



## Leading Global Brands Change the Future of the Seafood Industry with Launch of New Traceability Standards

**Washington** – Today, The Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST)—a major industry forum involving more than five dozen companies worldwide from across the seafood supply chain—released the first-ever global standards for tracking seafood products from point of origin to point of sale. These standards are a critical step forward in the fight against illegal fishing and unethical labour practices and are changing the game for an industry under increasing pressure to demonstrate its compliance with high standards for ethical sourcing.

“The release of the GDST traceability standards is a watershed moment for the seafood industry,” said Dr Darian McBain, Global Director of Sustainability for Thai Union, one of the world’s largest multinational seafood companies. “Traceability is the backbone of our sustainability strategy, and these standards will greatly strengthen our ability to manage the data flow in complex seafood supply chains.”

Seafood is the most globalized food sector, providing protein to 4.3 billion people and income to hundreds of millions around the world. But illegal fishing—which fuels overfishing and environmental degradation, as well as human rights abuses, such as slavery at sea—is estimated at up to one quarter of fish caught by commercial fishers globally, with upwards of \$36 billion in illegal fish products entering seafood markets yearly. Complex seafood supply chains mask these issues and contribute to fraud and the mislabelling of products in seafood markets.

“The future of seafood depends on effective traceability,” said Britta Gallus of Metro AG. “And until now, we have lacked the standards needed to make traceability work effectively across the thousands of companies involved in this highly globalized industry.” METRO is a leading international wholesale company with food and non-food assortments.”

From the outset, the GDST was convened and supported by WWF, one of the world’s leading conservation groups, and the Global Food Traceability Center of the Institute of Food Technologists, a non-profit global association dedicated to safe, nutritious, and sustainable food for all. After nearly three years of technical work, the release of the “GDST 1.0” standards will establish a common baseline for the kinds of information to be tracked and the digital formats needed to share information across the sector.

“We believe that our customers should know where their food comes from and how it is sourced,” noted Carrie Brownstein, Principal Quality Standards Advisor for seafood at Whole Foods Market, the leading natural and organic foods retailer owned by Amazon, Inc. “These ground-breaking standards have the power to positively change how seafood is tracked through supply chains globally.”

Media background materials and multiple industry endorsements can be found at [http://traceability-dialogue.org/gdst\\_launch/](http://traceability-dialogue.org/gdst_launch/)

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**About the Global Dialogue of Seafood Traceability (GDST)**

*The GDST is an international, business-to-business platform established to advance a unified framework for interoperable seafood traceability practices. The Dialogue brings together a broad spectrum of seafood industry stakeholders from across different parts of the supply chain, as well as relevant civil society experts from diverse regions. Learn more at [www.Traceability-Dialogue.com](http://www.Traceability-Dialogue.com).*

**About the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT)**

*The Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) is a global organization of over 15,000 individual members from more than 100 countries committed to advancing the science of food. Since 1939, IFT has brought together the brightest minds in food science, technology and related professions from academia, government, and industry to solve the world's greatest food challenges. Our organization works to ensure that our members have the resources they need to learn, grow, and enhance their professional work within the global food system. We believe that science is essential to ensuring a global food supply that is safe, nutritious, sustainable and accessible to all. For more information, please visit [ift.org](http://ift.org).*

**About the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)**

*WWF is one of the world's leading conservation organizations, working in 100 countries for over half a century. With the support of more than 5 million members worldwide, WWF is dedicated to delivering science-based solutions to preserve the diversity and abundance of life on Earth, halt the degradation of the environment and combat climate change. Visit [www.worldwildlife.org](http://www.worldwildlife.org) to learn more and keep up with the latest conservation news by following @WWFNews on Twitter.*