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## PRAWN PROCUREMENT GUIDELINES

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The FAO's State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (2014) stated that prawns are the largest single commodity in value terms, accounting for about 15 percent of the total value of internationally traded fishery products in 2012. In many tropical developing countries, it is the most valuable fishery export. Demand is increasing steadily in emerging economies for prawn species.

Prawns can be produced by farms or caught in the wild in many places all over the world. Whether the prawns are fished or farmed, there are potential associated environmental issues. Prawn fishing is usually carried out with the various types of bottom trawls which have been considered harmful for their low selectivity, often resulting in a very high bycatch of species that are usually more vulnerable than the prawn stocks themselves (FAO 2014). Prawn farming mostly occurs in developing tropical countries in South East Asia and Latin America. Some forms of prawn farming have had substantial negative effects on mangroves, and can be associated with other concerns such as water pollution and spread of disease. It is important to know where your prawns come from so that you are able to encourage the producers or fishers to address these concerns. In order to do this, conduct a mapping exercise back up the supply chain to find out the site that farms the prawns or the fishers that catch them.

These procurement guidelines are intended to provide a stepwise process to support farmed and wild-caught prawn purchasers move toward sustainably farmed or fished prawn product which ultimately moves towards compliance with either the Aquaculture Stewardship Council standard for responsible aquaculture operations or the Marine Stewardship Council standard for wild-capture fisheries.

## Prawn Procurement Guidelines (Farmed<sup>i</sup> and Wild-caught<sup>ii</sup>):

1. Preferentially procure Aquaculture Stewardship Council<sup>iii</sup> (ASC) certified or Marine Stewardship Council<sup>iv</sup> (MSC) certified prawn products, ensuring that all farm certifications and / or fishery certifications as well as Chain of Custody certifications are in place and valid. This step can be verified by the restaurant / retailer / supplier / importer independently using the links referenced in the Notes and Clarifications below.

**If unfeasible;**

2. The farmed / wild-caught prawn species appears on the WWF-SASSI database<sup>v</sup> as Green-listed. This step can be verified by the restaurant / retailer / supplier / importer independently using the links referenced in the Notes and Clarifications below.

**If unfeasible;**

3. The farmed / wild-caught prawn species appears on the WWF Network Seafood Database as either Light Green or Green. This step would have to be verified by WWF-SA as access to the Network database is restricted. At the discretion of WWF-SA, this assessment could be adopted on the WWF-SASSI database during the next assessment cycle.

**If unfeasible;**

4. The farmed / wild-caught prawn species are procured from :

i) Farms that are implementing a WWF approved Aquaculture Improvement Project (AIP)<sup>vi</sup> and have a method of ensuring the traceability of promoted products from a farm to plate,

**OR**

Fisheries that are implementing a WWF approved Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP)<sup>vii</sup> and have a method of ensuring the traceability of promoted projects from a fishery to plate<sup>viii</sup>.

These projects should be monitored for progress at least annually using systems such as the MSC Benchmarking Tool<sup>ix</sup>.

**If unfeasible, for species originating from farms;**

ii) The supply chain for farmed species needs to be mapped to a degree where individual source farms can be identified. These farms should submit a formal written commitment to improve their practices to a level compliant with the ASC standard, or equivalent. This commitment should outline a strategy to achieve this objective along with a timeline and implementation plan.

- **For all source farms and fisheries meeting the above criteria, WWF-SASSI will support communications by retailers and suppliers that these sources are in line with their commitments to sustainable seafood.** However, the support from WWF-SASSI on these communications is reliant on full transparency in the process. Retailers and suppliers should publically communicate progress in either AIPs or FIPs by listing all source farms or fisheries, the sustainability objectives of each of these farms or fisheries as well as the associated timelines for reaching these objectives. These communications must be updated annually to reflect progress on the sustainability objectives.
- **Source farms or fisheries that do not meet the above criteria would not be considered as Under Improvement<sup>x</sup> by WWF-SASSI,** however they should be encouraged to engage in improving the sustainability practices of their operations to meet the above requirements. To achieve this, the source farm / fishery can carry out a pre-assessment against the ASC / MSC in order to identify what improvements are potentially required. An improvement project could then be developed in order to address the challenges highlighted by the pre-assessment. Note that in order for the improvement project to be recognized by WWF-SASSI it would have to meet the criteria listed in the Under Improvement document referenced in the Notes and Clarifications below. **Should the source farm or fishery not want to engage in improving the sustainability practices of their operations, WWF-SASSI cannot support retailers and suppliers that continue to procure from these sources.**
- All new procurement should come from sustainable sources by selecting fish from responsible aquaculture operations and well-managed fisheries that meet the above criteria.

## NOTES AND CLARIFICATIONS

<sup>i</sup> These species include *Litopenaeus vannamei*, *Penaeus monodon*.

<sup>ii</sup> There are a multitude of species that are wild-caught. Species relevant to the South African market are listed below:

*Litopenaeus vannamei*  
*Penaeus monodon*  
*Fenneropenaeus indicus*  
*Haliporoides triarthrus*  
*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*  
*Metapenaeus monoceros*  
*Parapenaeopsis stylifera*  
*Pleoticus muelleri*

<sup>iii</sup> ASC certified farms are listed on the ASC website and can be found here:

<http://www.asc-aqua.org/index.cfm?act=tekst.item&iid=4&iids=204&lng=1>, found listed under “SHRIMP FARMS” and currently covers the species under the genus *Litopenaeus* and *Penaeus*. Farms that are undergoing certification can also be found on the ASC website (<http://www.asc-aqua.org/index.cfm?act=tekst.item&iid=4&iids=258&lng=1>)

<sup>iv</sup> MSC certified fisheries are listed on the MSC website and can be found here: <https://www.msc.org/track-a-fishery/fisheries-in-the-program/fisheries-by-species/fisheries-by-species#shrimp-prawn> and includes a variety of prawn and shrimp species.

<sup>v</sup> The WWF-SASSI list can be found here: <http://wwfsassi.co.za/sassi-list/>

<sup>vi</sup> WWF-approved Aquaculture Improvement Project (AIP) is a focused initiative with the goal of enabling a farm to reach the necessary sustainability standards to enter full assessment by a credible third party assessment scheme, in this case the ASC.

<sup>vii</sup> WWF-approved Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) as defined by the WWF Guidelines on Fisheries in Transition defined Fishery Improvement Projects as focused initiatives with the goal of enabling a fishery to reach the necessary sustainability standards to enter full assessment by a credible third party assessment scheme, in this case the MSC.

<sup>viii</sup> Applicable for both fisheries and farming operations: All supply chain businesses, including subcontractors and secondary processors, shall have a documented traceability system in place able to trace all products from purchase and delivery through to sales. The traceability system shall:

- a) Use labels, bar codes or other unique identifier to link products and information
- b) Record minimum product information at every step (collected from suppliers, during processing, packaging, delivery, etc.)
- c) Deliver the required information in an electronic format.

In addition, the following information confirming the origin of seafood shall be kept for every product:

In the case of a wild-caught prawn product:

- a) Common and scientific fish names
- b) Fishing method and gear type
- c) Fishing area (country of origin)
- d) Information on the vessel (including name)
- e) Date of catch, ports of entry, landings and any transshipment.

In the case of a farmed prawn product:

- a) country of origin
- b) farming method (specific methods required)
- c) common and scientific fish names
- d) sustainability of feed used
- e) information on the farm
- f) date of harvest

<sup>ix</sup> The MSC Benchmarking Tool can be found here: <https://www.msc.org/documents/developing-world/benchmarking-and-tracking-tool>

<sup>x</sup> A definition of what is considered as Under Improvement by WWF-SASSI can be found in the WWF-SASSI communications around species Under Improvement document that can be downloaded from <http://wwfsassi.co.za/sassi-participants/>.