



Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday 10 February 2020

Time: 4:00-5:30 HKT

Location: GoToWebinar

Attendees:

17 individuals, representing:

7	Member companies	1	Technical Advisor
0	Observers/ academics	3	Steering Committee organisations
2	Secretariat organisation	4	Independent consultants

Agenda

- 1 Welcome remarks and housekeeping
- 2 Funding update
- 2019: Review
- 3 Introduction to new member
- 4 Membership update and progress on Letter of Commitments
- 5 Webinars
- Working Group updates
- 6
 - Branding and communications
 - Sustainability risk assessment
 - Marketplace
- 2020: Proposed activities
- 7 Independent review of HKSSC's value proposition - introduction to consultants
- 8 Updates to Voluntary Codes of Conduct, Guidance Document and support tools
- 9 Additional support options
- 10 Webinars
- 11 Government engagement



1. Welcome remarks and housekeeping items

- Secretariat provided welcome remarks, overview of agenda and a reminder of Chatham House Rules.
- Members from working groups agreed for minutes to be uploaded online.
 - Vote result: 5 members voted “Yes”; 1 member abstained
- In line with the Terms of Reference, the Chairperson’s position was up for review after serving more than 12 months. Members were asked if they would like to take a vote for a new Chair, or have current Chair remain in position:
 - Vote result: 5 members voted to keep Chair in current position, 1 member abstained

2. Funding update

- ADM Capital Foundation and The Swire Group Charitable Trust, with contribution from Estée Lauder Foundation, will provide funding to HKSSC for the next two years. The funding will cover the cost of HKSSC including Technical Advisor, Secretariat and Independent Consultant’s review.

3. Introduction to new member

- One new member who is a seafood product supplier joined since last member meeting.

4. Membership update and progress on Letter of Commitments

- Five new members joined in 2019, with several recruitment meetings held for hotels and recreational clubs. Currently, majority of the members are seafood suppliers/ distributors.
- Most successful recruitment channel is through introduction from members.
- A Letter of Commitments was introduced to the onboarding process last year, asking members to describe their commitments and relevant measurable targets towards meeting the Codes of Conduct. Secretariat will follow up with members on their Letter of Commitments for better collective reporting.

5. 2019 webinars review

- Technical Advisor provided recap on all webinars in 2019
 - Webinar 1 - Sustainability: First Step Risk Assessment
 - Provides members with guidance of the use of third-party assessment tools available online and encourages members to take the first step to assess biological sustainability risk.
 - Webinar 2 - Supply Chain Traceability & Legality: First Step Assessment
 - Introduces the issues of illegal, unreported and unregulated (“IUU”) fishing and raises the key questions for members to ask their suppliers to collect data that can help make an assessment against IUU risk.
 - Webinar 3 - High Value Species
 - Provides information on high value species commonly traded in Hong Kong and recommendations on the initial due diligence steps, as presented by a local academic expert and an NGO.
 - Webinar 4 - Seafood Mislabelling / Seafood Fraud
 - Introduces the situation of seafood mislabelling and seafood fraud globally and in Hong Kong, with strategic guidance on how to ensure traceability and legality, as presented by three experts on the issue.

6. Working group updates

i. Branding and Communications Working Group

- The Group aims to ensure consistent branding with the development of a branding package, which will be accessible to all members for their communications.
- A communications plan has been developed, helping to identify and communicate with our target audience. This will be reviewed in the next working group meeting.
- One member raised a question if HKSSC has a list of companies that have been approached to avoid reaching them twice. This list will be shared with members, though members are encouraged to see if there may have been turnover or a stronger connection within the company to initiate communication



ii. Sustainability Risk Assessment Working Group

- Consultant presented an update on the objectives, scope and working process of the risk assessment project
 - Wild catch: Five species profiles have been created, involving assessments from several countries. In certain cases species information has been difficult to capture (e.g. squid), but the assessment team is seeking ways to fill knowledge gaps. Scoring for wild catch to be finalised the week of 10 February.
 - Aquaculture: Profiles for two species are underway from overseas farms and further profiles will be developed. For local farmed species, the consultant aims to visit farms to ensure the framework being developed is suitable (possibly in May 2020).
- Next steps are to finalise seafood profiles and summaries, to agree on scoring mechanism and to develop guidance for members.
- Emphasised by Technical Advisor that the project is funded for members to fill in the gaps in information on relevant species and to improve their supply chains.

iii. Marketplace Working Group

- Following the last members meeting (July 2019), the Working Group established a memorandum of understanding, and the Marketplace development will take advice from the HKSSC working group.
- A star-rating system will be advised by the working group and the Marketplace will adapt the traceability questionnaire. Agreed that if a product is certified with MSC, there is no need to fill in additional fields on the Marketplace.

7. Introduction to the Review of HKSSC’s Value Proposition project

- Introduction of the independent consultants and team leading on the project.
- Project overview: The consultants will conduct a gap analysis, review documents, and draft a strategic plan that includes recruitment and outreach suggestions. The team requested to be able to engage with members and for members to give their comments on the HKSSC.
- Emphasised that the purpose of this project is to ensure that the program and approach of HKSSC matches membership needs and to enhance communication of membership value proposition.

8. Updates to Voluntary Codes of Conduct (VCOC), Guidance Document and support tools

- The HKSSC received legal advice to change some wordings in the VCOC to comply with the anti-competition ordinance (e.g. changing “will” to “should”). Members were asked if they agree with these proposed changes:
 - Vote result: 5 members voted “Yes”; 1 member voted “No”; 1 member abstained
 - Note: After meeting it was clarified with member who voted “no” that it was an error.
- Members voted on whether to include social aspects into the 2020 workplan.
 - Vote result: 4 members voted “yes”, 3 voted “no”.
- Members were then asked in what way HKSSC could start working on social aspects.
 - Vote result: 2 members voted “Update Codes”; 3 members voted “Hold off until later date”; 1 member voted “Capacity building”; 1 member abstained
- Members were asked if they were ready for enhanced criteria to be added to the sustainability / traceability / IUU support tool to better align with the VCOCs?
 - Vote result: 4 members voted “Yes”; 1 member voted “No”; 1 member abstained

9. Additional support options

- Technical Advisor asked members what kind of internal support they need, or if they are struggling in complying with the VCOCs. Suggested that those who answered “yes” in the vote would be approached by the Secretariat to arrange support.
- Members did not seek assistance with implementing the VCOCs.
 - Vote result: 6 members voted “No” in terms of needing support; 1 member abstained

10. 2020 webinars

- Members agreed that they would like webinars to continue.
 - Result: 5 members voted “Yes”; 1 member voted “No”; 1 member abstained, clarifying that he prefers face to face meetings



- No suggestions were given from members for content of upcoming webinars, but Technical Advisor provided an overview of options with a focus being on IUU

11. Government engagement

- The Chair introduced the Food Trader Portal, an initiative of the FEHD, which allows importers of various food products to submit an application for import licenses with all documentation tracked online, including health certificates. The scope of the FTP does not cover seafood at present. An initial step for HKSSC could be to engage with relevant stakeholders to explore where improvements can be made in terms of seafood trade from a food safety, traceability and transparency perspective.
- A comment from one member was that the difficulty will be on the buyer side, as cost remains the most important issue.
- HKSSC could develop a strategy to engage with the government on these issues. HKSSC members voted on whether or not they felt HKSSC has potential to positively influence policy change, which all agreed.
 - Vote result: 6 members voted “Yes”; 1 member abstained

12. AOB

- Next members meeting date to be set via email, proposing week of 18 May 2020.