



Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 26 July 2022

Time: 4:00-5:30 HKT

Location: Zoom

Attendees:

16 individuals, representing:

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

Agenda

Section	Time	Item	Lead
Introduction	4:00 - 4:05	Housekeeping	Jacqui
		Recapping the problem / HKSSC Vision	Jacqui
	4:05 - 4:10	Welcome remarks	Ben
	4:10 - 4:20	Welcome to new members	Ben
2021 in review	4:20 - 4:45	Key developments in 2021 - Overall - Working Groups - Call for participation - Confirm WG leads, chair and other positions for 2022	Jacqui, WGs
Charting a course for '22	4:45 - 5:00	2022 workplan review; open floor for member discussion	Jacqui
Funding and fees	5:00 – 5:10	Confirmation of fee structure and payment process	Sophie
	5:10 – 5:15	Next steps	Jacqui



	5:15 - 5:25	AOB	Jacqui
Closing	5:25 - 5:30	Closing	Ben



1. Introduction

● Housekeeping

- Reminder of Chatham house rules and transparency of meeting minutes

● Recapping the problem

- Regional and global overexploitation of seafood
- Prevalence of illegal, untraceable, non-sustainable seafood in global supply chains
- Limited laws and regulations governing HK's seafood imports
- Hong Kong is Asia's 2nd largest per capita consumer of seafood - FAO estimates 65.5kg consumed per capita in HK; hence importance of the HKSSC's existence
- Particular challenges in Hong Kong:
 - IUU is a global problem and Hong Kong's monitoring and import controls are behind that of the EU, USA, and Japan
 - There is no centralized regulatory body from government to oversee the whole trade process
- HKSSC's vision and mission:
 - For all seafood imported into Hong Kong to be legal, traceable, and biologically sustainable
 - HKSSC members are committed to improving their sourcing practices, encouraging the industry as a whole to improve
- Welcome remarks from the Chairman, Benjamin So at 178 degrees
 - Acknowledgment that 2021 has been a difficult year, and appreciation for all businesses that still allocate time and resources to tackle seafood sustainability issues
- Welcome to new secretariat and new members
 - New Secretariat: Renee Lam, Sustainable Seafood Programme Co-ordinator from ADM Capital Foundation, also oversees the Choose Right Today initiative
 - New members:

Saga Seafood

- ❖ A young company, the local "arm" of Iceland's biggest fishery
- ❖ Partners with a publicly listed company that owns a fleet of fishing vessels, approximately 200,000 tonnes of fishing quota, processing plants in Iceland, trading office in Japan and team in Qingdao, China
- ❖ Trades in various species (e.g. Atlantic cod, Greenland halibut, Atlantic salmon) with a warehouse facility in Hong Kong
- ❖ Most products frozen at sea from certified fisheries, with high transparency - product information all available online
- ❖ Mostly wild caught but also few farmed species are available



- ❖ Farmed species from recirculating aquaculture systems, where Iceland is a leader and energy sources come from renewable energy

Wynn resorts

- ❖ Based in Macau, with two properties
- ❖ In Macau, F&B industry makes up half the financial engine in the city
- ❖ Ruby O is in the sustainability department, overseeing food safety and sustainability and bringing together customers and SMEs on the topic of sustainable seafood
- ❖ Her background is in F&B, food safety and traceability. She is an advocate for food sustainability in general (note her other activities involve the Society of Food & Environmental Health in Macau)
- ❖ Aim: to fill gaps in driving sustainable seafood in the city, with the Greater Bay Area also taken into consideration - noted the uniqueness of the GBA and connection to Portugal. Transparent and sustainable seafood considered good for the city as a whole

KIN Food Halls

- ❖ A digital integrated F&B platform that is redefining the food hall experience offering multiple brands across chefs in Asia
- ❖ Mission: Develop new technologies to inspire implementation of new solutions to current food and climate crisis
- ❖ Developing also a physical space to reshape current food halls offerings
- ❖ Own managed supply chain and everything cooked onsite in one kitchen
- ❖ Offering dine in, take-out and delivery from their base in taikoo place
- ❖ First smart food ecosystem in Hong Kong

2. Key developments in 2021

● Achievements

- Two promotional videos (English and Cantonese), three webinars with 87 attendees in total, three new members, and 251 LinkedIn followers
- Encouragement to all members to follow HKSSC on LinkedIn
- Updated Member Support Tools - launched towards end of last year
- Tools currently undergoing trial with 10 seafood products
- Marketplace: started exploring auditing and DNA functionality
- Seafood Risk Assessment: added 10 more profiles for assessment, worked with Hong Kong government for the first time
- International recognition: HKSSC was featured in Landscape Review of Sustainable Seafood Precompetitive Collaborations, set up by a sustainable seafood funders group in the US (all the major foundations)

● Working Group updates

- Change of chairs in the coming year; to become more member led
- New members in the Outreach & Comms working group which is active again

● Call for participation

- Reviewed governance structure
- Aim to have members drive the steering committee in the long run
- Positions to fill include: Chair, vice-chair, treasurer
- Members voted Yes for Benjamin So to continue as Chair in 2022
- No self-nomination or other nomination received for Chair and Vice chair
- Members voted Yes for ADMCF to take up the Treasurer role
- Working group chairs will include: Cesar for SRA WG (Q3 onwards) and Makiko for O&C WG (Q2 onwards)



- **Working group recap**

Seafood Risk Assessment WG

- Identified 10 new species, including seven wild-caught and three farmed species
- HK Government approached SRA to cover two local farmed species
- Assessments mostly completed but few still being completed
- New aquaculture assessor appointed from the University of Hong Kong (PhD candidate)
- Strengthened internal review process - internal review team includes Yvonne Sadovy, Stan Shea, Jacqui Dixon - profiles sent out to peer reviewers after internal review
- AIP in progress with grey mullet farms - a potential future case study on how to improve other farmed products
- In touch with the Hong Kong New Territories Fish Culture Association to help disseminate the questionnaire to the farmers
- By digging deeper into data collection at farm level, we will be able to identify if medium and high-risk ratings still applicable for feed and seed issues
- Members (178 Degrees, M&C and Indoguna) have started using the Member Support Tool and Supplier Questionnaire on products

Outreach & Communications WG

- Delivered two recruitment webinars
- Revamped marketing collaterals with testimonials and promotional video
- Members provided feedback and support on VCoC step-by-step implementation slide deck
- ADMCF and TA put together proposal couple of years ago with support from Yvonne Sadovy and Stan Shea to map out seafood trade in Hong Kong with the aim to support policy reform. No interest from foundations to date, but more recent interest from the Minderoo Foundation
- Will be a large-scale project that will involve collection of ten year's worth of customs data of seafood traded into Hong Kong from 150 plus countries, by seafood product type, form and mode of transport. As well as interviews with HKSSC members, Seafood Merchant Association and FMO to better understand seafood trade flows, documentation gaps and industry support for improvements to close those gaps. As well as comparative country by country import controls analysis
- If funding secured research to start this year and be completed in 2023
- Makiko will be Chair of WG from Q2

Marketplace WG

- Working on new platform to bring together buyers and sellers
- Started in 2018, with discussion between Peninsula and Teng Hoi
- User friendly platform still under testing
- Traceability questionnaire developed to cover basic questions to be asked when buying seafood and ensure chain of custody so you know what you are buying and from who: know which supplier one is buying from, to know whether product is farmed or wild, details on catching method or harvesting method, and product certification
- Multi year project with discussion from members
- Prototype developed with a series of steps designed: first step for users



- to identify the seafood, then use filters to search for product by product form (whole fish, fillet, skin on, skin off etc), then issue Purchase Order (PO) or start a Reverse Auction
- POs are tracked, all relevant documents from the seller are uploaded - with the aim for it to be fully auditable for traceability and sustainability and ensure complete transparency; have had discussions with potential auditors
- Buyers on one side get access to full information and network of suppliers; sellers have a better chance of visibility
- Feedback and perspectives at the Green Hospitality event last year:
 - Received useful feedback from industry: main concerns included security of platform, possibility of hosting other food products in the future, and need for an easy and user friendly tool with possibility of staff training to help them use the tools
 - Aim to discuss with Swire Trust for eventual collaboration and funding
- **Member sharing**
 - Indoguna Singapore Ltd
 - Distributor, producer, importer
 - Obtained CoC accreditation from MSC and ASC
 - Part of FOODSERVICE Asia Pacific Middle East (APME), which operates in six countries and 14 cities and is part of CP group, based in Thailand
 - Townhall events held in 2021 in conjunction with HKSSC, MSC and ASC. Included both internal (employees across the Group and food sourcing companies) and external (customer) facing events - speakers presented on their sustainability sourcing journey and provided platform to communicate with customers and industry on sustainability commitments
 - Next Townhall event: with retail sector on 17th Feb - will invite all retailers across the region, including international retailers
 - Sands China
 - Updated strategy and CSR platform - integrates ESG issues - planet, people, and communities with sustainable sourcing being a part of strategy
 - Aim to increase purchase of sustainable products and services
 - Five integrated resorts in Macau
 - Procurement and supply chain team has a sustainability matrix that they refer to
 - Sustainable seafood already incorporated into operation. In 2021 the majority of their certified products were prawns, followed by shellfish and fish
 - Extended sustainable sourcing guidelines and launched a global policy on bluefin, which prohibits purchase to non-certified bluefin only and only high end Japanese restaurants can request purchase
 - Major challenges:
 - Local seafood suppliers lack knowledge on sustainability; they rely on two suppliers in HK for sustainable seafood
 - Trying to find new suppliers to advance sustainable seafood sourcing, while continuing to meet internal requirements on taste and guest satisfaction



3. 2022 work plan review; open floor for member discussion

● Key focus areas in 2022 agreed by SC:

- Includes leadership, membership, partnership and stewardship streams
- Engaging with government (e.g., AFCD/FMO) on seafood risk assessment profiles
- Conducting seafood trade research as part of advocacy on policy change leading to a position paper (in 2023) on possible regulations on seafood imports
- Translation of recruitment materials and VCoC step by step guide will be high priority
- Promotional video - to be adapted to include all member logos along with a media campaign
- Membership: fee trial with this being the first year to charge member fees
- Importance of recruitment drive through webinar database and member contacts
- Reaching out to Chinese local companies
- Relationship management - secretariat to conduct check in calls with members
- Partnership: continue AIP work, SRA promotion and dialogue with GDST
- Stewardship: Bi-annual AGMs and bi-annual interim member meetings; Bi-monthly Steering Committee Meetings; note interim meetings are less formal and all members are encouraged to attend to make this a useful discussion
- Quarterly Working Group meetings (SRA, O&C, Marketplace)
- Work plan open to member comments

4. Confirmation of fee structure and payment process

● Breakdown of fee structure based on OECD organisational size categories

Corporate member categories	Annual fee (HKD)
Organisations with 250+ employees	\$ 25,000
Organisations with between 50 - 249 employees	\$ 10,000
Organisations with 10 - 49 employees	\$ 8,000
Organisations with 9 or fewer employees	\$ 5,000
Associate members categories	Annual fee (HKD)
Organisation with 250+ employees	\$ 10,000
Organisation with fewer than 250 employees	\$ 5,000
University	\$ 10,000
School	\$ 5,000

- Membership fees will be important for long term sustainability of the HKSSC
- Total source of funding from ADMCF combined with membership fees will be HK\$409,000
- Funding gap: HK\$176,000 (and ideally will be filled by new member recruitment)
- Funds to be allocated to TA, Secretariat, and communication costs
- Members with financial concerns due to Covid-19 can contact Secretariat
- Fees will be implemented by February 2022
- If fee structure works well, ADMCF will step back in the future to achieve financial independency for the HKSSC



- Members pointed out the importance of recruitment for financial sustainability and the credibility of the Coalition

- **Next step:**
 - ADMCF to issue invoices (based on donation basis)
 - Promotional video to include member logos
 - 11/2 members to provide consent
 - 16/2 SC will circulate video
 - internal approval for logo placement in video by members by 28/2
 - If some members do not want to display their logo, video will still be published minus those member's logos

- **Upcoming dates**
 - 11/4 1st Interim meeting - open floor discussion
 - 12/9 2nd Interim meeting - open floor discussion
 - 27/7: 2nd AGM

- **Relationship management**
 - Secretariat shall do two check in calls with members on progress on VCoC implementation; and review of Letter of Commitment achievements at year end

- **News and resources**
 - IUCN Red List Update: 4 Tuna species showed recovery despite increase in pressure on marine species ([link](#))
 - WWF Endangered Seafood Guide: WWF's guide to at-risk freshwater and marine species in seafood procurement ([link](#))
 - Sink or Swim: Asia's marine fisheries at risk of collapse (overfishing and climate change), leading scientists warn ([link](#))
 - Industry [landscape review](#) on behalf of the Sustainable Seafood Funders Group
 - New [training video](#) on the Member Portal and Member support tools
 - New marketing materials (VCoC step-by-step, HKSSC intro deck, promotional video, virtual banner) all available in the [Member Portal](#)

5. Any other business

- Marketing activities for World's Ocean Day (8 June 2022)
 - Indoguna will host a programme to promote sustainable seafood products and has been in touch with MSC regional office in China
 - Due to Covid last year - MSC China was focused mainly on China, but could be extended to Hong Kong this year
 - Recommended there be a Coalition level discussion of activities for World Ocean Day promotion - to grow awareness of the Coalition and to attract new members
 - Wynn, LMO, Saga Seafood, and M&C are interested to participate
 - Secretariat to send out an email to connect the members and arrange a call
- Invoicing matters
 - ADMCF as a NGO, cannot issue invoice directly; will therefore issue a request for donation grant for the HKSSC
 - MOU for each member with ADMCF allows transparency for all organizations to know where their money is going
- New programme called Greener Blue reached out to M&C via 178 Degrees
 - Interesting project pulling together producers and buyers worldwide



- Working in Europe, Asia, and US time zones
- M&C shall share insights after their webinar in two weeks