



*Wild, Natural & Sustainable®*

## **2021 ASMI All Hands on Deck** Key Questions for Species Committees

### **WHITEFISH**

#### **1. What are the top 3 opportunities you see for your species in international markets?**

- Diversification in Alaska whitefish markets:
  - including looking to markets outside of Japan for Alaska pollock roe
  - increasing demand for surimi in Japan
  - Alaska cod and pollock in Peru, and
  - Opening doors in Indonesia and Southeast Asia for Alaska flatfish, cod, and POP.
- Reprocessing sector expansion in Europe: The EU, specifically the Eastern EU, has expanded and increased its capacity to take on new clients.
- Alaska flatfish in Europe, given the tariff advantage.

#### **2. What are the top 3 opportunities you see for your species in the US domestic market?**

- International costs are raising the price of whitefish, which could lead to domestic opportunity, including promoting whitefish fillets as center of the plate options. The Domestic market has already shown an increased demand for frozen rockfish and POP fillets.
- The logistical challenges at reprocessing facilities internationally could lead to more demand for reprocessing locally in the US.
- Opportunities at alternative market sectors, including pet food and e-commerce.

#### **3. Please identify any areas where ASMI may be able to provide technical support for your species, i.e., quality, products, packaging, health, safety, nutritional.**

- Preparing information and messaging on the carbon footprint of the Alaska Seafood industry to get ahead of the growing eco-conscious environment.
- Messaging and marketing the different freezing methods to the public, as there are common public misconceptions about the freshness of frozen seafood. Messaging surrounding frozen versus fresh seafood would be beneficial.
- The nutritional comparisons between Alaska frozen whitefish and other aquaculture whitefish species. Moisture content and cellular comparisons could be beneficial for marketing purposes.
- Gathering analytical data on global herring fisheries, production, output and utilization for the benefit of promoting Pacific herring to new markets.

**4. For your species, what issues or topics (if any) can ASMI help with messaging and/or outreach?**

- The committee requests messaging and suitable responses to the growing consumer interest in global climate impacts, by-catch issues, IUU traceability, social responsibility, fishing boat crew safety and compensation, and carbon footprint.
- The committee believes the industry/ASMI will be under pressure in the future to address the growing consumer concerns about seafood abundance. There is a need to educate consumers about the ebb and flow of seafood abundance and Alaska's sustainability story.
- Identifying country of harvest and origin – ensuring Alaska pollock is identifiable and labeled correctly to separate from Russian pollock.

**5. What challenges/threats do you anticipate for your species in the next year or near future?**

- Labor shortages and increased operation costs continue to be an obstacle the industry faces, not likely to be solved by next year. The committee discussed the benefit of supporting policies to allow further hiring internationally if labor shortages continue. The committee asks whether ASMI can market for industry recruitment given these labor issues.
- Competition from other origins (Russia) and mislabeling for origin.
- Global logistical issues