

## Minutes: SSC Feed Working Group (FWG) Meeting

19th January 2021, 11.00-13.00, online.

14 participants including the secretariat and an external presenter.



### **Summary of next steps:**

Action	Responsibility	Discussion # (see below)
Draft an Objectives document to guide further discussions. This may be updated as new information is gathered on existing initiatives and processes.	Secretariat to draft & FWG members to review	6
Invite Marin Trust, GAA, ASC and GLOBALG.A.P. to present feed elements of their programmes at next FWG meeting.	Secretariat	5
Doodle poll for FWG meeting next month.	Secretariat to send & FWG members to respond	N/A

### **Summary of agreements for later steps:**

Agreement	Discussion # (see below)
Use objectives document to guide further discussions, including identification of appropriate projects to undertake.	1, 6
Once objectives and projects are more clearly defined, specify whether these will focus on marine ingredients only, 'major' ingredients only, or all ingredients in feed.	3
After information gathering, re-consider contracting third-party to develop and implement questionnaire-based assessment of priority feed suppliers.	4
After information gathering, design a gap analysis to collate relevant tools, resources and practices already available to members seeking to risk assess their feed sources	7

### **Discussion:**

1. The Secretariat summarised the SSC meeting (10<sup>th</sup> December 2020) at which the FWG was established.
  - SSC Members and external consultants saw a need for clearer standards, expectations and support for the responsible sourcing of aquaculture feed.
  - At that meeting, members agreed on the need for collective engagement. It was recognised that the SSC brings together influential stakeholders, and that aligning our vision for and definition of responsible aquaculture feed sourcing would benefit all stages of the supply chain.
  - That meeting identified 8 potential next steps for the FWG to prioritise and action.
    - *Decisions:*
      - *Should the SSC focus only on marine ingredients, also include major terrestrial ingredients, or develop a sourcing approach for the whole feed ingredient basket?*
    - *Meetings:*
      - *3Keel presentation on transparency approaches taken for other feed commodities.*
      - *Presentations from major certification bodies on current and planned feed elements of their programmes.*
    - *Projects:*
      - *Develop simple SSC message to supply base of feed manufacturers.*
      - *Conduct gap analysis of resources already available for businesses risk assessing feed sources.*
      - *Develop questionnaire for feed manufacturers & provide aligned feedback.*
      - *Establish position on the use of marine ingredients, consequences of removal from basket and communicate effectively on this.*
      - *Review need for updates to SSC Codes in light of any progress made.*

2. A representative from 3Keel provided an overview of the Palm Oil and Soy Transparency Coalitions (POTC and STC). A Q&A followed.
  - The POTC and STC are business-led pre-competitive forums with direct engagement with traders. NGO advisory partners provide support. As well as 'Full Members' who are actively engaged, 'Subscribers' can access the data and outputs from the process.
  - These coalitions have found that a policy approach is not always sufficient, as these policies are not necessarily applied to third party suppliers. Third-party or 'traded' commodities might not be physically handled by a trader and so are not reported or subjected to policy governance.
  - This model has therefore adopted a comprehensive questionnaire approach for assessing companies. This helps identify areas of risk. The POTC are taking this approach with the top 20 growers and traders. Companies receive individual feedback on their performance and access to an webinar to compare anonymised results.
  - Challenges encountered in improving transparency in these commodities include: traders' perceptions of limited demand for responsible sourcing from customers; inconsistent supply chain models and terminology; ill-defined reporting; manufacturers feeling the 'least responsible' for driving change; assessing and weighting the range of risk categories (e.g. deforestation, illegal deforestation, pesticide use, human rights issues, indigenous land ownership).
  - Costs for establishing these questionnaires are relatively low (example given of £1750 per member) but these might be higher in year 1. Questionnaires can be established fairly quickly (example given of a two week turnaround for recent beef sector questionnaire).
3. Members considered whether this working group should focus only on marine ingredients, should also include major terrestrial ingredients, or should develop a sourcing approach for the whole feed ingredient basket. Opinions were split, with support for all options. The FWG will revisit this decision following further information gathering and improved clarity of overall objectives.
  - Case for marine ingredient focus only:
    - Focus scope of project. Terrestrial ingredients can be considered later.
    - There are gaps in the assessment of FMFO ingredients, whereas work is ongoing for other high-profile feed ingredients (e.g. palm oil and soy coalitions).
    - The SSC's strengths and experiences are in the assessment of marine sources.
  - Case for major ingredients approach:
    - A deep-dive on high-profile ingredients only is pragmatic. A due diligence approach can be taken for other ingredients. This is a learning from the ASC's work to risk assess aquaculture feed.
  - Case for whole feed ingredient basket:
    - Marine ingredients can be our priority focus, but we shouldn't rule other ingredients out of scope.
    - A holistic approach would minimise the risk of missing important issues which might emerge later. There may be significant 'unknown risks' which remain unexplored if certain ingredients are prioritised over others.
    - It is reasonable to expect that feed manufacturers have undertaken some degree of risk assessment for all ingredients and these assessments should be considered by the FWG.
    - It is unreasonable to expect a different degree of assessment and transparency for marine ingredients compared to non-marine ingredient sources in feed.
4. Members discussed the option to develop a questionnaire for feed manufacturers, potentially with the support of a relevant consultancy.
  - A member strongly supported this proposal. They cited cost-effectiveness, credibility and relevant experience as good reasons to contract a third-party.
  - Another stressed the importance of further information gathering before making this decision. In particular, the FWG should hear from certification standard holders and feed companies about what they are already doing.
  - Questions were asked about whether the standard holders would be assessing all metrics necessary for a full assessment of responsible feed (traceability, transparency, carbon footprint, human rights, terrestrial and alternative protein risks).
5. Members discussed the proposal to invite certification standard holders to present the feed elements of their programmes and their plans for development.
  - This was seen as an important step to build FWG knowledge and to avoid duplication of effort.

- The group would appreciate presentations from Marin Trust, GAA, ASC and GLOBAL.G.A.P. to understand existing and planned work on the risk assessment of feed sources, and the metrics this will encompass.
  - Marin Trust should also be invited to provide an overview of feed supply chains. This could cover the a variety of farmed species, and the role of different actors at each stage of supply. Relevant pre-reads (e.g. a feed supply chain stakeholder map) would also be helpful.
6. Members discussed the need for clear objectives for the FWG.
- Clarity of objectives will help the group to prioritise projects to undertake.
  - More information gathering is needed to identify where and how the FWG should focus its efforts. Overarching objectives should be established to guide these information gathering efforts.
  - The motivations for establishing the FWG have largely been identified in minuted group discussions (10/12/20 and 19/01/21) but should be consolidated into a one-pager objectives document.
7. The group discussed the remaining project proposals from the previous meeting.
- FWG members were clear that initiating the proposed projects at this stage would be premature.
    - Objectives and workplans should be developed further before publicly communicating any statements of intent.
    - FWG members can see the value in conducting a gap analysis, and drew comparisons to the SSC's recent 'Risk Assessment Resource Sharing' project. This should be designed based on agreed objectives.