



Seafood Traceability

Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) sets guidance for traceability in its ongoing work with the seafood industry, but we don't regard traceability as a primary tool for gauging the overall sustainability of a fishery or farm.

We understand the value of traceable products to the industry and public and why traceability and transparency is important to some buyers, suppliers, producers and governments. Drivers for employing traceability include food safety, identifying fraud/mislabeled, marketing, and uncovering evidence of human rights and environmental abuses, including IUU. Our guidance focuses on the human rights and environmental issues in an effort to push improvement in the majority of global seafood supplies. Hence our focus is on what minimum standards the global seafood industry can set for traceability. Rather than promoting one set of best practices for all cases, SFP provides additional guidance for a wide range of scenarios that exist in the context of global fisheries.

Before implementing a traceability solution or solutions, SFP believes it is critical to first conduct a risk assessment for all source fisheries to identify which products are more likely to come from fisheries or farming zones with significant environmental and human rights issues. To do that, the key minimum requirement we advise is that data on the source of raw material is transmitted through every level of the supply chain and that the retailer or food service company is fully informed about species, origin, and harvest/production technique. Using that source fishery and aquaculture information, a variety of risk assessment tools can be used. For example, FishSource for wild capture fisheries, Seafood Watch reports for aquaculture, and the Labor Safe Screen for human right abuses.

After seafood product sources have been assessed, we advise a risk-based approach that ratchets up traceability requirements and due diligence processes in cases where there is a high risk of significant IUU, environmental, or human abuse issues. This means that product coming from a low-risk fishery through a short and known supply chain might require a minimum level of traceability. However, sources that are considered high risk for issues such as IUU, labor abuse or environmental degradation will face increased due scrutiny. In other words, the higher the risk, the greater the level of detailed traceability that may be required.

Much of the above process is occurring with SFP partners today via Metrics and SFP's public database, FishSource, one of the world's largest catalogs of fishery-specific information for wild seafood and contains data on over 2,000 source fisheries. In order to level the playing field and develop solutions that can be adapted industry-wide in the future (rather than each retailer utilizing their own traceability systems), SFP proposes that the NGO community and industry work together to define agreed upon Key Data Elements that are implemented globally.

What is SFP doing?

Right now, SFP is 12 months into a 30 month collaboration with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to build a global database of existing fisheries ("Global Record for Stocks and

Fisheries” or GRSF) that includes the national management and stock units for all fisheries. Each fishery will then have its own code or unique identifier that can be used to ensure the correct identity of a fishery within traceability systems and by NGOs and science community.

From there, SFP is recommending and planning to work on the following:

- Once the FAO database is complete, work with industry and the NGO community to ensure alignment globally on the use of Key Data Elements (KDEs)
- Work with retailers, suppliers, importers, processors to adopt standardized nomenclature and unique codes for source fishery identification from their supply chains .
- Support industry-led efforts to develop tools and systems that will allow for the collection, tracking, and verification of KDEs through the supply chain
- Encourage retailer demand for these systems as part of their procurement policies.
- Support industry and NGOs to introduce legislation to make the collection of the KDEs standard in the seafood industry.