



Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 22 July 2020

Time: 4:00-6:00 HKT

Location: Zoom

Attendees:

22 individuals, representing:

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

Agenda

- 1 Introducing of new Secretariat representative
- 2 Meeting objectives and agenda
Housekeeping
- 3 Use of the webinar platform / Who's in the room?
Chatham House Rules
- 4 Overview of HKSSC membership
- 5 Introduction of new members: Sands China Ltd, Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group
- 6 TPB project update and findings from benchmarking organisations
- 7 Discussions and gathering input from Members
- 8 Membership discussion: Producers outside region selling into HK
- 9 Approval of revised Terms of Reference / Invitation to Steering Committee
- 10 Choose Right Today update
- 11 Working Group Updates: Sustainability Risk Assessment and website; Marketplace; Branding and Communications
- 12 Member support: upgraded support tool; seafood policies
- 13 Proposal for seafood trade flows into and within Hong Kong
- 13 Webinars



Progress on Letter of Commitments

14 App-based communications

Next steps

15 Close



1. Welcome remarks

- Chairman provided welcome remarks and overview of agenda
- Introduced new representative from the Secretariat organisation

2. Housekeeping

- Introduced the housekeeping rules and the functions of the online meeting platform
- Reminded members of the Chatham House Rules to ensure no identity nor affiliation will be revealed

3. Overview of HKSSC membership and introduction of new members

- Secretariat presented the overview of current membership status
- New members introduced their background, scope of businesses and roles in the seafood supply chain

4. Independent consultant (The Purpose Business) project updates and findings

- Independent consultant gave a brief introduction on project background and progress update, and went through the results from previous benchmarking exercise against five similar organisations – Sea Pact, Seafood Task Force, UK Sustainable Seafood Coalition, Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative and International Seafood Sustainability Foundation
- Key areas of the exercise are around focus areas and major initiatives, member representation, membership categories, impact measurement, key partnerships and governance structure
- Independent consultant gathered inputs from members regarding the future development and priorities of HKSSC. Members had the following insights:
 - Bringing in more members from the retail industry could bring more impact
 - Include a local fish market, which has real desire to make change to increase transparency
 - The Aberdeen Fish Market has the desire to create a sustainable market. They are a large partner and control large seafood supplies and can impact governmental change
 - Every member has a part to play in moving the organisation forward, and the member can make use of their network to bring new members to the table
 - Focus should be put on working with the government to have rules in place as is the case for the meat industry in terms of requirements; put more effort on local seafood suppliers and increase the public awareness of the cause; lobby at governmental level and buy in to regulate seafood imports
 - Organise training with qualified authority about tender submission process and product sourcing (this is key for sourcing at Hotels & Casino): there are a lot of items in the tender documents with wrong descriptions, incorrect certification etc.
 - When the member receives tenders from hotels, there are usually incorrect terminology / species names in the documents – training and workshops should be offered to these stakeholders
 - Enlarge membership, help members complete self-assigned commitments, begin discussion with government on policy suggestions
 - Looking for more support on the implementation of the Codes of Conduct
 - Should we engage more with GSSI certification bodies to bridge that gap for suppliers and end users to make informed choices?
 - Many customers want to make informed choices, therefore certification schemes provide guidance
 - Create social media platforms to enhance awareness and appeal to potential partners



- Need to expand to many kinds of stakeholders e.g. hotels and restaurants, together with suppliers, government departments and other non-profit organisations. Then we could do better in promoting sustainable seafood.
- Enlarge membership by organising networking session with the chambers of commerce (e.g. Food & Beverage chamber community)

5. Discussion: Membership

- Chairman led the discussion regarding the question: Should the HKSSC encourage producers from outside the region that sell into Hong Kong to join as members?
- HKSSC has received several enquiries from overseas about joining the Coalition and influencing the government policy and seafood procurement practices
- There is no objection around this issue, the Coalition will be open to dialogue and keep in view, One member recommended that we first strengthen / consolidate our Hong Kong membership and potentially offer different categories for outside producers / suppliers
- Live poll: Do you accept the revisions to the Terms of Reference?
 - Poll results: 7 members voted “Yes”

6. Choose Right Today update

- Ran through the current survey of sustainable seafood in Hong Kong; results show that there is no baseline data in Hong Kong
- Introduced Choose Right Today, which offers more information on sustainable seafood options in Hong Kong and will look for collaboration opportunities to reach out to consumers

7. Working group updates

- Sustainability risk assessment working group
 - TA introduced the background, objectives and methodology of the risk assessment project
 - The assessment methodology has been overseen by the peer review advisory committee comprising university professors and seafood supply chain experts, and developed by the assessment team headed by an independent consultant (RS Standards)
 - Project team gave project update on the process, difference / similarities to other risk assessment tools (e.g. WWF) and initial findings of the risk of nine wild catch and seven farmed fish species imported to or originating in Hong Kong
 - Updated the progress of website development and the future steps
 - Website should launch in August 2020
- Marketplace working group
 - Introduced the background and benefits of the marketplace, a tool to enable sustainable seafood buyers to meet sellers that meet minimum requirements on traceability and sustainability
 - The platform is still work in progress, but the process has been delayed by the current COVID-19 pandemic
 - More information will follow after further discussion within the working group
- Branding and communication working group
 - Worked on the design and content of the presentation slides of HKSSC
 - Progress has been affected by recent events, will need to wait until situation in Hong Kong is better



8. Member resources

- Technical Advisor provided a recap on the updated self-risk assessment tool, training video can be found in member portal
- Internal seafood policies are recommended in the Voluntary Code of Conduct, and as a support, a seafood policy database has been offered to members as a reference
- As part of the support by members to help encourage better seafood policy and regulations in Hong Kong, the Technical Advisor introduced a research project proposal to map out the seafood imports and trade flows in Hong Kong that will provide insights for the industry to assist them in their due diligence measures, as well as recommendations for policy reform. It will explore the potential for improved seafood labelling in Hong Kong with government departments and the industry. Using a local research team of academics and trade experts, part of the project aim is to build capacity amongst local experts to support future work in developing better control schemes in Hong Kong.

9. Webinars

- Recap of previous 2020 webinars on human rights / social issues facing seafood supply chains and developments around traceability, transparency and disclosure ; recordings are available online (dedicated YouTube channel)
- Two more proposed 2020 webinars were shared; proposed topics focus on tuna and social issues
- Live poll: Are the webinars useful for the HKSSC and do you wish to continue with them?
 - Poll results: 5 out of 7 members voted “Yes”
- Live poll: Which of the proposed next webinar topics are of interest?
 - Poll results: 3 out of 7 members voted “Tuna”; 2 members voted “Other species”
- Outcome: TA confirmed that the next member webinars will focus on biological sustainability at species level, with the first webinar on tuna to be followed by other species of interest

10. Letter of commitments

- Updates on the progress of letter of commitments
- Any questions or support needed please get in touch with the Technical Advisor

11. App-based communications

- Secretariat proposed introduction of additional communication channel (WhatsApp)
- Time was limited and members had to leave, initial responses to poll resulted in no conclusion
- Live poll: Do you agree to WhatsApp being an additional channel of communication?
 - Poll results: 1 yes, 1 no
- Members have been provided with the link to the WhatsApp group and can opt into this group if desired
- Communications will continue via email

12. 2020 Outlook

- Seafood risk assessment website launch
- Two further webinars will be offered this year, previous webinars can be view on YouTube channel
- The Purpose Business will share their review findings and develop a strategy with HKSSC Members
- Funding for the seafood trade flows research will be explored