

**TO: ASMI Board of Directors**

**FROM: Susan Marks, Sustainability Director**

**RE: Sustainability Program Report**

This report covers activities occurring October 2016 – October 2017. The Sustainability Program has seen some exciting opportunities for collaboration and exposure with other ASMI programs this year. As the landscape shifts in what the definition of ‘sustainable seafood’ means today, ASMI continues to emphasize Alaska’s gold standard of fisheries management, while also adapting and broadening our messaging to include other great stories about full utilization and the communities and families that make up our long history of sustainability. We remain vigilant in understanding how social responsibility will influence our messaging and talking points.

The RFM Program continues to be a leader in demonstrating the importance of having a choice in independent, third-party certifications. We continue collaborations with other ‘FAO-based RFM Programs around the world and successfully completed Version 2.0 of our Fisheries Standard in March 2017. The RFM Committee has been working on a redraft of the Quality Management System (QMS) and Procedures documents, which will be presented for Board approval at this All Hands meeting. The main emphasis is on greater readability, clarity and reducing costs where appropriate.

Ongoing acceptance of the [Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative](#) (GSSI) and their increase of additional funding partners is welcome news and integral to RFM’s success. We also continue to see retailers around the world modify their procurement policies to recognize those certification programs that have successfully benchmarked to GSSI. This verifies the Board’s initiative to be GSSI recognized (in July 2016) as a key strategic move with a remaining return on investment (ROI). The AK industry is looking at options for the program’s future that would strengthen RFM, ensure its ongoing success and provide possibilities to broaden and expand the program.

### **SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM HIGH-LIGHTS:**

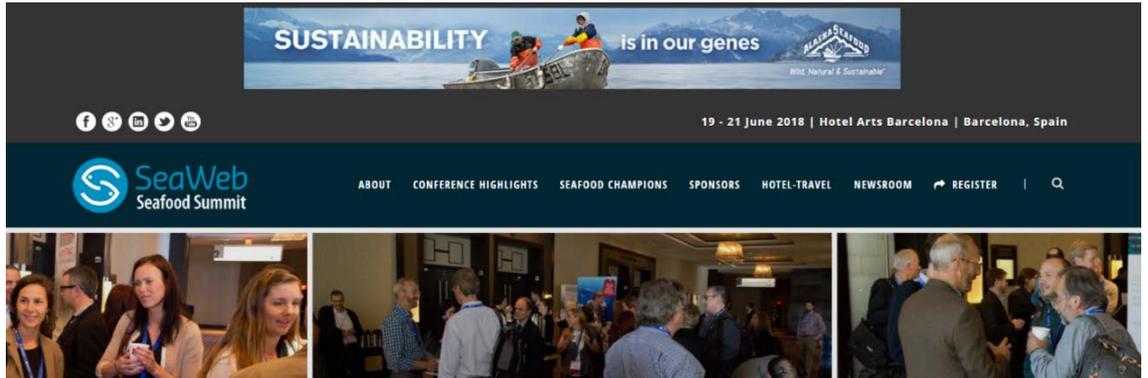


#### **Global Sustainability Summit Plenary Session & Sponsorship:**

ASMI was a Platinum Sponsor for the [SeaWeb Global Sustainability Summit](#) in June 2017. The SeaWeb Seafood Summit brings together global representatives from the seafood industry with leaders from the conservation community, academia, government and the media. The goal was to highlight key components that make up **Alaska’s sustainability story**. Additionally, ASMI Sustainability Director, Susan Marks spoke at the **opening plenary session**, ‘Fish Talk: How do we have useful conversations about seafood?’



SeaWeb Summit continued....



SeaWeb Global Sustainability Summit, June 2017

**New Sustainability Section for ASMI Website:**

In collaboration with the Domestic, Technical and Communications programs, we developed new digital and web content highlighting our four pillars of sustainability. <http://www.alaskaseafood.org/sustainability/>



**ASMI Joins FMI and Becomes a Member of the Seafood Strategy Leadership Council:**



This year ASMI joined the [Food Marketing Institute](http://www.foodmarketinginstitute.com), the largest food advocacy group of retailers, wholesalers, and suppliers in the country. There are 44 members from various retailers on the Seafood Strategy Committee, and 30 members from industry and NGO sectors; including ASMI, on the **Seafood Strategy Leadership Council**. This Council brings together thought leaders to identify, discuss and share perspectives on current issues and trends in the seafood industry. The mission is to identify areas of collaboration across all seafood operations and sectors to enhance total industry understanding and cooperation that will result in driving growth, identify emerging trends, help manage risk and improve operational performance for industry and individual companies.



NYC Media event continued...

ASMI sponsored and attended the **James Beard Food Summit** and held a **#AskForAlaska Crab & Seafood media event** at the James Beard House on October 24. The event was in partnership with the Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers Association (ABSCA) and highlighted the first Alaska king crab of the season as well as the three other primary Alaska crab species. **Three Alaska chefs:** Aaron Apling-Gilman of Seven Glaciers at Alyeska Resort, Jason Porter of Alyeska Resort, and Lionel Uddipa of SALT Juneau prepared appetizers and the main courses for the more than 50 guests in attendance, including Martha Stewart and representatives from outlets such as TODAY Show, Food Network, New York Post, Food & Wine, Bravo TV and ABC News. Content from media contacts **generated 1.2 million impressions and 12k engagements on social media.**



*#AskforAlaska Crab & Seafood Media Event, James Beard House, October 2017*



### **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 this last year include:

Sustainability/RFM Outreach continued...

### 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 FAO based ecolabelling scheme, 'Marine Ecolabel Japan'.



*Hannah Lindoff presenting RFM @ Ecolabel Symposium / Tokyo University, February 2017*

### 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.



### Boston / Brussels Seafood Show Highlights:



Seafood Expo  
NORTH AMERICA

### Presentation at Seafood Expo North America 2017

At this year's Seafood Expo, Fisheries Technical Consultant Jeff Regnart represented **Alaska RFM Certification 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.

### 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 featured Alaska Seafood in their first episode.



Other meetings in Boston & Brussels included:

- Sysco
- HighLiner / Retail and Foodservice leadership
- Iceland RFM
- Louisiana RFM
- Samuels & Son
- Noronha Pescados / Major Brazilian seafood supplier interested in CoC
- American National Standards Institute (ANSI) / US Accreditation Body
- DNV Global / new fisheries Certification Body
- Global Trust / fisheries Certification Body
- GSSI Leadership team
- Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO)



HighLiner Sustainability Summit:

Sustainability Director Susan Marks spoke at the 2017 Annual Sustainability Summit, hosted by High Liner Foods, one of the largest Alaska Seafood customers in North America. HighLiner's Executive leadership team, their NGO partners and some of their key customers; including **Sodexo, Compass Group, Foodbuy, Target and Red Lobster** attended the event. The Alaska RFM Program received special accolades for achieving GSSI recognition and the continued momentum the program has seen over the last year.

Internal Program Collaboration and Support:

- 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 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 provided Walmart a portfolio of information and worked **with former 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.

Internal Program Support & Collaboration continued....

**UPDATE:** Walmart continues to move forward with their initiative to feature the RFM Certified Seal and language about RFM on their website. **In October**, ASMI Sustainability Director approved language that will have **RFM featured alongside MSC and BAP (Best Aquaculture Practice) logos on a new 'seafood certifications shopping guide', the Walmart website and in freezer clings in their stores.**

- March/April 2017: The Sustainability Program worked closely with ASMI's Domestic, Communications and Technical programs to develop messaging for the **SeaWeb Global Sustainability Summit** in June 2017. ASMI was the Platinum Sponsor for the 2017 Seafood Champion Awards reception had 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 was to highlight key components that make up Alaska's sustainability story.

- June 2017:

- Joined the International Team in hosting a delegation women leaders in seafood business from China representing various companies as they toured through Seattle.
- Worked with ASMI Domestic team to contribute information and copy editing on article in July **Costco Connection** on Alaska Salmon



- July 2017:



- Worked with International Program Director Hannah Lindoff to provide answers for the **German business and gastronomy magazine "First Class"** who doing a story about seafood featuring a focus on sustainability.
- Interview with **Sizzle Magazine** for their fall article 'The Politics of Seafood'.
- Assisted Domestic team with meetings at the University of Washington and facilitating a call with specialty seafood distributor Fortune Fish in Chicago.

- August 2017:

- Provided Updated sustainability language to Domestic Team for ASMI's 'Seafood U' training program
- Organized call with Seafood Watch & ASMI staff/contractors to discuss AK seafood ratings on their website and app. These discussions are ongoing as we work towards a solution for how information can be conveyed more clearly.

- October 2017:

- Provided updated sustainability/RFM slides & notes to ASMI Retail Consultant for various presentation.
- Provided updated sustainability language for updated ASMI species fact sheets
- Provided Sustainability seafood industry onboarding to ASMI's (2) new Domestic Marketing Coordinators during their visit to Seattle.

## RFM PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



**The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI)** continues to see growth and momentum with over 40 companies, NGOs, governmental and intergovernmental organizations in support. Last year Iceland's RFM Program achieved GSSI recognition.

The Marine Stewardship Council received recognition in March 2017 and Best Aquaculture Practice (BAP) became the first aquaculture scheme to gain recognition in September 2017. The ongoing growth and awareness of GSSI is a huge value for ASMI's Alaska RFM program, **the first certification scheme formally recognized by GSSI in July 2016.**

We are seeing added support of GSSI in multiple ways:

- 1) Additional funding partners: GSSI now has over 40 companies worldwide who are supporting this initiative. <http://www.ourgssi.org/partnership/partners/> The most recent partner joined in October with the announcement of AEON becoming a funding partner. **AEON is the largest retailer in Asia**, and AEON is the first Asia-based retailer to join GSSI's global partnership. In addition, the first Asia-based NGO, Seafood Legacy also became a GSSI partner and Mr. Wakao Hanaoka has joined the GSSI Steering Board.
- 2) Companies continue to **modify their procurement policies** to acknowledge GSSI recognized certification schemes. Giant Eagle is the most recent retailer. Walmart announced their support in February 2017, and modified their [seafood policy](#), following the likes of Kroger, Ahold Delhaize, Metro in 2016. <http://www.ourgssi.org/partnership/gssi-partner-commitment/>



### 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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## Ongoing collaboration with other FAO Based RFM Programs and the FAO:



**Tokyo 2020 Olympics:** In December 2016, ASMI submitted comments to the Tokyo Olympic Committee regarding their 'Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games Sustainable Sourcing Code' ([Sustainable Sourcing Code for Fishery Products](#)). As a result, their sourcing code was modified and they have committed to include seafood certified by programs recognized by GSSI. ASMI, in collaboration with NFI and GSSI submitted public comments to the original sourcing code, which were taken onboard to reflect this modification, which is a huge success.



## Sponsorship for the FAO's Product, Trade & Marketing Branch (FIAM) / GLOBEFISH

[GLOBEFISH](#) is a trusted source of international fish trade and market news, providing price trend analyses, market outlooks and related FAO news. They also facilitate workshops and research projects.

In collaboration with the Technical Program, ASMI submitted a proposal for our sponsorship to develop a project where the FAO **creates a network for all regional FAO-based sustainability certification programs**, like Alaska's RFM program as well as those countries and/or regions that are considering an RFM based certification program. We would like FIAM Globefish to coordinate an event to join all regional sustainability certification programs and identify ways to provide leadership and outreach as well as foster collaboration for these FAO-based programs.

### Certification Bodies & Accreditation Boards:



The RFM Team has continued onboarding 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).

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 have seen success with ANSI. In June 2017, we had a **joint call with Global Trust and INAB** for an initial meet/greet. In September 2017, Fisheries Technical Consultant, Jeff Regnart traveled to Ireland and **was able to meet with INAB in person**. The result of the meeting was a pledge by both parties for open two-way communication and periodic updates on activities.

### Certification Body (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 in March 2017, and an onsite audit of Global Trust was conducted in September 2017. The onsite audit provided insight into the activities of the CB and also allowed for constructive conversation on potential improvements and efficiencies in the implementation of both the Fishery and Chain of Custody Standards.



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

The RFM Committee committed to a thorough review of the QMS during their January 2017 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 main emphasis is on greater readability, clarity and reducing costs where appropriate.

One example of potential savings is Fishery certification costs to the clients will be reduced because of the increased emphasis on the acceptability of desktop reviews over on-site audits for annual surveillances. The below is language from Procedure 2 of the QMS:

### ***Procedure 2 - 4.1 Surveillance Audit Methodology***

***Desktop reviews are the preferred assessment vehicle.*** In general, on-site audits are required only if the Certification Body deems that a desktop review may be inadequate for determining whether the fishery is continuing to comply with the Alaska RFM Fishery Standard, based on the performance of the fishery, status of non-conformances and related corrective actions.

### ***Procedure 2 - 4.1.1 Surveillance Audit Additional Guidance***

***It is recommended that the work product of the pre-assessment for the 5<sup>th</sup> year recertification serve as the foundation for the fourth surveillance audit.*** It is anticipated that the 4<sup>th</sup> surveillance audit be conducted as a desktop audit unless the Certification Body determines an on-site audit is merited.

**The RFM Committee will present the revised QMS to the ASMI Board for approval at the November 2017 All Hands Meeting.**

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

Since October 2016, the RFM Team continued 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 were approved by the ASMI Board in May 2017.**

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.

*Fisheries Standard continued...*

### **UPDATE** on Alaska RFM Data Deficient Fisheries Framework:

In 2016, RFM introduced a new assessment methodology for assessment of fisheries that are considered data deficient. When the RFM program was developed, there was not an option for those fisheries with data deficiency (typically absence of a formal stock assessment of target, bycatch and ETP species) to enter the program. We initially experienced this during the validation in 2012 for the Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab fishery.

We recognized there was a limitation of the Scheme so an alternative method was developed that could be triggered in these data deficient cases. Additionally, the Global Seafood Sustainability Initiative (GSSI) identified accessibility of data deficient and small-scale fisheries to certification schemes a benchmark criterion for Standards owners who wish to be identified as GSSI compliant.

Using existing technical contractors and the RFM's Fishery Standard Committee (FSC), the program created a **Data Deficient Framework (DDF)**. **The DDF feasibility was tested on the Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab (GKC) Pot Fishery in an initial assessment.** This was done in conjunction with the reassessment of Bristol Bay Red King crab, St. Matthew Island Blue King crab and Eastern Bering Sea Snow crab (2017).

### **Fishery Certifications:**

The below fisheries achieved full recertification to the Alaska RFM Program in the last year:

- Alaska Sablefish and Halibut recertified in January 2017
- Alaska Salmon recertified in March 2017
- Alaska Pollock: Draft Report available for public comment (*ends Nov 15<sup>th</sup>*)
- Alaska Cod: Draft Report open for public comment (*ends Nov 30<sup>th</sup>*)
- Alaska Crab: full recertification in process for Bristol Bay Red King crab, St. Matthew Island Blue King crab and Eastern Bering Sea Snow crab
- **NEW Assessment** for the Eastern Bering Sea Tanner Crab (*this will be added to the existing crab certificate*)
- **NEW DDF Assessment** for Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab