Alaska Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) Certification Program  
Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) Fact Sheet

Alaska RFM Certification Program – First to be recognized by GSSI
Alaska RFM Certification was the first certification program to be benchmarked against the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative’s (GSSI) Global Benchmark Tool and achieve recognition. This recognition demonstrates that Alaska RFM is in alignment with all 143 applicable GSSI Essential Components. The Benchmark Report is available at http://www.ourgssi.org/benchmarking/recognized-schemes/alaska-rfm-program/

Why GSSI recognition is important
One way businesses provide assurances to their customers are the use of seafood certification schemes for both aquaculture production and wild capture fisheries. However, the increase in the number of programs and ecolabels has led to confusion among producers, retailers and consumers over how to recognize a credible seafood certification scheme.

The GSSI Benchmark Tool is an attempt to streamline procurement decisions by making it easy for buyers to see which certification programs have met the rigorous bar set forth by FAO’s internationally agreed guidelines.

For the first time, members of the seafood supply chain, NGOs, governmental and intergovernmental organizations and a number of independent scientists have come up with a collective, non-competitive approach to provide clarity on seafood certification and ensure confidence in certified seafood.

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.

- **For NGOs**, it means more open and verified information to help promote environmental sustainability.

- **For Alaska RFM**, it means being publicly recognized for meeting all applicable GSSI Essential Components, a globally agreed benchmark building confidence in seafood certification. For more information on GSSI go to http://www.ourgssi.org/

What GSSI Is
In October 2015 GSSI launched the Global Benchmark Tool for seafood certification schemes. The Tool is the first collective and non-competitive approach to provide clarity on seafood certification.
worldwide. GSSI publicly recognizes seafood certification schemes that meet GSSI Components grounded in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the FAO Guidelines for Seafood Certification and Ecolabelling.

GSSI is modeled on a successful global retail driven benchmark program called the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI). Like the previously adopted GFSI, which resulted in inter-operability among the world’s food safety certifications, the GSSI provides a common benchmark that makes it easier for seafood buyers to identify which of the various third party certification programs are credible.

**The 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.
What are the ‘calls to action’ regarding GSSI?
The most important action now is to encourage customers and companies further down the supply chain to sign on to the commitment to use GSSI in their sourcing policies. The commitment reads as follows:

“As strong supporters of GSSI, the below retailers, brand manufacturers, traders and food service companies commit to include the outcomes of the GSSI Benchmark Tool in their daily operations by recognizing all GSSI-recognized certification schemes as acceptable when sourcing certified seafood. We encourage companies across the seafood sector worldwide to join our commitment.”

Which companies have signed the commitment?
The following companies committed to use GSSI in their sourcing policies:

- Ahold Delhaize
- Aquastar
- Anova Seafoods
- Bumble Bee Foods
- Grobest
- Trident
- Sea Delight
- Pacific Seafood
- Espersen

- Darden
- Highliner Foods
- Sodexo
- Morrisons
- Gorton’s
- Metro Group
- Fortune Fish
- Kroger

These companies have formed a strategic alliance to bring clarity and transparency to the issue of the seafood sustainability worldwide. Companies, especially retailers, foodservice distributors and restaurant chains should be encouraged to join these companies in this commitment.

Examples of how companies have modified their sourcing policies to include GSSI language: http://www.ourgssi.org/partnership/gssi-partner-commitment/
For more information on GSSI - http://www.ourgssi.org/
For more information on Alaska RFM - http://www.alaskaseafood.org/RFM-certification/