

**TO: ASMI Board of Directors**

**FROM: Susan Marks, Sustainability Director**

**RE: Sustainability Program Report**

This report covers activities occurring October 2016 – April 2017.

A primary focus since October has been continuing work on Version 2 of the Alaska RFM Fisheries Standard to achieve sign off from both the Fisheries Standard and RFM Committees so the ASMI Board can make a motion for final approval at the May meeting.

The RFM Team continues our outreach efforts for the RFM Certification Program and the seafood industry has seen recent uptick in support of GSSI by domestic retailers. This is very positive and directly influences awareness and support of the RFM Program.

The Sustainability Program continues to support and collaborate with ASMI International and Domestic Marketing programs on both general sustainability and certification messaging, with a key focus being message development for our upcoming sponsorship for the SeaWeb Global Sustainability Summit in June. This messaging will create the foundation for what will be a broader redesign and update to the Sustainability section of the ASMI website.

The below report will outline the above in more detail as well as provide updates to subjects covered in the October 2016 Board Report.



### **GSSI Continues to Gain Momentum**

GSSI is off to a strong start in 2017 with over 40 companies, NGOs, governmental and intergovernmental organizations in support. Last year Alaska and Iceland RFM Programs became the first Certification schemes to achieve GSSI recognition. The Marine Stewardship Council received recognition in March 2017 and more schemes have publicly entered the benchmark process.

With this has come added support for GSSI, and we are seeing this in multiple ways:

- 1) Additional funding partners: GSSI now has 34 companies worldwide who are supporting this initiative. <http://www.ourgssi.org/partnership/partners/>

GSSI continued...

- 2) Companies are modifying their procurement policies to acknowledge GSSI recognized certification schemes: Walmart is the most recent retailer to modify their seafood policy, following the likes of Kroger, Ahold Delhaize and Metro in 2016.

<http://www.ourgssi.org/partnership/gssi-partner-commitment/>

*\*\*Note\*\* see additional news about Walmart and ASMI on page 5 under 'Internal ASMI Program Collaboration & Support'*



### Walmart backs GSSI as part of seafood policy

The retail giant will accept certification schemes that have completed GSSI's Benchmark Process.

by InterFish Media  
February 27th, 2017 14:07 GMT

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- 3) GSSI was featured in a November 2016 story: **Financial Times Special Report: Future of the Food Industry**

## **RFM Fisheries Standard Version 2 Completion**

Since October, the RFM Team has continued to work on the completion of Version 2 of the Fisheries Standard.

- Multiple webinars were held to address questions and further educate stakeholders; including the RFM Committee, Fishery Clients and their technical experts.
- This resulted in additional input and recommended revisions, which were presented to the RFM Fisheries Standard Committee via webinars in January. They provided their approval and the final documents have been submitted to the ASMI Board for approval during this meeting

This is a **key accomplishment and milestone** for the program and represents the first full update and reissue of the Standard since the program started in 2011.

## Sustainability/RFM Outreach and Communication

The Sustainability Program continues ongoing outreach and improved communications for the RFM Certification Program and general Alaska sustainability messaging. Some **highlights** from the last few months include:

### Alaska RFM at Ecolabel Symposium, Tokyo University

Hannah Lindoff, ASMI International Program Director, presented the Alaska RFM Certification Program at the Ecolabel Symposium at Tokyo University Yayoi campus in February. Hannah was one of several speakers presenting on **regional eco-labeling schemes** to an audience of trade press and member of the local Japanese scientific and management community, who currently have their own ecolabelling scheme, 'Marine Ecolabel Japan'.



*Ecolabel Symposium / Tokyo University*



### New AK RFM Sustainability Quiz Developed

The ASMI Sustainability Program developed an Alaska RFM Sustainability Quiz for Reinhart Foodservice to **implement with their 750 sales associates**. Reinhart is using the Quiz as a training tool in all divisions as well as a qualifier for the Alaska Seafood Lenten Promotion. This Quiz is available for industry and distributors and can be customized as needed.

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## Boston Seafood Show Highlights

### Presentation at Seafood Expo North America 2017

At this year's Seafood Expo, **Alaska RFM Certification was featured on a panel** for a session titled "*Seafood Standard Program Updates – Challenges and Targets*". The session provided the audience updates on the leading and emerging seafood standards programs including both fisheries and aquaculture.



*Boston Seafood Show Highlights continued...*



### ASMI Featured in YouTube Video series

An interview with ASMI Sustainability Director took place at the Boston Seafood Show as part of a **YouTube Series FISH TALES** developed by East Coast distributor Samuels & Son. The video will feature Alaska Seafood in their first episode for the month of June.

### Participation in FMI Seafood Strategy Committee Meeting



The Food Marketing Institute (FMI) is the **largest retail trade association** in the US. ASMI joined FMI in 2017 and secured a seat on the **Strategic Advisory Council to the Seafood Strategy Committee**. There are 44 members from various retailers on the committee, and 30 members from industry and NGO sectors on the Strategic Advisory Council. ASMI Marketing Director Victoria Parr and Sustainability Director Susan Marks attended the meeting on March 18, which also had 10 invited guests, including GSSI, ISSF and NOAA.

### Other meetings in Boston included:

- Sysco
- HighLiner / Retail and Foodservice leadership
- Iceland RFM
- Louisiana RFM
- Samuels & Son
- Noronha Pescados / Major Brazilian seafood supplier interested in CoC
- DNV Global / new fisheries Certification Body

### Interview with Vis Magazine (Netherlands)

Vis Magazine will be conducting an interview with ASMI Sustainability Director at the Brussels Seafood Show for an article that will be published in October focusing on innovation, sustainability and certification. Vis is the **leading trade magazine** for the seafood industry in the Netherlands.



## **Internal ASMI Program Collaboration and Support**

- September 2016: Provided RFM 101 webinar to all ASMI staff, consultants and overseas marketing representatives.
- November 2016: Co-presented with ASMI International colleague Megan Rider on Sustainability and Alaska Fisheries Management to a **delegation of Chinese buyers** that were traveling through Seattle.
- January 2017:
  - Co-presented with ASMI Fisheries Technical Consultant Jeff Regnart to provide Sustainability training with focus on innovations and gear types to ASMI's Domestic Marketing Team.
  - Worked with International Program Director Hannah Lindoff to help her prepare to speak at Tokyo Ecolabelling Symposium about RFM Program.
  - During Hannah's trip to Seattle, facilitated meeting with US Seafoods who have expressed interest in working more closely with ASMI. Discussed ideas for new flatfish markets & promotions.
- February 2017: Provided RFM and Sustainability onboarding to ASMI's new Communications Director, Domestic Director and Communication Manager while in Juneau.
- March 2017: **Walmart contacted ASMI with an interest** in getting additional information on sustainability, RFM and GSSI so they can work on updating their messaging. This interest was likely driven by Walmart's recent announcement that they have modified their seafood procurement policy to acknowledge those certification schemes that have successfully been benchmarked by GSSI. I have provided Walmart a portfolio of information and am **currently working with ASMI retail manager Linda Driscoll and retail consultant Mark Jones to propose a joint meeting in Bentonville** as they have expressed interest in receiving an updated training and presentation.
- March/April 2017: The Sustainability Program has been working closely with ASMI's Domestic, Communications and Technical programs to develop messaging for the **SeaWeb Global Sustainability Summit** in June 2017. ASMI is the Platinum Sponsor for the 2017 Seafood Champion Awards reception and will have the opportunity to communicate messaging via signage and digital ads, as well as a landing page on [alaskaseafood.org](http://alaskaseafood.org) in the sustainability section. Our goal is to highlight key components that make up Alaska's sustainability story.

## New for Alaska Fisheries!

### Addition of Data Deficient Fisheries (DDF) Framework

**What:** The Alaska RFM Program’s Data Deficient Fisheries (DDF) Framework is an addendum to Version 1.3 of the RFM Scoring Guidance for use by Assessment Teams in the case of data deficient fisheries in Alaska.

**Why:** Allows small-scale fisheries with inherently low exploitations and/or that are data poor, the potential to achieve Alaska RFM Certification.

**Features:** Assesses if a fishery has minor deficiencies in data (not major gaps), and looks at the vulnerability of the target stock and associated bycatch or ETPs (endangered, threatened or protected) and determines whether the risk is low, medium or high.

**Benefit:** Provides an opportunity for a small-scale, low exploitation fishery to be certified to the Alaska RFM Program, assisting them with carrying the message of sustainability forward to their customers.

**First Fishery:** The first fishery to use DDF is the Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab (AIGKC) fishery that occurs in the Bering Sea. It’s the first fishery going through a preliminary DDF assessment.

For more information on the DDF Framework:  
<http://www.alaskaseafood.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Data-Deficient-Fishery-Framework-Addendum-to-Scoring-Guidance-Final-1.pdf>

## Fishery Clients & Certifications

### FISHERIES UPDATE

This past year the Alaska RFM Certification Program instituted a 30-day public comment period for registered stakeholders on draft assessment reports for both initial fishery certifications and re-certifications. Stakeholders register and submit comments directly to the Certification Body (CB).

**Alaska sablefish and halibut fisheries achieved recertification in late 2016 and Alaska salmon was recertified in March 2017!** See the update below.

FISH SPECIES	Recertified	Under Assessment for Recertification	New Certification in Process	New DDF Framework Certification	Annual Surveillance Audit
SABLEFISH	Completed January 2017				
HALIBUT	Completed January 2017				
SALMON	Completed March 2017				
CRAB BB Red King, BSAI Snow, St. Matthew Blue King		In Process			
CRAB BSAI/GOA Tanner			New fishery to RFM. Assessment in Process.		
CRAB AI Golden King				In Process	
POLLOCK		Spring 2017			
COD					Audit #3 Completed October 2016
FLATFISH					Audit #2 Completed March 2016

## **Certification Bodies & Accreditation Boards**



The RFM Team has continued our onboarding of the newest Certification Body DNV Global. This has required training on the current Fisheries Standard Version 1.3 for their staff and members of their assessment teams as well as for their Accreditation Board ANSI (American National Standards Institute). A series of webinars were conducted over the last few months and these will continue as needed.

### **CB Performance Review**

The RFM Program is required to conduct an annual audit of our approved Certification Bodies. The audit for SCS Global was completed, and work will begin soon on the audit for Global Trust.

Historically the RFM Program has not had a direct relationship with the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB). At their request, communication has gone through Global Trust. As we continue to improve RFM, we have come to realize the importance of trying to establish a direct line of communication with the Accreditation Boards. This has proven to be very challenging; however, we are seeing success with ANSI and we are working to change this with INAB and are hopeful for a meeting in Brussels to explore this further.



### **RFM Quality Management System (QMS) Update**

The RFM Committee committed to a thorough review of the QMS during their January meeting in Seattle. The Committee chair appointed a QMS subgroup of members Mark Fina, Stefanie Moreland, Ron Rogness and Jim Gilmore to work with RFM staff on the review. The group hopes to have the revised QMS completed sometime this summer.