



WWF®

SOUTH AFRICA

THE HIDDEN COSTS OF YOUR SEAFOOD

WWF-SASSI RETAILER/SUPPLIER PARTICIPATION
SCHEME REPORT 2023

About this report

This ninth edition of the WWF-SASSI Retailer/Supplier Participation Scheme report focuses on progress made by South Africa's top seafood vendors that have been working towards a sustainable seafood supply chain. It also reflects on the important role procuring sustainable seafood has on the environment and the importance of using the ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

WWF editorial team: Alexandra Azevedo, Sue Northam-Ras and Pavitray Pillay

Design: Design for development

Cover photo: Michelle Carpenter / WWF

Printer: Rob Print

Printed on: GalerieArt Natural

© Text 2024 WWF

All rights reserved.

Published in 2024 by WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature (formerly World Wildlife Fund), Cape Town, South Africa. Any reproduction in full or in part must mention the title and credit the above-mentioned publisher as the copyright owner.

For more information, contact info@wwf.org.za or call 021 657 6600.

This report is available online at:
www.wwf.org.za/our_research/publications

WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organisations, with over 6 million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries.

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the Earth's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature. It aims to do this by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

WWF South Africa is a national office in the global WWF network. Started in South Africa in 1968, we are a local NGO with a vision of building a sustainable and equitable future in which humans and nature thrive. We work to champion the Earth's capacity to provide a source of inspiration, sustainable food, fresh water and clean energy for all. For Nature. For You.

www.wwf.org.za





CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
Weighing up traceability's value	3
Traceability and your business	4
Traceability in the seafood supply chain	5
The unseen journey of our seafood	6
TRACKING PERFORMANCE	8
John Dory's	9
Pick n Pay	10
Food Lovers Market	11
Woolworths	12
The SPAR Group Limited	13
Ocean Basket	14
Shoprite Holdings Group	15
Atlantis Foods	16
TRANSFORMING THE MARKET	17
Traceability roundtable event	18
Certification and Chain of Custody Standard	19
Transparency in seafood labelling	20
WWF-SASSI UPDATES	21
Refined organisational assessment process	22
Updated protocol on unassessed species	23
Events and resources	24

As ocean and seafood lovers, we want to see our marine spaces teeming with pods of dolphins, seals and iconic sharks, with an abundance of diverse fish living within kelp forests, coral reefs or mangroves. These ecosystems are all interlinked, their diverse and rich species abundance maintain ecosystem integrity, health and resilience. These ecosystems need urgent prioritisation for protection, so that sea creatures can thrive and humans can continue to benefit from our oceans for nutritious food, and job and livelihood security.



© Gunnar Oberhösel / WWF

WEIGHING UP TRACEABILITY'S VALUE

Traceability, in short, is about chronological documentation – a “paper trail” of sorts. In food supply chains, traceability is the ability to identify, track and trace the origin and full extent of a product’s journey.

The traceability journey starts from when and where the raw material used for the product was derived. It continues through the supply chain’s transfer period to a processing facility – which may often take place in other countries with varying legal enforcement rules or lower sustainability standards – until the packaged item or fresh product reaches its ultimate destination.

The final point of sale for most food products is usually an online retail environment or a supermarket shelf or fridge. Here, unless traceability becomes the norm, a consumer would have little to no opportunity of making an informed or sustainable choice without knowing where the food item originated. This is especially true if the product label doesn’t state information such as which species it is, and where and how it was caught/farmed.

TRACEABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The concept of traceability can seem complicated. How best can a product’s journey be recorded over place and time? These are the questions and logistics many are grappling with. For seafood that is imported from around the world the ability to trace the source and supply chain steps are even more complex. However, complex does not mean impossible.

In a century where vast fish stocks are overexploited, positive seafood procurement targets are set with committed seafood suppliers and retailers wanting to source sustainably caught seafood. Traceability is often the missing – or invisible – piece. If we can shift the needle on this, we can speed up the recovery of our oceans.

BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

There is a long list of benefits for businesses who implement traceability in their supply chains. One of the main benefits is reduced risk to retailers and suppliers. If there is contamination of a specific product, for example, the

business is able to act swiftly, tracing it back to identify the source of where the contamination happened. With this pre-documented information, action can be taken to address the problem. Minimising disruptions also saves money.

By having full sight of a product’s full supply chain, businesses can:

- increase ability to help shape and meet regulatory standards
- have an improved competitive advantage
- identify strategic value chain opportunities
- innovate faster through monitoring real-time events by obtaining, updating and transferring data amongst stakeholders involved in the supply chain.

There are a few easy steps that can be taken to start tracing the seafood you procure and sell. These are not expensive and are effective. They include:

- Identifying and mapping out your stakeholders from fishers to consumers, standardising data collection and setting criteria on what the expectation is from suppliers to provide information.
- Providing training to personnel involved in the seafood supply chain on the importance of traceability and how to accurately record and track relevant data.
- Conducting regular audits and inspections and, where possible, using a third-party to do this to ensure transparency.
- Educating consumers about the importance of seafood traceability and providing them with access to information about the origin and sustainability of the seafood products they purchase.

TRACEABILITY AND YOUR BUSINESS

In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in the demand for transparency in corporate sustainability. This has been driven by increasing consumer expectations and the implementation of new legislation and frameworks. As a result, businesses are now compelled to integrate fully traceable supply chains into their business models as a standard operational practice.

Businesses are increasingly at risk due to market volatility, supply chain disruptions, investor pressure and fast-changing consumer preferences. A recent example was the Covid-19 pandemic, when businesses urgently had to re-route global shipments and find product alternatives due to port closures or pivot to ensure products made it onto supermarket shelves. To adapt to such unpredictable disruptions, businesses require increased transparency, visibility and in-depth understanding of their supply chains.

Furthermore, the escalating threat of economic instability due to a rise in natural disasters and geopolitical shifts strengthens the case for adopting traceable and transparent supply chains. Business leaders are recognising the importance of traceability. This is evidenced in a recent survey from the World Economic Forum which highlighted that 68% of senior supply chain executives view traceability as very or extremely important for decreasing business risk.

One of the easiest ways for businesses to lower this risk is to implement shortened supply chains, where local product procurement is prioritised above products that have complex supply chains spanning multiple countries. This not only enhances transparency and accountability but also enables quick identification and mitigation of any potential risks, such as contamination or irresponsible sourcing practices.

The WWF-SASSI Retailer/Supplier Participation Scheme (RSPS) focuses on nine key areas of sustainability of which traceability in the seafood supply chain is one. Working with the participants on this focus area will enable them to implement both a traceable system and traceable targets to achieve their sustainability commitments.

There are various approaches to seafood traceability, each offering unique benefits and challenges. Some examples include:

- traceability systems which utilise electronic tags
- barcodes or Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology to track seafood products throughout the supply chain
- blockchain technology where each transaction is recorded
- providing a secure and transparent way to track the provenance of seafood products
- DNA barcoding involving sequencing a short fragment of DNA from a seafood product to identify the species accurately
- certification schemes such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) that certify seafood products meeting specific sustainability standards.

Implementing effective traceability systems is crucial for promoting transparency, sustainability and accountability in the seafood industry. More importantly, traceable systems demonstrate a commitment to responsible business practices and build trust among consumers.



Justin Smith
Head of Business Development,
WWF South Africa

68%
OF SENIOR
SUPPLY CHAIN
EXECUTIVES
VIEW
TRACEABILITY
AS VERY OR
EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

TRACEABILITY IN THE SEAFOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

The seafood being sold in the market has quite often travelled further than the end consumer will travel in their lifetime.

One of the most challenging sectors for traceability implementation within supply chains is the seafood industry. Some of those challenges include:

- discrepancies when recording data out at sea
- difficulties identifying each species to a common and species level
- language barriers in documentation as the product travels around the world to different processing facilities.

Although the seafood sector is one of the most challenging sectors in which to implement traceability, it is also one of the most important. Over 100 million tons of fish are caught per year in the world's marine fisheries, and another 80 million are being produced by aquaculture (FAO 2020). This seafood is then shipped around the globe and processed in various countries before it ends up at its ultimate destination. On top of that, one out of five fish worldwide are caught by illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (FAO 2023). In addition, many of the world's fish stocks are under-threat with 50% of the global fish stocks considered over-exploited (Global Fishing Index 2021).

In South Africa, there are hundreds of species being sold on the market (RSPS Procurement Data 2022). The country's population has a wide range of diets ranging from those who rely on low-cost protein sources like sardines and/or dried fish such as mullet, all the way to aspirational diets which include lobsters and prawns. This means the country's retailers and suppliers must manage a diverse range of products and supply chains, from local fishers catching fish within our exclusive economic zone to fish caught on the other side of the world and processed in other countries before landing in South Africa as its end destination.

Heightened consumer awareness has led to consumers asking questions about where their food comes from. According to a study conducted by the World Economic Forum, 67% of consumers surveyed want to know the origin of their food. Businesses are increasingly accountable to consumers, ensuring that the seafood stocked is sourced legally, originates from sustainable populations, and is harvested or farmed using non-destructive methods. This entails ensuring that their seafood offerings do not harm ecosystems or exacerbate the depletion of ocean resources. Seafood retailers and suppliers thus have a crucial role to play to ensure responsible and sustainable fishing practices are implemented, and that this is done by adopting fully integrated traceability into their seafood supply chains and operations.

67%
OF CONSUMERS
SURVEYED
WANT TO KNOW
THE ORIGIN OF
THEIR FOOD



Pavitray Pillay
Behaviour Change Lead and WWF-SASSI Manager,
WWF South Africa



THE UNSEEN JOURNEY OF OUR SEAFOOD

Follow the supply chain journeys of two common seafood species eaten in South Africa: sardines caught and imported from Morocco, and hake caught in South African waters.

Sardines

Sardines are caught in Morocco (*Sardina pilchardus*) by purse seine nets and shipped to South Africa.



How the sardine fishery affects African penguins

Historically, there are various reasons for the decline of the African penguin such as predation from multiple species, habitat loss and oil spills, but a major recent impact is the overfishing of South Africa's sardine stocks, which has led to cascading impacts along the ocean food web. One of the critical reasons for the endangered status of the African penguin is the lack of adequate food availability for this species whose diet consists solely of sardines and anchovies. Penguins are having to travel further distances to find food and are often having to abandon their chicks and eggs due to not being able to provide them with sufficient food. Only 5% of the total African penguin population remains and there are scientific estimates that the African penguin could be functionally extinct (extinct in the wild) as early as 2035 if there are no urgent interventions made.

Hake

Deep-water South African hake (*Merluccius paradoxus*) and shallow-water South African hake (*Merluccius capensis*) are caught off the southwest coast of South Africa by inshore and offshore trawl vessels.

The hake is then processed in Cape Town, and a small percentage (33%) is sold locally.

In South Africa they are processed and packaged with local sardines (*Sardinops sagax*) caught on the southwest and south coasts of South Africa.

Finally, the sardines are canned and distributed countrywide and to some Southern African Development Countries. Sardines are an affordable, high-protein food source for many low-income households.

80% Moroccan and 20% South African sardines

33% is sold locally

67% South African hake

Seafood supply chains

Seafood supply chains have varying journeys across the world. Each species' journey is dictated by where it is caught, which country it is destined for and what the "end product" will be such as fresh, frozen, filleted, tinned or processed into other products. Some supply chains are very short – the fish is caught, sold to a local store or restaurant and sold to the seafood lover who eats it. Some are more complex. For example, a fish is caught in country A's waters, sent to country B to be processed and landed in country C where it is distributed to stores or restaurants. It can get really complex if the same species is caught by different fishing methods, in different countries, but then lumped together when processed, packaged and sold in a completely different country. The more complex a supply chain is, the harder it is to trace and track. Most importantly, each step and destination needs to be properly documented and quality assured.

The fishery was first certified in 2004, making it the world's first hake fishery to meet the globally recognised standard for sustainable fishing set by the MSC.



The South African trawl hake fisheries are certified to the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Fisheries Standard. When sold with the ecolabel this means that a hake product is sustainably sourced and that the stocks are fished in a way that does not threaten the population's long-term health and minimises the impact of trawl fishing on the surrounding marine animals and ecosystems. The Chain of Custody Standard provides assurance that all seafood sold with the MSC ecolabel comes from a fishery that has been certified as sustainable. Read more about Chain of Custody certification on page 19.



For South African retailers and suppliers of seafood, it is of benefit to source species that have shortened – and where possible local – supply chains so to minimise supply chain disruptions, and build business resilience and longevity while still sustainably utilising the oceans natural resources.

Hake is one of the most common fish sold in South African restaurants and found at almost every supermarket and fish shop. From WWF's *On the menu* report (2023), hake maintains its place as the most popular set menu item in restaurants across South Africa with 92% contribution to total seafood sales.



TRACKING PERFORMANCE

PROGRESS TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENTS

In the pages that follow, we show each member's progress towards their seafood sustainability commitments. The graphs depict the species and volume that they have procured in 2023, their notable achievements from their biannual organisational assessments, how many species they are selling which have a sustainability certification as well as the individual progress since joining the WWF-SASSI Retailer/Supplier Participation Scheme.

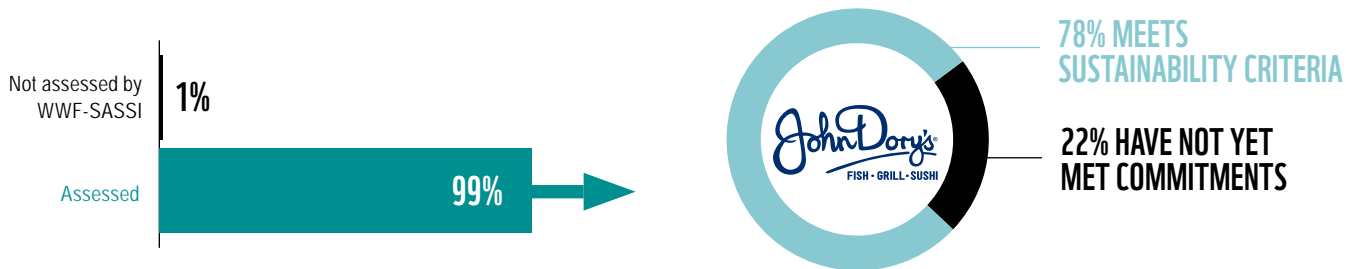
© Marine Stewardship Council/Fish For Good

JOHN DORY'S

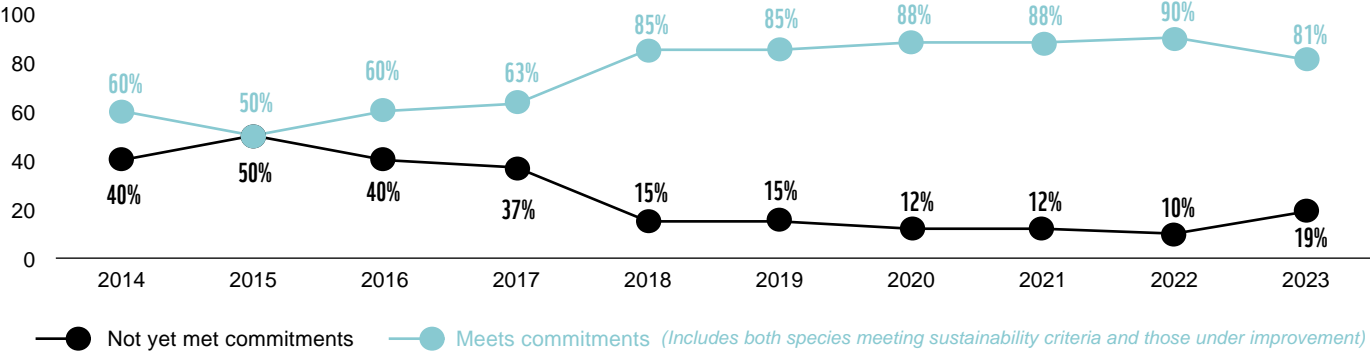
PROGRESS BY SPECIES



PROGRESS BY VOLUME



JOHN DORY'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE YEARS (SPECIES)



NUMBER OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS SOLD



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

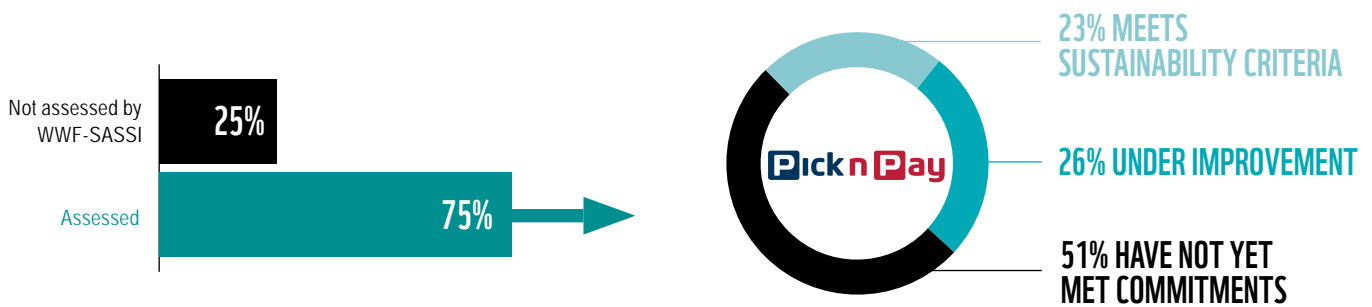
- Added four green species to procurement list
- Increased 3% by assessed species (from 91% to 94%)

PICK N PAY

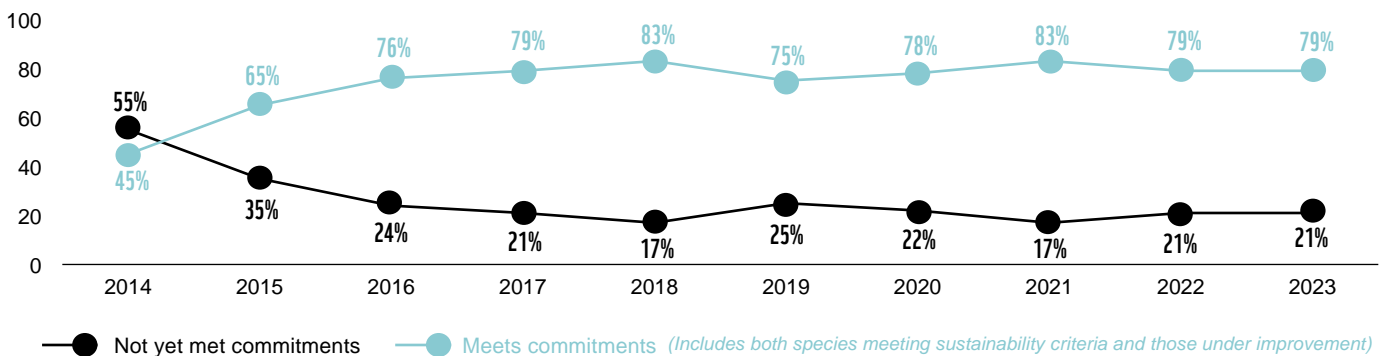
PROGRESS BY SPECIES



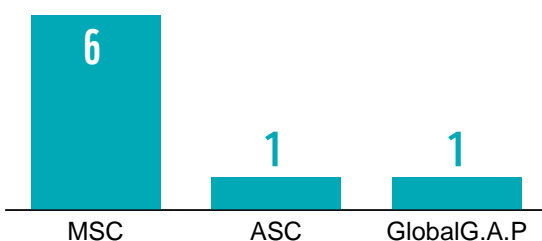
PROGRESS BY VOLUME



PICK N PAY'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE YEARS (SPECIES)



NUMBER OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS SOLD



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

- Co-funding the South African Offshore Hake Trawl Fishery Bycatch Fishery Improvement Project (seven species)
- Added one green species and removed one orange species from procurement list
- Improved 2% meeting sustainability criteria by volume (from 21% to 23%) and saw an increase of 26% for under improvement by volume (from 0%)
- Trained home office staff

FOOD LOVER'S MARKET

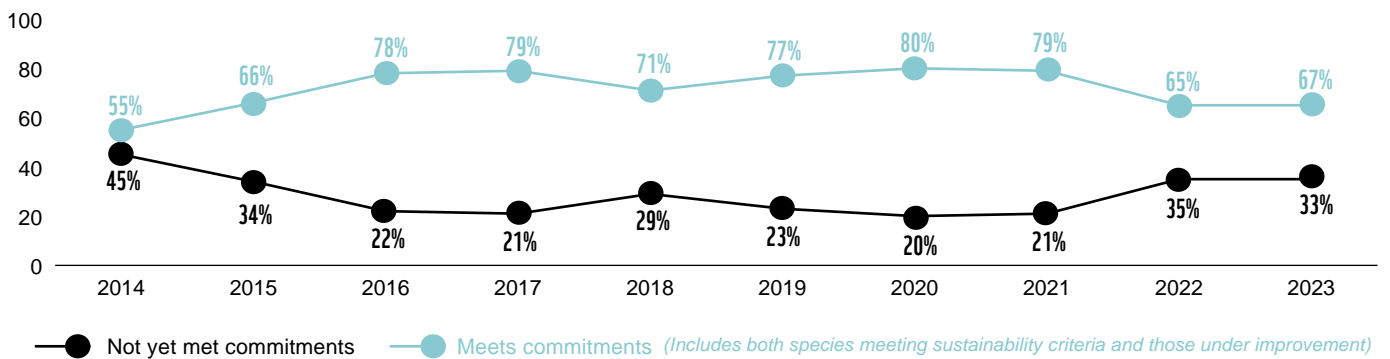
PROGRESS BY SPECIES



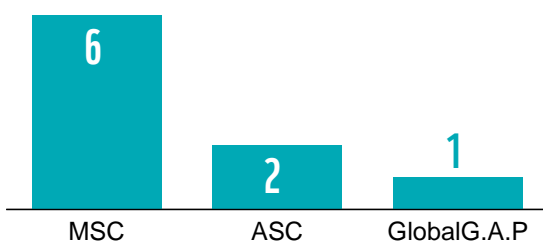
PROGRESS BY VOLUME



FOOD LOVER'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE YEARS (SPECIES)



NUMBER OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS SOLD



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

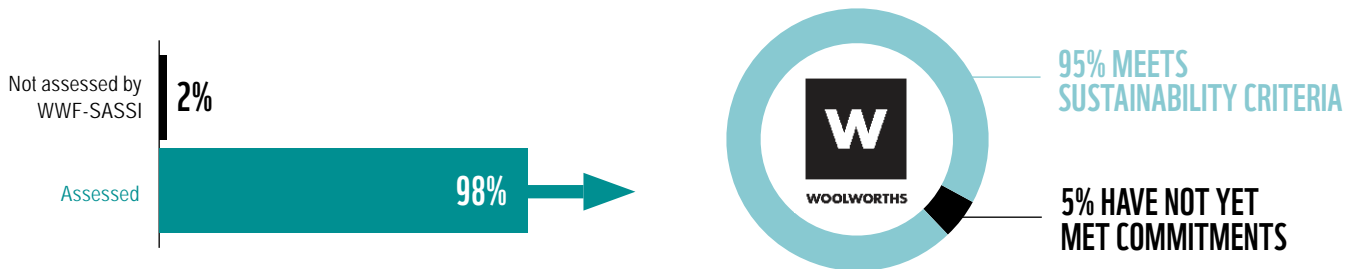
- Trained home office staff
- Increased under improvement species by 5% (from 12% to 17%)
- Improved by 2% on meeting sustainability criteria by volume (69% to 71%)
- Removed one orange species from procurement list

WOOLWORTHS

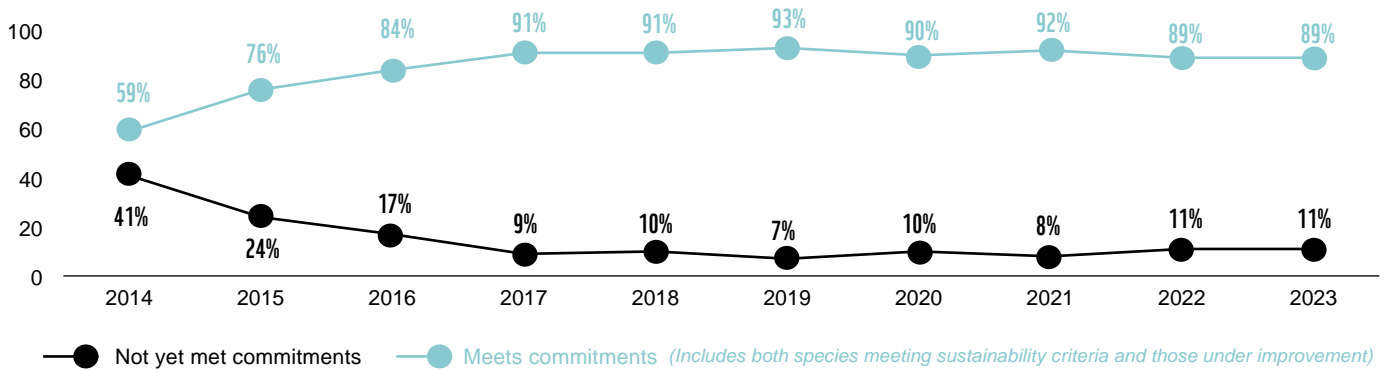
PROGRESS BY SPECIES



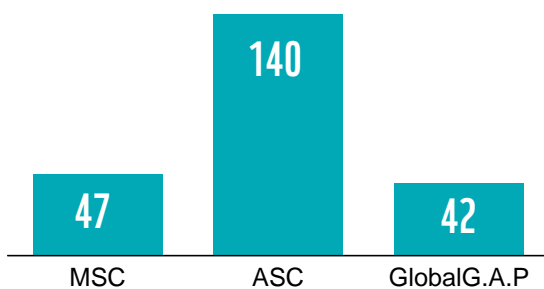
PROGRESS BY VOLUME



WOOLWORTHS' PROGRESS THROUGH THE YEARS (SPECIES)



NUMBER OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS SOLD



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

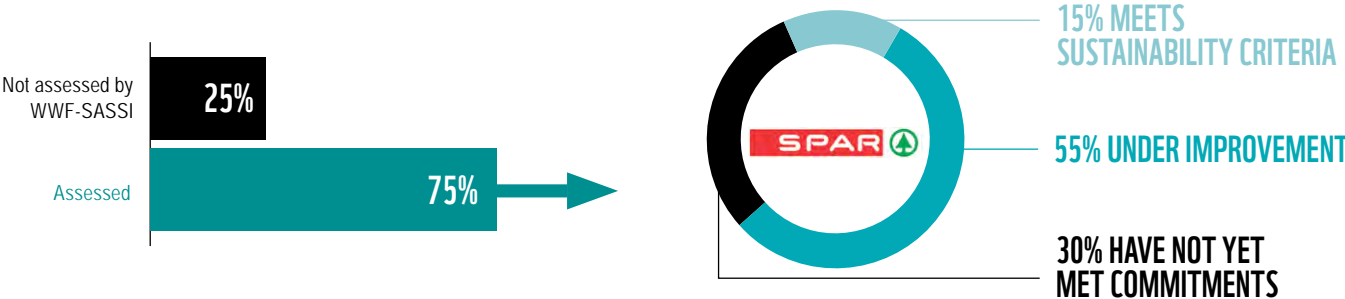
- Funding three fishery improvement projects (FIPs): the South African Offshore Hake Trawl Fishery Bycatch FIP (seven species), the South African Large Pelagic Longline FIP (three species) and the Namibian Monkfish and West Coast Sole Trawl FIP.
- Increased the percentage of certified seafood sold by volume to 70%.
- Woolworths' Aquaculture and Fisheries Specialist was appointed to the Steering Board of the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) as well as to the Partnership Advisory Group of the Global Tuna Alliance (GTA).*
- Engaged in 6 sustainable seafood precompetitive collaborations.*

THE SPAR GROUP LIMITED

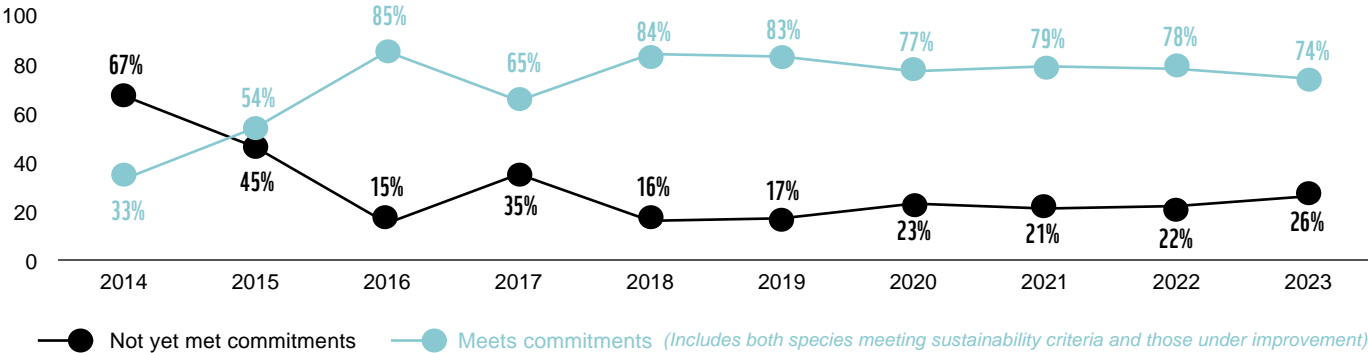
PROGRESS BY SPECIES



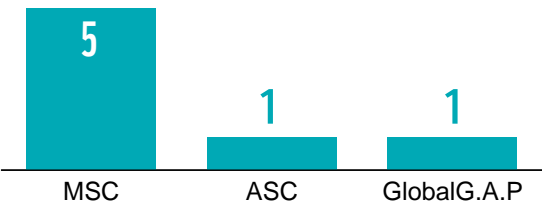
PROGRESS BY VOLUME



SPAR'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE YEARS (SPECIES)



NUMBER OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS SOLD



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

- Removed eight unassessed species from procurement, therefore improving 19% by species (from 66% to 85%) and 44% by volume (from 31% to 75%).
- Improved 55% on under improvement species by volume (from 0% to 55%)
- Trained home office staff

OCEAN BASKET

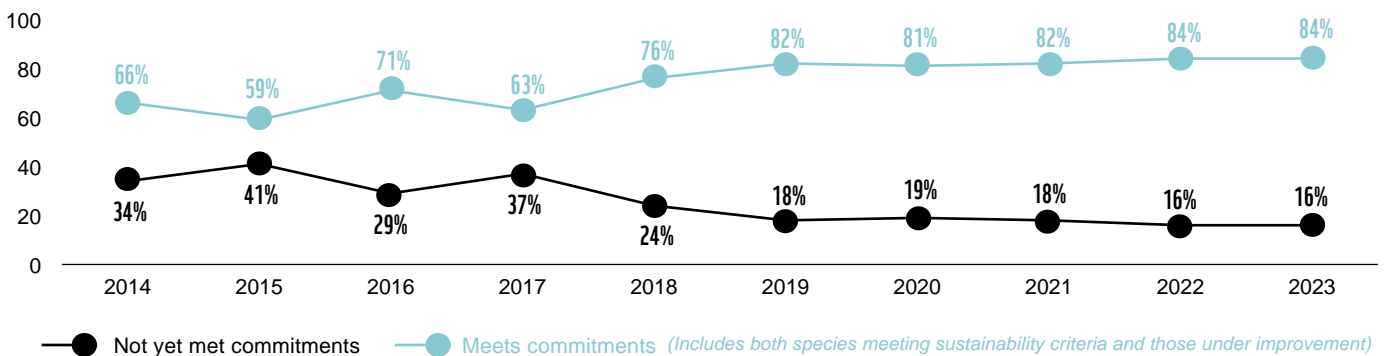
PROGRESS BY SPECIES



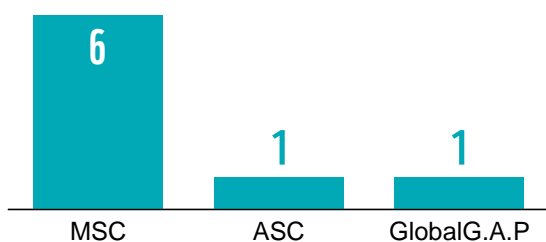
PROGRESS BY VOLUME



OCEAN BASKET'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE YEARS (SPECIES)



NUMBER OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS SOLD



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

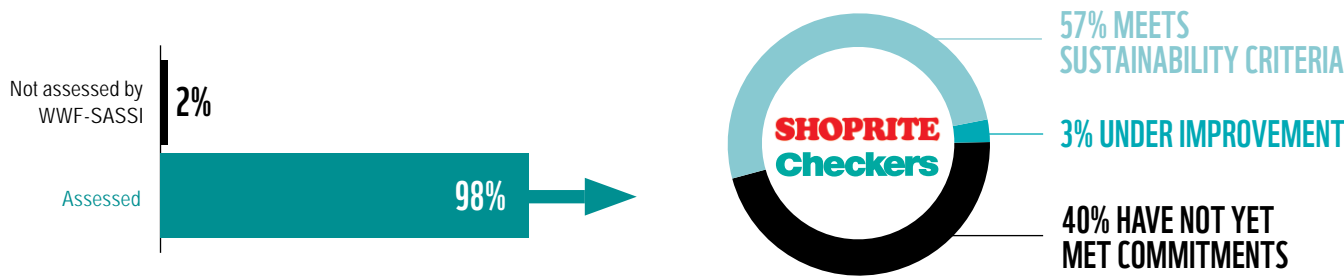
- Improved by 4% in meeting sustainability commitments by volume (from 53% to 57%)
- Improved assessed by volume by 4% (from 76% to 80%)

SHOPRITE HOLDINGS GROUP

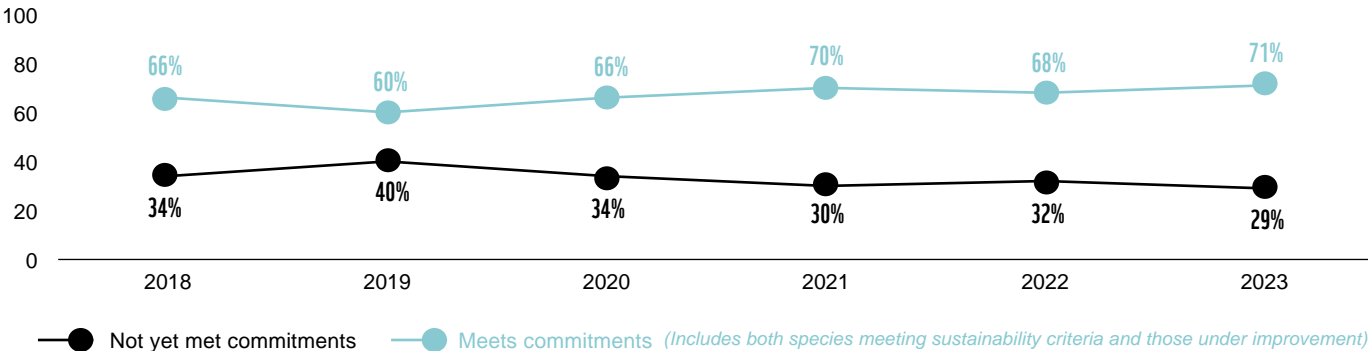
PROGRESS BY SPECIES



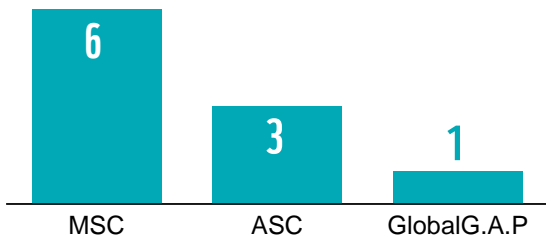
PROGRESS BY VOLUME



SHOPRITE HOLDINGS GROUP'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE YEARS (SPECIES)



NUMBER OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS SOLD



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

- Funding a fishery improvement project for mullet (haarders)
- Added four green species to procurement list
- Trained seafood suppliers
- Added five under improvement species to procurement list, thereby improving 10% by species
- Removed two unassessed species, therefore improving assessed species by 10% and 4% by volume

ATLANTIS FOODS

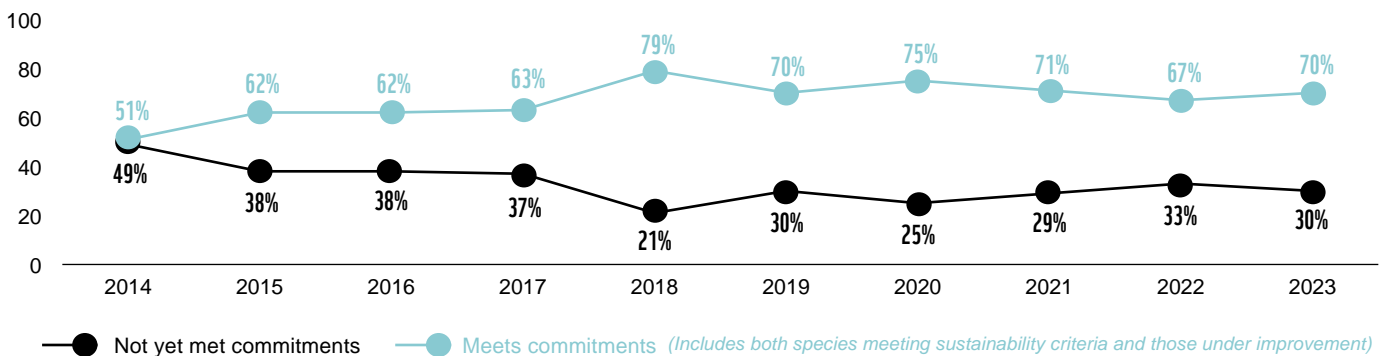
PROGRESS BY SPECIES



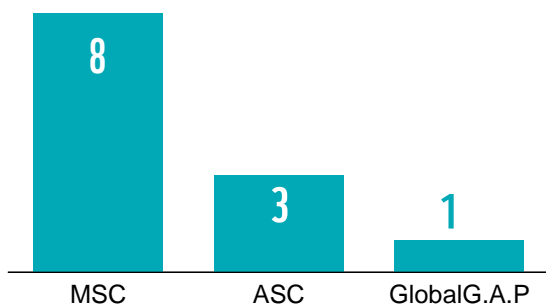
PROGRESS BY VOLUME



ATLANTIS FOODS GROUP'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE YEARS (SPECIES)



NUMBER OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS SOLD



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

- Added two green species to procurement list
- Added two under improvement species to procurement list, improving under improvement species by 2% (from 18% to 20%)
- Removed five unassessed species from procurement, improving assessed species by 6% (from 59% to 65%)
- Improved by 1% in meeting sustainability commitments by volume



TRANSFORMING THE MARKET

TRACEABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND LABELLING

WWF-SASSI has been diving deep into traceability, transparency and labelling with the scheme members – including hosting its first roundtable event on traceability, encouraging members to implement the SANS1647 voluntary labelling standard onto their products and updating the biannual organisational assessment process.

TRACEABILITY ROUNDTABLE EVENT

The annual WWF-SASSI Sustainable Seafood Symposium has been taking place since 2012. Discussions that took place during previous symposia have launched key projects, such as the seafood naming work which helped develop the SANS1647 protocol (2012) and the West Coast rock lobster project (2014).

To ensure that the symposium's outcomes and valuable discussions are taken further – WWF-SASSI is initiating collaborative roundtables, so that the seafood community can continue to have a forum throughout the year. The format of the roundtables is to be solution focused yet address key issues affecting the main actors in the seafood supply chain and to do so in a collective manner.

Some of the topics suggested for future roundtables may revolve around the following:

- problem/unassessed species from 2023
- discussions around ecolabels and their effectiveness
- investment in fisheries improvements projects
- illegal, unreported, unregulated fishing (IUU), traceability and transparency
- seafood naming and labelling.

The first WWF-SASSI Retailer/Supplier Participation Scheme roundtable event, held in April 2024 in collaboration with the MSC, was focused on traceability assurance in the seafood supply chain. The discussions were focused on increasing the participants' awareness and understanding of seafood traceability and critical thinking about its benefits, as well as ways to incorporate it into their supply chains.

A key insight from the event was that South Africa has a large scope for growth for WWF-SASSI and the MSC to educate consumers about the importance of seafood traceability. This ties into one of the three seafood questions WWF-SASSI asks, namely "where was it caught?".

Another key insight is that benefits often outweigh the costs for seafood retailers and suppliers to implement traceability in their seafood supply chains. Examples include increases in resilience and responsiveness when product supply chain issues arise, improved product quality and a reduction in waste. Other benefits included mitigating regulatory risk, addressing logistics and responsible sourcing.

The main outcomes, learnings and takeaways from the event were the following:

- the MSC Chain of Custody Standard is a resource for implementing traceable products into supply chains
- the WWF-SASSI team will work with the scheme members to have better communication with their suppliers regarding collecting data from their supply chain and providing more transparency
- retailers and suppliers must collect supplier certificates
- as a resource for the scheme participants, a new document will be created, *Weighing up traceability's value: The benefits and cost of implementing traceability in seafood supply chains*
- WWF-SASSI will look into creating a database that lists sustainable products and suppliers who are sourcing sustainable seafood
- WWF-SASSI and the MSC will share studies where traceability was successfully implemented.



CERTIFICATION AND CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARD

Well-documented traceability information also indicates if a product was obtained legally, ethically and sustainably. For a seafood product to be certified sustainable – and earn an ecolabel on the product – such as with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) – it needs to come from a certified sustainable source and all companies along the supply chain need to hold Chain of Custody certificates.

This global Standard means that there is a sequential documentation of the wild-caught or farmed seafood species, that allows an auditor to track the product from origin all the way to the point of final packaging, with assurance that the certified product was purchased from a certified supplier. The product must follow the five principles below.

Certification to the Chain of Custody Standard ensures an unbroken chain where certified seafood is easily identifiable, separated from non-certified products, and can be traced back to another certified business – a guarantee of sorts – that the product is sustainable and derived from a healthy

fishery or responsible fish farm, ensuring that there will be reduced impact on our oceans and enough seafood for future generations.

This is why species traceability – and having product supply which follow the Chain of Custody Standard when possible – is a keystone tool for companies that are aligning their operations with their sustainability goals. In South Africa, we are at the beginning stages of implementing traceability in our value chains, but we can see clearly how the benefits outweigh the costs.

CHAIN OF CUSTODY

-  1. Companies must purchase certified product from a certified supplier
-  2. Certified products are clearly identifiable
-  3. Certified products are separated from non-certified products at each step of the supply chain
-  4. Certified products are traceable and volumes are recorded
-  5. The company management system addresses the requirements of the Chain of Custody Standard



Sea Harvest frozen hake product carrying the MSC ecolabel which follows the Chain of Custody Standard.

TRANSPARENCY IN SEAFOOD LABELLING

What species is it? Where is it from? How was it caught/farmed? These are the three questions that WWF-SASSI prompts people to ask and answer when choosing and buying seafood.

For a customer to make an informed choice, the retailer is responsible for providing the necessary information on the packaging of seafood products.

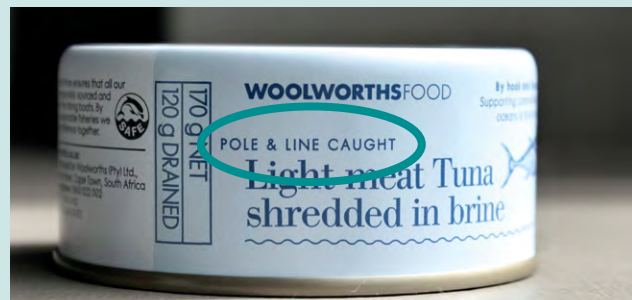
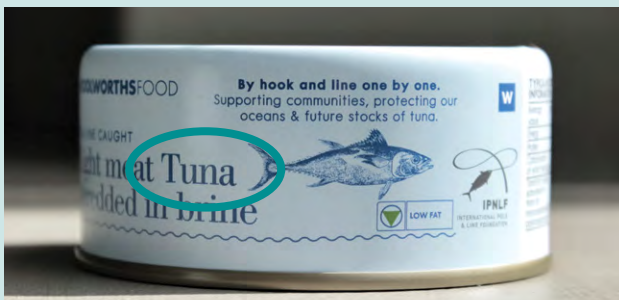
There is a South African National Standard (SANS) for seafood product labelling: SANS1647. However, it is up to the individual suppliers and retailers to implement this.

WWF, with funding from Woolworths, was a representative in the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) working group tasked with developing a national seafood-labelling standard. Because of these collaborative efforts, since 2021, South Africa has had its first seafood-labelling standard.

SEAFOOD PRODUCT LABELLING: SANS1647

- ✓ the common name and scientific species name of the product - Skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*)
- ✓ the country of origin - Maldives
- ✓ the method of capture or farming production method - Pole & line
- ✓ if wild caught, FAO “major fishing area of capture” - FAO 51 (learn more at www.fao.org/fishery/area/search)

Woolworths was the first scheme participant to take it upon themselves to follow the SANS1647 protocol, and more members are following suit.



Woolworths canned tuna following SANS1647 protocol: common name, species name, method of capture, area of capture and country of origin.

An underwater photograph of a sea turtle swimming through a dense kelp forest. The turtle is the central focus, with its patterned shell and head clearly visible. A bright orange starfish is resting on its shell. The kelp stalks and leaves create a complex, textured background. The water is a deep blue, and light rays are visible filtering through from above.

WWF-SASSI UPDATES

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF WWF-SASSI

WWF-SASSI is continuously working on improvements and updates to modernise both the consumer awareness initiative and provide better tools and support to the scheme members as they work towards their seafood sustainability targets and goals.

REFINED ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The updated organisational assessment sessions will establish precise and attainable targets for each area of work accompanied by timelines. As usual, there will be two organisational assessments per year for each participant, with a thorough workplan session for the first one and the second being a check-in to ensure each member is on track for reaching their targets and goals.

A REVIEWED AND UPDATED ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY WILL INCLUDE:



UPDATED PROTOCOL ON UNASSESSED SPECIES

The seafood market is in constant flux, with new species regularly becoming available on the South African market. As a result, WWF-SASSI does not have a sustainability rating for all seafood species that are being sold. These species are referred to as “unassessed”.

To address the issue of which unassessed species to rate, WWF-SASSI has an annual prioritisation process to determine which new species need to be included in the assessment for a specific year. This is informed by three considerations 1) Is it a species with an associated conservation concern? or 2) Is it a species that is relevant to the South African market in terms of volumes sold? or 3) Is it a species of relevance to WWF’s partner/supporting organisations?

For WWF-SASSI to understand a participant’s seafood sustainability, it is vital that the participants source from fisheries and farms which have been assessed. As a result, we are developing a new protocol on unassessed species which

will be taken forward through partnership discussions during the biannual organisational assessments.

For a species that is unassessed by WWF-SASSI, or the WWF International Network under the guidance of WWF Germany, a search is conducted to see if these species may be assessed by other organisations such as IUCN, SANBI’s National Biodiversity Assessment, FishBase, CITES, etc. In this case participants are notified of this rating to ensure a sound and informed business decision is made.

The ultimate goal of this protocol is for participants to procure their products from known sustainable sources. This eliminates risks to their businesses, and in turn, society can continue to benefit from the resources of a healthy ocean.



© Jules Thomas / Unsplash

EVENTS AND RESOURCES

The year of 2023/2024 has been a special one for everyone involved in WWF-SASSI.

It marked the 20th anniversary since the initiative began. In November 2023, a day-time sustainable seafood cook-off was held with our retailers taking part in the fun, and in April 2024 an evening “Blue Tie” event to celebrate the 20-year milestone.

FACTSHEET

A new ‘What is / what isn’t’ factsheet on WWF-SASSI

WHAT WWF-SASSI IS NOT...	WHAT IS WWF-SASSI?
<p>An emotive public campaign to encourage people to stop eating seafood altogether</p> <p>The trendy lingo of a chosen few While the concept is easy to name and design, SASSI – or correctly as its full name of WWF-SASSI – is NOT just a mis-spelt adjective or a trendy phrase.</p> <p>▲ WWF-SASSI approved * ▲ WWF-SASSI endorsed * ▲ WWF-SASSI friendly *</p> <p>* These terms DO NOT exist.</p>	<p>An engaging science-based initiative to inform seafood consumers to enable sustainable seafood choices</p> <p>The traffic light of choice WWF-SASSI lists popular seafood options according to their science-based, ecological, sustainability status. This considers species, catch/farming method, country of origin and the associated environmental impacts.</p> <p>● WWF-SASSI green-listed = best choice ● WWF-SASSI orange-listed = think twice ● WWF-SASSI red-listed = avoid altogether</p>

MOBILE APP

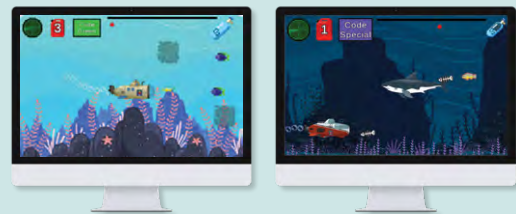
Newly improved WWF-SASSI app which has integrated WWF-SASSI's FishID technology to scan and identify fish so that the user can check the WWF-SASSI list at a local fish market, when shopping or ordering seafood at a restaurant



wwfsassi.co.za/sassi-app

ONLINE GAME

The newly updated WWF-SASSI Ocean Challenge online game (now with a secret level!) to share with customers and family



BUSINESS LANDING PAGE

A new and improved business page on the WWF-SASSI website for members to showcase their sustainability policy and find information and resources for procurement, fishery improvement projects and communication documents



POCKET GUIDE AND POSTERS

Updated WWF-SASSI tools that members can buy online and use to educate colleagues in their offices or customers in front of house spaces



WWF-SASSI poster



WWF-SASSI pocket card



WWF-SASSI's "Blue Tie" dinner acknowledged long-term ambassadors and funders in celebrating the 20-year journey of WWF-SASSI.



KEEP A LOOK OUT FOR

- The outcomes of a third-party consultant-led study on “aquaculture certification scheme benchmarking” which will take a closer look at the Aquaculture Stewardship Council, GlobalG.A.P. and Best Aquaculture Practices
- An online portal for members to view detailed WWF-SASSI colour assessments, i.e. the year it was adopted and details about the outcome of the colour rating, the species that will be assessed in 2024 and the draft colour announcement
- Practical resources are being created to grow the network of committed seafood members:
 - Scheme video outlining the work the members do towards protecting our ocean’s resources and their sustainability commitments
 - Scheme brochure
 - Pre-organisational assessment online for potential members to see if joining the scheme would be right for their business

THE WWF-SASSI TOOLS



WEBSITE
wwf.org.za/sassi



MOBILE APP
wwfsassi.co.za/sassi-app



**POCKET GUIDE
 AND POSTERS**
shop.wwfsa.org.za

FOLLOW US

 facebook.com/WWFSASSI

 [@WWFSASSI](https://www.instagram.com/WWFSASSI)



**IT IS THE
RESPONSIBILITY
OF RETAILERS AND
SUPPLIERS TO SOURCE
SUSTAINABLY CAUGHT
OR RESPONSIBLY
FARMED SEAFOOD
TO ENSURE
HEALTHY OCEANS**



Lasting positive outcomes for people and nature in the places where we work and from priority environmental challenges we focus on.

FOR NATURE. FOR YOU.

wwf.org.za

WWF-SA is a registered non-profit organisation, number 003 -226 NPO. ©1986 Panda symbol WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature (Formerly World Wildlife Fund) ® “WWF” is a WWF Registered Trademark.

1st Floor, Bridge House, Boundary Terraces Mariendahl Lane, Newlands, Cape Town. P.O. Box 23273, Claremont 7735

Tel: +27 21 657 6600, Email: info@wwf.org.za, www.wwf.org.za