This document outlines SFP’s guidance for engaging with Fishery Progress, a new website maintained by the nonprofit FishChoice for reporting and tracking Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) globally.

SFP welcomes Fishery Progress as a further step toward clear and consistent public reporting of FIPs on a common framework. This reporting benefits everyone connected to a FIP. It helps major buyer customers such as retailers and foodservice companies easily understand the fisheries they source from – what progress is being made and what problems remain. It also enables supply chains supplying customers with diverse requirements (e.g., “fix the worst first,” achieve Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification, upgrade a rating from Monterey Bay Aquarium’s Seafood Watch program) to work together as easily as possible in launching and assisting FIPs.

Fishery Progress builds on the success of the FIP Directory, run by SFP for the past couple of years. We believe the new site is an improvement on the directory as a global repository for FIP reporting. SFP encourages all stakeholders managing FIPs on the FIP Directory to transition reporting to Fishery Progress as soon as practical.

In addition, Fishery Progress complements the FIP progress tracking SFP has been doing for many years publicly through FishSource and privately with partners through Metrics. For now FishSource will continue to provide high-level tracking of all FIPs globally, including the FIP progress ratings. Fishery Progress will provide a more detailed level of tracking (e.g., workplan activities progress) for FIPs that are actively reporting on the site. We look forward to working with Fishery Progress to make certain SFP’s FIP progress ratings are also available on fisheryprogress.org, to ensure consistency.

In 2015, the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions published FIP Guidelines that draw a distinction between “comprehensive” and “basic” FIPs. SFP wants to make clear that despite the distinction between basic and comprehensive FIPs on Fishery Progress, data from all FIPs are welcome on the site. We disagree with the premise that comprehensive FIPs are in some way preferred or more effective than basic FIPs. Evidence we have seen based on actual impact and performance of FIPs (many basic FIPs leading to MSC certification, for example) does not support this conclusion. Regardless of which phase a FIP is in, the most important consideration is whether continuous progress is being made toward the end goal. SFP is working with Fishery Progress to ensure the reporting experience for basic FIPs is not overly burdensome and does not deter reporting.

SFP offers the following advice to partners regarding Fishery Progress:
• Fishery Progress is an ongoing project. We encourage all partners to work with FishChoice to help the organization improve the site over time, both in the reporting process and in how information is disseminated on the site to its users.

• If you have not yet been engaged by FisheryProgress directly and are interested in a training or demonstration, please reach one of the site leads (Kristin Sherwood; kristin@fishchoice.com)

• For partners having difficulty evaluating certain fisheries against the MSC standard for technical reasons (e.g., complex multispecies trawl fisheries in Asia), seek out guidance from FisheryProgress, which will set up technical support with the MSC about how such fisheries could be evaluated against its standard. This will help make such fisheries more compatible with Fishery Progress, enabling them to be included on the site.

• On a similar note, partners working with fisheries that are working toward non-MSC standards, such as IFPO, Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch, Fair Trade or other standards, should encourage Fishery Progress to work to assist these fisheries in mapping to the MSC-based reporting framework used on fisheryprogress.org.

Please contact your SFP contact(s) if we can help address any questions you have. Also, we encourage you to reach out directly to FisheryProgress by contacting Kristin Sherwood (Kristin@fishchoice.com).