



# RFM UPDATE

MARCH 2019



## Greetings from the RFM Committee Chair

In the coming year the RFM Committee will continue in our work to evolve the RFM program, increasing its relevance in the field of fisheries sustainability certification. After streamlining the program's rules with updates of the Quality Management System (QMS) and procedures in 2017, we spent 2018 considering possible paths for future development of the program's management with an ASMI Board decision to move the program to a nonprofit foundation outside of ASMI. For 2019, we expect to begin to move in the direction of new management for the program that evolves to broader stakeholder interests, while ASMI will play a critical role representing the RFM program in markets.

These transitional developments are intended to increase awareness, acceptance, and adoption of the program for both seafood buyers and consumers. In particular, reaching the broader market is imperative for the RFM program to achieve its potential and gain the industry support needed to maintain the program in a nonprofit foundation outside of ASMI. The participation of several ASMI Board members on the RFM Committee shows the commitment of the Board to the continued development of the RFM program.

Mark Fina  
RFM Committee Chair  
United States Seafood, LLC

## RFM Evolution Info

### What are the benefits of forming a foundation?

RFM is very important to the State of Alaska and the intent of the transition is to strengthen the program. Forming an independent foundation increases flexibility for growth such as certifying fisheries outside of Alaska and continued collaboration with other FAO based certification programs. The benefits of a geographically broader program would be:

- Increased cost efficiencies
- Increased market strength through provision of a broader and more complete range of products
- Broad based industry and market representation ensure stability and credibility
- Well defined governance ensures the best interests of well managed fisheries are served
- Greater acceptance with a broader program avoids monopoly of power in a single certification scheme

*RFM Evolution Info continued next page*





## RFM Evolution Info *continued*

### Who will run the foundation? How will it be funded?

The RFM Committee is working with the ASMI Board and other stakeholders to develop a business plan for the Foundation. ASMI Staff and contractors will continue to carry out the administration of the program including the Chain of Custody and Fishery standards and continue a Program of Work directed at improvements. The program will move to the foundation with continued ASMI funding and participation, and the RFM Committee and ASMI Board will continue the austere approach to the overall program costs, which over the last 3 fiscal years have decreased by more than 40%.

### How will you ensure ongoing credibility of the RFM Program and continued GSSI recognition?

RFM was the first certification scheme recognized by GSSI in July 2016. The formation of the independent foundation will not jeopardize

our current GSSI benchmark. It is a priority to keep this in place and we will have ongoing communication with GSSI during this time to ensure the program remains compliant with GSSI requirements and our recognition continues.

### Will this impact Chain of Custody?

With the transition to an independent foundation, the fisheries that are currently certified will remain certified as will companies certified under the Chain of Custody standard. No logo license fees will remain as well.

### What is the timeline?

The transition of the RFM Program to an independent foundation outside of ASMI will occur over the next two years.

## RFM OUT AND ABOUT

Over the last year the RFM Team and Committee have focused on outreach to in-state stakeholders as well as capitalizing on key speaking opportunities in the U.S. and globally.

### Here's where we've been!

- ✓ Walmart Sustainable Seafood meeting for suppliers/ NGO partners
- ✓ United Fisherman of Alaska Board of Directors Spring Meeting
- ✓ Pacific Seafood Processors Association Board of Directors
- ✓ Amendment 80 Group
- ✓ At Sea Processors Association
- ✓ Alaska Crab Foundation
- ✓ Pacific Marine Expo
- ✓ Association of Sustainable Fisheries, Boston and Brussels
- ✓ Seafood Expo North America (SENA) 2018, Boston

### International speaking engagements:

- ✓ Global Seafood Expo Brussels
- ✓ Tokyo International Symposium
- ✓ Global Outlook for Aquaculture Leadership (GOAL) conference, Guayaquil, Ecuador
- ✓ Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Symposium
- ✓ Tokyo University Workshop, "Development of sustainable fisheries & seafood eco-labels"
- ✓ Seafood Legacy Workshop, Tokyo, "To know world's certification schemes"

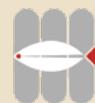


### Please look for us this year in Boston and Brussels.

If you are interested in booking a meeting, please contact Jeff Regnart @ [jrregnart@gmail.com](mailto:jrregnart@gmail.com)



Seafood Expo  
NORTH AMERICA



Seafood Processing  
NORTH AMERICA



Seafood Expo  
GLOBAL



Seafood Processing  
GLOBAL

MARCH 17-19, BOSTON  
Booth number 1633

MAY 7-9, BRUSSELS / Booth  
number Hall 6, #1126, 1127, 1143



## 5-Q'S WITH A FISHERY CLIENT:

### Julie Decker, Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF)

#### Why does AFDF manage fishery certifications with both RFM and MSC Programs?

AFDF manages the RFM and MSC certification for both cod and salmon\* for two primary reasons. First, maintaining two certifications provides choice in certification to the members of our client group, and to the marketplace. Second, having multiple certifications under one client (AFDF) allows us to realize cost savings during the fisheries assessments and audits. *\*MSC salmon is scheduled to be transferred from Pacific Seafood Processors Association (PSPA) to AFDF in spring, 2019.*

#### Why is choice important?

Essentially, choice fosters excellence. It drives cost efficiencies, assures market access, and helps ensure the best interests of the fishery instead of the certification programs.

#### What's the audit experience with the dual certifications?

AFDF has a Technical Facilitator (Dave Gaudet) who works closely with the certification bodies for both MSC and RFM audits. This is helpful in coordinating the information that is used by both certification bodies during the assessment process, which reduces duplicity, increases productivity, saves money and creates synergy. Additionally, the RFM program is working toward greater efficiency by combining the audit and/or assessment work of the certification bodies and aligning timelines for the certificates. The RFM Program is working towards these types of efficiencies with Chain of Custody (CoC) audits as well. To attain further cost reductions, AFDF also combines audit

and assessment work with other Client Groups when grouping similar fisheries (i.e. reduced Assessment Team travel costs).

#### How is the RFM Fishery certification paid for? What are the costs associated with certification?

As the client, AFDF sets a budget each year that covers the Technical Facilitator, travel, AFDF staff and indirect costs. Additional costs may exist if there is a non-conformance found during the audit which would require an action plan. Based on that budget, industry decides what is a fair and equitable cost share for the companies that want to use the certification. For example, the cost share for RFM salmon in 2017/18 was \$156 per million lbs of salmon purchased from fisherman.

#### How do you see the future of the RFM Program?

At AFDF, we are excited to see the commitment to continual improvement. For instance, RFM recently completed a revision of the Quality Management System (QMS) which achieved cost efficiencies, such as allowing for desk-top audits instead on-site visits for annual surveillances in some fisheries. RFM is also working to increase international awareness and recognition of the program by broadening the program to allow fisheries outside of Alaska to participate. To me, this is the most exciting prospect, because it will ensure for the long-term success of the RFM Program. Other areas I'd like to see strengthened are continued outreach for CoC, more companies participating in CoC and claiming the RFM Certification, and consideration of modifying audit requirements for consistently high performing, low-risk fisheries.



The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) continues their growth in 2019.

They are currently supported by more than 90 partner organizations globally. These partners consist of both Funding Partners from the seafood industry, and non-profit

Affiliated Partners, including the FAO. You can read more about them here: <http://www.ourgssi.org/partnership/partners/>

This summer will mark Alaska RFM's third anniversary since being the first

certification program to be formally recognized by the GSSI Benchmark. The program is currently preparing for GSSI's 'Monitoring of Continued Alignment' process and we look forward to our ongoing recognition to this important global benchmark.



## RFM Certified Seal

The **Alaska RFM Certification seal** is available for those who satisfy the **Chain of Custody** requirements, would like to demonstrate traceability and make a certification claim. There is no **logo-licensing fee** and it is free to use with **Chain of Custody** and a signed **Terms of Use Agreement**.

### Key Contacts

Jeff Regnart is ASMI's Fisheries Technical Consultant and spearheads the Alaska RFM program along with support from Susan Marks, Sustainability/Certification Advisor.

For additional information please visit <http://alaskaseafood.org> or contact Jeff Regnart at [jrregnart@gmail.com](mailto:jrregnart@gmail.com)

To receive email updates for specific fishery certifications and to stay informed of the latest developments and news regarding the Alaska RFM Program please sign up to receive our E-Blasts at <https://www.alaskaseafood.org/rfm-certification/rfm-news/>

## THE ALASKA RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (RFM) CERTIFICATION

is a rigorous program founded on the strongest and most widely acknowledged international standards and practices. As the owner of Alaska RFM Certification, the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) developed the program to offer a credible, cost effective choice in seafood sustainability certification.

