



Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 27 January 2021

Time: 3:30-6:00 HKT

Location: Zoom

Attendees:

20 individuals, representing:

8	Member companies	1	Technical Advisor (TA)
0	Observers/ academics	3	Steering Committee organisations
2	Secretariat organisation	4	Independent consultants

Agenda

1. **Agenda**
2. **Welcome remarks and reflection on 2020**
3. **Key developments in 2020**
4. **Member updates (MOHG, 178 Degrees, M&C)**
5. **Working groups and seafood trade flows proposal**
6. **Value Proposition review: key research findings**
7. **Recommendations and strategy roadmap presentation**
8. **Discussion**
9. **Overview of workplan and member input**
10. **Funding and fees**
11. **Next steps**



2020 in review

2. Welcome remarks and reflection on 2020

- Welcome remarks from the Chairperson of the HKSSC, reflecting on the challenging circumstances faced by members due to the impact of the pandemic on the hospitality and food and beverage industries, and thanking members' commitments in the past year.

3. Key developments in 2020

- TA provides updates on last year's progress in member support, implementation of the Codes of Conduct and webinars.
- Secretariat's update on membership, commitment letters and recruitment of new members; five members need to clarify their commitment in their Letter of Commitment.

4. Member updates (Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group (MOHG), 178 Degrees, M&C)

- MOHG sharing:
 - MOHG upholds the responsibility of operating and procuring responsibly.
 - Rolled out a sustainable seafood guideline last year - 33 hotels, 27 operating regions
 - The level of dining and procurement is at the Michelin Star level – even more emphasis on sustainability.
 - Guidelines across the Group driven by the initiatives taken by the two HK hotels.
 - MOHG tracks supplier data but more from a sustainability angle. In terms of defining what constitutes the definition of sustainability they defined it as GSSI certified seafood – that includes MSC & ASC.
 - Some hotels have been active on this, others have not started on the journey yet.
 - There are a number of certifications that don't fall under the GSSI scheme, hence why the HKSSC tools are useful to fill the information gap.
 - A lot of the tools highlight scientific names of seafood – which is foreign to them at the hotel level, as they don't deal with these names on a daily basis.
 - This is a gap that needs to be filled – to make sure seafood they procure and which enters HK is readily disclosed (scientific names). MOHG hopes their membership will help to bridge this.
 - All the people that they work with from chefs to procurement, want to purchase sustainably, but the info is not always available..
- 178 Degrees sharing:
 - The data collection process for risk assessment is straightforward. Once started, it is not as difficult as one might think to assess a seafood supply chain. Making a start is therefore the most important step.
 - However, for companies like 178 Degrees it is a different set of challenges to the large hoteliers due to having simpler supply chains, so Latin names are not an issue.
 - Looks forward to expanding the scope of species for the risk assessment.
- M&C sharing:



- The HKSSC risk assessment tool provides relevant information and helps the user to know his or her supply chain and understand risks in seafood procurement.
- M&C tried to make concrete commitments and stick to them, even though the situation has been difficult due to the global health crisis disrupting supply chains.
- M&C hopes HKSSC can recruit large retailers.
- M&C suggested it would be good to talk more closely with NGOs, such as WWF.
- M&C's mission is to explain and educate what we do – however it has taken some time to have the right message. The best scenario is if the product is MSC certified. However, sometimes buyer purchasing departments require MSC / ASC and when a product does not have this labelling, then it is not considered sustainable. The Coalition materials raise a lot of interesting questions and the fact that it's not only about certification.
- M&C pointed out that collecting data from a frozen product from a big fishery vs. artisanal line caught is very different. They can fulfill most of the questions for large scale fisheries (e.g. frozen black tiger shrimp) with just a few questions outstanding. However for species such as fresh line caught European pollock it is different (e.g. seasonality involved, purchasing direct from fisher, in summer it's difficult to find the fish). So M&C try not to highlight or promote when it is not the best season for a species.
- On a monthly basis M&C verifies all documentation and details received on goods from suppliers. M&C will be committing to continue this during 2021.
- Covid has made it more difficult to get the product (boat, air freight or whichever mode). MSC certified products are available but will take longer to receive. So to make sure that standard is followed does have additional costs.

5. Working groups and seafood trade flows proposal

- Working groups
 - Risk assessment working group:
 - With the help of RS Standards and risk assessment team, it has developed assessment for 16 species profiles.
 - Launched Seafood Risk Assessment website last year. TA provided a demo of the website.
 - Next year the working group aims to assess 10 more species and will look at initiating a fisheries improvement project (FIP) and aquaculture improvement project (AIP).
 - Branding and communication working group:
 - Drafted communication plans in 2020 Q1.
 - Progress halted in 2020 due to COVID-19.
 - Marketplace working group:
 - Progress halted in 2020 due to COVID-19.
 - Will continue the development in the coming year, focusing on the three-star rating system.



- External engagement
 - Through organising webinars, the sustainability risk assessment initiative and seafood trade research proposal, we have engaged with a lot of stakeholders over the past year raising the profile of the HKSSC.
 - HKSSC is communicating with potential funders and other external stakeholders, such as the engagement with Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (“GDST”).
 - Chair described the GDST Standards and explained that endorsing them as a group would be a positive step as it has no immediate resource requirement on members, but signals HKSSC’s position on seafood traceability and as members work towards assessing their supply chains through implementing the HKSSC Voluntary Codes of Conduct VCoC, they are also in alignment with the GDST Standards.
 - Secretariat and Technical Advisor will reach out to the members to decide if HKSSC will endorse the standards of GDST.

Strategy workshop

6. Value Proposition review: key research findings

- Led by external consultancy, The Purpose Business (TPB), the session was run as a workshop in which TPB gave updates on the strategy roadmap development and presented the summary of recommendations on the strategic plan.
- TPB set the context for discussions based by sharing the findings from their review of the HKSSC, from their research and from engagement with members.
- TPB presented the aggregated prioritization of 26 recommendations included in the Value Proposition Report.

7. Recommendations and strategy roadmap presentation

- TPB presented the recommendations as part of a preliminary roadmap and sought clarification on key focus areas of the roadmap through discussion with members.
- In the first discussion questions, the members contributed to the workshop as a group. When focusing on initiatives, members were divided into two groups, suppliers and hoteliers based on their organisation type.

8. Discussion

a) Name 2 to 3 entities/ organisations HKSSC could reach out to become members and what (new) membership type would apply?

- Caterers for Schools, IKEA, AEON, member clubs (Jockey Club, American Club), Citysuper, Red lobster, restaurant associations, wet markets, Maxim's, event / outsourced caterers, Cathay Pacific and other airlines.
- Suggested to offer some groups (e.g schools) information/education without requiring too much commitment to start.
- One member suggested university scholars and secondary school science teachers could be invited to join as non-executive members. Value added: sharing knowledge, making it easier for HKSSC to be known and sought after.



b) What can HKSSC do to create more value specifically for them to join us? What may be their main concerns?

- Concerns: it will too much time to join and follow up, trade secret, language barrier, lack of awareness of HKSSC or seafood issues, cost and additional processes/policies
- Action: Develop or articulate incentives to participate;
- Action: Ensure all outreach materials are translated to Chinese to reach out to local institutions.
- Action: Launch a short pitch video in Cantonese that can be shared with local companies / wet markets / FMO

c) 2-3 short term priorities that HKSSC can do to create impact

- Launch a marketing campaign or public event to promote the vision and mission.
- Engage well-known people in the industry or in general (local celebrities) as ambassadors to bring awareness to the public. (e.g. Jackie Chan)
- Increase local language (i.e. Cantonese) presence to attract local organisations.
- HKSSC should think about doing a launch event to promote and be the go-to organisation for sustainable seafood.
- Engage with the government to get more support.
- Engage with the general public, beginning with staff and guests. This could be in the form of an information pack, QR code and other channels to share information more easily with guests at hotels. Could be a short video, which they incorporate into their own branding.
- Sustainability doesn't translate directly to Cantonese, so it can be difficult to understand for Cantonese speakers. Translate consumer information into Cantonese or even Filipino (for the consumers shopping on behalf of families).
- Look at ways of making it easy for prospects to join in place of the long CoC, which might make them hesitant to join. Instead look for more suggestions for them to join.

2021 Workplan

9. Overview of workplan and member input

The Secretariat and TA provided a snapshot of the draft 2021 workplan, and sought input on key issues and new inclusions. Feedback provided in this session and to TPB will be used to finalise the workplan in early March 2021. Work will begin on key aspects of the workplan that were agreed in the meeting.

HKSSC Strategy, VCoC and governance

The Secretariat shared the key objectives for 2021:

- Finalise HKSSC strategy and assign responsibilities to relevant parties
- Make VCoC easier to digest
- Reduce number of SC meetings to reallocate time to other aspects of workplan
- Strategically grow the Steering Committee (SC)



Question 1
<i>Do members agree for Ben So to continue as Chair?</i>
Response
<i>Yes: 5 votes; No: 0 vote</i>
Resolution
<i>Ben So will continue as Chairperson.</i>

Question 2a and b
<p>a) <i>A Vice-Chair position is open. Do any members wish to volunteer for this position?</i></p> <p>b) <i>Any interest from membership to participate in Steering Committee and/or SC calls?</i></p>
Response
<i>a) No attending members voiced interest.</i>
Resolution
<i>Members are to contact the Secretariat if interested.</i>

Membership strategy

The Secretariat shared the key objectives for 2021:

- Improve networking opportunities
- Engage more often with members to increase level of support and understand common challenges
- Expand membership to keep proposed member fees low and build support for policy advocacy

Question 1



<i>Is everyone in support of introducing live online meetings twice a year to supplement the bi-annual member meetings to share case studies and discuss common challenges?</i>
Response
<p>Yes: 4 votes; No: 0 vote</p> <p>One member asked for further information. The Secretariat recommended that the content is member-driven, the format is informal and that when conditions allow, should be in person with or as part of a social event to promote networking and relationship building.</p>
Resolution
<i>HKSSC will proceed with this initiative in 2021.</i>

Programmes, initiatives and working groups

The Secretariat shared the key objectives for 2021:

- Continue open webinars to provide relevant insights, raise awareness of HKSSC to help with recruitment
- To increase HKSSC’s relevance to local Chinese markets and businesses
- To expand membership through onboarding Chinese companies
- To drive progress on working groups using staffers

Till Lembke, Hongkong Shanghai Hotels Ltd, shared an update on Marketplace:

- HSH through collaboration with HKSSC and its suppliers aim to complete the structure of Marketplace, including a star rating system.
- The star-rating system enables readily-understood policy decisions by the group’s management. e.g. By 2025 we want at least 50% of suppliers meeting 2 star standard; By 2030 we want at least 50% meeting 3 star standard.
- HSH will seek to deliver training on Marketplace within HSH, and participation of other interested HKSSC members;
- HSH will launch Marketplace with e-procurement systems providers.

A motion was put forward to conduct at least one webinar in Cantonese and focus other webinars on species that are to be profiled for the Seafood Risk Assessment Website, and also on the establishment of a Local Chinese Company Engagement Working Group.

Question a and b
<p>a) <i>Do members agree that Cantonese webinars are a good idea? (first planned Feb 2021)</i></p> <p>b) <i>Do members agree to a new WG focused on local Chinese company engagement?</i></p>
Response 1



<p>a) Yes: 4 votes; No: 0 vote b) Yes: 4 votes; No: 0 vote</p>
<p>Resolution</p>
<p>a) Chinese language webinar(s) will be introduced b) Local Chinese company engagement working group will be established</p>
<p>Question c</p>
<p>c) Would anyone like to join this WG?</p>
<p>Response 2</p>
<p>Yes: 2 volunteers: M&C, Indoguna Note: Sands China will introduce a colleague through the Cantonese webinar and determine then if this colleague wishes to join the working group</p>

External stakeholder engagement

The Secretariat shared the key objectives for 2021:

- Secure funding for seafood trade flow research and commence project
- Raise awareness of the HKSSC and its mission

A request was made to members to consider any avenues or organisations that may lead to funding the seafood trade proposal so that government engagement work can commence.

10. Operating funds and membership fees

The Secretariat shared the imperatives for 2021:

- Confirm membership prices/bands;
- Set a target date to be self-sufficient

Members were reminded that the current funding will expire at the end of 2021. An example fee structure based on the SSC (UK) model was provided as a reference. Members were asked if the banding made sense, and if members were able to begin paying fees in 2020 to cover work needed on branding and communications.

<p>Question</p>



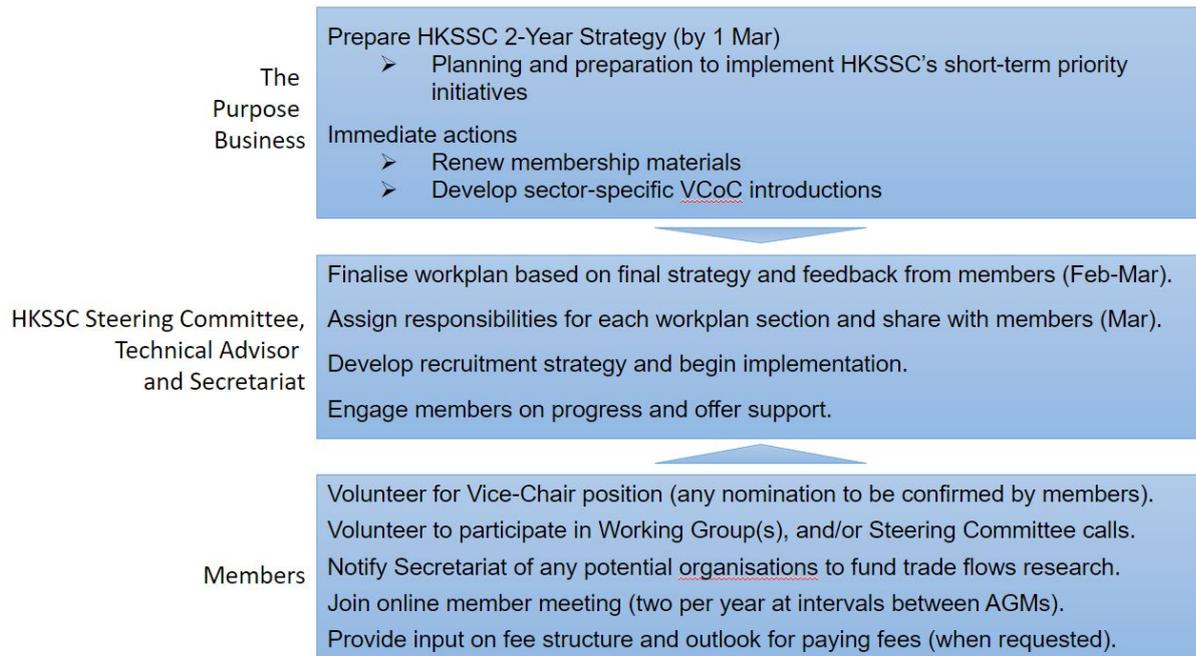
<p>a) <i>Are members willing to start paying fees, based on the below fee structure, this year to help cover the additional proposed activities?</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Proposed fee structure:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>HKD 2,000 for all members with annual turnover below HKD 50,000,000</i> ○ <i>HKD 5,000 for all members with annual turnover below HKD 500,000,000</i>
Response 1
<p><i>Yes: 3 votes; No: 1 vote</i></p> <p><i>One member stated that they would need to check internally before making any commitment.</i></p>
Commentary
<p>It is welcomed that some members are already willing to commit to financially contribute to the HKSSC in 2020. The Secretariat does not recommend that a limited group of members pay fees that would benefit all members of the Coalition.</p> <p>The motion will be raised again in the next member meeting. In the interim, the focus will be on recruitment and gaining a better understanding of the funding and member contributions in the SSC (UK). This will inform the HKSSC recruitment strategy and revisions to the fee structure before implementation.</p>

Question prompts on slides that were not directly addressed include:

- *Fees: Are existing members willing to commit to paying fees as of January 2022?*
- *Fee structure: Do these bands make sense to members?*
- *Target date for self sufficiency: Can this be achieved in 2022?*

11. Next steps

The Secretariat recapped the main resolutions from the meeting and provided direction for four key groups, namely TPB, the HKSSC SC, TA and Secretariat, and the members



Closing

The Chairperson closed the session with forward looking remarks and thanks to all involved. The Secretariat signed off letting members know that minutes would be circulated and separate communications on working groups and endorsing the GDST would be provided.