

## Seafood industry taking action on environmental issues but falling short on human rights

**London / Amsterdam, 12 October 2021:** The World Benchmarking Alliance's (WBA) has published its second Seafood Stewardship Index, presented today at Tokyo's Sustainable Seafood Summit. WBA's research has revealed that seafood companies are not doing enough on human rights due diligence in the industry, despite making some progress on tackling environmental issues.

WBA's data suggests that even for those seafood companies who do have commitments to protect human and labour rights, these are not translating into action. The majority (97%) of benchmarked companies lack a due diligence process – the most basic action that can be taken to start protecting their people. Only Thai Union Group, the number one company in the ranking, has demonstrated that it has a such a process in place to identify, assess and act on human rights risks and impacts in both its own operations and supply chain.

Moreover, of the 30 seafood companies assessed by WBA, only eight have commitments to monitor and ensure decent working and living conditions on-board vessels, a key issue in the industry, especially on distant water fishing fleets. Fishing is one of the most dangerous occupations in the world, so the health and safety of on-board workers must be made a priority for the industry.

**Helen Packer, Lead Seafood Stewardship Index at WBA said:** *"It's all well and good for companies to say they're against practices such as forced-labour, but we need to see these words turn into action such as robust due diligence and grievance mechanisms to assess and address risks in both their operations and supply chain."*

When it comes to environmental impact of fisheries and aquaculture, the Seafood Stewardship Index suggests that most companies are taking action, by trading products from sources that are certified or engaged in improvement projects. However, how much progress has been made is unclear due to imprecise reporting. For example, several companies do not disclose how much product is certified versus improving towards certification, which mean different levels of sustainability.

Detailed disclosure of companies activities across their entire portfolio is the only way to identify where improvements are most needed. If not, there is a risk they only focus on the low hanging fruit and leave behind the most challenging parts of the sector.

### The 5 top performers in the Seafood Stewardship Index 2021

Ranking	Company
1	Thai Union
2	Mowi
3	Nueva Pescanova
4	Nomad Foods
5	Nutreco

In this iteration, Thai Union retained its number one ranking, demonstrating leading practice on traceability and social responsibility topics. This year, the salmon giant Mowi leads the way on ecosystem impacts, with a 100% of its salmon products being certified sustainable and providing comprehensive reporting on key aquaculture issues such as responsible feed production and animal welfare.

Since 2019, together with other companies, Japanese companies have strengthened their commitment to traceability, the backbone to any sustainability and legality claims of seafood products. Three Japanese companies - Kyokuyo, Maruha Nichiro, Nissui – are members of the Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship initiative which has pledged to work towards the adoption of the Global Dialogue for Seafood Traceability standards. The overall industry picture suggests more ambition is still required. Targets, while present, often lack a time frame and a little over a quarter of companies (26%) are yet to commit to traceability.

*“As an industry so dependent on healthy ecosystems, it makes sense that companies are investing in sustainability strategies” adds Packer. “We need clear reporting of progress and companies must be transparent about the complexity of the issues at hand. Only then can we have productive conversations about how to ensure a sustainable future for the industry.”*

The full findings and data of the Seafood Stewardship Index are available from today on our website: [Seafood Stewardship Index - World Benchmarking Alliance](#)

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#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

The Seafood Stewardship Index is a spotlight ranking of WBA's Food & Agriculture Benchmark. All companies assessed by the World Benchmarking Alliance are part of a broader list, the SDG2000, which will rank and measure the 2,000 most influential companies in the world on their performance to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

- Details about the Seafood Stewardship Index: [Seafood Stewardship Index](#)
- All details about the Food and Agriculture Benchmark here: [Food and Agriculture Benchmark - World Benchmarking Alliance](#)
- See key findings of our previous baseline assessment (2020) here: [Assessing the world's 350 most influential food and agriculture companies](#)
- More information about our methodology and company selection: [Methodology for the Food and Agriculture Benchmark: A roadmap for corporate action](#)
- Understanding WBA's mission and vision: [Mission and vision - World Benchmarking Alliance](#)
- More information about the SDG2000: [SDG2000 - World Benchmarking Alliance](#)

**ABOUT WBA:** The World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA) is a non-profit organisation that assesses and ranks the world's most influential companies' performance on the United

Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We publish publicly available and free benchmarks that inform and empower business leaders and investors, as well as governments, civil society and other key stakeholders. WBA insights aim to serve as an accountability mechanism, incentivising companies to become a successful driver of change and deliver on the SDGs. Together with our Alliance, we are building a movement that enables transparent dialogue, and ultimately action towards a more inclusive, fair and sustainable world.

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