

# Information to Support Requests for Verifiable Product-Level Data

This document is a template to assist companies with communicating to their trading partners the importance of capturing and sharing accurate and verifiable traceability information. The content can be customized by copying and pasting selected text into an email, standalone document, or website and then editing or adding language to meet specific needs.

## WHAT IS VERIFIABLE PRODUCT-LEVEL DATA?

**PRODUCT-LEVEL DATA IS ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT A SPECIFIC PRODUCT THAT IS PHYSICALLY LINKED TO THAT PRODUCT** via barcodes, QR codes, or human-readable labels. Verifiable product-data pairing occurs when the information can be further validated by another entity, including a catch or landing document (e.g., fish ticket) or by other traceability systems. Indeed, one benefit of interoperability among traceability technology is the ability to cross-check data for a given product.

## THE CHALLENGE

**THE UNFORTUNATE REALITY IN OUR INDUSTRY TODAY IS A SUPPLY CHAIN RIDDLED WITH MISLABELING, ILLEGAL FISH, AND VARIOUS FORMS OF FRAUD.** While numerous factors have created these problems, they continue in part because of an overall lack of demand for verifiable product-level data. When the industry standard is to not supply verifiable information about catch location, species, date of landing, vessel ID, and so on, the result is that illegal and misrepresented seafood enters legitimate sales channels completely undetected. Consequently, companies attempting to play by the rules become unassuming accomplices, and the damage is widespread: business costs rise; sales revenues fall; fishery resources suffer; consumer confidence dwindles; public health is put at risk.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

**WE CANNOT WAIT FOR MANDATES FROM POLICYMAKERS ABOUT THIS MATTER.** As a company committed to honest sourcing, we believe that we and other like-minded businesses can create a new norm for pairing verifiable product-level data with the seafood we buy and sell. As our trading partner, we invite you to join us in this effort. Doing so will not only help to sustain the wild fishery resources on which our industry is based and our livelihoods depend, but will also benefit our companies individually and collectively.

## HOW THIS BENEFITS YOU, US, AND OTHER INDUSTRY PARTNERS

**HERE ARE SOME WAYS WE CAN BOTH BENEFIT BY BEING INTENTIONAL ABOUT CAPTURING AND SHARING VERIFIABLE PRODUCT-LEVEL INFORMATION:**

- When fish landed by US fishermen are paired with verifiable data about where they were harvested, they can be distinguished from cheaper imports that compete in the marketplace and drive down dock prices.
- When fish enters a processing facility and retains information about its pedigree (e.g., species name, catch location, captain or boat name, gear type, landing date, etc.) throughout processing, that product can be sold for a premium to higher-end supply chains that are willing to pay more for 'storied fish'.
- Accurately labeled product—especially if it has a scannable barcode—is much more quickly and easily inventoried, which produces operational efficiencies.
- Truthful labeling with harvest or landing date results in accurate shelf-life labeling, which reduces shrinkage throughout the chain, especially for retailers, restaurants, and consumers.
- Seafood paired with accurate data means consumers can have confidence in what they're purchasing. This can be important for consumer health (e.g., avoiding food allergies or high-contaminant species), consumer values (e.g., sustainability, wild-caught, local), and consumer confidence (i.e., consumers that can't trust the seafood available will be more likely to choose another protein option)

# Request for Verifiable Product Level Data

## EXTERNAL DATA VERIFICATION REQUESTS

The following checked key data elements (KDEs) are important for how we distinguish our products in the marketplace as well as for compliance with our internal sustainability standards. We ask that these are prioritized.

We also request that you provide verification of the data supplied, either via landing receipts, bills of lading, or other external documentation.

Vessel ID

Landing Location

Captain Name

Landing Date

Harvest Date

Species Name

Harvest Location

Processing Location

Gear Type

Processing Date

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## REQUEST FOR DATA TRANSFER

Our company uses an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system that allows us to capture and internally track products via barcode scanners. Currently, our receivables team manually inputs data for each product based on packing slips and human-readable labels. In an effort to streamline and expedite the process of moving seafood through our facility, we propose initiating an effort to coordinate our barcode scheme with yours.