



*Wild, Natural & Sustainable®*

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute  
Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) Committee Meeting

**October 8 (Tuesday), 2019 from 1:15pm to 3:15pm**

All Hands Meeting

at

**Captain Cook Hotel/Adventure Room**

**939 W 5<sup>th</sup> Ave**

**Anchorage, AK 99501**

**(907) 276-6000**

Call in information:

1-800-315-6338

Alternate Call in number: 1-913-904-9376

Access code: 89501

#### **DRAFT MINUTES**

#### **I. Opening items**

##### **a. Call to order**

Chair Fina calls the meeting to order at 1:15 pm AK time.

##### **b. Roll call**

Chair Fina, Joel Perterson, Matthew Alward, Julie Decker, Tommy Sheridan, Duncan Fields, Tomi Marsh, Glenn Reed, Scott Goodman (calling in)

##### **Others Present**

Jeff Regnart, Susan Marks, Arianna Elnes, Tricia Sanguinetti, Lorin Gelfand, Tom Enlow, Chris Barrows, Chris Oliver, Jamie Goen, Jeremy Woodrow, Matthew Arnoldt, Akiko Yakata, Dave Gaudet,

##### **c. Approval of agenda**

Julie moves to approve agenda with addition of an executive session at the end to discuss marketing of certification programs, with MSC discussion just before. Matthew Alward seconds and motion carries

##### **d. Approval of minutes from 9/6/19**

Matt Alward asks that his name be removed from the minutes since he was not present Glenn Reed motions to approve, and Joel seconds. So moved.

##### **f. Goals & discussion for current meeting**

Chair Fina lays out the goals of the meeting, stating that the discussion will be regarding the determination of membership for the Interim Foundation Board outside of the usual applicants (we'd like to consider including NGO's, RFM partners, and buyers from industry), a brief focus on the public comment period for MBAq Seafood Watch Fishery

Standard modifications, a short GSSI update, and talk about the MSC self-suspension of Canadian salmon fisheries, and Committee membership.

## II. Public Comment

None at this time.

## III. New Business

### a. Committee membership

Dave Benton has resigned and Glenn Reed is retiring. Chris Barrows (New president of PSPA) is going to be replacing Glenn in the Committee and the Foundation, with details to be determined by the Board.

### b. Update and discussion on transition talks with international partners

Chair Fina talks about the other countries interested in joining an International RFM Foundation and their current certification programs. Iceland's is well-established and Norway put out an RFP and awarded a contract to Norwegian quasi-governmental consulting group Nofima. We and Iceland were both asked to submit letters of support which provide materials and insights on development, which we have now done. Nofima appears very familiar with certification but aren't as familiar w/RFM programs. SAI global has been hired by the Norwegians, which is pleasing since they worked with us and Iceland on our own programs and the hope is that the Norwegian standard will fit in well with the AK/Iceland versions. The Norwegian standard is likely 1-2 years out. We have agreed with the Icelanders to develop a joint Chain of Custody (CoC) under one program meaning a CoC cert for one would be valid in both. Jeff and Mark are going to meet with them again shortly. Currently, we are working together to identify the alignments of the two programs with an eye towards development of a joint standard, possibly in the form of us and Iceland joining under the Norwegian standard in development. Denmark has also expressed interest in joining. AK, Iceland, Norway, Denmark and Nofima to meet in Iceland at the end of November.

### c. Discuss timeline and duties of existing RFM committee as the foundation takes over ownership of the program.

Mark states that the Interim Board could be selected at this All-Hands, with January implementation of as the Committee is dissolved, since the governance does not require both. We will continue to work w/ASMI Board, and ASMI Board has indicated they may still fund in the future. Full takeover by Interim Board by July 2020, but it's at the ASMI Board's discretion.

- Duncan asks what structures are in place to connect ASMI Board to Foundation if it is entirely separate, adding that there may be some reservations to fund a separate entity, and a conversation needs to be had. While Initial and Interim Boards would be tightly knit, who knows how that will look as more outside people come in.
  - Mark answers that an MoU between the Foundation and ASMI is critical, and Duncan concurs adding that who writes the MoU matters.
- Duncan also asks what the ASMI Board see as 'success' for RFM, and how the new Interim Board should communicate financial need with the ASMI Board, with the stipulation that these are not questions for now but should be kept in mind.
  - Jeff answers that Iceland is the model, with Iceland RFM Foundation existing outside of Promote Iceland, which is essentially an ASMI equivalent, and does marketing on behalf of their RFM Foundation.

That may work here as well, though the contractual aspect is a balancing act. Jeff adds that the contract aspect is a push from the Dept. of Law.

- Glenn asks about Interim Board, where ASMI Board members may be present and puts forward that this may be a way to keep the ties between the two entities close.
  - Mark answers that the governance will have to allocate the authority for decision making to the Foundation Board. A balance between ASMI getting what it wants out of program and independence must be carefully managed. IP transfers in particular need to be considered.

#### **d. Foundation Applications**

- Current Applications
  - 8 received
  - 1-2 ASMI Board members appropriate, one has applied (Tomi)
  - 9 seat board, but there is no spot for Iceland yet. Mark adds that he had proposed foreign member in more of an advisory role for both transparency and to avoid actions which would damage relationship.

**Julie motions that the Committee recommends to the ASMI Board that 2 ex-officio members, one from Iceland and one from Norway should be present on the Interim Foundation Board. This is seconded by Glenn and carries.**

- NGO seats and Buyers may be called later but they may be best on the Fisheries Standards Committee.
- Fisheries Standard Committee is aware of the plans, but not the dates discussed here. ASMI Technical Committee also will cease to oversee CoC at some point. Chair Fina states due to the optics, and the fact that Technical Committee has never felt very comfortable handling it, it may be best to move the CoC management to the Foundation as well, though Chair Fina stipulates explicitly that this is solely his opinion. Julie adds that Iceland/Norway should have a say in that management as well.

#### **e. Public Comment period for MBAq Seafood Watch standards 8/19/19-10/18/19**

- Jeff and Dave are putting together comments for the tri-annual review of the standards, which should be done in the next few days and will be shared with the RFM Committee, MBAq working group, and others as needed. We'll provide the top 5 or 6 issues that concern us from an Alaska perspective, but don't want to discourage others from taking a close look, but the 2 standards up for comment are some very lengthy documents.
- MBAq meeting will be held tomorrow and their lead web designer Ryan Bigelow will be on phone.

#### **f. GSSI update – agreement to a create a formal governance body with representatives of the GSSI recognized certification schemes**

- We had a meeting in Brussels w/other scheme owners of GSSI benchmarked programs. GSSI has been slow to benchmark and is operating in ways we can't see, expanding operations but being very unresponsive to existing scheme owners. So we discussed some pushback and making sure lanes of communication are open so that scheme owners are getting what they expect out of GSSI. There have been talks of social benchmarking, which we do not want to become prevalent in fisheries as it's not a good fit for wild capture. No

stones have been thrown at GSSI as all are careful not to tarnish the credibility they provide. Formal communication from scheme owners is forthcoming. A committee of GSSI benchmarked scheme owners is being formed.

**Glenn proposes that a formal recommendation is made by the RFM Committee to be involved in GSSI Committee talks. Duncan seconds and motion carries.**

**g. MSC Salmon Letter**

- Letter released stating that BC salmon is self-suspending their MSC Certification.
- Julie adds that a week or two ago there was a meeting in Seattle of the Association of Sustainable Fisheries' West Coast participants and MSC. MSC states that they have a new fund available to help clients close out conditions. BC might be looking to try and go that route.
- Hatcheries there were the primary issue leading to the suspension, and since we also have them this issue bears our attention, though we'd need a better understanding of how their hatcheries operate compared to those in Alaska.
- Canada may be looking for an opportunity to join us, Iceland, Norway after this announcement. Social aspects are being prioritized (such as ghost gear) and are separate issues entirely from the fisheries standards. Duncan asks about genetic interaction of hatchery fish and wild, and why is it a bad thing to be able to differentiate them. Jeff answers that perceived lowering of fitness of the wild stock due to interaction with hatchery stock (competition, etc.). Unfortunately, often that is only being measured in one term of fitness, that being productivity. Due to that, measuring this litmus test can take years.
- Climate change may be brought in to discussion of certifications, but what that means will be debated. Mark points out that lowering of TAC based on climate is coming, but needs to be implemented carefully. Factors exist outside of management....and closing fisheries due to lower stock from environmental factors should not be punished if it's not a result of human action, and this is frustrating to MSC certified fisheries.

**h. Next meeting**

- Meeting after next Icelander discussion (November), we will maybe have a draft or conceptual outline of MoU by then.

**IV. Executive Session**

- Entered 3 pm to discuss MSC marketing operations.
- Executive session exited at 4 pm

**Julie motions "In anticipation of the RFM Program transitioning to a Foundation, the RFM Committee requests the Board direct the Operational Committees, program directors, in conjunction w/ the Foundation Board, to develop a plan to integrate the marketing of RFM certification into their programs." Matt seconds.**

**V. Adjourn**

Glenn moved to adjourn, seconded by Matt and adjourned.