



## Seafood Risk Assessment (SRA) Working Group Minutes

**Date:** 6 June 2022

**Location:** Zoom

**Attendees:** 7

5	Members	1	Technical Advisor
#	Observers	#	Steering Committee
1	Secretariat		

### Agenda

- **Open discussion**

#### 1. Opening by WG Chair (Cesar Maresville, M&C)

- From a supplier point of view: finding out that a species is not compliant with requirements could lead to business loss
- SRA allows the supply chain to determine whether they can source a species or not with a flexible approach
- Following the recent addition of further species to the SRA website, the information available is considered valuable; more species are needed but this will take time. More participants are also needed for the SRA WG and ways were discussed how to encourage more active involvement from other members, particularly suppliers
- Future direction: Identifying common species across members/suppliers, so SRA can progress from research to actions. For example for spiny lobster from Australia which is rated as low risk - members trading in this species can combine forces, which will help with minimum order requirements

#### 2. Funding directions for the future

- A government application for funding was submitted earlier this year and no response yet; not looking likely
- Potential direction could be to aim for species-focused funds from e.g. U.S. foundations
  - Need to encourage member survey participation to identify priority species for assessments
  - All suppliers / distributors will likely have one or two high risk species on their lists - what would be the engagements and next steps needed to work with government and fisheries departments to make improvements
- HKSSC is still running short on membership fees and might be difficult to reach out for external partnership work for fisheries improvement projects etc.
- Another possibility is to encourage businesses to fund their own assessments when they make assessment requests - aim is to keep these assessments affordable



- New focus: to explore what to do after finding out a species has a high risk rating - not to necessarily stop doing business, but to identify sustainable alternatives and / or improvement projects
- Indoguna updated the group on the work they have been doing on assessing some supplies and suppliers on PAS 1550 assessment criteria; offered to share results with HKSSC members to get an understanding on the level of detail for assessments
- Collaboration possibilities with other NGOs were discussed to maximize resources, namely WWF in Hong Kong. Potential for SRA to provide assessment services or work with partners to assist with assessments
  - [Action] Indoguna to share PAS 1550 assessment criteria and results with WG and members
  - [Action] TA and Chair of WG to follow up with WWF Hong Kong

### 3. Comparison with existing similar initiatives

- Some species assessment platforms provide a supplier database; note that SRA profiles will incorporate suppliers as far as possible for low risk outcomes
- IUCN was mentioned as a trusted source of information; note that SRA profiles do include IUCN status
- SRA methodology is relatively high level and aims to be a rapid assessment
- It was agreed that SRA should aim to fill gaps by conducting unique assessments (that have not been covered by other assessment platforms)

### 4. Directions to add value to the SRA

- SRA could focus on the high risk species, such as those commonly used in Chinese cuisine in hotels and restaurants, and once assessments have been completed, for suppliers to help look for alternatives - then to take these assessment reports to local restaurant chains in Hong Kong to raise awareness and offer support to source alternative products - then SRA will be making a significant impact
- Identifying sustainable alternatives for high risk / red-listed species could make life easier for procurement teams; but it was noted by traders that resources are constantly shifting and new sources are often needed; wouldn't want to drive everyone to source from one particular area / species which may cause damage in the long term
- Potential to start with a small list of problematic species e.g. Canadian lobsters, scallops, salmon, Alaskan king crab, shrimp, tuna - can get certified options for most of these
- The more challenging species to find alternatives will be fish maw and sea cucumber

### 5. Summary of HKSSC/SRA's value

- Most existing species risk assessment initiatives are from a very scientific / technical perspective, but HKSSC / SRA brings significant supply chain / industry knowledge and networks e.g. SRA can identify what can be done next after a species is listed as high risk / red, rather than just asking business to stop sourcing



- Hotel members in the WG see significant value from having these supplier discussions and fishery connections, makes the approach more practical
  - Membership can be actively used to identify alternative sources and bring solutions for local companies. By focusing on chinese cuisine species going forward will be meeting an important gap in the market
  - **[Action]** WG to come up with a list of products to see what is commonly served in Chinese restaurants:
    - TA to cross check with Peninsula and Wynn Macau e.g. leopard coral trout, fish maw, sea cucumber, Alaskan king crab (red and blue), spiny lobster / rock lobster, Boston lobster
    - TA to explore further funding for assessments and FIPs
- 6. Update on member risk assessments**
- M&C - sourcing from FIPs and some are pending MSC certification, such as yellowfin tuna, Barramundi is finally ASC certified
  - Indoguna - sourcing pasteurized crab meat (blue swimming crab) and most source countries are under FIPs. Sri Lanka is listed on the MBA Seafood Watch as Best Choice
- 7. Q4 meeting date 2022**
- Date / time options for Q4 2022 WG meeting – confirmed 5<sup>th</sup> Sept 2022 @3pm HKT