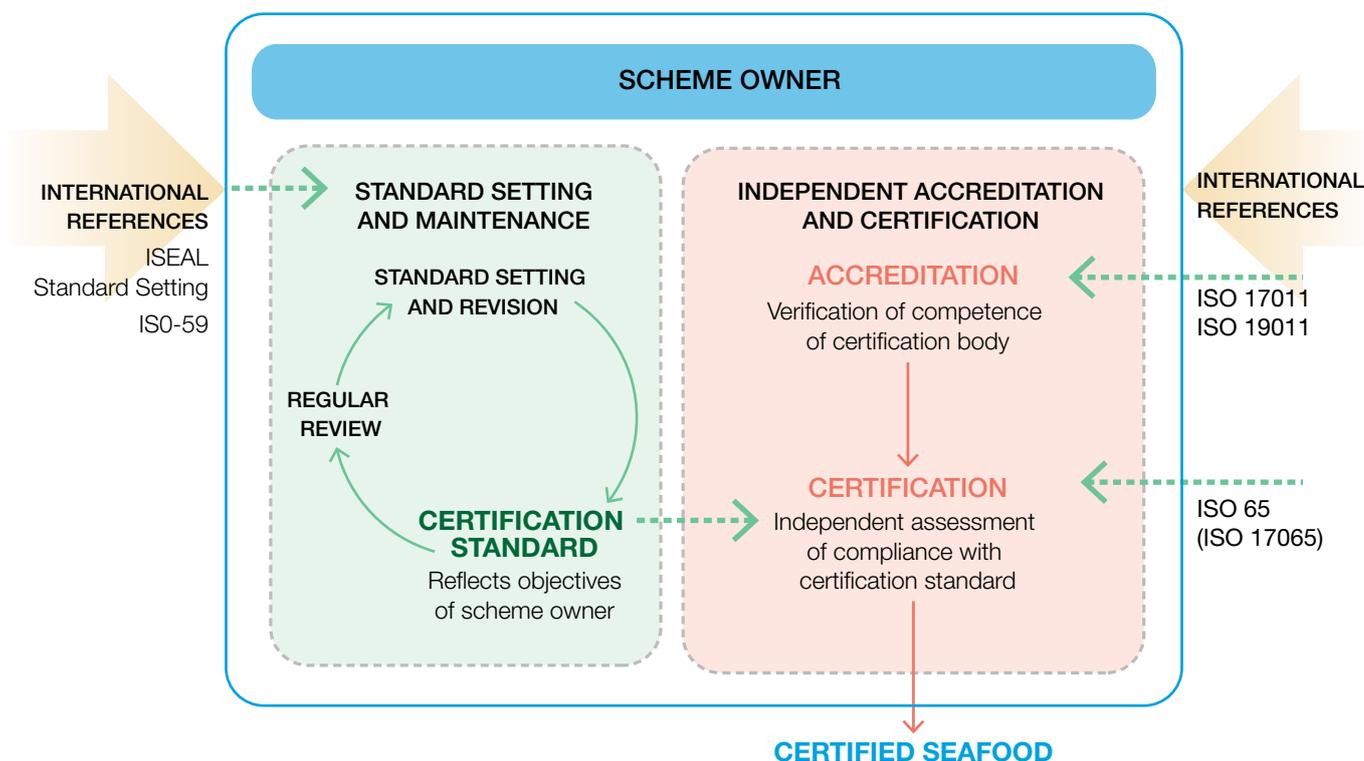
FAO affirms that the benchmark needs to be consistent with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and the FAO Guidelines. These are the FAO Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products

from Marine/Inland Capture Fisheries and the FAO Technical Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification.

GSSI's Global Benchmark Tool operates with the FAO Guidelines at its core. For the first time the FAO Guidelines will be used to look at what is happening on the ground as seafood certification schemes sign up to be benchmarked. When a seafood certification scheme meets GSSI's *Essential Components*,

grounded in the CCRF and the FAO Guidelines, GSSI will publicly recognize the scheme. At the same time the Tool includes *GSSI Supplementary Components*, which show a seafood certification scheme's diverse approach and help stakeholders understand where differences exist. They are defined by the GSSI Expert Working Groups and grounded in the CCRF and related FAO documents, ISO normative standards and ISEAL codes.

Seafood Certification Scheme according to FAO Guidelines*



*FAO Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine/Inland Capture Fisheries and FAO Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification

GSSI Global Benchmark Tool in Action

GSSI Global Benchmark Tool at a Glance

The GSSI Global Benchmark Tool is made up of three parts.

Process:

steps a scheme goes through to be recognized by GSSI

Framework:

includes *GSSI Essential Components* which a seafood certification scheme must meet for recognition, and *GSSI Supplementary Components*, which allow schemes to show their diverse approach and help stakeholders understand where differences exist

Result:

the statement of GSSI Recognition and Benchmark Report

Benchmark Process

Seafood certification schemes go through a 7-step Benchmark Process to be recognized by GSSI. The expert-led process involves objective assessments made against the Benchmark Framework. The process has been designed to be independent, impartial and transparent.

- 1 Application**
Schemes interested in applying for GSSI recognition contact the GSSI Secretariat.
- 2 Desktop Review**
Independent Experts review application and provided evidence.
- 3 Office Visit**
Independent Experts visit the scheme's office to review evidence and complete the interim Benchmark Report.
- 4 Benchmark Committee Meeting**
Benchmark Committee evaluates the interim Benchmark Report.
- 5 Public Consultation**
Benchmark Report and the Benchmark Committee's recommendation for recognition go to public consultation.
- 6 Recognition Decision by GSSI Steering Board**
Steering Board takes a decision on GSSI Recognition of the scheme based on the final recommendation of the Benchmark Committee.
- 7 Monitoring of Continued Alignment**
Recognized schemes annually report relevant changes to GSSI, in combination with regular reassessments through GSSI.

Benchmark Framework

The Benchmark Framework is made up of four Sections.

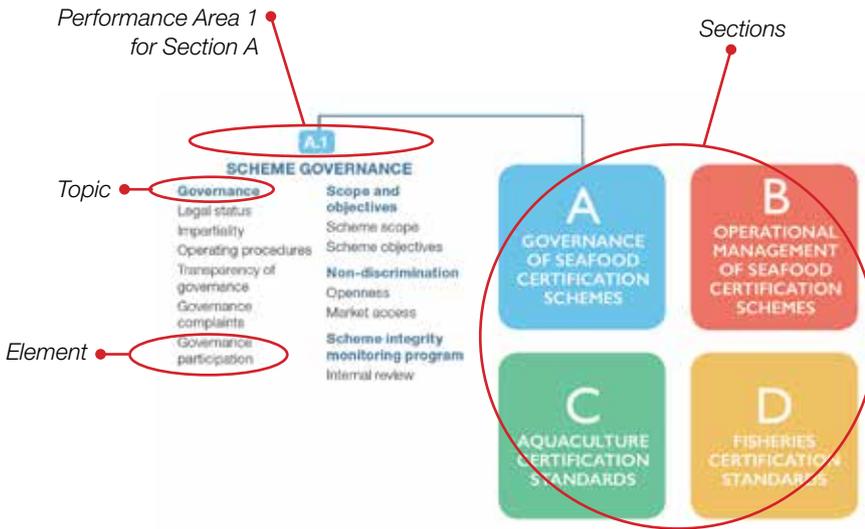
- A** *GSSI Essential Components and GSSI Supplementary Components for **Governance of a Seafood Certification Scheme***
- B** *GSSI Essential Components and GSSI Supplementary Components for **Operational Management of a Seafood Certification Scheme***
- C** *GSSI Essential Components and GSSI Supplementary Components for **Aquaculture Certification Standards***
- D** *GSSI Essential Components and GSSI Supplementary Components for **Fisheries Certification Standards***

All seafood certification schemes will be assessed against Sections A and B. Depending on the scope of the seafood certification scheme, they will also be assessed against either Section C or D or both.



Structure of the Benchmark Framework

The Benchmark Framework has four Sections, with a number of Performance Areas, each of which includes Elements organised by Topic.



It's here at the Element level that the Benchmark Tool Framework goes into detail. The Framework shows information on *GSSI Essential Components*, grounded in the CCRF and FAO Guidelines. These are the full range of criteria, which a scheme needs to meet to be recognized by GSSI.

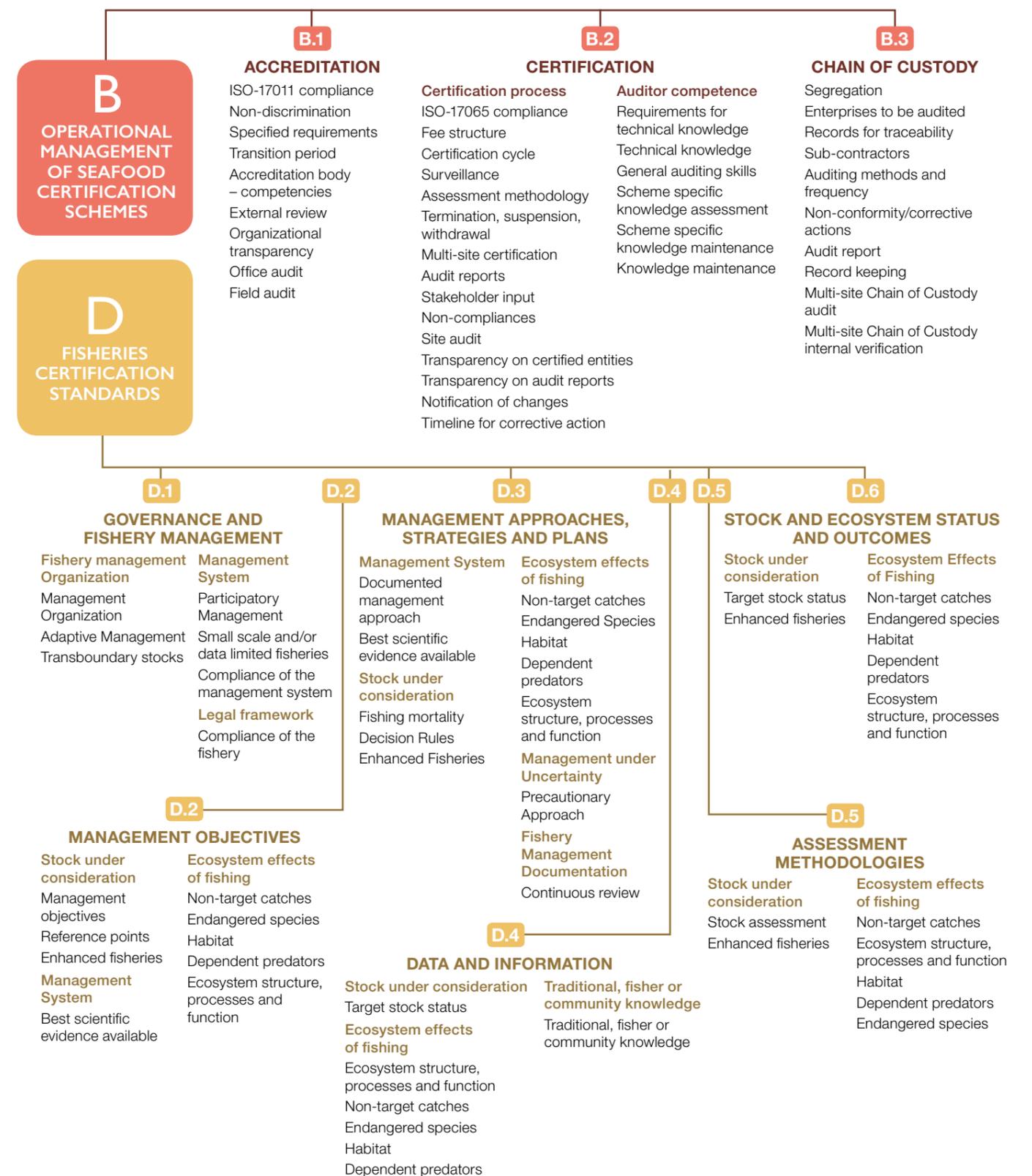
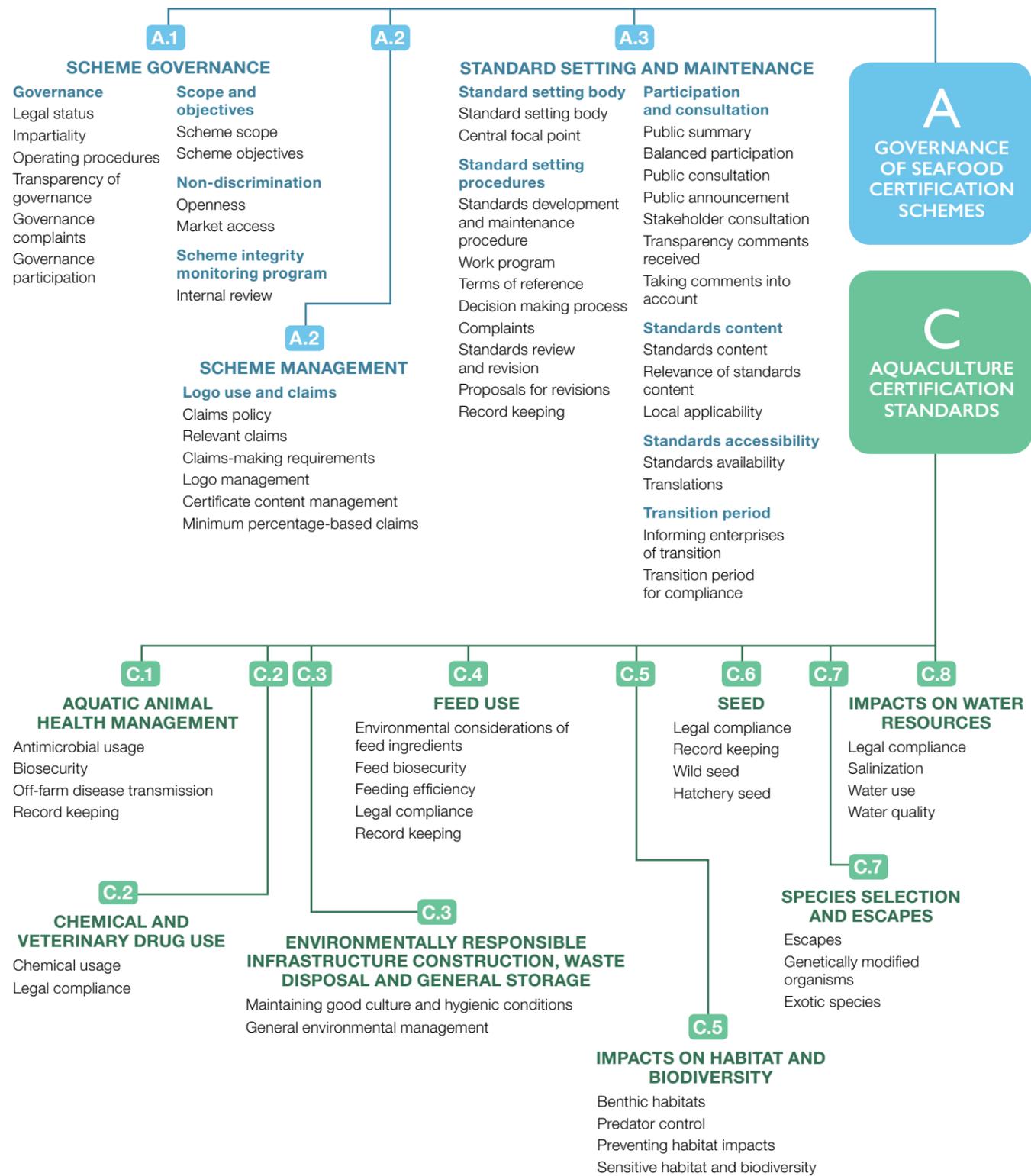
It also provides information on *GSSI Supplementary Components*, which show a seafood certification scheme's diverse approach and help stakeholders understand where differences exist. They are defined by the GSSI Expert Working Groups and grounded in the CCRF and related FAO documents, ISO normative standards and ISEAL codes. Their purpose is to outline the status of existing practices in seafood certification and they can be built on going forward. A rationale for each *GSSI Supplementary Component* explains its value to both schemes and stakeholders. The Benchmark Process will verify if a seafood certification scheme meets *GSSI Supplementary Components*. Meeting *GSSI Supplementary Components* is not required for GSSI recognition.

Benchmark Result

Once a seafood certification scheme has gone through the Benchmark Process and is found in alignment with all *GSSI Essential Components* it will be publically recognized by GSSI. GSSI will then publish a statement and a Benchmark Report on www.ourgssi.org.

Then it's over to the seafood sector to make use of the information to help in decision-making. For producers, it means more options to choose the scheme that is right for them and reduce the need for multiple audits. For seafood buyers, it means simpler, more consistent data to guide their purchasing decisions. And for NGOs it means more open and checked information to help promote environmental sustainability.

GSSI Global Benchmark Tool in Focus

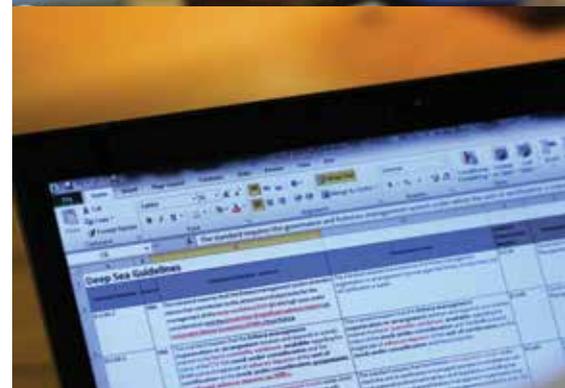
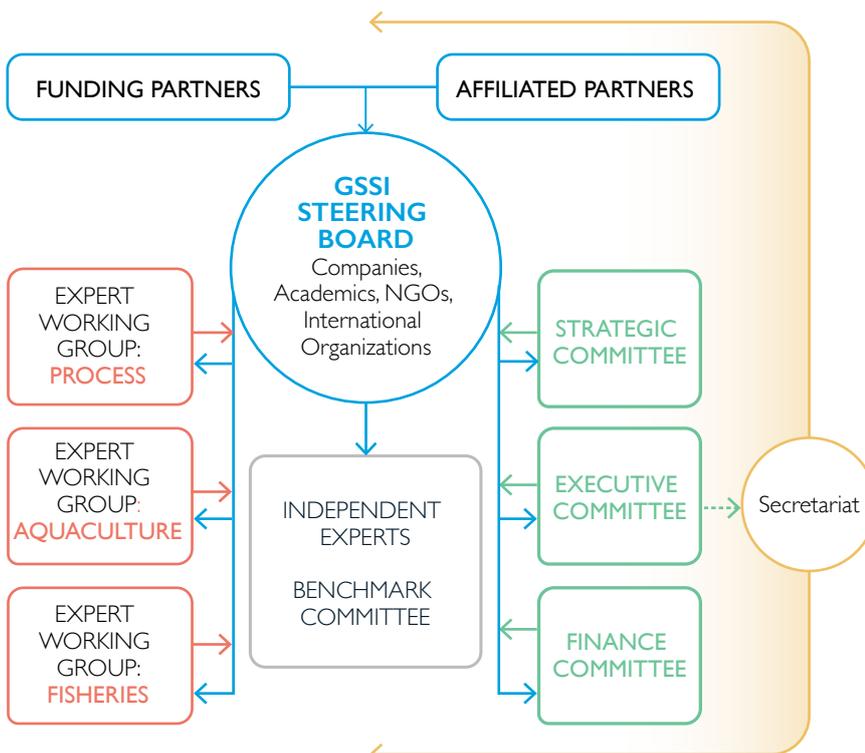


How GSSI works

Since the start of GSSI in 2013, partners have committed time, expertise and energy to coming up with a collective approach to provide clarity on seafood certification and ensure consumers can be confident in the certified seafood on offer. GSSI partners have been working to drive forward strategy at high-level Steering Board Meetings, drilled down on priority sector issues through the Expert Working Groups, reached out to seafood sector stakeholders at public updates, brought on board leading experts and collaborated closely with FAO, holding:

- **8 Steering Board Meetings** to guide GSSI strategy
- **13 Expert Working Group Meetings** on Aquaculture, Fisheries and Process
- **25+ Updates for Stakeholders** at Trade Shows, Conferences and Events worldwide
- **2 Public Comment Periods** of 60 days
- **4 Expert Consultation Workshops** in Australia, Canada, Germany and Italy
- **Side-Event** at the 31st session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries
- **3 Regional Workshops** on certification and benchmarking in cooperation with FAO in Chile, South Africa and Thailand.
- **Pilot Testing Program** with 8 seafood certification schemes from Europe, North-America and South-East Asia

As a global public-private partnership and platform, partners from across the seafood industry, NGOs, experts, governmental and intergovernmental organizations have the opportunity to work on a leading knowledge-exchange initiative and to collaborate on topics that are shaping the seafood sector's future.



Be part of GSSI

GSSI is a foundation established through a strategic alliance between leading actors in the seafood industry and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. It is implemented by GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-funded through its develoPPP.de program. Stakeholders have different partnership options:

- **Funding Partner:** private sector companies can support GSSI financially, promote GSSI work, and take part in GSSI decisions
- **Affiliated Partner:** non-profit partners can promote GSSI work and take part in GSSI decisions

GSSI partners

32 companies worldwide are backing GSSI as Funding Partners from across the seafood industry including from harvesting, aquaculture, farming, processing, food service, retail and brand manufacturing. GSSI also counts on the support of FAO and 6 non-profit Affiliated Partners.

Funding partners



Affiliated partners



On behalf of



Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development



Implemented by



GSSI going forward

GSSI is committed to promoting improvement in seafood certification schemes. As such, GSSI will review the Global Benchmark Tool on a regular basis.

GSSI principles to guide long-term change:

- improvement of seafood sustainability shall be at the heart of the work for all GSSI participants
- the benchmarking process shall be self-financing with agreed and fair contributions for benchmarking services and membership
- financing of activities on the neutral platform may include contributions from funders
- the partnership shall aspire to engaging with small and less developed schemes to provide them with a pathway towards recognition by GSSI

A word on sustainability

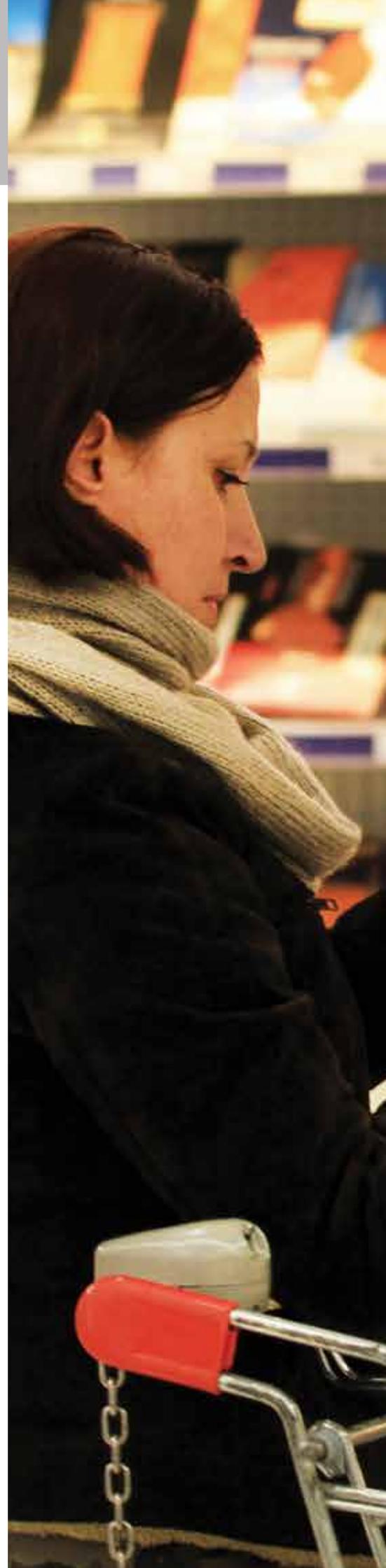
GSSI's partnership recognizes the lively debate on what is sustainability. Two examples:

World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission)

Sustainable development is "development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

FAO

"The management and conservation of the natural resource base, and the orientation of technological and institutional change in such a manner as to ensure the attainment and continued satisfaction of human needs for present and future generations. Such sustainable development (in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sectors) conserves land, water, plant and animal genetic resources, is environmentally non-degrading, technologically appropriate, economically viable and socially acceptable."





Find out more and
be part of GSSI

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