Global Seafood Alliance

Public Stakeholder Consultation

Where to provide feedback:

GFSIBM@theconsumergoodsforum.com

Before: 07 December 2026 at midnight CET

Global Seafood Alliance Issue 6

GFSI Benchmark Assessment Report

Final Version: 17 . 04. 2026

Application information

Assessment team and date

Certification programme Name(s)	Global Seafood Alliance Seafood Processing Standard Issue 6
Certification programme owner name and address	85 New Hampshire Avenue, Suite 200 Portsmouth, NH 03801 USA
Certification programme owner name, email, contact number	Global Seafood Alliance kyle.harrison@globalseafood.org +1 603-317-5000 ext. 179
Date of previous application if applicable	
Benchmark Leader name and contact details	Emma Skouse
GFSI Senior Technical Manager name	Karla Mijatovic
Observers name	NA
Interpreter's name (if applicable)	NA
Date of this office assessment	26th – 27th August 2026
Language (e.g. English or other)	English

Scopes included in this application

GFSI Scopes		Scopes applied for
AI	Farming of Animals for Meat/ Milk/ Eggs/ Honey	
AII	Farming of Fish and Seafood	
BI	Farming of Plants (other than grains and pulses)	
BII	Farming of Grains and Pulses	
BIII	Pre-process Handling of plant products	
C0	Animal Conversion	
CI	Processing of perishable animal products	
CII	Processing of Plant Perishable Products	
CIII	Processing of Animal and Plant Perishable Products (Mixed Products)	
CIV	Processing of Ambient Stable Products	
D	Production of Feed	
E	Catering	
FI	Retail / Wholesale	
FII	Food Broker / Agent	
H	Provision of Food Safety Services	
G	Provision of Storage and Distribution Services	
I	Production of Food Packaging	
JI	Hygienic Design of Food Buildings and Processing Equipment (for building constructors and equipment manufacturers)	
JII	Hygienic Design of Food Buildings and Processing Equipment (for building and equipment users)	
K	Production of (Bio) Chemicals (Additives, Vitamins, Minerals, Bio-cultures, Flavourings, Enzymes and Processing aids)	

Executive summary and recommendation to the GFSI Steering Committee

Executive summary

Overview of the Assessment Process

Global Seafood Alliance applied for recognition against the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements (BMR) Version 2024 for scopes C0, CI, CIII, CIV & K. The benchmarking process was conducted as an integrated assessment to ensure a seamless transition from v2020.1 to v2024.

The purpose of the GFSI assessment was to evaluate the Seafood Processing Standard (GSA SPS v6), issued by the CPO (owned by the Global Seafood Alliance), in compliance with the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements 2024 version.

Desktop Review & Technical Verification

The benchmarking cycle commenced with a comprehensive preliminary Desktop Review of the GSA Seafood Processing Standard, (Version 6) and associated documentation, completed remotely by the BML (Benchmark Leader) Emma Skouse (ES) in August 2026, and was based on the review of the evidence provided by the Certification Programme Owner in the self-assessment excel files for GFSI part II and III to cover the scopes of recognition applied (C0, CI, CIII, CIV & K), ensuring that it contained sufficient objective evidence to proceed to the onsite assessment phase.

All findings raised, concerning the request for additional information, have been communicated in writing with the CPO. The assessment identified eight (8) non-conformities related to Certification Programme development and maintenance (Clauses 1.15, 1.24 & 1.25), Accreditation (Clauses 2.3, 2.19, 2.21), and Management of Audit and Certification (Clauses 5.8 & 5.12). The CPO was offered a call to discuss the findings, however they did not feel this was necessary, and instead submitted further supporting evidence to address the findings. The findings raised were discussed during the Office Visit on 26th & 27th August 2026 and subsequently closed out during the office visit.

Office Visit and Findings

An Office Visit (OV) was conducted on 26th & 27th August by Benchmark Leader (ES).

No critical findings or other impeding factors were raised at this step, and the office assessment followed a predefined by a specific agenda (Office Assessment Plan). The office assessment was

carried out in person and achieved the main purpose to verify the implementation and alignment of the new requirements and the Certification Programme Owner's Integrity Programme through sampled record reviews.

Validation of Corrective Actions (19th October, 2026)

Following the Office Visit, there were no miss alignments identified; therefore the CPO will be recommended for Public consultation directly as no corrective actions are due. The GFSI Senior Technical Manager Karla Mijatovic (KM) will conduct a final technical validation of the information presented including the corrective actions closed for the desktop review and acknowledgement of no finding raised at the office visit on August 26, 2026.

Verification of Root Cause Analysis (RCA): completed 19/10/2026

Validation of Evidence: completed 19/10/2026

Final Approval: The Senior Technical Manager officially accepted the close-out of all findings from the Self assessments and all documented reviews with no findings for the office visit, confirming that the GSA SPS v6 is now in full conformity with BMR v2024 as of October 23, 2026.

Conclusion

The benchmarking process encountered no significant complexities that would impede recognition. The Senior Technical Manager concludes that the assessment was transparent, evidence-based, and compliant with GFSI protocols. The report is now deemed validated for the 4-week public stakeholder consultation.

Recommendation to the GFSI Steering Committee

Results of assessment and office visit

Time and location details

	Location	People present GFSI, consultant, CPO. Names and roles	Date and time
Self-assessment review	remote	Emma Skouse (BML)	6 days completed 05-13/05/2026
Review calls	Online conference	Not required	
Office visit	85 New Hampshire Avenue, Suite 200 Portsmouth, NH 03801 USA	David Yunker, Kyle Harrison, Ryan Weide, Jess Stumper, David Deitz, Chris Weeks, Keiko Pasterczyk	26-27/08/2026

Overview of Certification Programme

In 1997, the Global Aquaculture Alliance was originally founded by shrimp farmers and aquafeed and seafood companies responding to criticism about mangrove deforestation. In 2025, GSA advances responsible seafood practices worldwide through education, advocacy and demonstration. GSA Convenes seafood industry leaders, academia and NGOs to collaborate on cross-cutting issues such as environmental and social responsibility, animal health and welfare, food safety and more. GSA is a membership-driven organisation. Members include certified producers, corporations and individuals.

As of January 13th, 2026, GSA has 3717 facilities certified to the BAP/BSP programs. Of these facilities, 548 facilities fall under the scope of GFSI recognition to GFSI Framework 2020.1, under Scope CI.

General compliance, strengths and weaknesses

The GSA SPS v6 is reviewed at least every 5 years, or sooner if changes occur in industry, normative documents, legislation, etc. by technically competent internal and external representatives, who inform the GSA Standards Oversight Committee (SOC), the Standards Technical Committee (STC) and/or the Issue Technical Committee (ITC). The Scheme is governed by an independent Standards Oversight Committee (SOC), who approves all changes or updates

to the Scheme, supported by Standards Technical Committee (STC) and/or the Issue Technical Committee (ITC).

The programme has strong oversight of Certification Body activities through a dedicated Certification Body team, through Certification Body office visits, comprehensive desktop reviews and discussion of Certification Body performance against specified Key Performance Indicators and witness audits of auditors. GSA now also carry out their own pre-approval of auditors prior to the CB approval by reviewing applicant information submitted by CBs of auditors they wish to approve.

The review of the self-assessment documents and corresponding submitted evidence was carried out by the Benchmark Leader during the office visit on 26th & 27th August 2026.

During the office visit, carried out in person, the Benchmark Leader interviewed the Certification Programme managers, reviewed documents, performance data and sampled certification records. The Integrity programme process was discussed and evaluated.

Changes made to the certification programme following the GFSI assessment

The CPO GSA, following the GFSI assessment, has supplied the corrective action plan containing the revised requirements.

The first and final corrective action plan was received on 16th October 2026 with evidence.

The new version became live and mandatory for audits from May 2026 and therefore notification to stakeholders for amends has been necessary.

List of findings

Note; These are findings raised at the desktop review. No Findings were raised at the Office Visit.

Element reference	Non-conformity	Partly / no	Corrective action	Recommendation from Benchmark Leader	Decision from GFSI Senior Technical Manager
1.15	Standards Development Process, I4.0, 02/03/2026 states an annual review will be carried out by the Chair of each STC. Section 1.6.2 Major revisions state "For all BAP and BSP standards under active operation, GSA shall conduct a major revision of the standard every 5 years. This shall include the introduction of a new TC Chair that shall recruit and preside over a new TC for the next 5-year cycle of active operation, unless removed." Comment from CPO states formal update every 4 years - to be confirmed whether 4 or 5 years.	Partly	Typo in self-assessment was corrected and clarified as every 5 years, not 4 years. Updated RW comment from SA: Review is once every 5 years.	Confirmed to be every 5 years. CLOSED. ES 19/10/2026	Accepted. The amendment was completed by the CPO's therefore accepted. Validated by KM 23/10/2026.

1.24	Annual review for 2026, reviewing 2025 was not provided however so the review of SPS v6.0 was not evident.	Partly	RW 6/12/26 - 2025 Management review uploaded, review of SPS 6.0 can be found starting on page 34	Review provided for 2025 - section 11, Review of standards shows a review of SPS v6.0. CLOSED. ES 19/10/2026	Accepted. The amendment was completed by the CPO and verified by the BML, therefore accepted. Validated by KM 23/10/2026.
1.25	Annual review for 2026, reviewing 2025 was not provided however so the review of SPS v6.0 was not evident.	Partly	RW 6/12/26 - 2025 Management review uploaded, review of SPS 6.0 can be found starting on page 34	Review provided for 2025 - section 3 - results of 2024 Management Review Action Items covers this requirement. CLOSED. ES 19/10/2026	Accepted. The amendment was completed by the CPO therefore accepted. Validated by KM 23/10/2026.
2.3	GSA Auditor Competency and Course Approval Requirements, Issue 1.0, 16/09/2025 references scopes CO, CI, CIII, CIV in section 6.0 BAP/BSP Auditor Competencies, but Scope K is not referenced as described.	Partly	RW 6/12/26 - Amendment #1 in the CB Requirements document (after table of contents) now showing the addition of Scope K to the scope of SPS 6.0. And Scope K is referenced in newly revised Auditor Competency and Course Approval Requirements Document Issue 1.1 - 15-April-2026.	GSA have introduced Amendments to Normative documents to avoid having to keep reissuing the standard, which is a lengthy process. Once the standard is reviewed and updated, the	Accepted. The amendments completed by GSA to their normative documents to reference the missing scope including the Certification Body requirements and proper notification

				amendments will be written into the standard. Email seen sent to CBs 12/06/2026, with Amendment to CB Requirements Document, Issue 1, notifying them of inclusion of Scope K as part of SPS v6.0 scope. Global Seafood Alliance - Auditor Competency and Course Approval Requirements, Issue 1.1, 15/04/2026 seen, scope K has been added to section 6 BAP/BSP Auditor competencies. CLOSED. ES 19/10/2026	paths were verified by the BML, therefore in alignment with the BMR 2024 requirements. Validated by KM 23/10/2026

2.19	All CBs have notified the CPO of their application for extension of the scope. Emails from CPO acknowledging this was not provided.	Partly	RW 6/12/26 - Email from VP of Operations dept on 17 April 2026 provided acknowledging SCS's accreditation plan.	Email provided - seen sent from SCS on 16/04/2026 with updated accreditation plan; confirmation from GSA that they will remain on restricted status until the accreditation is confirmed. CLOSED. ES 19/10/2026	Accepted. The provided corrective evidence effectively closes the communication gap identified in the initial assessment. Furthermore, the CPO's action to confirm restricted status proves active management and retention of this notification. Fulfilled against the clause. Validated by KM 23/10/2026
2.21	Intertek - Food certification schemes detailed show accredited / non-accredited (by omission) however they do not state that BAP is accredited and BAP/GSA Intertek do not appear to be detailed on the Intertek website.	Partly	RW 6/15/26 - Opened communication w/Intertek to have the website updated. Confirmed website updated on 16 June 2026.	Intertek website - Chinese page. Translate from Chinese, scroll down to "Intertek qualification documents" and it is the link titled "ANAB accredited certificate". Intertek has local	Accepted. This satisfies the requirement to prevent market confusion. Approved for close-out. Validated by KM 23/10/2026

				countries and each country's page holds the relevant accreditation. CLOSED. ES 19/10/2026	
5.8	GSA Audit Duration Guidelines, I1, 03/11/2021 states "The expected duration of SPS audits is established as two (2) audit days for those requirements per GFSI scope CI" - additional scopes applied for need to be considered in this document.	Partly	GSA Audit Duration Guidelines has been updated to issue 1.1 on 18 June 2026 to include the additional GFSI scopes.	Amended GSA AUdit Duration Guidelines, Issue 1.1, 18/06/2026 now includes audit duration requirements for Scope K. CLOSED. ES 19/10/2026	Accepted. The amendment made by the CPO rectifies the oversight in the normative documentation. The update aligns fully with the GFSI mandates for effective assessment, therefore in alignment with the BMR 2024 requirements. Validated by KM 23/10/2026
5.12	Annual Desktop review of CBs checks how this is managed by the CB, under clause 2.7 Evidence provided says this is monitored by CPO during	Partly	Error in self-assessment was corrected and clarified as being verified during desktop assessments annually, not during the office assessments every 3 years.	This is covered in the annual desktop assessments of CBs, and covered under Section 2 Policy and	Accepted. The provided corrective action resolves the conflicting

	3-yearly onsite assessments of CBs however it is not clear where this is covered on the assessment.			Procedures, clause 2.7 and Section 3 Auditors, under clause 3.11. CLOSED. ES 19/10/2026	information regarding the CPO's verification methodology, and is aligned with the requirements of the clause. Validated by KM 23/10/2026

Root Cause Analysis (RCA) Summary

Finding 1:

Standards Development Process, I4.0, 02/03/2026 states an annual review will be carried out by the Chair of each STC. Section 1.6.2 Major revisions state "For all BAP and BSP standards under active operation, GSA shall conduct a major revision of the standard every 5 years. This shall include the introduction of a new TC Chair that shall recruit and preside over a new TC for the next 5-year cycle of active operation, unless removed." Comment from CPO states formal update every 4 years - to be confirmed whether 4 or 5 years. Misinput resulted in miscommunication.

Finding 2:

Annual review for 2026, reviewing 2025 was not provided however so the review of SPS v6.0 was not evident. Incorrect management review initially provided.

Finding 3:

Annual review for 2026, reviewing 2025 was not provided however so the review of SPS v6.0 was not evident. Incorrect management review initially provided.

Finding 4:

GSA Auditor Competency and Course Approval Requirements, Issue 1.0, 16/09/2025 references scopes CO, CI, CIII, CIV in section 6.0 BAP/BSP Auditor Competencies, but Scope K is not referenced as described. Scope K was accidentally omitted while updating normative documents to align with newly applied scopes. The new scopes for which GSA is applying were in the process of being finalized.

Finding 5:

All CBs have notified the CB of their application for extension of the scope. Emails from CPO acknowledging this was not provided. Initial evidence that was provided was lacking.

Finding 6:

Intertek - Food certification schemes detailed show accredited / non-accredited (by omission) however they do not state that BAP is accredited and BAP/GSA Intertek do not appear to be detailed on the Intertek website. Prior misinterpretation of the intent of this clause caused confusion on this requirement. The evidence that was provided in past years' SAs met our initial interpretation of the clause, but we now have a better understanding of the intent.

Finding 7:

GSA Audit Duration Guidelines, I1, 03/11/2021 states "The expected duration of SPS audits is established as two (2) audit days for those requirements per GFSI scope CI" - additional scopes applied for need to be considered in this document. This document was overlooked when updating all normative documents to include all relevant scopes.

Finding 8:

Annual Desktop review of CBs checks how this is managed by the CB, under clause 2.7 Evidence provided says this is monitored by CPO during 3-yearly onsite assessments of CBs however it is not clear where this is covered on the assessment.The incorrect checklist was referenced in initial evidence. These checklists have some overlap, which leads to the miscommunication.

RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

List of findings – public stakeholder consultation

GFSI Benchmarking Requirements version 2024		Stakeholder Consultation Comments	CPO Answer	Recommendation from Benchmark Leader	Decision from GFSI Technical Manager