



PUBLIC SUMMARY OF A MEETING OF THE MSC STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COUNCIL

Monday 19 – Tuesday 20 May 2025, London

The Stakeholder Advisory Council (STAC) meeting was attended by [members of the STAC](#). Apologies were received from STAC Members Ms Bernadette Butfield, Mr Christian Haller, Ms Susan Jackson, and Dr Tom Pickerell

Mr Giles Bolton (MSC Board Chair) attended day 1 of the meeting on behalf of the MSC Board of Trustees

Dr Rebecca Lent (Technical Advisory Board Chair) observed the meeting

Dr Stephanie Good (ASI Program Technical Manager), and Mr Tristan Southall (Consultant), observed parts of the meeting

The following MSC staff attended - Mr Nicolas Guichoux (Chief Program Officer), Mr Rupert Howes (Chief Executive Officer), Ms Ishbel Matheson (Chief Communications Officer), Ms Amanda Stern-Pirlot (Chief Standards Officer), Ms Tanya van Niekerk (Governance Secretary), Dr Alene Wilton (Chief Operating Officer)

The STAC was also joined by a number of relevant MSC staff on a project-by-project basis.

This summary contributes to the transparency of MSC's governance. Readers should note that recommendations made by the STAC are reviewed by the MSC Executive and only those recommendations that are formally endorsed by the MSC Board of Trustees and Executive will result in changes to the program or MSC's work. The Executive may not always immediately consider the STAC's recommendations, especially in instances where more research or consultation is required. Project pages on [msc.org](https://www.msc.org) will be updated to reflect final decisions, including rationales.

Fisheries Standard v3.0 Implementation

The STAC was updated on the MSC Fisheries Standard v3.0 Implementation project, with a focus on progress of the review of the [MSC Fisheries Standard Toolbox](#).

The [Fisheries Standard Toolbox](#) is a normative document containing tools that support the application of the Fisheries Standard. Included in these tools are the Evidence Requirements Framework (ERF), a tool that supports consideration of information quality, and the Risk Based Framework (RBF), a tool that allows assessments of data-limited fisheries.

Changes to the Toolbox have been considered in two distinct phases: i) amending the MSC's requirements in Version 3 of the Fisheries Standard to clarify technical issues, and ii) a wider review, including the MSC Fisheries Standard Toolbox Version 1.1. which reconsiders both the ERF and the RBF.

The STAC welcomed the update on the review of the Fisheries Standard Toolbox, in particular, the clarity and brevity of the ERF and RBF, which had been simplified and definitions removed where these were not necessary.

The STAC supported the proposals for revisions to the Toolbox and highlighted the importance of MSC providing capacity building and training for Conformity Assessment Bodies and assessors to support them in applying the Fisheries Standard.

MSC Chain of Custody Standard Review

The STAC was updated on the **progress of the MSC Chain of Custody Standard Review**, with a focus on the component of the Review looking at the restructure the Chain of Custody Standard, which involved developing a proposal to merge the three certificate holder variants – Default, Group and Consumer-Facing Organisation – into a single document and restructuring its five principles, with the aim of enhancing the Standard's accessibility and clarity by reducing repetition and eliminating inconsistencies across shared requirements.

The STAC also received an update on the related Fraud Protection Project, which involved research to identify options that would enable the MSC, the Aquaculture Stewardship Council, and Chain of Custody certificate holders to protect themselves from food fraud.

The STAC welcomed the update on the progress of the Chain of Custody Standard Review and the opportunity to provide feedback and stakeholder views on the proposed restructured and redesigned Chain of Custody Standard.

The STAC supported the proposed revisions to the Standard and was pleased to hear about the plans to engage with Chain of Custody certificate holders about the proposed changes and to test thoroughly and allow partners ample opportunity to provide feedback on the restructured Standard.

MSC Traceability Enhancement Program

The STAC received a general update on the MSC's **Traceability Enhancement Program (TEP)**, which sought to strengthen traceability requirements and digitise data collection throughout the MSC Program and to use this enhanced traceability to further reinforce the integrity of the MSC ecolabel.

The STAC welcomed the update on progress and the opportunity to provide feedback and advice on the challenges of assessing market readiness, both in terms of the digitisation of traceability data and the adoption of common data standards.

Climate Change

The STAC received a general overview and update on research work that MSC had carried out to identify fisheries and regions where predicted climate impacts threaten their ability to meet MSC benchmarks for sustainable management.

To achieve this, the MSC carried out the **Assessment of Risks posed by Climate Change project (the ARC project)** study which evaluated vulnerability to climate change in fisheries currently certified to the MSC Fisheries Standard, fisheries working towards certification and those that had been suspended from the MSC program. This included over 500 fisheries, representing approximately 19% of global wild catch.

The STAC welcomed the opportunity to consider and discuss the findings of the ARC project study, the results of which will be published in early 2026, and some of the challenges and opportunities of supporting fishery and supply chain partners in facing the effects of climate change.

Meeting Close

The STAC thanked the MSC Executive for the informative updates on the aforementioned topics.

ENDS