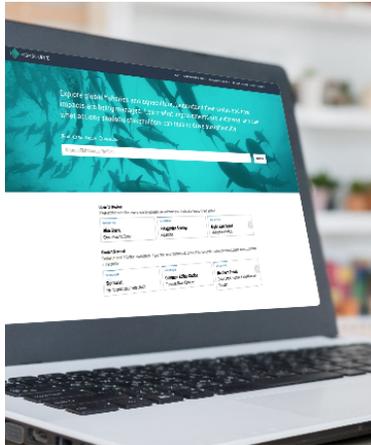

Universal Fishery IDs: Expanding transparency, data flow, and equity for fisheries globally by Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Foundation (SFP)



Complexity in the seafood trade is exploited by bad actors in the industry who mislabel and disassociate themselves from product that was harvested illegally, unsustainably, or with forced labor. Greater transparency and improved information flows across the global seafood industry will reduce that complexity leading to more sustainable fisheries and more equity for marginalized workers. To achieve this, the industry needs to adopt universal fishery identifiers (IDs) as part of their business operations and transactions. This project will materialize a publicly-available database of fishery IDs, hosted by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO). The IDs will be tested in two different supply chains: one representing a small-scale fishery in one of the developing countries and one representing an industrial fishery in a another developing country. The pilots will use existing technologies and processes to associate a fishery ID with product from its landing area to the end retailer. These pilots will inform the final deliverable of the project, a business plan for how best to deploy the IDs to the rest of the global seafood industry and its stakeholders using existing and new technologies.

The project started in July 2022 and is planned to be completed in June 2024.

The original project proposal was to be implement the project in two countries Philippine, and Argentina. However, during the inception meeting of the project, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Foundation raised the issue that McDonald's company is no longer sourcing Argentina hoki for Filet-o-Fish sandwiches. Consequently, Argentina hoki is no longer a good fit for the pilot project in Argentina and SFP requested to replace Argentina hoki pilot project with Namibia hake fish as they have a corporate partner who is one of North America's largest seafood processing/marketing companies. They sell to nearly all major grocery store chains and food service companies in the US and Canada. They source around 1 million pounds of Namibian hake each year and sell it into the Canadian food service.

The OIC Secretariat discussed the proposed change from Argentina hoki to Namibia hake and consulted with the UNDP CO in Namibia who ensured that the project can be implemented successfully in Namibia. The OIC Secretariat agreed on that suggestion and SFP started the

communication with the Namibian government to get their support for the implementation of that project in Namibia.

Current status and achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFP started communication with the Namibian government to get the approval for implementing the project in Namibia and partnering with local institution there. • Prepared a report containing baseline conditions, guidance for completing the fishery management area database. • Signed a contract with a subcontractor to compile the fishery management and stock areas database and maintenance manual. Workflow and roles are agreed, and work is started to compile the database. • Prepared report containing baseline conditions, process for validating the database records, and progress in validating records (including the number and percentage completion).
Target outputs and outcomes by end of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A database of national/sub-national fishery management areas is created as reference for the GRSF. • GRSF database of validated records for use by the seafood industry and others. • Each of the two supply chains (from producers to end retailer) is trained on how to incorporate the GRSF fishery IDs into their operations and transactions. • SFP's systems (FishSource2, Metrics3, and Ocean Disclosure Project4) display pilot fishery IDs on the user interface of the websites. • A business plan, including potential new technologies and services built on existing technologies, is completed to find financing and partners to take the proposed innovation to the rest of the seafood industry.

This innovation project will make the Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF) fishery IDs available as a reference for governments to require this critical information attached to wild seafood products. As more importing governments build the GRSF identifiers into their regulations, the more standardized and easier it will be for exporting countries and companies to comply with labelling requirements. The project will begin to unlock inefficiencies in how the seafood industry operates by changing its behaviour toward identifying fisheries and sharing information. Additionally, as fishers, local communities, and local businesses in producer countries use and become more familiar with fishery IDs, they will have their own opportunities to innovate. They most often do not know where their internationally traded products go, in terms of end markets and types of companies, or in what form they end up (e.g., frozen, added value products). Using tools like the Ocean Disclosure Project (ODP), fishers and others can use the IDs to gain assured insight into trade flows.

To ensure project sustainability post-OIC support, SFP got the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) commitment to maintain indefinitely the IT infrastructure (via iMarine) that hosts the GRSF and fishery IDs. SFP is committed to maintain the standard for fishery IDs and to championing their use throughout the seafood industry, with governments, and with other stakeholders. Processes for sustaining the GRSF will be explored and adopted as part of completing the GRSF, piloting use of the fishery IDs, and built into services/products developed through the business plan. The potential user base of the fishery IDs spans the entire global seafood industry, related service providers, and governments of seafood producing, exporting, and importing countries. SFP strategy is to start rolling out the IDs to SFP's strong network of



Second cohort of
UNDP Ocean
Innovators
on



seafood companies, fishers/fisheries, and service providers to build an initial mass of first adopters and generate ‘buzz’ targeted at the rest of the potential users. The fishery IDs will also be embedded in free and publicly-available tools, such as SFP’s FishSource.org, and Ocean Disclosure Project (ODP). As the innovation scales up and fishery IDs are widely used throughout the seafood industry, SIDS and developing countries that are sustainably managing their fisheries will have more opportunity to brand their products for the international markets.