



Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute

## INTERNATIONAL MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING

November 7, 2025

9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. AKST

King Salmon/Iliamna Room (2nd Floor), Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, AK

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87332075962?pwd=tC4GUzDDVVpFTNa7qlvC2B1PB4erFt.1>

Phone: +1 253-215-8782; Meeting ID: 873 3207 5962; Passcode: 552630

### DRAFT Meeting Minutes

#### INTRODUCTION

A. Call to Order. Meeting called to order at 9:04am.

B. Roll Call

Chair Bart Lovejoy  
Rasmus Soerensen  
Sidney Riggs  
Andrew Jenssen  
Hank Baumgart  
Jeffery Stephan- Not Present  
Joel Peterson- Not Present  
Shigeki Okano- Present Virtually  
Stephen Rhoads  
Brian Hodgen  
Frank O'Hara  
Nick Souza  
Board Liaison Tomi Marsh  
ASMI Board Chair Rich Riggs

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by O Hara. Seconded by Souza.

D. Approval of Previous Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes was made by O'Hara. Seconded by Rhoads.

E. Announcements & Reading of Antitrust Statement

Chair Lovejoy read the ASMI antitrust statement.

F. Introduction of Guests/Visitors

Bob Barnett, Merle Knapp, Daniel Kusakari, Robert Gershberg, Allen Kimball, William Sullivan, Cathy Dupuis, Julie Yeasting, Brody Pierson, Julia Ying.

G. Public Comment

No public comment.

#### REPORTS

A. Chairman's Report and Comments

Chair Lovejoy gave a report on the status of the seafood industry including regulatory issues.

B. International Marketing Director's Report and Comments

Alba announced the recruitment of ASMI's new Assistant Marketing Coordinator, Anna Mahnor, and discussed upcoming outbound trade mission to the Baltics (Latvia and Lithuania) and the upcoming America First Trade Program (AFTPP) funding program that will be announced soon.



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Rhoads asked if the new grant would need Matching funds and Alba confirmed that yes, matching funds would be required.

### **China Presentation and Discussion**

Mey Feng and Stephanie Pan presented new strategies in their market including positioning Honk Kong and Macau as primary markets while continuing to monitor the mainland China market. Their presentation also included highlights of activities in Q1 and Q2 and upcoming plans including a retail survey in the Great Bay Area. They continued their presentation by explaining the challenges in mainland China including tariffs. On November 10<sup>th</sup> China will remove the retaliatory tariffs including those on Alaska seafood but the existing Tariffs are still higher than those on competitors like Norway and Chile. They concluded their presentation by discussing China Fisheries trade show. ASMI has downsized its booth footprint but competition countries like Russia, Norway, and the Netherlands continue to put a lot funding towards their booth space.

Q. Lovejoy asked the team what they are hearing about US seafood reputation in China?

A. US Seafood still has a high reputation in the market, with consumers thinking products are premium and high quality and believing US products are better than Russian. Traders still want to buy Alaska seafood because there is still a market and there are opportunities. Many young families and middle-class people have moved to Hong Kong from mainland China.

Q. Jenssen explained that since April, industry in the US have been affected because reprocessors in China have not been able to take Alaska seafood byproducts to sell into the domestic Chinese market. He asked if reprocessors had been able to find new sources, possibly through pet food?

A. Chinese companies have been opening new processing facilities in Southeast Asia to hopefully combat these issues.

### **Southeast Asia Presentation and Discussion**

Tim Welsh and Sarina Welsh presented on the Southeast Asia program including the programs recent successes including past trade missions, trade shows, and EMP technical support to SE Asia seafood processors. Year 1 of the EMP project was focused on identifying 166 potential processors. Year 2 will focus on technical training with top potential processors and year 3 will focus on developing and strengthening supplier-processor relationships including an inbound mission to Alaska. They also explained that additional funding would allow for further development of the collaboration between Southeast Asia and Japan, expansion on the EMP project including training on value added products and providing more technical seminars. Lastly it would sponsor regional buyers' participation at SENA or SEG. They concluded with upcoming events including EMP trainings, trade shows, and retail promotions.

Q. Barnett asked about the EMP database and asked if it specified which companies had certain certifications.

A. S Welsh explained that the database has different columns including certifications, current products processed, etc.

Q. O' Hara asked if there is any Atka mackerel or POP in the Southeast Asia market.

A. Yes, but it's not identified as Alaska in the market. Japanese companies want to promote the Japanese brand and not necessarily the Alaska origin. Southeast Asia convenience stores may not be able or as willing to call out the origin as Japanese stores are. The team would appreciate the help of the industry to find where Alaska products are ending up in the region.

### **MENAWA Presentation and Discussion**

Manjusha Matthew presented on the MENAWA region including a market overview and explained that tariffs into the UAE region are the baseline of 10%. She discussed FY25 activities including corporate membership with Emirates Culinary Guild, social media, and website development. Current FY26



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activities include retail research in UAE, retail promotions, trade servicing, and exploring Morocco canning opportunities.

Q. Soerensen inquired about regional processing capabilities other than in Morocco. He also commented about the great potential that lies in getting Alaska Seafood into the regional airlines.

A. Partner research and outreach is in its first stages. More to report after first year of the program (FY25 concludes).

Q. Ying asked if there are any tariffs for products going from the UAE to the EU?

A. 0% to EU and to the Africa region as well.

### **Japan Presentation and Discussion**

Akiko Yakata and Bianca Lai presented on the Japanese market including the economic situation, Russia competition, surimi industry, past activities including Gen Z Top Media Interactive event, Atka mackerel promotions, and surimi brand enhancement initiatives. Their plans for additional funding include strategic ads through retail media and co-marketing partnerships to encourage surimi suppliers to use Alaska Seafood logo and ASMI Japan Partner Chef Program. Upcoming events include YouTube collaborations with Asana Mori, Women's Run 2026 x Interactive Puzzle Challenge.

### **LATAM Presentation and Discussion**

Leonardo Silveria and Rodrigo Mascarenas presented on the LATAM market including growing Russian competition and the current tariff landscape. Political outlook presentation alluded to the 8<sup>th</sup> president of Peru in 8 years and the fact that Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Peru will have presidential elections next year. Overall, there has been a 5% decrease in US Seafood Exports in 2025 (YTD) but the growth of Alaska species exports to main LATAM markets is mostly from reprocessing. They discussed the reprocessing program in Peru including the first stage of processor training. The second stage will consist of taking those processors to China to pursue further training. Other activities include trade shows, in store promotions- seafood week in September, Costco promotions in Mexico, festivals in Brazil, influencer campaigns, and digital campaigns.

Q. Soerensen asked the team if they see higher influx of Russian raw material coming in?

A. Yes, there are more Russian products in the region. 3 years ago, there were none. Now we are seeing some.

Q. How important is in-store sampling in your region?

A. We have been having better results this year, Mexico is seeing good results but other countries not as much. Seafood doesn't see the same level of growth in sales as other products when sampling.

However, tastings are key to increasing sales of products that are not as common in the market like black cod and pollock.

Q. Hodgen discussed how McDonalds in Brazil are running a few promotions for the Filet of Fish. Are other QSRs doing this as well?

A. The team responded that for every 400 Big Macs only 1 McFish is sold. McDonalds is only running the promotion during Lent and usually only sells the McFish sandwich during Lent. The team is in talks with other restaurants including one that has added Pollock to their menu permanently.

Q. Riggs asked if the LATAM consumer can differentiate between Chilean and Alaska coho salmon?

A. Depends on the country. Some countries are used to fresh, some are used to frozen. We see processed seafood growing including fish sticks, nuggets, and salmon burgers. Education of consumers on fresh salmon from Chile vs frozen salmon from Alaska continues to be imperative.

Q. Lovejoy wanted to know which countries Russian products are coming from and in what format?

A. Finished products are coming from Germany, Mexico, and China. Raw material is coming from Russia directly into the region.



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Lunch Recess

Meeting called back to order by Chair Lovejoy at 1:00pm

### **EEU Presentation and Discussion**

Anastasia Talalay presented on the Eastern European market including global fish consumption trends, highlights from the start of FY26 including the pan European surimi project, Reaton product launch in the Baltics, Vici education program, upcoming events including the Baltics trade mission, omnichannel campaigns, and digital trends. Also discussed was how further funding could support Gen Z focused E-commerce campaigns.

Q. Soerensen asked about how to tell if content is AI friendly?

A. There are AI experts that help maximize online content for AI.

Q. Ying asked about reprocessing in EEU. Do you know the average wage of laborers?

A. Countries are not as transparent. Estimates are around 900 to 1500 EUR per month.

### **CEU Presentation and Discussion**

Jens Hombeck and Maria Kraus presented on the CEU market including an update on trade and tariffs, program achievements in the region like canned Alaska seafood line in Germany, smoked salmon promotions with Alaska Seafood logo (6 out of 10 wild smoked salmon products carry the logo now in the region), and chef culinary education. Plans for additional funding include further investment in private label promotions and Ambassador programs.

Q. Soerensen asked how do you attract customers to a new product like canned products?

A. Using Aldi's consumer product catalog, they do a good job of highlighting gourmet products. Also by partnering with influencers to do test runs and increase consumer recognition.

### **SEU Presentation and Discussion**

David McClellan presented a SEU market update, noting that smokers and importers are currently out of sockeye and keta salmon, creating price sensitivity in the market. Demand for Pacific cod remains strong however, buyers are increasingly seeking more affordable alternatives. Interest in rockfish, flatfish, and Atka mackerel is higher than ever. He emphasized the continued importance of key trade shows, including Seafood Expo Global (SEG) and Conxemar. Planned and ongoing activities include retail promotions featuring refreshed sockeye and coho H&G and fillet products, smoked salmon promotions, and Pacific cod promotions in Italy. Additional initiatives include Alaska seafood chef training masterclasses with culinary retreat alumni, sablefish promotions within the HRI sector, pollock promotions with school caterers and other institutions, and the samples bank program. He noted that additional funding could support larger-scale retail promotions, advertising campaigns, and expanded sales force training.

### **WEU Presentation and Discussion**

Jens Hombeck and Maria Kraus presented an overview of the WEU market, highlighting ongoing domestic political uncertainty. He noted that supply constraints are currently the primary factor affecting seafood trade in the region. Current activities include in-store retail activations with Labeyrie/Delpierre at Carrefour, the Picard Alaska campaign focused on freezer-center promotions, and surimi advertising initiatives with Vici. With additional funding, a flatfish program would be developed in partnership with WASA, working with Cité Marine, along with expanded HRI education initiatives, including trade missions to Alaska. Upcoming activities include a Sysco inbound mission scheduled for the last week of June 2026.



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### **NEU Presentation and Discussion**

Sarah Block and Becky Nascimento presented an overview of the NEU region, noting that while the overall economic environment remains stable, growth is limited and consumer spending has declined across both retail and HRI channels. The Dutch economy is comparatively more stable, despite recent changes in government leadership. Emerging trends include younger consumers increasingly driving shifts in seafood purchasing and consumption. Key successes highlighted included high-ROI back-to-school campaigns with Ocado, Costco demonstrations featuring sablefish and yellowfin sole, and ongoing trade servicing efforts such as trade missions to Alaska, engagement in Grimsby in partnership with WASA, and a Vici education day. Additional initiatives included menu development and a Market Insight Day focused on Alaska pollock. Opportunities for scaling efforts include a potential “Seafood Revolution” campaign in collaboration with Fish Tales and Jamie Oliver, expanded digital campaigns, and out-of-home activations. Upcoming activities include Christmas retail campaigns, foodservice promotions with Bagel & Beans and GAIL’s, an Urk visit, and continued engagement through the Fish in Schools program.

### **Species Committee Feedback Review**

The committee reviewed the Species Committee recommendations for ASMI’s International Program.

### **Operational Committee Board Recommendations**

The committee discussed and answered ASMI’s Board of Directors’ questions.

### **Vice Chair Elections**

Souza nominated Rhoads. O’ Hara seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed and Rhoads was elected as Committee Vice Chair.

### **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Baumgart. Seconded by Hodgen. Meeting adjourned at 4:05pm.