

# SEAFOOD NINJA

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## “WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD?” WORKSHEET

### Define sustainable seafood for your company.

Using this general definition, build your own based on your company values and goals:

“To be sustainable, seafood must be caught or farmed in ways that consider the long-term vitality of harvested species and the well-being of the oceans, as well as the livelihoods of communities dependent on these fisheries.”

**Create your company’s public Sustainable Seafood Commitment/Policy** using Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions (CASS) [Common Vision for Sustainable Seafood](#). Please note that creating a commitment following this guideline may feel overwhelming but the goal here is to get you started and as you get more knowledgeable and comfortable with the progress you are making, you can start addressing more issues and improving on them. For now, we can start with these:

1. **Make a Public Commitment** – “Develop a comprehensive policy on sustainable seafood that includes time-bound objectives for addressing environmental and social issues and traceability.” The [Common vision](#) has several examples of how to complete this step.

**TIP-** Make sure to define time bound goals that are realistic for your company. For example, 15% of your procurement is certified sustainable by MSC/ASC by year 20XX; 30% is sourced from FIPs/AIPs, etc. You can also use certifications benchmarked by GSSI if you choose to accept this as part of your commitment. Once you have assessed your products (Module 2) you can use quantifiable goals as a baseline that you can use annually to review how you have improved your sourcing.

Check out what other companies’ policies look like for inspiration:

[Sea Delight, LLC](#)  
[High Liner Foods](#)

[Fishin’Co](#)  
[Hyatt Hotels](#)

[Hilton Hotels](#)  
[Safeway](#)

[Loblaws](#)  
[Kroger](#)

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2. **Collect Data on Seafood Products.** This is the What, Where and How. For example:

**What:** Species common and scientific (Latin) names. Volume of product purchased. Product rating or certification

**Where:** Fishery location ([FAO Major Fishing](#)) Farming location: Country of farming.

**How:** Wild-caught or farmed designation. Fishing methods or aquaculture production methods used.

**TIP-** In module two we will review how to assess your products and you will learn how to collect data on your products and use it to monitor your progress.

3. **Make Responsible Sourcing Decisions** – “Support sustainable and improving seafood sources through purchasing decisions.”

**TIP-** Basically this covers sourcing from certified fisheries, Fishery Improvement Projects (FIP), Aquaculture Improvement Projects (AIP) and working with your supply chain to engage in improvements if they are already not doing so.

4. **Be Transparent** – “Make information regarding the environmental and social performance of seafood products publicly available and report on progress against your sustainable seafood commitment.”

**TIP:** The data being collected to assess your products (Module 2) can be used to publicly report in your progress. Also please note that there’s no such thing as failure, if you do not meet your goals, it’s an opportunity to recognize why you didn’t and strategize for next steps to improve. Publicly reporting on your progress can also be used to receive recognition for your efforts and encourage transparency in supply chains.

5. **Educate Staff, Customers, and Vendors** – Educate employees, customers, suppliers, and other key stakeholders about sustainable seafood, including the importance of addressing environmental and social issues and working toward full traceability.

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**TIP:** This training can be used to educate your staff and you will also learn how to communicate your efforts to consumers. Using your policy to communicate with vendors will also help them understand what your expectations are and work with them to improve their sourcing.

6. **Support Improvements in Fisheries and Aquaculture** – “Engage in policy and management reform that leads to positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes in fisheries and aquaculture production, including ensuring implementation of core labor standards.”

**TIP:** Participation is key, either as a Fishery or Aquaculture Improvement Project (FIP/AIP) participant, attending workshops, supporting advocacy efforts at Regional Fisheries Management Organisations ([RFMOs](#)), joining Supplier roundtables, etc. Module 4 covers more information on how to participate in a cost-effective way.

## IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you are vertically integrated, or on the harvesting/producer end, your sourcing commitment will change slightly. Consider the following:

- Opportunities to launch and implement a Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) or Aquaculture Improvement Project (AIP).
- Is Certification the right path for you?
- Are your products rated by Seafood Watch, OceanWise, or present in World Wildlife Fund (WWF) regional buying guides.

Future modules content may be helpful in addressing the above.

Remember there’s a difference between [Certifications and Ratings](#):

**Red, Yellow, Green are ratings.** Seafood Watch, OceanWise and Sustainable Fisheries Partnerships (SFP) are not certification schemes.

Similarly, FDA, HACCP, SQF, BRC, GFSI, etc. are not seafood sustainability certifications.