

SEAFOOD ETHICS ACTION ALLIANCE (SEA Alliance)

Terms of Reference for the Seafood Ethics Action Alliance (SEA Alliance)

The purpose of the SEA Alliance is to provide a platform to share information on emerging issues, agree best practice solutions, and provide a forum for collective pre-competitive action where it is not better fulfilled by an existing organisation.

The SEA Alliance will co-ordinate pre-competitive ethics work for seafood species landed into, and imported to the UK and prioritise and address key ethical issues in shared supply chains, as identified within the Seafish Seafood Ethics Common Language Group (SECLG). It will do this via scheduled bi-annual meetings (further meetings as deemed necessary), collaborative information sharing between members, and where necessary, the setting up and co-ordination of working groups to implement required actions.

Engagement will take into consideration the PAS 1550:2017 Code of Practice on Exercising due diligence in establishing the legal origin of seafood products and marine ingredients, and the BRC IUU Advisory Note (2015), together with meaningful implementation of ILO 188 and other appropriate instruments.

The group can identify the need for advocacy by trade associations.

Participants

Participation in the alliance is open to any commercial market facing organisation based in the UK which source seafood nationally or internationally. This might for example include:

- . Seafood processors and traders
- . Retailers
- . Food service/catering industry

Participation requires a commitment to positively engage in pre-competitive collaborative action, adhering to competition law and to maintain the confidentiality of discussions.

Seafish will act as the secretariat of the alliance, including the provision of meeting facilities after the SECLG (twice a year), as well as webinars and tele-conferences as required. The need for additional face-to-face meetings of the SEA Alliance, or the SEA Alliance steering group, and the costs involved would need to be determined in advance before Seafish could commit any funding to facilitate these.

SEAA Steering Group

A steering group will be formed of no more than 10 – 12 people representing the above sectors and one person from Seafish, including representation from the relevant trade associations, but not limited to organisations who are trade association members. This group will meet in person or on conference calls to plan meeting agendas; to agree, prioritise, and coordinate actions discussed at the meetings; and subsequently review progress. The steering group will appoint a lead member.

Other stakeholder organisations (eg. fishermen's federations and NGOs) may be invited to contribute with the agreement of the steering group.

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Scope of the SEA Alliance

The scope of the SEA Alliance is initially to focus on ethical risks and social compliance issues related to wild capture fisheries internationally and in the UK. This may include the alignment of risk management processes and/or establishing 'in country' or 'on vessel' programmes of work. Other supply chain issues will be included in discussions and action plans according to priority.

The alliance will utilise PAS 1550 and other instruments as the framework to guide its collaborative action. This may include work to protect human rights, dignity, equality and safe working conditions. It is understood that control of illegal unregulated and unreported fishing (IUU) is often linked with issues of ethical and social concern.

Advocacy will be conducted by industry federations and associations using the existing infrastructure and experience of the Seafood Industry Alliance, the British Retail Consortium and the British Hospitality Association. This may include (but is not be limited to) calling for the ratification of international instruments (e.g. the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), the Cape Town Agreement, ILO Work in Fishing Convention No 188); contributing to the development of a UK fisheries bill; and being fully aware of the EU legislative requirements during the transition phase of the UK's exit from the EU with regards to compliance and enforcement under the Landing Obligation.

Further development of the Sustainable Seafood Coalition (SSC) industry code of practice to include ethics is a potential separate work stream for SSC members outside of the alliance.

Minute taking, decision making, and transparency:

Discussion within the SEA Alliance will be conducted under Chatham House rules. Meeting outcomes will be captured and circulated by the steering group via the secretariat (Seafish), and will be made publicly available via the Seafish website. However, comments made will not be attributed to the respective participants in the group. Seafish will create a new web page on the Seafish website for the meeting notes and presentations. All Seafish web pages are open source.

Decisions on the priority of common projects will be taken by the steering group.

Each SEA Alliance meeting, collaborative communications and/or member interaction will be under the mandate of the following competition statement:

We must at all times comply with the requirements of competition law throughout this meeting, including in any informal discussions. Accordingly, we must not engage in any conduct which is likely to have the effect of preventing, distorting or restricting competition. All participants at this meeting agree to adhere to these principles and acknowledge that failure to do so could have serious consequences in law. Please also respect the confidentiality of your relationships with both customers and suppliers. These ground rules should serve to protect us all from any inadvertent breach of competition law.

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