



Seafood Risk Assessment (SRA) Working Group Minutes

Date: 28 November 2022

Location: Zoom

Attendees: 8

6	Members	1	Technical Advisor
1	Secretariat		

Agenda

1. Members to share progress & challenges
2. Updates on Seafood Risk Assessment Project
3. Discussions with WWF
4. Member support tools
5. Focus areas for 2023
6. AOB

1. Members to share progress & challenges

- Members shared progress and challenges in meeting the Codes of Conduct and Commitment letters and conducting risk assessments on seafood species and suppliers.
- Member shared that they are working on the member survey but it is taking time; they are focusing on seafood they are using the most and will approach procurement team to ask suppliers for data; their internal policy is to require certified seafood but this is not always available. It was noted that hotels generally tend to only ask for certified products, and it was discussed what happens in cases of non-certified products and the challenges around requesting certain documents.
- Member shared their recent trip to Vietnam and the realities of sourcing cephalopods (baby squid, octopus) in terms of the prevalence of very small fishing ports and small fishing vessels. While the port has IUU catch certificate capacity, this is only possible for the larger vessels. The positive is that the catch records in Vietnam are available, as well as the fishing vessel lists - the member showed progress on the data collection tool for sustainability and traceability, transparency and IUU risk assessments.
- Sharing progress on the collection tool was useful for observers (hotel chefs) to get a better understanding on what type of data one is collecting for supplier due diligence; they will put forward the most important species being sourced for the member survey.
- Member also discussed the challenges around MSC CoC in Hokkaido supply chain as not all seafood processors are CoC certified.
- Member confirmed they have set up CoC in their hotel facilities so can use the MSC label. It was emphasized that one needs to work closely with F&B and procurement teams to achieve internal targets; seen progress in the staff canteen in terms of meeting commitments to increase the type and volume of sustainable seafood; have also committed to make more sustainable seafood items available to customers - which



includes being MSC certified, not on the WWF avoid list, and other available certifications.

- ACTION ITEM: Two members that have yet to complete the member survey to meet with procurement to request data.
- Member shared progress in sourcing two sustainable sea cucumber species from Australia; samples currently being tested and once quality and specifications met, will share with other members; it was commented that Chinese sea cucumber is not ideal in terms of sustainability and traceability.
- A sea cucumber assessment report from the China Seafood Sustainability Assessment (CSSA) website on Chinese spiky sea cucumber - pond raised and stock-enhanced method - was subsequently shared with the WG members.
- It was noted by a member that the WWF Seafood Guide is used by a lot of procurement teams in hotels as an authorisation on products sourced, as this is regarded to be a straight-forward approach; it was agreed that in reality, sourcing is much more complex and requires a transition phase; the HKSSC tools help members to dig deeper - there is more work involved, but gets to the real challenges.
- It can be problematic when only one species / geography has been assessed - as the assumption is that all others are non sustainable; need to make it clearer that there are data gaps in seafood guide assessments.

2. Updates on Seafood Risk Assessment (SRA) Project

- TA updated members on the progress of SRA for the following species, as put forward by members:
 - Sea cucumber *Holothuria scabra* from Mozambique
 - The Mozambican government (Oceanographic Institute) has drafted a report with general information on this species e.g. its ecological, economic, nutritional, and medicinal importance and conservation status.
 - Oceanographic Institute of Mozambique, inspired by this request for assessment, proposed a local study (involving field work) that would be used to promote the amendment of legislation in Mozambique. They are currently seeking funding before the study can commence.
 - TA exploring various funding avenues.
 - Soft-shell mud crab *Scylla serrata*
 - Completed the peer review by experts from Bangladesh and Indonesia;
 - Looking for experts from Thailand to review the assessment; have asked if Bangladesh academic can assist with this.
- TA introduced the HKSSC SRA website for the observers, illustrating it as an assessment tool for seafood that has not been assessed or is not readily available on any sustainable seafood certification or seafood rating system.
- TA shared the updates to the SRA website - the profile for soft-shell mud crab *Scylla serrata* is to be added by the end of 2022.

3. Discussions with WWF

- TA reported the progress of discussions with WWF for future collaborations.



- Two meetings were held this year.
- Key opportunity areas:
 - Policy work (MOU signed)
 - Rapid assessment on local species using HKSSC SRA(to be discussed)
- SC has been pushing forward the discussions on the membership programs.
- Members shared comments on the membership programs of WWF and HKSSC.
- TA explained the challenges of collaboration with WWF due to the difference in the models and approach.
- Members also acknowledged the difference in the understanding of seafood sustainability and traceability among industry stakeholders, e.g. the procurement, and sustainability teams.
- TA and members agreed to set up an internal meeting to discuss conflicts and synergy of the two programs, prior to our discussion with WWF scheduled this mid-December.

4. Member support tools

- TA encouraged members to access the data collection tools and risk assessment tools on the Member Portal.
- Members based in Macau shared the challenges of accessing the shared folders on the portal.
- Secretariat to explore other file sharing tools, including One Drive

5. Focus areas for 2023

- TA encouraged members to propose species to be assessed.
- TA to circulate the website of China Seafood Sustainability Assessment, a science-based independent seafood sustainability rating scheme in China.
- TA encouraged members to reach out for consultancy support to overcome challenges in supplier due diligence and data collection for suppliers and products.
- It was felt that the internal BAP webinar was very useful for members to learn alongside their procurement teams - WG members would like to see more internal webinars /learning sessions

6. AOB

- Secretariat to invite the chefs from Sands China to the next meeting.

7. Next meeting date

- Monday 6th February 2023, at 3 pm HKT