Developing Jurisdictional Initiatives for the Seafood Sector: Full Guidelines

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This guidance document will be updated as additional information, knowledge, and implementation experience lead to learnings in the field.

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Glossary

Blended finance: Blended finance can be broadly defined as the combination of public, concessional, official development assistance with private or public resources, generally with the aim of mobilizing or leveraging development finance from other actors (Oxfam 2017).

Contextual analysis: Identifies key systemic environmental and socio-economic challenges in the seafood production system of the jurisdictional initiative site and against which improvements and performance claims will be measured, as well as providing insights into whether key enabling conditions are in place, or could be created, to support the successful co-design of the jurisdictional initiative. This analysis is completed during the co-design phase.

Credible: Having rigor and a strong likelihood of success; worthy of belief and confidence.

Market partners: Seafood businesses, including end buyers, mid-supply chain suppliers, and local exporters.

Marine protected area: Any area of intertidal or subtidal terrain, together with its overlying water and associated flora, fauna, and historical and cultural features, which has been reserved by law or other effective means to protect part or all of the enclosed environment (WCPA 1999).

Monitoring: An ongoing function that uses the systematic collection of data on specific indicators to assess and document the extent to which actions, progress, performance, and compliance are being carried out or achieved.

Scoping assessment: An assessment conducted in the Scoping phase to evaluate whether the key enabling conditions are in place, or could be created, to support the successful co-design of a jurisdictional initiative.

Seascape: Large, multiple-use marine area, defined scientifically and strategically, in which government authorities, private organizations, and other stakeholders cooperate to conserve the diversity and abundance of marine life and promote human well-being (Murphy, S. E. et al. 2021).

Site: The specific location/area of the jurisdictional initiative.

Triple bottom line: Improvement of a fishery/farm's environmental, social, and economic performance.

Verification: An assessment and validation of compliance, performance, and/or actions relative to a stated commitment, standard, or target. It utilizes monitoring data and other information sources as input to the verification process.

List of Acronyms

AIP: aquaculture improvement project
ASC: Aquaculture Stewardship Council
BAP: Best Aquaculture Practices
CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity
CI: Conservation International
CoC: chain of custody
CRI: certification, ratings, and improvement
EAA: ecosystem approach to aquaculture
EAF: ecosystem approach to fisheries
EBM: ecosystem-based management
EEZ: exclusive economic zone
EFT: ecological fiscal transfer
ETP: endangered, threatened, and protected
FAD: fish aggregating device
FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization
FFIA: Fiji Fishing Industry Association
FIP: fishery improvement project
FISH: Fairness, Integrity, Safety, and Health
FISHE: Framework for Integrated Stock and Habitat Evaluation
FMP: fishery management plan
FPI: fishery performance indicator
GDP: gross domestic product
GDST: Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability
GTA: Global Tuna Alliance
IMT: Implementation Monitoring Tool
IPs: Indigenous peoples
IUCN: International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IUU: illegal, unreported, and unregulated
JA: jurisdictional approach
JI: jurisdictional initiative
KDE: key data element
KPI: key performance indicator
MPA: marine protected area
MSC: Marine Stewardship Council
MSP: marine spatial planning
MSP: multistakeholder process
MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
NGO: nongovernmental organization
PNA: Parties to the Nauru Agreement
RAT: rapid assessment tool
RFMO: regional fishery management organization
SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SIDS: Small Island Developing States
SRA: Social Responsibility Assessment Tool for the Seafood Sector
UN: United Nations
UNCLOS: United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
VDS: vessel day scheme
WCPA: World Commission on Protected Areas
WCPO: Western Central Pacific Ocean
WWF: World Wildlife Fund/Worldwide Fund for Nature

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About the Guidance Document

These guidelines were developed by Conservation International (CI) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in consultation with civil society organizations and seafood supply chain members. In the following pages, we present what a jurisdictional initiative for the seafood sector entails, guidance for when and how to develop such an initiative, and best practices to help producers, local communities, governments, the private sector, and civil society establish credible jurisdictional initiatives to address systemic drivers of decline of global biodiversity and increase the resilience of marine and freshwater ecosystems. The goal of this document is to provide useful guidance to build an approach that is more likely to address systemic and policy-level changes that improve social and environmental conditions; however, some jurisdictional initiatives may not require the implementation of all elements outlined in this guide. **The application of these initiatives is still nascent, especially in the seafood sector. The community will learn as we further develop jurisdictional initiatives. As such, this document provides early guidance and will be updated as experience in the field warrants.**

Executive Summary

Over the past 25 years, seafood certification, ratings, and improvement (CRI) efforts have been effective at bringing awareness to environmental and social issues in seafood production (i.e., wild-capture fisheries and aquaculture) and improving their sustainability performance in many parts of the world. While CRI approaches are impactful and critical to continue, their current framework of working with individual fisheries or farms is not designed to achieve the scale of improvement needed in global seafood production, nor do they effectively engage many of the world's small-scale fisheries and farms and local communities who may not be incentivized by export market demand or cannot afford the costs associated with certification. In addition, these market-focused interventions alone are proving insufficient to fully address critical systemic issues that can be barriers to long-term environmental sustainability and social responsibility, such as cumulative environmental impacts, labor rights, climate change impacts, and biodiversity loss, which often can only be achieved through policy changes. Therefore, there is an opportunity for new approaches that aim to address systemic barriers at scale while engaging seafood sector stakeholders broadly in improvement efforts, as complementary to CRI approaches.

Frameworks for jurisdictional initiatives (JIs) have been developed by the nongovernmental organization (NGO) community in recent years to drive improvements at scale for environmental challenges in terrestrial commodities such as soy, palm oil, and timber (often called jurisdictional approaches (JAs)). These initiatives have provided added value to credible certification efforts by addressing not only environmental but also additional social and economic barriers to sustainability at a jurisdictional level or within the boundaries of a management system. Noting the successes in applying JAs to terrestrial commodities, recent efforts have focused on evaluating the applicability of these approaches to seafood commodities.

The JI concept is still nascent for fisheries and aquaculture, and there is a need for greater clarity around the key elements of successful JIs for seafood. Guidance for practitioners or companies is also needed to clarify what makes these initiatives for fisheries and aquaculture impactful and credible, and how to measure progress. For JIs to become more mainstream, it is critical to define what a credible JI for seafood should encompass to help ensure the greatest impact on aquatic ecosystem health and human well-being. This guide aims to provide some clarity on the rationale and importance, the process and key elements, and the engagement of key stakeholders for the establishment of a robust seafood JI.

We define seafood JIs as place-based initiatives in key seafood commodity-producing regions that utilize policy and market-based approaches to drive holistic improvements in seafood production at relevant ecological and political scales (Kittinger et al. 2021). JIs aim to achieve positive environmental, social, and economic outcomes in seafood production, such as achieving environmentally sustainable harvesting practices, promoting equity and safe and decent working conditions, and enhancing the economic profitability of those involved. Through the application of ecosystem-based management (EBM), JIs also seek to

manage, restore, and/or protect critical habitats, threatened species, and biodiversity by addressing cumulative impacts, as well as to increase ecosystem and climate resilience. The success of JIs relies on a robust and inclusive multistakeholder dialogue and collaboration to align goals and incentives among government, market, and producer actors, and with local communities and Indigenous peoples (IPs).

These initiatives are designed to be long-term engagements that drive systemic changes at ecologically and politically relevant scales, and rely on long-term efforts such as policy reform, public-private partnerships, and trust-based community engagement. As such, JIs can be particularly effective at driving alignment and collective action by government, IPs, local communities, the private sector, and civil society groups toward a shared vision and agenda for seafood production across a seascape. Locally driven and locally defined through a multistakeholder forum, JIs provide an opportunity to improve inclusivity and democratize planning and management. This allows for engagement of smallholders who might not participate in certification due to cost and capacity constraints.

We recommend developing a JI if stakeholders desire to increase the resilience of the ecosystem or tackle more systemic social and environmental drivers rather than focusing solely on the sustainability of a single fishery, farm/group of related farms, or supply chain. This would mean tackling issues that are not often or not fully addressed in established CRI efforts, such as ecosystem-level biodiversity, climate resilience, regional social issues (such as lack of decent work or equity), and industry/cross-industry cumulative impacts. Seafood JIs are complementary to CRI efforts and may occur before or after application of other mature and credible market-based tools, depending on political will and economic conditions. A JI could help address risks around the continued effectiveness of traditional CRI efforts, such as lack of government engagement at all levels.

Elements that help ensure success of a JI include setting the appropriate political and ecological scale, enabling legal frameworks, strong engagement and commitment from the government at relevant levels (e.g., national, regional, or local), strong commitment from other critical stakeholders (e.g., research institutions, local communities, producers, producer groups, and supply chain companies), a public reporting framework, traceability and transparency, and a viable pathway for financing the initiative.

JIs have the capacity to benefit many stakeholders throughout a region. Participation may benefit producers by addressing risk to their livelihoods (e.g., decline in fish populations and poor water quality), providing opportunity to organize into a more cohesive collective, promoting dialogue to resolve disputes and reach agreements regarding management of resources, helping ensure safe and decent work and community well-being, reducing reputational risks by demonstrating industry-wide progress in an ecosystem, obtaining equitable distribution of benefits, and obtaining a market incentive from suppliers and end buyers who are investing in these initiatives. The major benefits that these initiatives are meant to create for local communities and IPs are

platforms to engage and eventually secure improved socio-economic equity, continued dialogue with policy-makers and private actors (ensuring full and equitable participation and democratizing planning and management of resources), and potential access to financing through public-private partnerships. Governments can address risks from climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, and unethical human rights and labor practices that threaten the long-term health of marine and aquatic resources, thereby increasing the stability of nationally important food products for domestic consumption or export. Governments can also meet their national and international commitments and increase their reputations as ones that manages their ocean and aquatic resources in ways that improve biodiversity, increase climate resilience, and protect the rights of fishers, farmers, and local communities. Similarly, suppliers and end-buyer partners can reduce potential local community risks, operation risks, and supply chain volatility. Participation in JIs can also help businesses deliver on their sustainability commitments, reduce leakage issues, and improve value-chain efficiency. When supported by robust monitoring and evaluation systems, JIs may also provide companies with a way to credibly claim positive impacts as part of larger-scale improvements.

All credible seafood JIs seeking to drive change need to have a strong monitoring framework in place, with metrics relevant to the jurisdiction that will enable stakeholders to assess progress against the initiative's targets and milestones. The most effective metrics will be tied directly to performance against environmental, social, and economic outcomes at the jurisdictional level. However, given that a JI can span 20 years, it is also recommended to include some pathway indicators that are not direct conservation outcomes but capture important initial steps believed to lead to measurable outcomes over time as well as process indicators that capture progress in JI development. The appropriate metrics for each specific initiative will depend on the local context but should tie to overall biodiversity, climate, social, and economic goals of the effort (e.g., fish stock biomass) and pathway goals focused on better management/policies and information to support effective implementation of those policies (e.g., precautionary management, effective enforcement).

There are a variety of claims that participants can utilize to communicate with internal and external stakeholders, including claims about process, objectives of the initiative, risk management, investment, actions being implemented, current performance status, and trends over time. To the extent possible, claims should have associated objective and measurable criteria so they can be verified. Stakeholders making claims should make the information publicly and easily accessible (e.g., on their website, in sustainability reports, or through public reporting by the JI itself). No single stakeholder group should make attribution claims (i.e., we are responsible for a specific performance outcome), as it is often difficult to show a direct cause-and-effect relationship, and it disregards the influence of others in achieving the outcomes. However, stakeholders can make claims about their specific contributions. It is important to note that seafood buyers and other stakeholders participating in a JI should not claim premature or augmented successes. These initiatives span a significant timeline, and associated claims should

appropriately reflect the improvement journey over time. In addition, claims made by seafood companies or by producers to obtain market access will require strong traceability systems in place to ensure the integrity of products across the supply chain and reduce the risk of greenwashing in some marketplaces.

All effective JIs will have a progress framework with impact outcomes and an action plan with time-bound targets and milestones, as well as a monitoring and reporting framework to monitor and report on processes followed (including processes to ensure inclusivity) and progress against the time-bound milestones and performance improvements within the jurisdiction. Effective JIs will also have adequate capacity to manage and analyze the data. ISEAL has developed best practice guidance for these frameworks that should be followed.

Credible seafood JIs must also have sound verification frameworks that can assess the validity of different aspects of the JI's progress. These include validation of structural outcomes, action claims, and performance claims. To drive credibility of JIs, it is important to manage the expectations of stakeholders about their inability to make *performance/outcome* claims for quite some time, given the long timeframe of JIs. Stakeholders will need to focus first on *structural claims*, which highlight the progress in establishing the structures and systems for an effective JI, and *action claims*, which relate directly to actions companies may take to support development and progress in a JI. Different levels of verification are required for each type of claim due to the nature of the respective claims. Verification of the performance data and of the monitoring process helps build trust in the quality and reliability of the claim. The degree and level of independence of verification needed will depend on the claims being made, the track record of the JI, the level of transparency of the data, and the trustworthiness of the data providers. ISEAL has also developed guidance for verification that should be followed.

Learnings from relatively early-stage JIs (primarily terrestrial) show the following:

- Geographic boundaries need to align with the scope of environmental degradation and decision-making authority, capacity, and local frameworks.
- A coordinating backbone organization is necessary.
- A strong common vision and multiple, balanced objectives matter.
- Strong community engagement and stakeholder participation are critical.
- Meaningful engagement with Indigenous populations and local communities is key.
- Government engagement is a key driver.
- Private-sector actors are crucial for success.
- Strong partnerships with producer cooperatives or associations can boost success.
- Robust, transparent, and collaborative multistakeholder development processes and decision-making platforms are needed.
- Technical partners are needed to support blended finance.
- Transparency and traceability are crucial for verification of market claims.

Section 1. Jurisdictional Initiatives for the Seafood Sector

1.1 What Is a Jurisdictional Initiative for the Seafood Sector?

Background

Aquatic ecosystems across the world are in peril. The collapse of key commercial fisheries within the past 50 years has made clear the precarious position of the world's fish stocks. Decades of overfishing and coastal habitat conversions for fish farming have taken a significant toll on the health of aquatic ecosystems, human livelihoods, and global food security, and demand for seafood continues to increase. Over one-third of the world's commercial fish stocks are overfished, and the global fishing fleet is two–three times larger than the oceans can sustainably support. Unregulated growth of aquaculture has, in many places, led to conversion of marine and terrestrial habitats, water quality degradation, and biodiversity loss. Approximately 600 million livelihoods rely on fishing, aquaculture, and related activities, and more than 4 billion people around the world rely on seafood as an important source of animal protein.

We have reached a point where we need to achieve conservation impact at scale. In 2009, Rockström et al. proposed an approach to global sustainability based on nine planetary boundaries within which humanity can operate safely. They noted the deterioration of one or more planetary boundaries may be damaging or potentially catastrophic, pushing the Earth beyond a "safe operating space." A 2015 update (Steffen et al. 2015) on this planetary boundary concept showed that two of the core boundaries, climate change and biosphere integrity (including genetic diversity), have reached a high-risk point that may push the Earth into a new state.

The historical and current realities of inconsistent and inadequate regulation and enforcement across regions have led many actors to turn toward voluntary and market-based mechanisms to drive or achieve better environmental and social practices in seafood production. Certification and eco-labeling schemes (including the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)), emerged in the 1990s–2010 to harness the purchasing power of seafood businesses to incentivize fishers and aquaculture producers to improve their fishing and farming practices. Certifications are usually granted to a single related farm or fishery or group of related farms and fisheries and do not often cover the entire area of production or whole fisheries. An eco-certification label on a product indicates that it has been grown and harvested in a manner that meets the associated standard. Consumers and retailers who value responsibly produced seafood can preference seafood products with a certification eco-label, rewarding better performance, which in theory can rise over time.

Some conservation nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) also provide seafood ratings based on their own methodology that reviews the status and environmental impacts of fisheries and aquaculture (e.g., Seafood Watch, WWF seafood guides). These ratings are then shared with consumers through wallet guides and mobile apps and on menus and seafood counters.

Over the past decade, fishery improvement projects (FIPs) and aquaculture improvement projects (AIPs) have been developed to provide a credible improvement pathway for fisheries and farms (especially those in the supply chains of retail, food service, broad line, and multinational companies with sustainable seafood commitments) that cannot immediately meet the certification standards (e.g., MSC and ASC). Like certifications, these improvement projects are primarily implemented at individual fishery and farm levels.

Together, these certification, ratings, and improvement (CRI) efforts have been effective at bringing awareness to environmental and social issues in fisheries and aquaculture and moving the needle toward improved fishing and aquaculture practices in many parts of the world. Indeed, there are numerous examples of improved performance in fisheries and aquaculture farms, large and small, around the world due to engagement in CRI efforts that provide the basis for seafood company commitments and related improvement efforts for specific fisheries or farms, particularly those that contribute to international trade.

While CRI approaches are impactful and critical to continue, their current framework of working with individual fisheries or farms is not designed to achieve the scale of improvement needed in global seafood production, nor do they effectively engage many of the world's small-scale fisheries and farms who are not always incentivized by export market demand or cannot afford the costs associated with certification. In addition, these market-focused interventions alone are proving insufficient to address critical, systemic issues that can be barriers to long-term environmental sustainability and social responsibility of individual fisheries and aquaculture farms, such as cumulative environmental impacts, labor rights, climate change impacts, and biodiversity loss, which often can only be achieved through policy changes. This shortcoming is in part due to CRI efforts not often addressing the vital role that governments play in allocating, regulating, and managing the use of marine/freshwater resources (Buchanan et al. 2019). Therefore, there is an opportunity for new approaches that aim to address systemic barriers at scale while engaging seafood sector stakeholders broadly in improvement efforts, as complementary to CRI approaches.

Jurisdictional Initiatives for the Seafood Sector

In recent years, new jurisdictional approach (JA) frameworks have been developed to drive improvements at scale for environmental challenges in terrestrial commodities such as soy, palm oil, and timber (FAO 2005, FAO 2010, Fishman et al. 2017, Boyd et al. 2018, CI 2018, Boshoven et al. 2021). JAs for terrestrial commodities have been defined as "an integrated landscape approach that aims to reconcile competing social, economic and environmental objectives through participation across stakeholders and sectors, implemented within governmental administrative boundaries, and with a form of government involvement" (CI 2018). These initiatives have restricted themselves to national and sub-national political jurisdictions and have provided added value to credible certification efforts by addressing not only environmental but also additional

social and economic barriers to sustainability at a jurisdictional level or within the boundaries of a management system. Noting the successes in applying JAs to terrestrial commodities, recent efforts have focused on evaluating the applicability of these approaches to seafood commodities.

Fisheries and aquaculture production raise new opportunities and challenges for the application of JIs. The mobile and transboundary nature of many wild fish species often confounds JIs from a fishery management perspective, as well as in terms of stakeholder behavior. In aquaculture, the interconnectivity of open (e.g., cages and pens) and semi-closed (e.g., ponds and raceways) production systems that rely on common water bodies creates the need for coordinated effluent and disease management, which can also influence stakeholder behavior and complicate JIs. Another key difference influencing the industry-level approach outlined in this document is linked to the realities of most seafood sectors and supply chains. In terrestrial landscapes with multiple commodities planted together (or in rotation), largely sold to a single buyer, and with readily available geospatial land-use monitoring tools, different models focused on multiple commodities in a region are possible.

We define seafood jurisdictional initiatives (JIs) as place-based initiatives in key seafood commodity-producing regions that utilize policy and market-based approaches to drive holistic improvements in seafood production at relevant ecological and political scales (Kittinger et al. 2021; Figure 1). JIs aim to achieve positive environmental, social, and economic outcomes in seafood production, such as achieving environmentally sustainable harvesting practices, promoting equity and safe and decent working conditions, and enhancing the economic profitability of those involved. Through the application of ecosystem-based management (EBM), JIs also seek to manage, restore, and/or protect critical habitats, threatened species, and biodiversity by addressing cumulative impacts, as well as to increase ecosystem and climate resilience. The success of JIs relies on a robust and inclusive multistakeholder dialogue and collaboration to align goals and incentives among government, market, and producer actors, and with local communities and Indigenous peoples (IPs).

Figure 1. Jurisdictional initiatives (JIs) simultaneously utilize governance reform and market-based approaches to drive holistic improvements in seafood production at a jurisdictional scale. By combining these approaches, JIs can deploy the considerable resources and innovation of the private sector and the regulatory authority of governments to drive seafood sustainability across entire production geographies.

Seafood JIs aim to initiate or accelerate more holistic policy-level approaches to private-sector seafood interventions across a whole region or jurisdiction. While these JIs may not be able to solve all ecosystem-level sustainability challenges on their own, by engaging with industry, government, local communities and IPs, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and within the context of the larger regional social and ecological realities, the JI process will begin to engage a wider set of necessary actors and contextualize for the industry those larger limits of the seascape. The reality is that success in achieving the ultimate outcomes and lasting systemic change may require patience, perseverance, and long-term financing.

These initiatives are designed to be long-term engagements that drive systemic changes at ecologically and politically relevant scales and rely on long-term efforts such as policy reform, public-private partnerships, and trust-based community engagement. As such, JIs can be particularly effective at driving alignment and collective action by government, IPs, local communities, the private sector, and civil society groups toward a shared vision and agenda for seafood production across a seascape.

JIs are not intended to be separate from existing government-led fisheries management frameworks for a particular geography and jurisdiction. JIs are instead seeking to address the

siloed way in which these policy efforts have oftentimes been implemented to date, with limited engagement by market and industry actors, resulting in slow adoption of best practices for seafood production. In Indonesia, for instance, the emergence of JIs was the result of a national recognition of the need to adopt a multistakeholder approach and the weaving together of multiple international initiatives to address deforestation, including the provision of financial and market-based incentives and strengthening Indigenous rights (Seymour et al. 2020).

Existing fisheries management and stakeholder consultation efforts that are being led by governments should similarly be incorporated within multistakeholder JIs' efforts to address system needs. In certain cases, these consultations may include broader jurisdictional ocean governance efforts, such as government commitments under the Global Biodiversity Framework and delivery of the 30x30 ocean protection agenda. If JI partners collectively agree to create new marine protected areas (MPAs) as part of the initiative, then a marine spatial planning (MSP) process should be undertaken to determine where and how to do so in a manner consistent with the objectives of the JI. The potential costs and benefits of new MPAs should be adequately assessed, and innovative mechanisms should be designed to alleviate potential losses incurred by JI participants, including by the seafood industry. The latter will help ensure that incentives among the pertinent public and private stakeholders are aligned, enabling collective action in securing ocean protection and holistic seafood production improvements at scale.

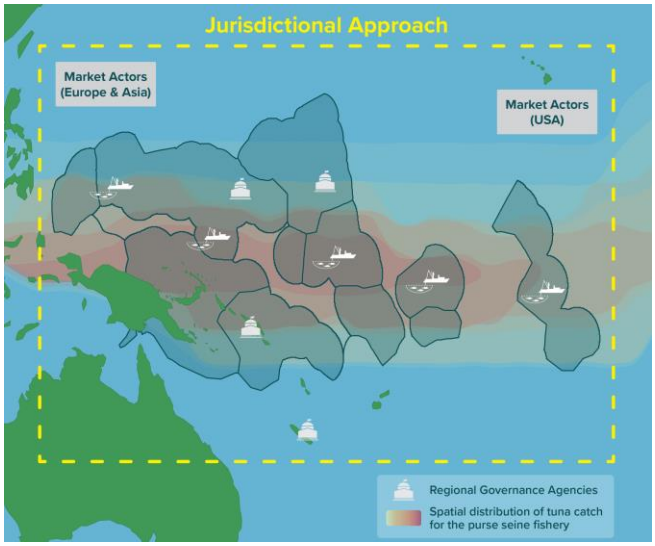
Given the central role envisioned for government in the design of a JI, a key barrier to long-term success is the inevitability of government turnover and the resulting change in policy priorities. Mechanisms should therefore be embedded in the initiative's design that insulate it from political shifts—for instance, developing a long-term financing strategy that provides sufficient resources for the long-term implementation of JIs or securing buy-in from leadership in the technical and regulatory agencies that are less susceptible to political shifts.

Producers, governments, and NGOs are accelerating efforts to develop and implement JIs to support seafood sustainability at scale (Box 1). Many of these initiatives are early iterations of terrestrial JA efforts.

Box 1. Case Studies: Advancing seafood jurisdictional initiatives (JIs)

1.1 Fisheries:

One of the most notable examples of a JI for large-scale fisheries comes from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) in the Western Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO), wherein eight Pacific Islands' governments partnered to create a new tuna management jurisdiction and regime that extended across most of the area where the purse seine tuna fishery occurs **(policy-based approaches at a jurisdictional scale)**. The PNA member countries subsequently obtained Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification for the fishery and then developed joint ventures with private-sector partners to commercialize tuna coming from the new "verified sourcing area" **(market-based approaches at jurisdictional scale)**. The latter efforts can be distinguished from traditional industry-led certifications, ratings, and improvement (CRI) efforts in a number of ways.



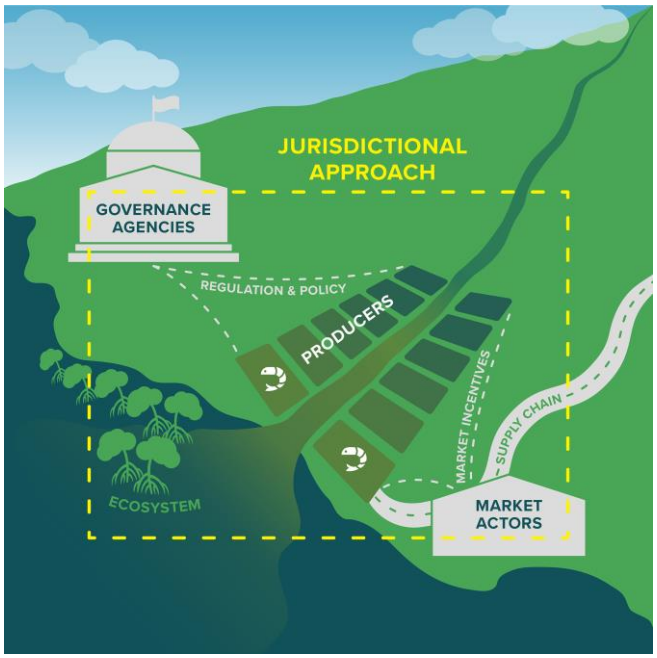
First, the creation of the PNA was **led by governments that had the jurisdictional authority to establish new policies, rules, and regulations. The latter governance mechanism was designed to achieve improved triple-bottom-line outcomes prioritized by the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) where the fishery occurs**. As a result, the new scheme established requirements that **all purse seine vessels fishing in the PNA area had to comply with**, such as restrictions to fishing in certain high seas pockets, seasonal bans on fish aggregating devices (FADs), and in-port transshipment requirements for monitoring, among others. Second, the **jurisdictional scale** of the PNA management area was designed to encompass most of the ecological distribution of skipjack tuna stocks, thereby ensuring that the regulatory requirements would apply to all fishing vessels operating in most of the area where fishing occurs. The latter is fundamentally different from many **industry-led CRI efforts, which are restricted to the vessels of participating companies**; as such, traditional CRI initiatives are susceptible to "free riding" by other fishery participants in the same areas, who are not engaged in CRI efforts, leading to leakage of benefits. **Industry-led CRI efforts can also be impaired by limited government participation and leadership**, which are needed to establish a regulatory framework that ensures ecosystem-based management across an entire production geography. Furthermore, **the scope of industry-led CRI objectives is oftentimes narrower**, focused on ensuring the environmental sustainability of a fishery rather than achieving triple-bottom-line outcomes. The PNA case study again illustrates how a broader set of policies can be implemented to **achieve socio-economic benefits beyond the scope of certifications**, such as through their catch retention requirement, ensuring that tuna catches that would otherwise be discarded at sea are instead landed or transshipped to meet local food security objectives.

While there remain challenges associated with management of the PNA fishery, including limitations in monitoring and enforcement that lead to violations of the agreement (Yeeting et al. 2018), the creation of the PNA scheme has nonetheless yielded undeniable environmental and socio-economic benefits for the purse seine fishery and for Pacific Island peoples. The stock status of these commercial tuna species in the WCPO, for instance, is one of the most sustainable on the planet (Brouwer et al. 2018, ISSF 2023). The revenues generated from the purse seine industry for the nine participating island nations have also

increased from US$60 million in 2010 to close to US$500 million in 2018 (PNA 2019). The financial in-flows, derived primarily from daily access fees levied on vessels who wish to fish PNA waters, provide a **long-term financing mechanism** to fund the regional JI scheme. The PNA management regime was also designed to enhance the **climate resilience** of member countries through the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS) trading mechanism (Aqorau et al. 2018). The latter array of benefits illustrates the success of PNA members in integrating effective governance systems, together with market-based approaches within a politically and ecologically defined jurisdiction, to achieve holistic improvements (Kittinger et al. 2021).

1.2 Aquaculture:

A JI for shrimp aquaculture is currently being developed in Banyuwangi, East Java, Indonesia. The initiative focuses on enabling shrimp farms across the region to improve shrimp farm performance to match international environmental and social standards. Numerous aquaculture farms occupy multiple watersheds in the project region, resulting in these farms being ecologically connected through shared water resources and dependent on a range of ecosystem services. Disease outbreaks, pollution problems, and other unsustainable practices represent shared threats that require farmers to work together to reduce risks. A JI is currently underway in this area to incentivize the adoption of responsible practices through a zonal management approach, implemented collaboratively by producers, government, supply chain companies, universities, and nonprofit organizations (Kittinger et al. 2021).



The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO 2021) also highlights the example of Estero Real Delta in Nicaragua, a water body in which juvenile wild-caught shrimp harvesting and local farmed shrimp operations are engaged in holistic interventions around alternative livelihoods to improve economic and environmental outcomes of the farmed shrimp sector.

International market actors are also advancing significant commitments to support the development of these JIs. In 2021, the UK supermarket chain Tesco introduced a new "Seascape" sourcing approach, a similar concept to JI, to marine sustainability, aiming to manage whole marine ecosystems in a healthy, productive way. Through this new approach to tuna sourcing, developed in partnership with WWF, Tesco will work with suppliers and others across the industry to implement a road map to transition sourcing to only fisheries with an EBM approach by 2030 (Seafood Source, March 2021).

Despite these successes, the JI concept is still nascent for fisheries and aquaculture production systems, and there is need for greater clarity around the key elements of successful JIs for seafood. Guidance for practitioners or companies is also needed to clarify what makes JIs for fisheries and aquaculture impactful and credible and how to measure progress. For these

initiatives to become more mainstream, it is critical to define what a credible JI for seafood should encompass to help ensure the greatest impact and long-term viability.

Elements of Successful Jurisdictional Initiatives

As summarized in Figure 1, JIs utilize policy- and market-based strategies at relevant political and ecological scales to achieve social, economic, and environmental objectives in a seafood production system. In addition, these initiatives are locally driven and locally defined through multistakeholder forums, providing an opportunity to improve inclusivity and democratize planning and management. This allows for engagement of smallholders who may not participate in certification due to cost and capacity constraints. The latter considerations, as well as other key elements needed for JIs to be successful and credible, are summarized below (Figure 2). NGO partners can help other stakeholders determine which elements should apply within a specific JI.

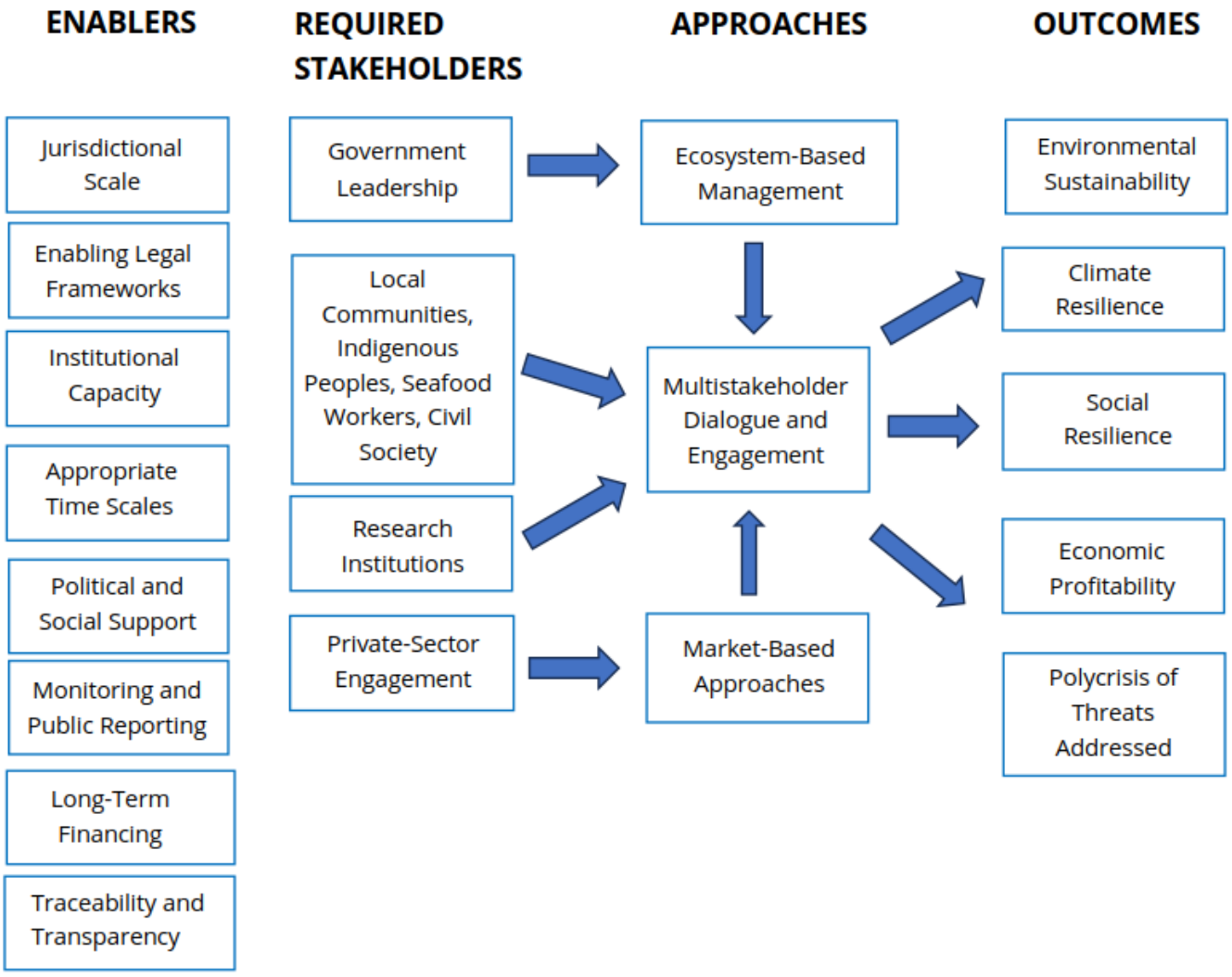


Figure 2. Elements of successful jurisdictional initiatives for seafood.

Enablers:

- **Jurisdictional Scale:** JIs oftentimes occur at different scales than traditional CRI efforts. The appropriate political and ecological scale of a JI should be determined by the highest-level political jurisdiction that is needed to address the key sustainability challenges (environmental, social, economic) identified.
- **Enabling Legal Frameworks:** An enabling framework of laws, conventions, regulations, and policies exists, or can be developed, at the appropriate scale to facilitate the design and implementation of JIs.
- **Institutional Capacity:** Adequate institutional frameworks and capacity are present, including personnel, infrastructure, research, and equipment, to make the relevant governance structures (governmental, commercial, and civil) work effectively and efficiently.
- **Appropriate Timescales:** Timescales of successful JIs and ecosystem approaches to fisheries (EAF)/aquaculture (EAA) often range from eight to 20 years (Brugère et al., 2019). This is due to the focus on policy change, participatory and multistakeholder processes (MSPs), and ecosystem-level outcomes reliant on collective impact. The complexity and duration of JIs require sustained engagement and investment to achieve systemic change; therefore, local, and global expectations across all types of stakeholders need to be thoughtfully managed to create achievable goals and timescales and help ensure lasting results. These timescales also must be thoughtfully considered when discussing recognition, claims, and incentives.
- **Political and Social Support, Including Local Community Engagement:** Resilient processes are needed in the design of the initiative to ensure broad political support across levels of government (local, sub-national, national) and strong shared ownership by the private sector and civil society. This will help safeguard the initiative against political change. A strong narrative that articulates the initiative's goals, needs, and early successes is crucial to building support across stakeholders. Engagement with all who may be impacted, including IPs and local communities, is critical.
- **Monitoring and Public Reporting:** A public, multistakeholder reporting framework for communicating accessible information on a regular basis about outcomes achieved, key partners who contributed, and future actions to be taken is key for transparent dialogue. The latter will include a set of metrics to enable regular assessment of improvements against impact outcomes on a jurisdictional scale (beyond the individual entity, farm, or supply chain level).
- **Long-Term Financing:** A long-term financing strategy to cover the multimillion-dollar cost is essential. Early identification of various types of long-term financing models is needed to support and sustain a JI at its various stages. Nearly all JIs rely on a blended finance approach. Terrestrial JI implementers have noted that cost estimates for JIs are nearly impossible to make, as these initiatives vary greatly depending on the scope and approach. Landscape Finance Lab, an organization who supports practitioners in structuring and launching landscape-scale initiatives, such as JIs, estimates approximately US$2.5 million per landscape over five years to cover their costs for capacity-building, baseline studies, technical assistance, and seed funding for feasibility studies. This cost estimate is only for

Landscape Finance Lab's support; additional coordination, resource mapping, etc., across the entire JI requires additional support.

- **Traceability and Transparency:** A set of metrics to enable regular assessment of product traceability. (See *Section 1.8: Traceability and Transparency* for additional information.)
- **Public-Private Collaboration:** Public-private collaboration is needed to develop and support necessary research for development and monitoring of metrics, generation of appropriate communication, and innovation.

Required Stakeholders:

- **Government Leadership:** Leadership from government is critical, and staff engagement at the sub-national level is often useful, supported by national-level commitments or initiatives. To ensure durable change, it is important to obtain political commitment and leadership of the initiative across various levels of government (local to national). Successful JIs often have sub-national implementation plans linked to national policy initiatives and embed the work in government operations. In some situations, other partners may be the initial driving force who bring government to the table. But to have a successful JI, the government needs to participate.
- **Local Communities, Indigenous Peoples, Seafood Workers, Civil Society:** It is important that local communities and IPs are engaged in the scoping and co-design to ensure that their rights are upheld, and their needs are heard. On-the-ground coordination and implementing partner(s) are needed to support management of the JI and its activities, including coordination of a multistakeholder entity.
- **Research Institutions:** Research institutions conduct the scientific research necessary to help inform management decisions. These institutions also can play an important role in sharing information and connecting with local communities to help ensure that local needs are addressed, and decisions are made from a common understanding among stakeholder groups.
- **Private-Sector Engagement:** Long-term commitments of private-sector actors throughout the supply chain (e.g., from producers to processors to retailers) are crucial for project success, given the dominant role the market plays in driving change in the seafood sector. Some actors may join the effort informally to engage with regional suppliers and reduce risks, while others may seek more formal involvement.

Approaches:

- **Ecosystem-Based Management:** JIs aim to achieve an adaptive, ecosystem-based, and climate-resilient approach to management. While a single industry and its stakeholders may not have the ability to achieve EBM alone, a JI will engage holistic levers and other important actors needed to ultimately achieve EBM. For additional information about the EAF, please reference the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) e-learning academy, including guidance for policy-makers, NGOs, and other practitioners about why, when, and how to use the EAF-Implementation Monitoring Tool (EAF-IMT) (FAO 2010; FAO 2022).
- **Multistakeholder Dialogue and Engagement:** Success depends on robust and inclusive stakeholder dialogue and engagement during scoping, design, and implementation. Stakeholder interests should be sufficiently aligned to develop shared goals. To ensure

success, we recommend that the main parties involved in the initiative document the degree of engagement and buy-in by different stakeholders, such as by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that defines the specific roles and responsibilities of each entity so that expectations are clear from the outset about the objectives and the role that each group plays. For additional guidance, see the FAO's recent guidance on how to design and secure multistakeholder collaboration to address environmental, social, and economic issues in food systems (FAO 2023).

- **Market-Based Approaches:** Market-based approaches comprise a wide array of strategies focused on generating incentives along the supply chain that favor sustainability (Jacquet et al. 2009, Sutton 1998, Murphy E.L., et al. 2021). The latter approaches are traditionally driven by the private sector and focus on encouraging sustainable behavior through market signals. Certification is a prominent example that has effectively promoted fishery sustainability due to its inclusion in the sourcing requirements of large retailers in Europe and North America.

Outcomes:

- **Environmental Sustainability, Including Ecosystem, Climate, and Biodiversity Resilience:** Goals to secure sustainable resource use through the application of EBM. As a result, JIs also seek to manage, restore, and/or protect critical habitats, threatened species, and biodiversity by addressing cumulative impacts, as well as to increase ecosystem and climate resilience.
- **Social Resilience:** Goals to help address a variety of social issues, including equity, community well-being, human and labor rights, safe and decent working conditions, and local (including Indigenous) community rights (including access rights) and engagement.
- **Economic Profitability:** Goals to help enhance the economic performance of a seafood production system, including by maximizing biological productivity, enhancing operational efficiency, and/or increasing market value (Holmes et al. 2014). Coupled with equity and inclusivity goals, economic profitability should be inclusive of local fishers, workers, and suppliers, enhancing worker and community well-being throughout the supply chain.
- **Polycrisis of Threats Addressed:** A JI aims to address multiple risks in fisheries and aquaculture that would otherwise lead to compounding negative impacts.

Claims made by JI stakeholders as a whole and/or individual participating entities should be appropriate to the phase of the initiative as well as verifiable. Credible and robust verification of monitoring, evaluation, and progress against goals is critical for ensuring the impact of the initiative's activities. (See *Section 1.6 Claims* and *Section 1.7: Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification* for additional information.)

1.2 When to Implement Jurisdictional Initiatives Versus Other Approaches

Certifications, Ratings, and Improvement (CRI) Projects Versus Jurisdictional Initiatives

A common question that arises is when to implement a JI compared to other traditional certification or improvement project pathways[1] for fisheries and aquaculture production systems. We recommend developing a JI if stakeholders desire to increase the resilience of the ecosystem or tackle more systemic social and environmental drivers rather than focusing solely on the sustainability of a single fishery, farm/group of related farms, or supply chain. This would mean tackling issues that are not often or not fully addressed in established CRI efforts, such as ecosystem-level biodiversity, climate resilience, regional social issues (such as lack of decent work or equity), and industry/cross-industry cumulative impacts. For examples of when and how to implement a seafood JI, please refer to *Table 4. Case studies illustrating different ways in which jurisdictional initiatives for wild-caught tuna have been initiated* within Section 2.

Seafood JIs are complementary to CRI efforts and may occur before, during, or after application of other mature and credible market-based tools, depending on political will and economic conditions. A JI may help address risks around the continued effectiveness of traditional CRI efforts, such as lack of government engagement at all levels, or increase the leverage for improvement against jurisdictional-level environmental, social, and economic issues. JIs may also help expand the scope of certifications already present within a supply chain by integrating additional stakeholders (e.g., farms, fishing vessels, and/or communities).

Often, CRI approaches ensure that a company's seafood sourcing policies and practices address specific criteria within CRI standards, which enables seafood products to meet short-term sustainability goals, supports external communication to consumers, and bolsters company reputations. The combination of CRI efforts and JIs can help demonstrate that seafood suppliers and buyers care about *both* the immediate impacts of seafood production and the long-term sustainability of seafood supply chains, decent work, and the inclusiveness of local communities and IPs in setting goals and decision-making.

We recommend implementing JIs when there is strong commitment by a government to drive holistic improvements across an entire seafood production geography over which they have political jurisdiction. JIs should also be prioritized when the policy objectives extend beyond sustainable resource extraction and instead focus on application of EBM to manage, restore, and/or protect critical habitats, threatened species, and biodiversity across the ecological range of the seafood commodities of interest. JIs should also be prioritized when there is a need to address

[1] Examples of certification schemes include Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), Best Aquaculture Practices (ASC), Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard, and Fair Trade USA. Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch rating system and fishery improvement projects (FIPs) and aquaculture improvement projects (AIPs) are examples of ratings and improvement schemes.

cumulative impacts on ecosystems, which will require robust and inclusive multistakeholder dialogue and collaboration with a range of stakeholders to align goals and incentives among government, market, and producer actors, as well as with local communities and IPs. A recent report commissioned by the ISEAL Alliance highlights when to pursue individual or collaborative improvement strategies, including value-chain and systemic strategies, which can also be used to decide when to implement JIs. (See *Step 1: Scoping* in Section 2 for additional information.)

Certification systems can play an important role in seafood JIs. In collaboration with local JI conveners, certification systems can (ISEAL 2017):

- help shape sustainability objectives/targets at the jurisdictional level
- help adapt or develop new credible verification or monitoring methods for the initiative
- help align on and achieve common goals (e.g., advancing toward Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs))
- enable dialogue across producers and existing certificate holders on connectivity and other issues beyond individual production units (cumulative impacts)
- adapt their tools, guidance, and expertise for capacity-building to fit specific local needs
- identify laggards and high performers, enabling the use of financial incentives at site level to incentivize continuous improvement within the jurisdiction
- strengthen confidence and risk management for investors
- provide incentive for suppliers and end buyers to engage

In addition to certification having a role in JIs, the opposite is also true—JIs can be an avenue for advancing certifications. For example, the Fiji JI (referenced in *Table 4. Case studies illustrating different ways in which jurisdictional initiatives for wild-caught tuna have been initiated* within Section 2) is working toward MSC recertification for the tuna fisheries.

Table 1. Differences between certification, ratings, and improvement (CRI) efforts and jurisdictional initiatives (JIs) (adapted from CI 2019)

Certifications, Ratings, Improvement Efforts	Jurisdictional Initiatives
Useful tools to drive improvements in individual fisheries and aquaculture farms.	Approach to drive holistic improvements across an entire seafood production geography (multiple fisheries/farms) as determined by the ecological range of one or two key species of focus. To address cumulative impacts, JIs may need to include other blue economy sectors to address key drivers of ecosystem degradation. For example, if the species of focus is impacted by deep-sea mining, the JI would need to include interventions that address deep-sea mining impacts. Farmed shrimp JIs may need to include activities around mangrove protection/restoration.
Depending upon the unit of assessment, there may be a mismatch between the scale of management and the scale of ecological processes being managed. This means that: • For fisheries certification, the geographical area may not cover the complete range of the species across its life cycle (e.g., larval to juvenile to adult). • Spatial interactions key to sustainability may not be considered (e.g., among interdependent fisheries or multiple fleets harvesting a single stock, or aquaculture farms in a watershed that rely on shared resources). • Ecological criteria are written to maintain individual stock health and may fail to consider the entirety of ecosystem services that may be impacted by fishing or aquaculture production. • May address farm and vessel practices and resource use efficiencies but may not protect all trophic interactions and key habitat functions.	Applied at the appropriate ecosystem level and political boundary needed to address sustainability challenges appropriately. This means that: • For fisheries, the defined territory within the JI can match the full range of the target species across its life cycle. For tuna and other highly migratory species that span across entire ocean basins, JIs can begin within more discrete politically relevant production areas (i.e., one–two national exclusive economic zones (EEZs)). Scaling pathways should be designed however to ensure that the national-scale interventions can eventually be extended to the broader production area that matches the ecological distribution of the target species. (See Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Case Study in Box 1.) • By focusing on a defined production geography, JIs may improve coordination among multiple economic sectors or entities that overlap or interact with one another (Boyd et al. 2018, CI, 2018). For example, terrestrial JIs focused on preventing deforestation of regional forests by working

	to coordinate multiple producers and production types (Stickler et al. 2020). • JIs are more likely to recognize and invest in conservation measures that support the full suite of ecosystem functions in that geography. • JIs are more likely to recognize and address key habitat functions and trophic interactions. • JIs are more likely to include biosecurity risks that can include risks to human health and/or the natural environment/wildlife.
Typically, does not require a holistic approach to address systemic issues, including those that extend beyond environmental sustainability, such as social responsibility. Some aquaculture CRIs include area-based criteria, including social engagement, but the practice remains limited.	Address broader policy/systemic issues, including areas not currently required under CRI, such as • ecosystem-based approach/cumulative impacts • biodiversity focus • social equity/inclusivity • building blocks for climate resilience
Depending upon the unit of certification and stakeholders involved, may not adequately/equally include the interests and rights of smallholders, Indigenous peoples (IPs), and local communities.	Locally driven and locally defined through multistakeholder forum. JIs allow for engagement of smallholders who may not participate in certification due to cost and capacity constraints.
Certification provides a certain level of traceability, assurance, and verification (ratings and improvements do not), and as such, participants may be able to make performance claims shortly after certification.	Participants likely cannot make performance claims until many years into the project, but engagement can reduce risks and raise opportunities for joint problem-solving among sectors, including government, fishers, farmers, and market/supply chain actors.

Some of the similarities and differences between JIs and CRIs are illustrated below, including a comparison to the objectives and stakeholders for MPAs (Figure 3).

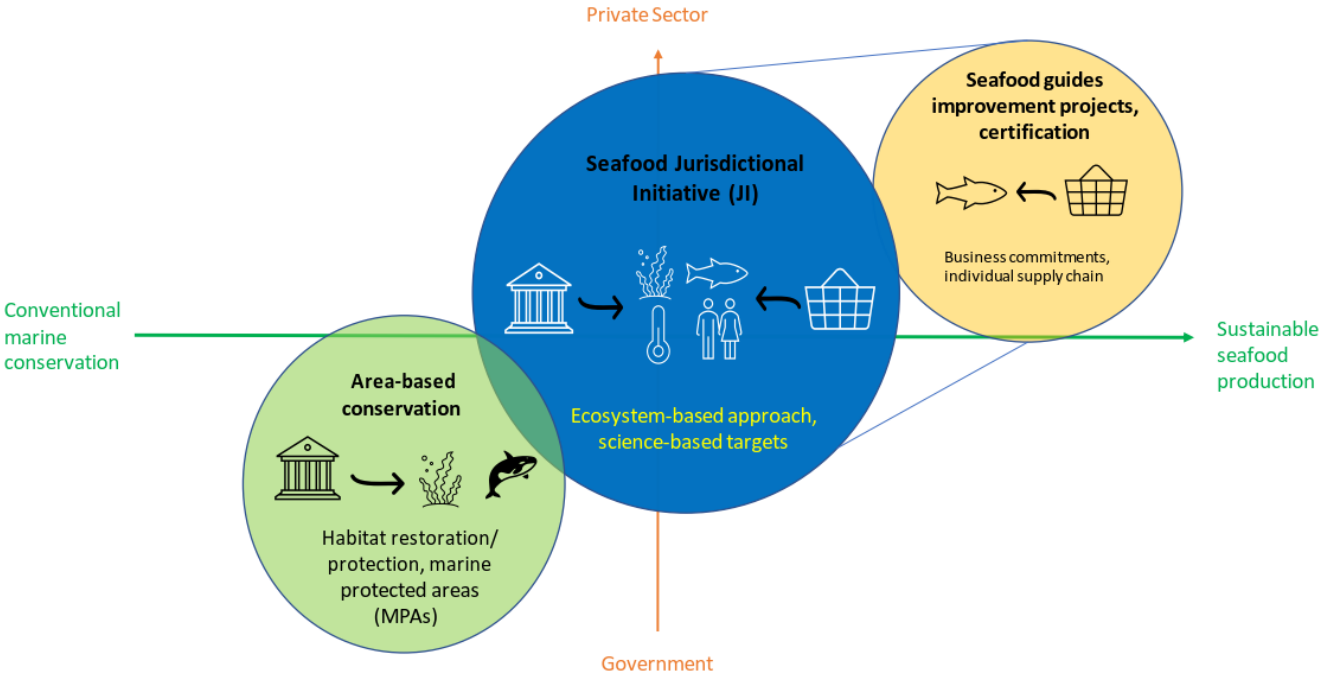


Figure 3. Comparison of objectives (green x-axis) and stakeholder participation (orange y-axis) in MPAs, JIs, and certification, ratings, and improvement (CRI) projects. Note the partial overlap of the circles to indicate that JIs can incorporate CRI efforts and PAs as part of a holistic seafood production improvement strategy.

Seascapes Versus Jurisdictional Initiatives

Recent debate has emerged around the similarities and differences between seascapes and JIs. The first difficulty in contrasting these two approaches centers on the multiple definitions for the term **seascape** and the way in which they have historically been implemented by different groups:

- Working Land and Seascapes: Working seascapes include coastlines, near- and offshore waters, estuaries, and open ocean, all of which have been transformed by humans for millennia. Working seascapes provide livelihoods, food security, and cultural identity to millions globally through wild-caught fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, recreation, and infrastructure (Deichmann et al. 2019).
- WWF: We define a seascape as a large, geographically bound area that supports integrated management of marine resources to conserve ecosystems that benefit the planet, people, prosperity, and peace. Our seascapes include both protected areas—created primarily to achieve conservation outcomes—and other effective area-based conservation measures—which deliver conservation of biodiversity regardless of their primary management objectives. Species management is also a critical piece of area-based conservation. Within each seascape, we identify target species that include species on which people rely for food and income and species critical to ecosystem health (WWF 2023).
- Conservation International (CI): Seascapes are large, multiple-use marine areas, defined scientifically and strategically, in which government authorities, private organizations, and

other stakeholders cooperate to conserve the diversity and abundance of marine life and promote human well-being (Murphy S.E., et al. 2021).

- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN): Where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural, and scenic value and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated values.
- Tesco: The UK retailer Tesco advocates for a Seascape approach (a similar concept to JI that mirrors Tesco's landscape approach on their deforestation-free commodities commitment) to marine sustainability, which is designed to ensure whole marine ecosystems are maintained in a healthy and productive way (Tesco 2021). The retailer will first adopt the Seascape approach for its tuna sourcing and has set out a road map to transition to ecosystem-based fisheries management by 2030 with an interim target of 100% MSC certification across its tuna ranges by 2025. The approach also includes the following key asks:
    - Product is sourced from a marine environment in which the number of breeding fish present is at least 40% of the number in the unfished populations, a key component of maintaining healthy marine ecosystems.
    - Fishing mortality levels are required to be kept below a certain level, best-practice bycatch mitigation is implemented, and all fisheries put 100% non-retention policies in place and promote best-practice fish handling and monitoring on board fishing vessels.
    - Robust management is to be put in place, including precautionary harvest control rules or harvest strategies, management of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and integration of MPAs.

In some cases, JIs and Seascape approaches can be analogous; Murphy, S.E., et al., 2021, identify nine essential elements of seascapes, which are also included within the elements of successful JIs for seafood (Figure 2). Both approaches aim to engage and benefit multiple stakeholders and rightsholders and stress the importance of adopting EBM to achieve threatened species recovery and human well-being. Similarly, terminology and conceptual overlap with freshwater basin management/relevant water body concepts and freshwater ecosystem aquaculture and fishing JIs occur and will continue to evolve as the frameworks develop further.

With that said, there have been some tangible differences in how some seascapes have been implemented compared with JIs. For instance, some of the seascapes described by Murphy, S.E., et al., 2021, were not established in key seafood commodity-producing regions but rather in biodiversity-rich areas to prioritize conservation and community-level human well-being as a primary objective. The latter divergence in objective prioritization has implications for the types of stakeholders who lead each of the approaches (private-sector engagement: commercial/industrial sector versus small-scale/artisanal fishers), as well as the types of financing mechanisms (i.e., commercial sourcing agreements versus tourism fees, grants, endowments, etc.) and management strategies that are employed to achieve the stated objectives (i.e., fisheries management versus MPAs).

Despite these occasional differences, both Seascapes and JIs seek to balance conservation with economic and social benefits through spatial planning with rules governing what activities are permitted where. In cases when those objectives overlap, a Seascape can be a JI.

1.3 Why Launch a Jurisdictional Initiative?

Over one-third of the world's commercial fish stocks are at biologically unsustainable levels, aquaculture is growing to meet global demand for seafood, two planetary boundaries are at high risk of being surpassed (climate change and biosphere integrity, including genetic diversity), and impacts from climate change are growing. This demonstrates a clear need to move beyond mature market-based tools, such as CRI models, toward JIs that aim to address marine and freshwater health in a spatially meaningful and holistic way, increasing biodiversity, climate change resilience, and equity and democratization of often marginalized local communities and IPs.

Ecological Considerations

- There is a need to address seafood sustainability issues at an appropriate political and ecological scale that ensures the long-term sustainability of seafood resources and of the underlying ecosystems upon which they depend. Traditional certification and ratings schemes tend to function on a fleet-by-fleet or individual farm basis. While this can address some important issues, such as farm practices and farm resource use, it can also present key challenges around "leakage" and "free riding." "Bad actors" can operate in the same area as a certified fishery or farm if critical issues are not addressed at a system-wide level. Seafood JIs seek to address this by incorporating as many actors as possible at the relevant jurisdictional scale.
- Seafood JIs also seek to address other environmental issues that impact the health and resilience of the ecosystem and are not explicitly accounted for in traditional CRI efforts, such as climate change impacts on production and associated ecosystems, cumulative environmental impacts in a region, and ecosystem-level biodiversity loss.

Social Considerations

- Because traditional CRI efforts were built with a focus on environmental sustainability, these approaches do not fully incorporate social responsibility considerations. Although social certifications for the seafood sector have recently been developed, these schemes typically focus on decent and legal work and do not address all six categories of human rights: civil, political, economic, cultural, social, and collective.
- In addition, traditional CRI efforts often focus on a specific supply chain or fishery/farming operation, limiting larger regional or national mitigation, and/or remediation efforts with respect to human and labor rights violations.
- JIs are locally driven and locally defined through a multistakeholder forum, providing an opportunity to improve inclusivity of IPs and local communities and democratize planning and management. This also allows for potential engagement of smallholders who often do

not participate in certification due to cost, capacity constraints, and geographic spread. Via focusing on root causes, appropriate geographic and political scales, and engagement of intentional stakeholder dialogue throughout all steps of a JI, JIs can support critical bridges among local and Indigenous communities, seafood buyers, and policy-makers that often do not occur in traditional CRI approaches.

Political Considerations

- The co-development of a seafood JI with local stakeholders creates an opportunity for regional, national, and sub-national political priorities to be incorporated within the improvement framework to catalyze more durable change. While a seafood JI will be focused on a particular commodity, including its local stakeholders and relevant governance structure, it will also need to address and consider other users/industries and their stakeholders and regulatory frameworks to drive systemic changes.
- While JIs are commodity-focused, they may aid government entities seeking to improve adherence to national and/or international laws and conventions. By focusing on root-cause analyses and building direct communication between producers and policy-makers, JIs can help shape or improve local and regional policies that can help drive larger systemic change.

Economic Considerations

- Certification and improvement efforts often put the onus on fishers, farmers, workers, or companies to invest in meeting the performance standards, which can be especially difficult and expensive for small-scale fishers and farmers. Multistakeholder efforts, such as JIs, provide opportunities to share costs across the public and private sectors and potentially financial institutions. Through blending of financial sources, risk profiles in the different components of a JI can be matched with appropriate risk appetites of the various financing sources.

Although JIs use a robust multistakeholder approach and aim to establish outcomes that are desirable to all, it is likely that there will be trade-offs, given the competing interests within the jurisdiction.

Figure 4 presents a high-level, generic Theory of Change for JIs for the seafood sector. Each JI should develop its own specific, more detailed theory of change to identify the underlying assumptions and risks to ensure the approach will contribute to the desired outcomes, and to support planning, implementation, and evaluation of the specific initiative.

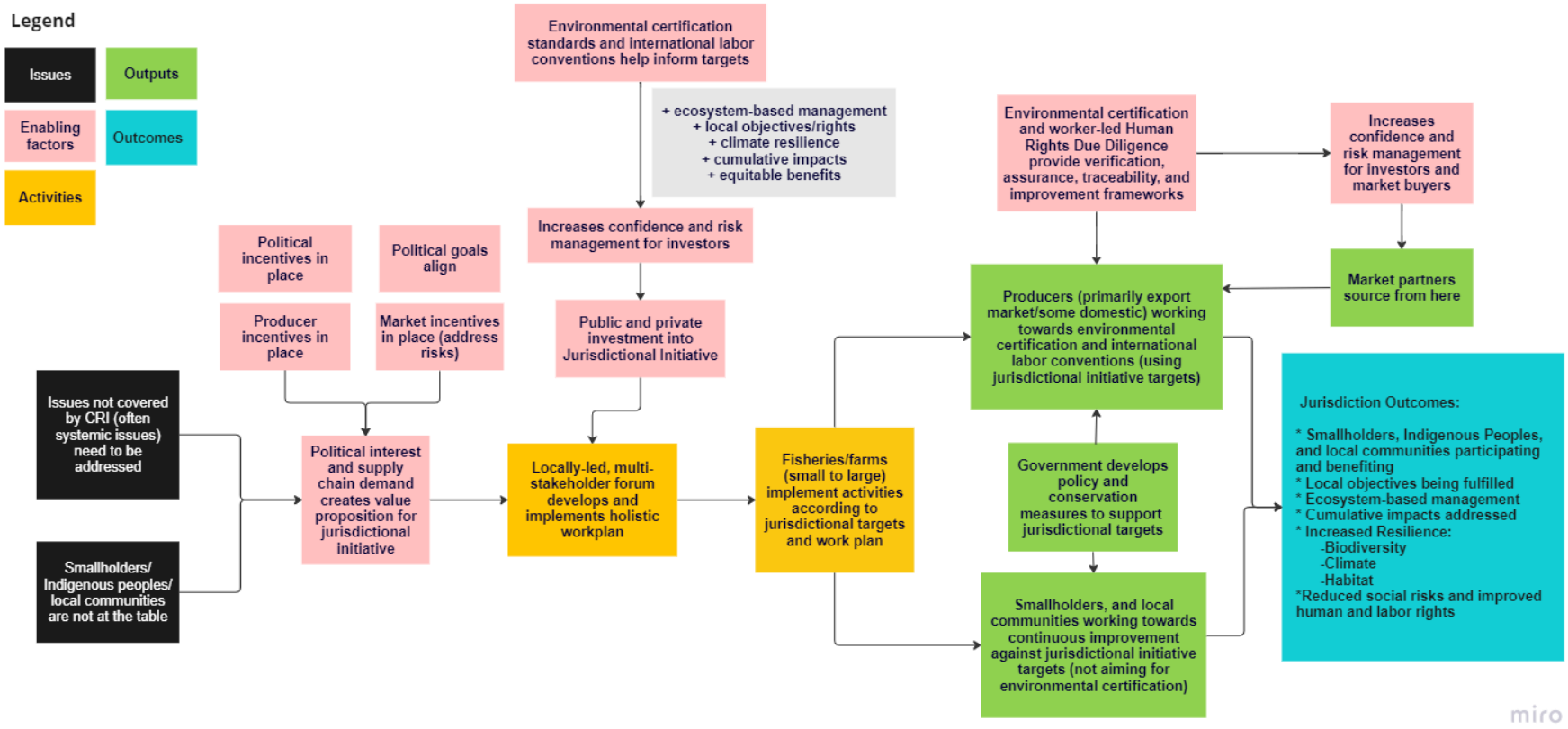


Figure 4. Generic Theory of Change for jurisdictional initiatives (JIs) for the seafood sector.

1.4 Who Benefits From a Jurisdictional Initiative?

JIs have the capacity to benefit stakeholders throughout a jurisdiction, including producers, government, supply chain companies, local communities, and IPs.

Producers

- Suppliers and end buyers are increasingly committed to preferentially sourcing from and investing in the development of initiatives at the jurisdictional level that address risks to their business, potentially providing a market incentive for producers to engage in JIs (e.g., higher, or fairer prices for product and/or access to new buyers, maintaining sourcing contracts).
- For small-scale fishers and farmers, JIs can offer the opportunity to organize into a more cohesive collective, better leveraging their voices to drive change and reach end buyers.
- Seafood JIs provide a process for creating a common, long-term vision and the promotion of dialogue as a mechanism to resolve disputes and reach agreements regarding the management of natural resources on a larger scale.
- In some regions, fishers and farmers may seek stronger, science-based management on an ecosystem level because they see risks to their livelihoods/industry from factors such as declines in marine fisheries and marine wildlife, poor water quality, erosion from habitat loss, and mortality from unmanaged disease that could be better addressed by improvements in policy and enforcement. Engagement in a seafood JI may thereby help ensure sustainable livelihoods.
- Across the world, poor aquaculture practices and overfishing have increasingly become public opinion concerns, in some places even threatening continued social license to operate. A seafood JI can offer additional opportunities for industry leaders to engage in credible and meaningful efforts to demonstrate industry-wide progress in an ecosystem. They also offer an approach to raising the minimum bar, which may reduce overall industry reputational risks exacerbated by sometimes highly visible bad actors.
- Some JIs may be able to provide more equitable distribution of economic benefits throughout the supply chain (i.e., higher product prices for producers and/or access to new markets) and ensure fishers, farmers, and workers are not bearing the cost of improvements—something that has not often been seen in traditional CRI efforts.
- JIs incorporate both environmental and social considerations (such as decent work, human rights, and community well-being). Historically, traditional CRI efforts have focused on one or the other or both, but in a limited way.

Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples

- JIs provide local communities and IPs with a platform to engage and eventually secure improved socio-economic equity, continued dialogue with policy-makers and private actors, and potential access to financing through public-private partnerships. Ensuring that IPs and local communities are empowered to have full and equitable participation is

critically important, especially as they are often at a disadvantage in negotiations with vested interests or multinational entities. Prioritization of local voices, access to participation, and incorporation of local stakeholder needs are critical to the success of JIs.
- JIs provide an opportunity to improve inclusivity and democratize planning and management of resources via intentional stakeholder-driven engagement built around cultural and community needs, with the goal of improving equity and community well-being.

Governments

- JIs can address risks from climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, and unethical human rights and labor practices that threaten productivity within a sourcing region, helping secure the long-term health of marine and aquatic resources and thus increasing the health and resilience of national fisheries and aquaculture production. This, in turn, supports national and local governments to deliver national- and international-level commitments against conventions, such as the Convention of Biodiversity (CBD) and the Paris Agreement on climate change.
- Stability of nationally important food products for domestic consumption and export will be increased, protecting the economic security and livelihoods of constituents.
- Governments can build a reputation as ones who manage their ocean and aquatic resources in ways that improve biodiversity, increase climate resilience, and protect the rights of fishers, farmers, and local communities.
- JIs provide governments with the opportunity to align political agendas across different ministries and departments so that obstacles are addressed, and more collective momentum is created across a shared vision (UNDP 2019). In addition, governments can use the opportunity to align with international conventions and standards.
- Having a stronger shared vision and a clearer action plan for sustainable seafood production provides a better context for attracting increased investment and support (across companies and international donors) for sector development (UNDP 2019).
- JIs provide a platform for government authorities to hear and support the needs of local communities.

Suppliers and End Buyers

- JIs can address risks from climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, and unethical human rights and labor practices that threaten productivity within a sourcing region, helping secure the long-term health of marine resources, thus stabilizing supply and leading to a more resilient value chain.
- The strong emphasis on multistakeholder engagement across the jurisdiction and alignment with government priorities helps reduce potential local community and operational risks and ensure equity.

- Companies will benefit from stronger legal and regulatory frameworks for the seafood sector, helping businesses deliver on their sustainability commitments and reduce risks related to security of supply and reputation (UNDP 2019).
- Seafood JIs offer a framework to contribute meaningfully to restoration, protection, and sustainable production that can address these larger, systemic challenges while simultaneously supporting wider corporate social responsibility and sustainability targets.
- JIs address sustainability challenges beyond individual supply chains to the broader sourcing region, such as climate change and biodiversity loss, meaningfully contributing to sustainable production, protection, and restoration of a production region, for example by addressing cumulative water quality impacts that affect farm mortality rates and, therefore, ultimately supply stability.
- Leakage issues can be reduced through a JI. Traditional CRI efforts may avoid or limit harm locally, but the harm may be displaced nearby or transferred to other entities rather than eliminated. Working at a jurisdictional scale may reduce leakage; however, some pressures may move to other jurisdictions. Appropriate regional, national, and/or international policies will likely be necessary to eliminate issues altogether.
- JIs can deliver a scaled version of the systems individual companies need in place to obtain certification. For example, if a certification standard requires that a company demonstrate zero bycatch from supplier vessels, a JI could develop a jurisdiction-wide system to monitor bycatch, which would obviate the need for companies to do so within their own supply chains and thus make it easier to meet certification requirements.
- Seafood JIs can help improve value-chain efficiency (including social and environmental externalities that increasingly affect bottom lines), mainly through avoided costs.
- Through multistakeholder collaboration, companies can share costs with the public sector and other private-sector partners to complete essential actions that would likely be prohibitively expensive for any individual company to complete on their own (UNDP 2019).
- When supported by robust monitoring and evaluation systems, JIs may provide companies with a way to credibly claim positive impacts as part of larger-scale improvements.

1.5 Metrics

All credible seafood JIs seeking to drive change need to have a strong monitoring framework in place, with metrics relevant to the jurisdiction that will enable stakeholders to assess progress against the initiative's targets and milestones. The most desirable results will be tied directly to performance against environmental, social, and economic outcomes at the jurisdictional level. However, given that a JI can span eight to 20 years, it is recommended to include not only outcome indicators but also pathway indicators to capture important initial steps that will lead to measurable outcomes over time, as well as process indicators that capture progress in JI development.

The appropriate metrics for a specific JI will depend on the local context but should tie to overall biodiversity, climate, social, and economic goals of the effort, including outcome goals (e.g., fish stock biomass) and pathway goals focused on better management/policies and information to support effective implementation of those policies (e.g., precautionary management, effective enforcement, national data collection systems (Table 2)).

ISEAL (2022b) describes that appropriate metrics for assessing performance improvements relative to targets should aspire to do the following:

- Measure the status or trends in a specific sustainability outcome.
- Be standardized and applied consistently to facilitate comparability of findings over time. This is also a prerequisite for being able to aggregate data from multiple actors in a jurisdiction.
- Align with existing Seascape or jurisdictional metrics, linking the monitoring with that of the states and municipalities within the Seascape or jurisdiction.
- Be sensitive enough to detect relevant changes from a baseline state.
- Be consistent with SMART guidelines (i.e., specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) so they can be objectively measured.
- Be cost-efficient and not overly complex, recognizing that in some cases, more costly or specialized data might provide more reliable results.
- Be defined in quantitative terms but supplemented by qualitative information when appropriate (e.g., for social issues like land conflict or forced labor).

It is important to consider the credibility and scope of potential metrics for tracking progress against identified indicators. While the best outcome and pathway metrics for a specific JI will depend on the local context, when identifying appropriate metrics, one should also consider factors such as the frequency of external assessments that may be relied upon and/or the funding and capacity available within a project to conduct regular monitoring. In addition, because fishery and aquaculture production frequently occur within data-deficient systems and existing indices and metrics often are incomplete or come with caveats, it is critical to carefully define and communicate what is truly captured by the metrics identified for the JI.

Table 2 recommends minimum JI components to be measured. JIs seek to drive improvement in four main areas: biodiversity, climate, social, and economic. Specific components under each area, which will vary depending on whether the JI is developed for fisheries or aquaculture as well as the local context, are suggested in Table 2. For each component, it is important to consider not only the environmental, social, or economic outcomes desired but also the legal frameworks/policies and information systems that support achieving the outcomes. In this way, stakeholders can strive to design and implement management and information systems that will support the achievement of good outcomes in perpetuity.

A set of core metrics is desirable for all seafood JIs (to mirror terrestrial JIs, which are further advanced) that would ensure common goals across JIs as well as high ambition. The seafood community should develop these core metrics jointly through a process that includes engagement with local practitioners, governments, NGOs, and seafood companies. Once this process takes

place and core metrics are developed, the JI Guidance will be updated accordingly. In the meantime, it is recommended that leading CRI resources, such as the MSC and ASC standards, be used as a minimum set of performance indicators that a JI should strive to achieve at the relevant political and ecosystem scale. Stakeholders can also decide to target the existing standards at a higher level of ambition that would be required for certification and at the jurisdictional scale.

Table 3 includes suggested resources to consult when setting location- and issue-specific metrics for a JI. This resource list is not exhaustive but includes some of the most credible and commonly used tools for setting goals against, measuring, and monitoring biodiversity, climate, social, and economic outcomes in fisheries and aquaculture.

At the outset of a JI, it is critically important to establish a credible baseline of data for the metrics that will be tracked throughout the duration of the initiative. This baseline data collection may be costly and may not have full support from those stakeholders who are not yet committed to the JI; therefore, it is important early on to engage stakeholders and develop a fundraising plan.

Sufficient improvement against the metrics outlined in Table 2 is likely to take several years. For that reason, the JI stakeholder group should also identify process metrics to track development of the JI structure and investment required to lead toward successful improvement activities. Individual seafood JIs can reference the steps of a JI (outlined in Figure 5) to develop their own process metrics. Process metrics will be used to determine process claims as outlined in Section 1.6.

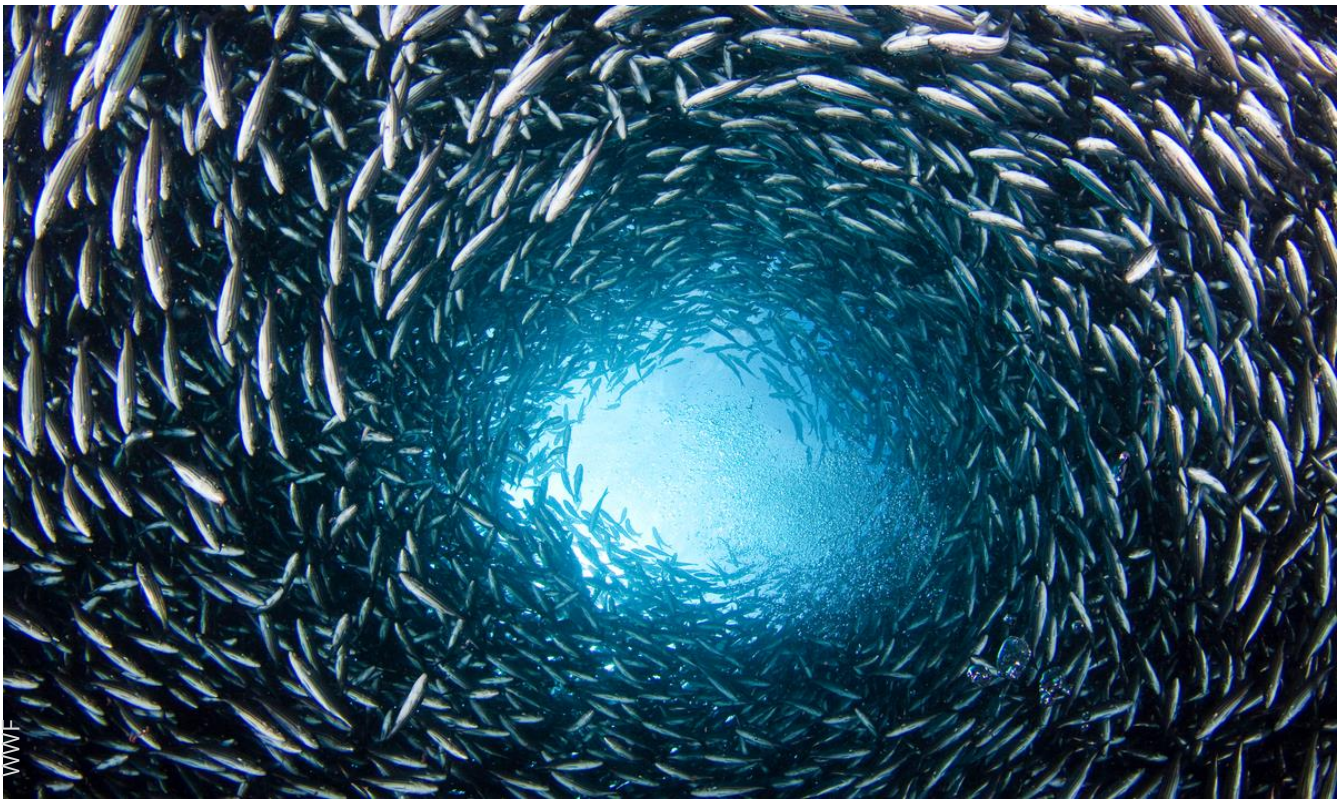


Table 2. Suggested minimum jurisdictional initiative (JI) components. For each component, JI implementers should consider metrics based on outcomes (current status), effective legal frameworks and policies to ensure good outcomes, and the availability, quality, and frequency of information to support effective management and monitoring.

JI Category	Component	Metric Category
Biodiversity	Target fish stock/species health and abundance	Outcomes
		Legal Frameworks/Policies
		Information
	Non-target species health and abundance (including Endangered, Threatened, and Protected species; bycatch; ghost fishing)	Outcomes
		Legal Frameworks/Policies
		Information
	Habitat impacts	Outcomes
		Legal Frameworks/Policies
		Information
Climate	Climate-resilient fishery management	Outcomes
		Legal Frameworks/Policies
		Information
	Climate-resilient aquaculture	Outcomes
		Legal Frameworks/Policies
		Information
	Carbon emissions (fishing/transhipment/production)	Outcomes
		Legal Frameworks/Policies
		Information
Social	Human and labor rights (including civil, political, Indigenous, cultural, economic, social, access, and collective rights)	Outcomes
		Legal Frameworks/Policies
		Information
	Participation, inclusion, and informed consent in decision-making, resource planning, and management	Outcomes
		Legal Frameworks/Policies
		Information
Economic	Socio-economic benefits from fishing/aquaculture (direct and indirect)	Outcomes
		Legal Frameworks/Policies
		Information

Table 3. Suggested resources for jurisdictional initiative metrics.

Suggested Resources
Biodiversity
Ocean Health Index
MSC performance indicators
ASC performance indicators
Stock assessment databases, e.g.:
o ICES Stock Assessment Database
o NAFO Stock Assessment Database
o Australian Stock Assessment Database
o Mediterranean Stock Assessments
ISSF Best Practices reports
IUCN Red List Database
CITES Appendix I and II
Living Planet Index
Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI) Data Portal
FAO abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear guidance
FAO Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem (VME) Database
FAO benthic biodiversity indices
Clark Labs Coastal Habitat Mapping: Mangrove and Pond Aquaculture Conversion
Global Mangrove Watch
Global Fishing Watch
WTO Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes
PAS 1550
Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability
Climate
EDF Climate-Resilient Fisheries Toolkit
MSC performance indicators
ASC performance indicators
ISSF Best Practices reports
Setting Science-Based Targets in the Seafood Sector
Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Seafood Production
Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch and Dalhousie University Seafood Carbon Emissions Tool
World Economic Forum on Scope 1, 2 and 3
Social
ILO Fundamental Conventions & Rights at Work, ILO C188
Social Responsibility Assessment Tool
Seafood Stewardship Index Social Responsiblity Methodology
Worker- Driven Social Responsibility Statement of Principles
Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication
The International Bill of Human Rights
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights
ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, ILO Fundamental Conventions
ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy
PAS 1550: 2017 Code of Practice
UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
SDG Tracker
Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Peoples
Attributes of social equity in (Bennett et al. 2021)
Framework for social equity in ocean governance (Crossman et al. 2022)
Economic
Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Peoples
Attributes of social equity (Bennett et al. 2021)
Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security

1.6 Claims

JI participants may choose to become involved simply to engage with other actors around risks, risk mitigation, or problem-solving opportunities, whereas others may be driven by other incentives associated with participation. There are a variety of claims that seafood JI participants can utilize to communicate with internal and external stakeholders (ISEAL 2022b):

- process, outcome, and risk management claims about jurisdictional structures
- investment or action claims
- status and trend claims about jurisdictional progress

The following statements showcase examples of claims concerning JI **structures** (i.e., the structural elements necessary for the initiative to be effective, such as engaged stakeholders, governance, a progress framework outlining time-bound milestones, financing, and a monitoring system (ISEAL 2022b)). No single stakeholder group should claim they have achieved these outcomes on their own, given the collaborative process of JIs.

- Process: *We are co-developing a JI that will help align practices among our seafood suppliers in the Pacific Island region within the next five years.*
    - Credible process-related claims can be made once timelines and milestones have been defined, against which future progress can be measured.
- Outcome: *We have a strong foundation in place to ensure strong and deep community engagement throughout the initiative.*
    - These initiatives can make claims about the structures and governance systems they have put in place (around stakeholder engagement, governance, financing, outcomes, action plans, and monitoring), but only after they have been established.
- Risk management: *We have processes in place to manage risks of human and labor rights violations within the supply chains, and local communities are actively engaged in the initiative.*
    - Claims about managing risk tied to negative environmental, social, or economic outcomes can only be made if the risk area is a focus of the JI and the necessary structural elements are in place (e.g., governance and monitoring systems). The JI coordinator can help verify this information.

Investment or direct action in a jurisdiction aims to address sustainability challenges at a scale that is meaningful for delivering impact. However, improvements in sustainability performance at the scale of the jurisdiction can take time to transpire. Prior to those jurisdictional performance improvements being achieved, stakeholders can make claims about their investments or participation in jurisdictional actions. For seafood companies engaging in JIs, robust action claims can help support their corporate reporting and disclosure (ISEAL 2023).

ISEAL (2023) outlines the following seven core elements that jurisdictional action claims are expected to include:

1. a description of the type of jurisdictional action

2. the sustainability outcome prioritized by local stakeholders toward which the action is contributing
3. scale and duration of the action or investment, and whether it is financial or in-kind
4. geographic area where the action is occurring
5. timing and duration of the action
6. the name of the JI
7. partners with whom the action is being implemented

To the extent possible, claims should have associated objectives and measurable criteria. This helps with verification of claims.

The following is an example of an **action claim** that incorporates the core elements:

- [Company name] is contributing $X over five years to support the goals of the local communities in [insert geographic name] with [insert name of implementing partners]. Our goal is to support [insert name of the JI] to achieve its vision of [insert initiative's overall goal, including date by which goal will be achieved]. Since [X date], we have been investing in [A and B types of activities] that aim to [insert the initiative's outcome(s) that the actions contribute to] by [Y date].

Stakeholders making claims about their jurisdictional investments or actions should make the information publicly and easily accessible (e.g., on their website, in sustainability reports, or through public reporting by the JI itself).

The following showcase examples of claims concerning **performance** of the JI (ISEAL 2022b):

- Status: *Within this jurisdiction, 30% of the fish stocks are overfished.*
    - These claims state the current performance status of an issue and use actual data.
- Trend: *Within this jurisdiction, wages of local workers have increased by 15% over the past three years, aligning with living wage estimates for the region.*
    - These claims express change in performance against a baseline.

No single stakeholder group should make **attribution** claims (e.g., We are responsible for a specific performance outcome), as it is often difficult to show a direct cause-and-effect relationship, and it disregards the influence of others in achieving the outcomes (ISEAL 2022a).

Claims made by seafood companies or by producers to obtain market access will require strong traceability systems in place to ensure integrity of products across the supply chain and reduce the risk of greenwashing in some marketplaces.

It is important to note that seafood suppliers, end buyers, and other stakeholders participating in a JI should not claim premature or augmented successes. As noted previously, JIs span a significant timeline, and associated claims should appropriately

reflect the improvement journey over time. Given initiative duration, participants should expect that outcomes may not be obtained for many years (for example, improved fish stock health, given species generation times), and participants will need to focus for some time on process and engagement claims first, which highlight ongoing progress toward laying the groundwork for an effective JI.

1.7 Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification

Each seafood JI will need to develop monitoring, reporting, and verification frameworks that fit their context and follow best practices. ISEAL has developed best practice guidance for these frameworks, as detailed in this section.

Monitoring and Reporting Framework

All effective JIs will have a progress framework with impact outcomes and an action plan with time-bound targets and milestones, as well as a monitoring and reporting framework to monitor and report on processes followed (including processes to ensure inclusivity) and progress against the time-bound milestones and performance improvements within the jurisdiction. Effective JIs will also have adequate capacity to manage and analyze the data.

A credible monitoring framework allows a JI to make claims about current performance status and improvements that have been made against set goals and targets and should include the following elements:

1. A set of metrics is in place that will enable meaningful assessments of progress toward targets and milestones in the action plan.
2. Primary and secondary data sources for measuring jurisdictional performance. Primary data is collected by the JI participants themselves. Secondary data is often existing data that has been collected by another entity.
3. Data management protocols are in place to gather credibly and consistently, store, analyze, and use the collected data.

Further detail on each of these elements is provided in ISEAL 2022b.

Where appropriate, JIs should utilize existing governmental, sectoral, or other context-specific monitoring systems that are already in place.

Verification of Claims

Credible seafood JIs must have sound verification frameworks that can assess the validity of different aspects of the JIs' progress. These include validation of structural outcomes, action claims, and performance claims. Different levels of verification are required for each type of claim due to the nature of the respective claims. Verification of the performance data and of the monitoring process helps build trust in the quality and reliability of the claim.

The degree and level of independence of verification needed will depend on the claims being made, the track record of the JI, the level of transparency of the data, and the trustworthiness of the data providers. ISEAL notes the appropriate extent and independence of verification should be determined by the amount of confidence the makers and receivers of the JI claims need to have. The appropriate level of assurance will be affected by factors such as the

- type of claims being made
- importance of the environmental and/or socio-economic issues being addressed
- past performance of the JI
- transparency of the performance data
- reliability of the data sources and providers

Where verification is determined to be necessary and/or beneficial, it must evaluate both the quality and relevance of the collected data with respect to the specific performance or process claims, as well as the reliability and trustworthiness of the monitoring process. The quality of data can be reflected in the relevance, accuracy, spatial and temporal resolution, and availability of the data source.

To drive credibility of JIs, it is important to manage the expectations of seafood companies and other stakeholders about their inability to make **performance/outcome** claims for quite some time, given the long timeframe of JIs. ISEAL is leading in generating industry-oriented tools to help companies understand the need to focus first on **structural claims**, which highlight the progress in establishing the structures and systems for an effective JI, and **action claims**, which relate directly to actions companies may take to support development and progress in a JI.

Verification of Structural Claims

Verification of structural claims consists of reviewing documentation of the structures and operating systems that have been put into place. A high degree of transparency is necessary. Information about the structure, agreements, financing, timelines, milestones, and actions of the JI should be made publicly accessible (such as on the JI's public website), or documentation should be formally reviewed by either a second or third party (ISEAL 2022b). For example, local or regional academic institutions can help with verification.

Verification of Action Claims

Participants making action claims should make sufficient supporting information publicly and easily accessible, so others are able to confirm the accuracy of the statements made, including that the stated actions have been undertaken. In practice, progress will often be communicated by the implementing partner or JI (ISEAL 2023). These types of claims should be verified by a second party (e.g., local, or regional academic institutions).

Verification of Performance Claims

Performance claims require a higher level of verification, given the importance of these claims and the potential benefits participants can receive. These types of claims should be verified by an independent third party.

As noted previously, a credible monitoring framework is key—one that specifies the indicators being monitored, guidance for measuring accurately and consistently against the indicators, the quality and relevance of data required, and how well the data are collected and managed (ISEAL 2022b).

ISEAL (2022b) provides best practice guidance on how to assess the quality of the data provided, the relevance of the data to the claims being made, and the integrity of the monitoring process. Verification approaches should meet the following principles:

- A consistent, documented methodology is applied when assessing data integrity.
- Evaluators have documented qualifications appropriate for the topics being verified.
- There is some degree of independence in the verification process (data collectors, data managers, and those conducting verification should be impartial). Independent third-party verification is important when market-facing claims are being made to minimize risks of partiality and ensure transparency.
- A high degree of transparency—relevant information is made easily and publicly accessible.

Credible verification that ensures the integrity of the monitoring process also relies on

- whether the metrics used to evaluate performance are appropriate and relevant to the key issues within the jurisdiction and whether they align with established jurisdictional measurement frameworks
- the degree to which the data management protocols have been effectively implemented in practice
- the reliability of the data analysis in drawing valid conclusions about the jurisdiction's performance
- the accuracy and clarity of communication in presenting the findings of the analysis

The final verification approach should strive to meet the four key principles for verification of performance in jurisdictional projects defined by ISEAL (2022b): consistency, competence, impartiality, and transparency. Verification is ideally conducted by a second or third party to help ensure alignment with these principles.

Verification of data and monitoring systems can be carried out by a variety of stakeholders, from formal certification bodies to qualified NGOs or second-party organizations. As JIs span environmental, social, and economic indicators, there will likely need to be an interdisciplinary verification team.

As seafood JIs are still relatively new, there is no global public reporting platform to provide transparency and context for claims. Each seafood JI will likely develop their own public website where they will share information and data in a transparent manner. In the future, the seafood community should aim to develop a global reporting platform, like LandScale for terrestrial JIs.

1.8 Traceability and Transparency

Traceability and transparency are critical components of seafood JIs, helping to address seafood fraud and IUU fishing/farming, worker exploitation, and environmental risk. Traceability is also a "must-have" for the verification of sustainable and responsible practices and stakeholder participation. Transparent and easily shared harvest/farm data provides governments with the information needed for decision-making and fisheries/aquaculture management strategies; enables buyers to verify claims about legal, social, and environmental performance of products; and empowers producers to meet both local and import market requirements (e.g., legality, food safety) and help them meet consumer demands for more transparent and responsible supply chains.

Government officials and fishery/farm managers can use traceability tools as part of their work to improve the regulatory management of their fisheries and aquaculture farms. For example, traceability information can complement data used to set up management plans and protected areas and establish effective policies and regulations. Traceability systems are required for fisheries and aquaculture farms that aim to meet a seafood certification scheme and can benefit developing countries with data-poor fisheries/farms. In addition, traceability systems can directly complement and facilitate the collection and sharing of data critical to managing JIs, especially where data come from multiple agencies and companies.

Supply chain transparency and traceability are fundamental if companies are to credibly claim they are supporting improvements—both within their supply chains and at the jurisdictional level. This requires companies to be able to trace seafood products back to the source of production and to provide essential information ("key data elements" or KDEs) about the conditions of production (such as vessel identity and fishing trip date, the geographic location of aquaculture farms, or the location and inputs of feed production). Various technology platforms exist to help companies advance their supply chain traceability and better understand their jurisdictional-level impacts. Ensuring transparent processes and structures is critical to both the internal and external credibility of a JI.

When JIs get to the point where claims associated with seafood products are sought, seafood JIs should follow best practice guidelines for supply chain traceability. This includes obtaining chain of custody (CoC) certification for fisheries/farms (e.g., ASC/MSC) and following industry-wide interoperable standards developed by the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST). The GDST has four core areas: (i) defining which KDEs should be collected and when, (ii) aligning

industry expectations around criteria for verifiable data, (iii) fostering data sharing and interoperability by defining technology standards and data access protocols that allow proprietary traceability systems to communicate with one another, and (iv) aligning seafood traceability systems with modernizing regulatory standards, such as national IUU regulations (e.g., EU, US, and UK). The GDST standards can and should be implemented within both industry and government systems, harmonizing data reporting requirements, streamlining data exchange, and easing compliance with both government regulations and end-buyer policies. While implementation of GDST standards is still in its early phases, governments and stakeholders are already moving toward, for example, using the standards to align the use of electronic vessel logbooks with both data systems used to track commercial transactions and governmental systems for collecting catch documentation and landing data.

The following resources provide further guidance on the tools mentioned in this section, which can be used to implement robust traceability within a JI (we recommend reviewing these resources in the order in which they are listed):

- Guidance and Tools for Traceability in Fishery Improvement Projects: Comprehensive guidance and practical tools to help FIP practitioners and stakeholders successfully implement traceability in fisheries to achieve improved FIP outcomes and encourage more transparent and responsible practices across the fishing industry
- GDST Standards and Materials: Resource library containing up-to-date information about the GDST, the GDST technical standards, and other supportive materials
- MSC Chain of Custody Standard: Resources on the MSC CoC Standard
- ASC Chain of Custody Standard: Resources on the ASC CoC Standard

1.9 Lessons Learned

Lessons learned described here are learnings from relatively early-stage (and primarily terrestrial) JIs, with over half operating for five years or less.

- **Appropriate geographic boundaries need to be defined.** The boundaries of the initiative need to align the scope of environmental degradation with decision-making authority, capacity, and policy frameworks, without being too large. The boundary should produce enough product volume to meet market demand, and the trade value should be large enough to attract financial institutions to engage and invest.

- **A backbone organization is necessary.** A coordinating body is necessary for driving stakeholder engagement, vision-building, and technical assistance for capacity-building. This organization should have the skills, reputation, and credibility to engage with and bring in diverse actors and stakeholders.

- **A common vision and multiple, balanced objectives matter.** A strong vision for management of natural resources within the jurisdiction facilitates effective

multistakeholder engagement and helps orient resources and human capacity toward common goals. The objectives of the initiative must carefully balance local needs and goals with larger regional, national, or even international targets.

- **Strong community engagement and stakeholder participation is critical.** Strong multistakeholder engagement is critical for building trust and incentivizing best practices, for data collection (especially in data-poor regions), and for ensuring policies and actions serve all stakeholders.
- **Meaningful engagement with Indigenous populations and local communities is key.** Participation of IPs and local communities helps focus governance on addressing issues around land/sea/resource rights, human and labor rights abuses, equity, conflict resolution, and wider challenges to sustainability.
- **Government engagement is a key driver.** Government must be a core stakeholder committed to formal multistakeholder participation and decision-making. Initiatives that lack government engagement, such as supply chain improvements, do not fit into the JI definition.
- **Private-sector actors are crucial for success.** Companies must be engaged, influential, and supportive of the vision and plan**,** given the dominant role that market forces often play in driving jurisdictional-level change.
- **Strong partnerships with producer cooperatives or associations are crucial for success.** These cooperatives/associations are often the entry point to scaling impact across dozens to thousands of small-scale fishers/farmers.
- **Robust, transparent, and collaborative multistakeholder development processes and decision-making platforms are needed.** A strong collaborative platform that provides transparency, frequent communication, and continued coordination is necessary to keep the project on course and ensure strong engagement across government, industry, local communities, and civil society sectors, which is necessary for success.
- **Technical partners are needed to support blended finance.** A technical assistance partner is needed to coordinate and develop an integrated set of investable projects to attract private capital and coordinate activities across the blended finance landscape. Having such a partner helps in de-risking the initiative for investors.
- **Transparency and traceability are crucial for verification of claims.** Transparency and traceability within private-sector supply chains are critical for monitoring and verification of JI claims made by industry partners.

Section 2. How to Implement Jurisdictional Initiatives

This section is designed around Figure 5 and provides guidance about the main steps in scoping, co-designing, and co-implementing JIs for the seafood sector.

- The Scoping Step involves bringing stakeholders together and understanding the context in a seafood production system.
- The Co-Designing Step involves engaging stakeholders to diagnose the environmental, social, and economic performance of a seafood production system and create a shared vision for success with specific triple-bottom-line improvement goals for that system. The co-design step will also require that initiative partners agree on an improvement action plan with appropriate metrics to measure progress and develop a monitoring framework to track progress.
- The Implementing Step involves implementing the policy and private-sector interventions outlined in the action plan, conducting regular monitoring and verification of improvement results, and public reporting of those results to ensure transparency.

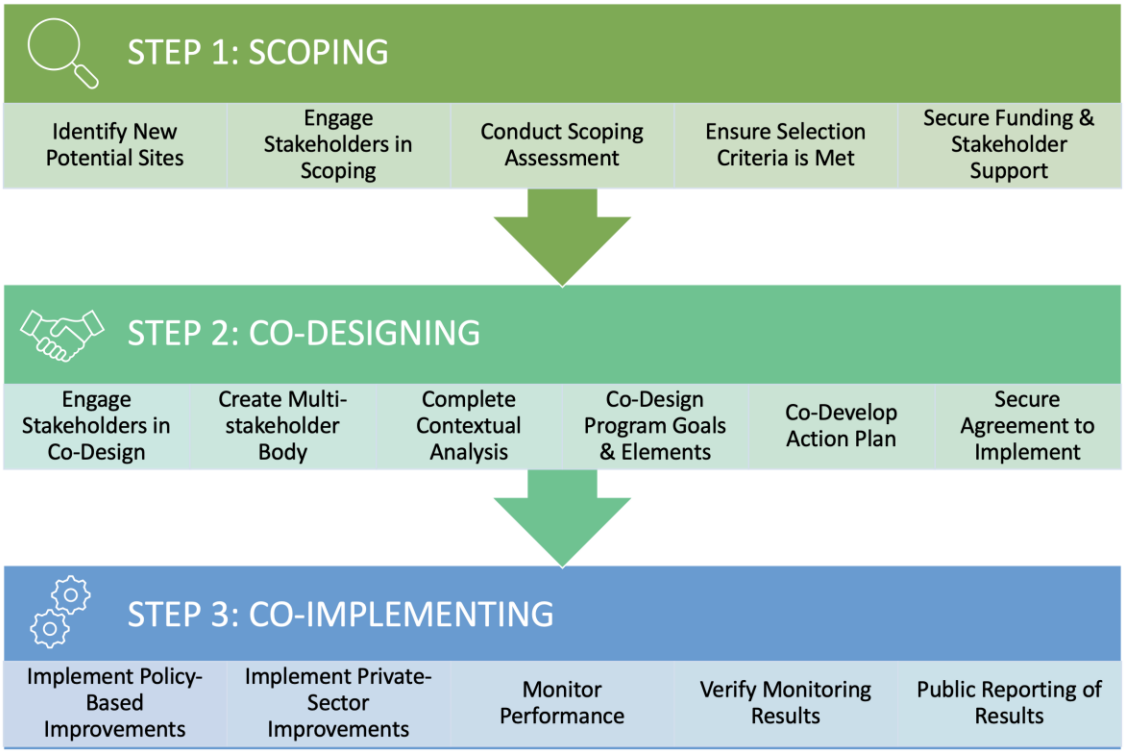


Figure 5. Process to create new seafood jurisdictional initiatives.

JIs need a robust design that supports credibility—to reinforce strong collaboration among diverse stakeholders, to support and incentivize the behavior and practice shifts necessary for driving change, to provide verifiable data that triggers the continued release of resources such as funding, and to allow for continued evaluation and adaptation to ensure long-term targets are met. While JIs will differ, they must fundamentally be focused on addressing key environmental, social, and production issues in the region.

Step 1. Scoping

Scoping of JIs often involves bringing stakeholders together and understanding the context in a seafood production system, including the following key steps: (1.1) Identify new potential JI sites, (1.2) Engage stakeholders in scoping (1.3) Conduct a scoping assessment, (1.4) Ensure selection criteria are met, and (1.5) Secure funding and stakeholder support for co-design. Each of these steps is described in further detail below.

1.1. Identify new potential jurisdictional initiative sites

JIs have traditionally been initiated in one of three ways (Table 4):

1. A political leader prioritizes the development of these types of initiatives to achieve the government's goals in an area under its jurisdiction.
2. Private-sector actors commit to and/or invest in supporting the development of JIs to increase their supply chain resilience.
3. NGOs, civil society, donors, or other "backbone" organizations initiate and fund the planning and design of JIs based on observed needs in an area, including ecosystem and local community resilience.

Table 4. Case studies illustrating different ways in which jurisdictional initiatives (JIs) for wild-caught tuna have been initiated.

Political Leadership	Private-Sector Commitment	NGO Coordination
As highlighted in Section 1, one of the most notable attempts to implement a JI for large-scale fisheries comes from the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA). The cooperation between eight Pacific Island governments was born out of a need to adapt the inadequate tuna management schemes at the time as well as a recognition that these tuna resource-owning countries could derive greater economic benefits through cooperation on policy reform. Since its establishment, the PNA agreement has benefited from considerable political buy-in and ownership by government partners and has resulted in significant	In 2021, the UK supermarket chain Tesco introduced a new "Seascape" sourcing approach (a similar concept to JI) to marine sustainability to ensure whole marine ecosystems are maintained in a healthy, productive way. Through this new approach to tuna sourcing, developed in partnership with WWF, Tesco will work with suppliers and others across the industry to implement a road map that leads to sourcing only from fisheries with an ecosystem-based management (EBM) approach by 2030. The new Seascape approach, which mirrors the landscape approach adopted in the Tesco UK Zero Deforestation Soy Transition Plan (2021), has	In 2022, the French overseas territory of New Caledonia and the Pacific Island nation of Fiji initiated JIs for their longline tuna fisheries. The initiatives in each country were scoped following a set of engagements by Conservation International (CI) with the domestic industries that were focused on highlighting how engaging in a JI could be beneficial to the local industry. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with the industry in each country (Seafood Source, 2023), which subsequently paved the way for an expanded partnership with government authorities. In New Caledonia, the JI that is being developed now includes

economic returns to these countries, from US$60 million in 2010 to about US$500 million in 2019. More recent examples of political leadership in the scoping of seafood JIs can be found in the Cook Islands, where Prime Minister Henry Puna convened public, private, and civil society stakeholders to develop a national tuna "gold standard." The latter commitment from the highest level of political leadership prompted the development of a draft national tuna policy through a collaboration among the national technical agencies and ministries, private-sector partners, and civil society groups (Cook Islands News 2019). The policy and standard are still in development but, once implemented, would set minimum environmental, social, and economic sustainability requirements for all vessels operating within the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).	been specifically designed to align with and build on existing tools and guidelines already widely used by the industry, including the guidelines of the Global Tuna Alliance (GTA), the NGO (Nongovernmental Organization) Tuna Forum, and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) (Seafood Source 2021).	100% of the local industry, which will ensure that all tuna fisheries operating within the political jurisdiction of New Caledonia's EEZ meet the highest standards required by high-value tuna markets. In Fiji, the partnership involves the Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA), CI, WWF, and the Ministry of Fisheries, which will promote the integration of policy and market-based strategies to improve the economic, environmental, and social performance of tuna fisheries at a jurisdictional scale.

The examples in Table 4 provide a blueprint for how new potential JI sites can be identified, such as the presence of, or ability or need to harness government and/or producer or supplier support at the appropriate ecological and political scales. Support from the government, the private sector, civil society, and donors is critical for the successful design and implementation of effective JIs, although endorsement by each of these partners is likely to be secured at different stages in the project. The availability of support from at least two of these stakeholder groups during the Scoping phase is critical and can be used as selection criteria to identify new potential sites (Box 2).

Box 2. Selection criteria for scoping new jurisdictional initiatives (JIs)

Political Will:

- Government leaders or other decision-making authorities have expressed interest in strengthening environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and sustainable development within a seafood production area. These leaders have the institutional capacity, resources, and willingness to partner to achieve this vision. Several JIs have started with the articulation and endorsement of a high-level vision for sustainable development in the jurisdiction by its elected leader (Seymour et al. 2020).

Private-Sector Interest:

- Local producers, processing facilities, and/or exporters have expressed interest in designing a seafood JI. Alternatively, international importers and end buyers are currently sourcing from the geography and/or have expressed tangible interest in directly supporting ecosystem-focused environmental sustainability and/or improving the social welfare of fishers/farmers, surrounding communities, and workers in the supply chain.

Financial Opportunity:

- Public, private, and/or philanthropic financing drives the initial development of these types of initiatives. Long-term financing opportunities beyond philanthropic sources should also be leveraged as the JI moves into the Implementation phase. The Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) scheme, which was able to capture significant revenues from daily access fees levied on vessels who wished to fish PNA waters, provides a compelling example of how long-term financing mechanisms can be established to fund JIs. (See Box 1.)

Social Support, Including Local Champions, Indigenous Leadership, and/or Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) Coordination:

- The presence of strong local support and/or NGO leadership in developing JIs is based on the ecological and/or socio-economic importance of a particular area.

Biological Significance:

- Area is of national, regional, or international significance in terms of its biological attributes (Atkinson et al. 2011). For JIs focused on one or two commodities, these specific seafood resources must be of particular significance to government and industry participants since these stakeholders will need to engage in the design and implementation of policy- and market-based improvement strategies over an extended time horizon. Additional elements of biological significance that may motivate other stakeholders include biological diversity, important ecosystem features, and iconic species (for instance, totemic shark species for local Indigenous groups).

Need for Improvements at a Jurisdictional Scale:

- The improvements needed across a jurisdiction cannot be addressed completely through traditional market approaches, such as certifications and rating schemes, or

traditional conservation, such as protected area designation. Noting the range of existing certifications and standards that exist for sustainable seafood, project developers should identify sites where traditional approaches alone are not well suited to achieve the desired improvements and sustainability outcomes. (See *Section 1.2: When to Implement Jurisdictional Initiatives Versus Other Approaches* and Kittinger et al., 2021, for additional information.)

1.2. Engage stakeholders in scoping

Developing a JI is an inclusive process designed to ensure that a wide variety of stakeholders with varying perspectives are an integral part of the project from start to finish. This helps guarantee that activities are appropriate for the sociopolitical context of the fishery or aquaculture farms in the region.

Noting the need for support from one or more of the key stakeholders described in Box 3 below, project developers should engage a range of stakeholders in scoping new potential JIs. Participants will vary depending on the nature of the project but will often include:

- government officials
- fishers (industrial, artisanal, Indigenous, recreational)
- aquaculture producers (small, medium, and large) and producer groups
- labor associations/unions and/or fisher/farmer/worker-led organizations
- other supply chain members and associated workers (e.g., hatcheries, feed mills, traders, processors, retailers, and importers/exporters)
- fishery managers/aquaculture regulators
- customary and Indigenous groups/local communities within the ecosystem
- academics, scientific and/or technical expertise
- environmental NGOs and other civil society organizations

The roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder group will vary by JI, depending on its unique circumstances. The JI coordinator role, for instance, responsible for engaging and convening the various stakeholder groups in the early stages of scoping a new JI, could be played by governments, NGOs, or private-sector actors, depending on their level of interest, influence, and capacity. While NGOs can oftentimes fill this role during the early stages of JI development, governments should eventually adopt the coordinator functions as part of the efforts to weave together the various management and stakeholder consultations focused on improving seafood production at a jurisdictional scale.

Effective strategies for engaging stakeholders will also vary but include developing outreach materials, hosting workshops, and—critically—building out relevant incentives for each stakeholder group. Understanding the incentives of each group will help the JI coordinator determine the most effective and credible ways to bring market-based leverage and actors into the JI framework for that geography. Some stakeholders may not join the effort or may take time

to become engaged, and this should be identified and factored into outreach and planning strategies.

1.3. Conduct a scoping assessment

Once new potential sites have been identified, project developers should conduct a scoping assessment to evaluate whether the key enabling conditions are in place or could be created to support the successful co-design of a JI (Figure 2).

The main findings of the scoping assessment could be captured in a relatively succinct document that provides the following:

- Brief description of the target geography and characteristics of the seafood production system.
- Summary of the key systemic environmental and socio-economic issues that have been identified in the seafood production system, including through the stakeholder engagement process. These key issues should focus on adoption of best management practices, impacts of the industry on biodiversity and habitat loss in the ecosystem, threats to people's rights and livelihoods, and risks around climate instability.
- Summary of the specific environmental and social goals the potential seafood JI would seek to achieve, ensuring these respond to local priorities and conditions.
- Summary of the availability of support from key stakeholder groups highlighted in Box 2, including the presence of political will, private-sector interest, financial opportunity, local champion leadership, and/or NGO coordination.
- Stakeholder group summary that includes a summary of discussions around incentives and motivations for each group, as well as how those various incentives could line up with credible requirements and systems for monitoring and evaluation, traceability, and other types of verification and assurance needed to build impactful markets-based leverage using a JI.
- Explanation of why the initiative builds on, includes, or offers more opportunities to achieve environmental and social goals than other traditional markets-based FIPs/AIPs or certification pathways that have been used to leverage change. (See *Section 1.2: When to Implement Jurisdictional Initiatives Versus Other Approaches* for additional information.)

Desk-based reviews, as well as expert and stakeholder interviews, can be used to guide the drafting of the scoping assessment. The tools outlined in Step 2.3 can also be used to inform the scoping assessment; however, project developers should not seek to address all the elements highlighted by those tools. The level of analysis required to scope, co-design, and ultimately implement a seafood JI will include a series of steps that become increasingly more detailed. The scoping assessment can be used as the basis for developing a more complete diagnostic assessment of the seafood production system under Step 2.3 once all the activities under Step 1 (Scoping) have been completed.

1.4. Ensure selection criteria are met

Following completion of the scoping assessment, project developers should ensure that at least two or more of the selection criteria for scoping new JIs are met (Box 2), including:

- political will
- private-sector interest
- financial opportunity
- social support, including local champions, Indigenous leadership, and/or NGO coordination
- biological significance
- need for improvements at a jurisdictional scale

Additional enabling conditions for consideration are highlighted in Figure 2, including enabling legal frameworks and institutional capacity. At this stage in the process, JI project developers should use all the knowledge gathered during the Scoping phase to determine which of the above selection criteria are most important for the specific JI under development and should therefore be mandatory in order to proceed to the next step.

1.5. Secure funding and stakeholder support for co-design

Prior to initiating the co-design of a seafood JI (Step 2), we recommend the main parties involved in the Scoping phase sign an MOU or similar agreement that outlines the overall vision for the JI and defines the specific roles and responsibilities of each entity. This ensures clear expectations from the outset about the role each group plays. This may not be possible in all scenarios.

Furthermore, project developers should aim to secure funding for the co-design process of the initiative, which typically comes from philanthropic sources or local governments who are leading. Long-term financing opportunities beyond philanthropic sources should also be explored, although the latter will become more important as JIs move into the Implementation phase. The PNA scheme, which was able to capture significant revenues from daily access fees levied on vessels who wished to fish PNA waters, provides a compelling example of how long-term financing mechanisms can be established to fund JIs. (See Box 1.)

Terrestrial JI implementers have noted that cost estimates for JIs are nearly impossible to make, as these initiatives vary greatly depending on the scope and approach. Landscape Finance Lab, an organization who supports practitioners to structure and launch landscape-scale initiatives, such as JIs, estimates approximately US$2.5 million per landscape over five years to cover their costs for capacity-building, baseline studies, technical assistance, and seed funding for feasibility studies. This cost estimate is only for Landscape Finance Lab's support; additional coordination, resource mapping, etc., across the entire JI requires additional support.

Step 2. Co-Designing a Jurisdictional Initiative for Seafood

Often, co-designing a seafood JI involves engaging stakeholders to understand the context more fully in a seafood production system, creating a shared vision for success, and determining improvement goals for that system. Partners then agree on an improvement action plan, decide on metrics to measure progress, and develop a monitoring framework to track progress. As such, often, co-designing a JI involves the following key steps:

- 2.1. Engage stakeholders to participate in the co-design phase.
- 2.2. Create a multistakeholder body to lead program design and implementation.
- 2.3. Complete a contextual analysis that identifies key systemic environmental and socio-economic challenges in the seafood production system, and against which improvements and performance claims will be measured.
- 2.4. Co-design the initiative's goals and elements; this includes articulating a high-level vision and goals for the initiative, as well as defining meaningful, relevant metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) to enable assessments of baseline performance and progress toward targets, milestones, and outcomes.
- 2.5. Develop a clearly defined, time-bound action plan that lays out steps to meet program milestones and outcomes. As part of these efforts, develop a detailed budget for activities to be implemented and secure funding. Finally, develop an effective monitoring framework, including data governance systems and protocols to credibly gather, store, analyze, and use data, and monitoring frequency.
- 2.6. Secure an agreement to implement the action plan, including by signing an MOU or similar. Project partners may also want to sign a code of conduct (rules of engagement) that outlines how the multistakeholder platform will address a range of issues that may arise, such as conflicts of interest, disagreements, and KPI development.

2.1. Engage stakeholders in co-design

Building on the stakeholder engagement efforts initiated in Step 1.2, the key actors described in Box 2 should formalize their collaboration through the development of a multistakeholder body responsible for co-designing the main elements of the JI (Box 3). Engagement might include developing a communication plan with stakeholders who initially chose not to be directly involved in the JI.

Box 3. Roles and responsibilities in designing a jurisdictional initiative (JI)

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)/JI developers:

- Project developers should support the transparent development of a representative, multistakeholder platform to ensure strong and consistent participation by all pertinent stakeholders. The resulting multistakeholder body will be responsible for leading the program design and implementation.
- Project developers will oftentimes also lead the drafting of the contextual analysis, which identifies key systemic environmental and socio-economic challenges in the seafood production system.
- Project developers support co-design of market and policy-based strategies to address key deficiencies identified in the contextual analysis. For instance, project developers may need to lead trainings targeting industry partners to improve understanding of business dependencies and impacts on the region as well as to identify how best a business can affect change in a seafood production area.

Government:

- Relevant levels of government should actively participate in the multistakeholder body to design and implement the initiative. A political (e.g., Office of the Prime Minister) or technical (e.g.,

Ministry of Fisheries) leadership group within the group may also lead the coordination of the group.
- Relevant levels of government should support the development of a contextual analysis, providing data and insights that can help identify key deficiencies in the seafood production system. This might include data from monitoring systems or government-led modeling.
- Relevant levels of government should lead co-design of policy-based strategies to address key deficiencies identified in the scoping assessment.

Private sector:

- In the early JI stages, the fishing or aquaculture industry can support the development of a contextual analysis, providing data and insights that can help identify key deficiencies in the seafood production system. This may include collected data or any industry-led modeling or reports.
- Downstream companies can clarify what their market requests are for sustainability, helping to drive alignment across their seafood value chain and creating incentives to drive improvements within a production geography. Large market partners can also use influence and advocacy to bring together various parts of government with stakeholders to address issues at a jurisdictional scale (CI 2018).
- Private-sector partners across the value chain can then lead the co-design of market-based strategies and interventions to address key deficiencies identified in the scoping assessment, including by committing to the transformative potential of a JI by rewarding progress with preferential sourcing.

All:

- "*Companies, donors, and NGOs should support governments in those jurisdictions that have demonstrated commitment through an inclusive process and clear actions to reduce ecosystem impacts and improve sustainability of commodity production. As noted elsewhere, sustainability at the jurisdictional level is a difficult and long-term process. Implementing jurisdictional sustainability plans or 'road map' will be expensive, and government leaders willing to take on the challenge will need to see that their courage and commitments are being recognized and rewarded during the journey and not only at the end point. This is especially important if we hope and expect other jurisdictions to follow the leaders*" (CI 2018).

Local communities and/or Indigenous peoples (Ips):

- Local communities and/or IPs who are sometimes marginalized from traditional CRI efforts should support the development of a contextual analysis, providing data, traditional knowledge, and insights that can help identify key deficiencies and improvement priorities for a seafood production system.

2.2. Create a multistakeholder body

Project developers should support the transparent development of a representative, multistakeholder platform to ensure strong and consistent participation and collaborative decision-making by all pertinent stakeholders. Considerable resources are available that highlight how to create multistakeholder engagement processes and decision-making bodies, including the FAO guidance about facilitating MSPs (Box 4).

Box 4. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) guidance on facilitating multistakeholder processes (MSP)

"An MSP is fundamentally about participatory decision-making and information sharing at the country level. Key stakeholders should be represented and decide what issues to focus on and what actions to take. MSPs range from simple processes such as one-off consultations to more complex ones such as multistakeholder networks and partnerships.

What are the benefits of MSPs?

- *Relevance: Local stakeholders best understand which activities are truly relevant to their needs and realistic in a specific context.*
- *Ownership and sustainability: Local stakeholders share information and jointly decide what actions to take. This leads to greater local ownership of activities and outcomes, which makes them more sustainable.*
- *Builds partnerships and alliances: Having a common goal strengthens partnerships and creates opportunities for dialogue and sharing resources.*

Tips for facilitating MSPs:

- *Designing the MSP: Key stakeholders should be involved in designing the MSP and coordinating the process.*
- *Selecting Participants: Conducting a Stakeholder Mapping exercise will ensure that you do not miss any important groups affected by the issue at hand. Select people at approximately the same level of authority and keep a gender balance. Suggested Tool: Stakeholder Mapping.*
- *Facilitation: Local facilitators should have prior training in facilitation techniques and use the local language. They should make sure women have a voice and that the meeting is truly participatory. FAO and similar organizations can support the process, but their role should be that of an observer or mentor rather than leading the MSP. Suggested Tool: MSP Facilitation Guidelines.*
- *Structure and setup: Having a permanent platform for multistakeholder consultations will ensure that the benefits of MSPs continue beyond the scope of the project or program.*
- *Process: During meetings, minimize long plenary presentations by experts and maximize group work and discussions. Different people should have the opportunity to take the floor and report back to plenary group. Suggested Tool: Socratic Questions.*
- *Common goal: Stakeholders often have different, sometimes even conflicting, goals and objectives. MSPs can be used to find common ground and build a shared vision for the future. Suggested Tool: Visioning."*

For additional guidance about the steps in setting up an MSP, see: fao.org/capacity-development/resources/practical-tools/multi-stakeholder-processes/en/

Ultimately, the multistakeholder body will be responsible for leading the program design and implementation. A strong collaborative platform that provides transparency, frequent communication, and continued coordination is necessary to keep the project on course and ensure strong engagement across government, industry, local communities, and civil society sectors, which is necessary for success. Additional resources about how to set up multistakeholder platforms (Adekunle and Fatunmbi 2012) and potential challenges around these bodies (Faysse 2006) include the recent guidance by the FAO on how to design and secure

multistakeholder collaboration to address environmental, social, and economic issues in food systems (FAO 2023). A particular emphasis should be placed on developing truly participatory decision-making mechanisms to ensure equity between smallholders and corporate or government interests.

2.3. Complete a contextual analysis that identifies key systemic environmental and socio-economic challenges in the seafood production system, against which improvements and performance claims will be measured.

Once a new potential JI has been scoped, ideally including securing funding and stakeholder support, project developers should conduct a complete contextual analysis to evaluate key socio-economic, environmental, cultural, and political contexts within which the initiative will be developed. The contextual analysis should identify key deficiencies in the seafood production system and provide insights into whether key enabling conditions are in place or could be created to support the successful co-design of JIs.

Identifying the most pressing environmental, social, and economic issues to be addressed in a seafood production system can be facilitated using various diagnostic tools. Credible seafood JIs are centered on identifying the environmental issues around habitat and biodiversity, as well as climate resilience and systemic social challenges in that region. We highlight various methodologies and tools below that can be used to identify key deficiencies and leverage points for improving the triple-bottom-line performance of seafood production systems.

While we are not prescriptive about which methodologies to use, we recommend project developers begin to highlight key issues using rigorous diagnostic tools recognized by their end buyers. For instance, if a target seafood commodity within a jurisdiction is intended to be sold to a retailer requiring products certified by the MSC, ASC, or Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP), project developers should at least utilize these assessment frameworks for environmental sustainability to help identify systemic issues across the jurisdiction. While certification standards are generally specific to the performance of an individual fishery or aquaculture farm, some indicators capture performance at the jurisdictional level, such as the effectiveness of national fishery management measures. Existing certification reports can be useful information sources and provide a level of verification of status against specific performance indicators that apply across the jurisdiction.

Note, however, the environmental certification standards and other internationally recognized certification and ratings schemes may not include all the considerations that are important to JI stakeholders (e.g., cumulative environmental impacts, climate change, and social responsibility). These tools and frameworks should be complemented with other tools to adequately assess local priorities tied to the desired ecosystem and social systemic challenges in the JI. The three Performance Frameworks developed by the Certifications and Ratings Collaboration (2019) may

provide a useful starting point to identify critical environmental and social issues that should be reviewed for wild-capture and aquaculture JIs.

Box 5. Diagnostic tools to identify key deficiencies in seafood production systems

Fisheries

Environmental Sustainability

- Project developers can utilize a range of diagnostic tools to identify key issues in fisheries. For fisheries with limited data availability, for instance, project developers could utilize the rapid assessment tool (RAT) highlighted on FisheryProgress to analyze the environmental performance of a particular fishery, including the management framework of which it is a part.
- For more robust assessments, particularly for jurisdictions that have key fisheries selling to markets with Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification as a sourcing requirement, project developers can utilize the MSC pre-assessment and MSC full assessment tools, preferably pulling from existing certification reports as these have been through an independent, third-party verified scoring process.

Social Responsibility

- The Social Responsibility Assessment Tool for the Seafood Sector (SRA) is a diagnostic assessment tool to assess the risk of social issues, identify areas in need of improvement, and inform the development of a work plan that includes actions toward social improvements. A portion of the SRA is used as the framework for fishery improvement projects (FIPs) to report on social performance on FisheryProgress.org. Note the Certification and Ratings Collaboration framework highlighted above has been incorporated into the SRA.
- Wild-capture fisheries can also benchmark their performance against internationally recognized certifications such as the Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard or the Fairness, Integrity, Safety, and Health (FISH) Standard for Crew for vessel or fishery-level improvements. Currently, there are no jurisdictional-level certifications.

Economic and Financial Resilience

- Value-Chain Mapping
- Cost-Benefit Analysis
- Financial Modeling and Business Case Development
- Economic pillar of the Fishery Performance Indicator (FPI) Assessment

Other Tools

- Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) Toolbox
- Fishery Performance Indicators (FPI) Assessment
- FishPath
- Climate-Resilient Fisheries Planning Tool
- Framework for Integrated Stock and Habitat Evaluation (FISHE)
- Tuna Sourcing Issues Identification Checklist

Aquaculture

Environmental Sustainability

- Project developers can benchmark their jurisdictions to internationally recognized certifications or frameworks, such as Sustainable Fisheries Partnership's FishSource Framework.
- For more robust assessments, particularly for jurisdictions that have key aquaculture farms selling to markets with Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) certification as a sourcing requirement, project developers can benchmark against criteria in the ASC standard, preferably

pulling from existing certification reports, as these have been through an independent, third-party verified scoring process.

Social Responsibility

- Project developers can benchmark their jurisdictions to internationally recognized certifications or frameworks, such as the ASC or Global Seafood Alliances Best Aquaculture Practices, for farm-level improvements. Currently, there are no jurisdictional-level certifications or frameworks.
- The SRA can also be used to assess social risk in aquaculture JIs.

Economic and Financial Resilience

- Value-Chain Mapping
- Cost-Benefit Analysis
- Financial Modeling and Business Case Development

The main findings from these analyses might be recorded in a document that builds on the scoping assessment completed under Step 1 and that ideally will include the following sections:

- Executive Summary
    - Briefly describe the target geography and characteristics of the seafood production system.
    - Briefly summarize the key deficiencies identified in the seafood production system, including through the stakeholder engagement process.
    - Briefly summarize the goals the potential seafood JI would seek to achieve, ensuring these respond to local priorities and conditions. The sectors and factors outside the focus of the JI that present risks to achieving stated goals should be noted along with the main ways in which they should be considered/engaged with from within the JI.
    - Briefly summarize the availability of support from the key stakeholder groups highlighted in Box 3, including the presence of political will, private-sector interest, financial opportunity, local champion leadership, and/or NGO coordination.
    - Explain why the JI presents a competitive advantage to address issues compared with traditional FIPs/AIPs or certification pathways. (See *Section 1.2: When to Implement Jurisdictional Initiatives Versus Other Approaches* for additional information.)
- Introduction
    - Provide an overview of the target geography and characteristics of the seafood production system, as well as additional background information that may be relevant for the initiative.
- Fishery or Farm Status
    - This section provides information about the status of the fishery or farm area in terms of biological, social, and economic performance.
    - For fisheries, this could include the following considerations:
        - Ecological: Stock condition and potential for recovery if depleted. Fishing impacts to endangered, threatened, and protected (ETP) species as well as on vulnerable habitats. Management effectiveness.

        - Social: Human and labor rights and equity conditions in the fishery and community. Contribution to food security and nutrition and to cultural identity of local communities.
        - Economic: Contribution of fishery to local and national economies. Contribution of fishery to livelihoods of fishers and indirect workers (e.g., jobs at processors or input providers). Profitability of companies.
    - For aquaculture, this could include the following considerations:
        - Ecological: Type of production (e.g., fed versus unfed, open versus closed) and potential and documented negative and positive impacts on associated ecosystems.
        - Social: Human and labor rights and equity conditions in the farm and local community. Contribution to food security and nutrition, and to cultural identity of local communities.
        - Economic: Contribution of production to local and national economies. Contribution of production to livelihoods of farm workers and indirect workers (e.g., jobs at processors or input providers). Profitability of companies.
- Regulatory System
    - Regulatory systems refer to the rules and regulations that are in place to control and monitor seafood producers' efforts and reduce the impact of local fisheries or farms on marine biodiversity and ecosystems. The purpose of this section is to characterize the existing regulatory systems and their effectiveness in meeting sustainable production goals. (See Box 5 for tools that can be used to assess sustainability performance.)
- Governance and Policy Framework
    - Governance and policy framework refers to the institutional, operational, legal, and customary frameworks that govern the seafood production system. The purpose of this section is to determine whether there are enabling political and institutional frameworks that promote the sustainable production of seafood and to identify potential barriers to sustainable seafood production. This section should also identify power relations, social hierarchies, and decision-making processes that affect the seafood production system.
- Market Potential
    - The purpose of this section is to describe the size (value) and growth potential of existing and new potential seafood markets, and to assess the market's willingness to pay for products derived from a successful JI. This section will help determine the competitiveness of the fishery and/or farm(s) and identify potential barriers to achieving market potential.
- Stakeholder Engagement
    - The purpose of this section is to identify whether there is stakeholder interest and commitment to participate in the co-design of a seafood JI. Buy-in from each of the key stakeholders (see Figure 2) should be explicitly characterized, ensuring there is social predisposition, political will, and market interest of all relevant stakeholders in collaborating effectively on co-designing and implementing a seafood JI.

2.4. Co-design the initiative's goals and elements

The first step in the design of several JIs has been to articulate a high-level vision for sustainable development in the jurisdiction, which provides the framework needed for a more formal design (Seymour et al. 2020). Significant momentum can be generated when the vision of the program is endorsed by a high-level political leader, but institutional adoption by the pertinent regulatory agencies (e.g., Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Finance, etc.) is also critical to ensure the initiatives are not disrupted by changes in political administrations.

- **Determining goals and scope:** Sustainability and production-based goals should be clearly stated and relevant to the jurisdiction in which the program is being implemented.
    - What is the high-level vision for sustainable development/ecosystems in the jurisdiction?
    - What are the priority commodities (fisheries/aquaculture farms) of the JI? Given the nature of seafood, most seafood JIs will likely be focused on a species/commodity; however, program design should consider other industries and interdependent commodities in the region and identify ways to engage with them.
    - What are the priority environmental and socio-economic challenges within the jurisdiction that the initiative will seek to address? What are specific goals and metrics for social and environmental objectives? The scope should incorporate as many of the locally determined improvement priorities as possible, as determined by a robust and inclusive stakeholder engagement process.

- **Determining scale:** The program should be of a meaningful scale to drive improvements.
    - Choose the spatial scale that allows you to have influence over the outcome you are seeking but that is not so large that you cannot gain traction/get it to work. What is the ecosystem level to appropriately address the key sustainability challenges identified?
    - The monetary value of the seafood production should be large enough to attract financial institutions to engage and invest.
    - The scale of a JI is oftentimes determined by political boundaries, reflecting the need for JI elements to be eventually incorporated into official government policies, regulations, and/or development plans at national or sub-national levels. What is the highest-level jurisdiction to address that ecosystem? Government engagement at the correct level is required. This can include sub-national entities, but national-level policies and levels of government are critical for success.
    - Climate change impacts on seafood production systems may alter the jurisdictional scale needed to address issues at an ecosystem level. Climate-driven shifts in species range, for instance, should be considered when determining the appropriate jurisdictional scale.

- **Identifying appropriately sized incentives for participating producers:** These should be commensurate to opportunity costs of conversion, where applicable.
    - Ensure the allocation of benefits, including reduction of production and supply risks, is commensurate with the contributions of each stakeholder to the outcomes. An approach to distributing rewards will need to be agreed on early, before the JI is implemented. To distribute financial benefits, the national government may be able to transfer cash directly through existing governmental cash transfer systems or through a newly established ecological fiscal transfer (EFT) mechanism—a mechanism to allocate fiscal transfers to the regions based on ecological performances (Tropical Forest Alliance 2021).

- **Determining metrics and KPIs:** Relevant metrics and KPIs should be determined to enable assessments of progress toward targets, milestones, and outcomes. Metrics should be tied directly to performance against environmental (i.e., biodiversity and climate), social, and economic outcomes at the jurisdictional level. Suggested categories for JI metrics are included in *Section 1.5: Metrics* and include broad categories covering biodiversity, climate, social, and economic impacts of seafood production. Because a JI can span decades, it may be helpful to define not only outcome-based metrics but also pathway indicators that can help capture important progress toward measurable outcomes over time. For example, an outcome metric could focus on population trajectories of ETP species while pathway metrics focus on the enabling conditions for outcome-based improvement—notably effectively implemented legal frameworks and management measures, with sufficient information to support effective management. This may provide more useful tracking of progress over the early years of a JI. Example outcome and pathway metrics could include:

    - <u>Environmental Sustainability</u>
        - Area under improvement management:
            - hectares (or km^2) of area under improved management (i.e., meeting all key elements of an effective management system) [pathway]
            - number or volume of priority species under effective, precautionary, climate-resilient fisheries/aquaculture management [pathway]
        - Species conserved:
            - fishery/aquaculture impacts on ETP species are quantified and monitored [pathway]
            - metric tons of seafood working toward improved practices tied to biodiversity [pathway]
            - number or volume of wild-caught fish stocks at biologically sustainable levels [outcome]
            - biodiversity index for jurisdiction [outcome]
        - Habitat conserved:
            - management measures protect vulnerable marine ecosystems within the jurisdiction [pathway]
            - habitat index for jurisdiction [outcome]

- Social Responsibility
    - Socio-economic benefits:
        - number of people receiving direct socio-economic benefits from fishery or farm, and number of people receiving indirect socio-economic benefits [outcome]
    - Inclusive decision-making:
        - legal frameworks in place to support participation/inclusion in resource planning and management for all stakeholders involved in, or affected by, production activities [pathway]
        - grievances raised and resolved by local and Indigenous communities against fishery or aquaculture industry [pathway]
    - Labor rights:
        - relevant legal frameworks explicitly require respect for women's rights, including decent working conditions, equal pay [pathway]
        - effective grievance mechanisms in place to support human rights violations [pathway]
        - incidence of child or forced labor [outcome]

- Economic and Financial Resilience
    - Socio-economic Benefits:
        - legal frameworks in place to support equitable distribution of benefits [pathway]
        - amount of additional funding (increased cash flow) received by public and private-sector partners because of the JI outcome

2.5. Co-develop an action plan and secure funding

Stakeholders should develop a clearly defined time-bound action plan that lays out steps to meet initiative milestones and outcomes. The action plan should identify the key policy and market-based strategies and actions to address the priority deficiencies identified by the scoping assessment. The action plan should also establish clear timelines, roles, and responsibilities for each key action. (See the Action Plan Template for additional information (forthcoming)). The action plan can also identify and reference overlapping objectives around timelines for stakeholder engagement and information sharing.

As part of these efforts, it will also be critical to develop an effective monitoring framework, including data governance systems and protocols to credibly gather, store, analyze, and use data, and monitoring frequency.

The accuracy of claims about jurisdictional performance depends on the quality of the monitoring process. This includes the quality, availability, and relevance of the data collected, as well as how effectively it is gathered, managed, and analyzed to draw conclusions. When choosing data sources and developing frameworks for monitoring against metrics identified, factors such as the relevance, accuracy, spatial and temporal resolution, cost, availability, and use rights should be considered.

A trustworthy monitoring framework should include the following (ISEAL 2022b):

- Clear guidance for application: For each individual metric, clear, explicit guidance must be developed to ensure reliable and consistent assessments. This guidance must be fully developed and explicitly clear to ensure credible assessments and consistent tracking across years of JI implementation. We suggest testing the application of the guidance before it is finalized to ensure consistent interpretation and analyses across individuals and identify potential issues around information availability.

- Information sources: For each metric, include the information source(s) used to gain insights about performance. Data sources should be made available in an accessible format to enable third parties to verify and derive insights about performance.

- Data management protocols: Procedures for collecting, storing, analyzing, and utilizing data are in place to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the collected data.

Finally, it will be critical to develop a detailed budget and secure funding for the costs of activities, coordination of the initiative, and monitoring and reporting. This will involve exploring and applying innovative and complementary investments. In addition to the investments required to reduce ecosystem impacts, improve livelihoods, and implement sustainable production systems, sustainable management of oceans, watersheds, and natural capital is fundamental to sustainability of a jurisdiction.

Three financial structures have typically been used in JIs:

1. Local, regional, or global investors directly invest in a project or co-invest in complementary activities.
2. Investors contribute to a global, regional, or national fund. The fund may contribute directly to a project or to another fund at the jurisdictional level that specifically serves the initiative.
3. Blended approach of direct project investment and jurisdictional level fund.

The public sector (e.g., bilateral, and multilateral agencies) has been the largest provider of funding to support JIs thus far. However, their scale of financing is insufficient to match the scale of financing needed. As such, private-sector investment also needs to be a primary source of financing. Companies who have already made commitments to ocean conservation, community development, or similar sustainability goals through either corporate or philanthropic channels should consider directing these investments or philanthropic programs to support priority seafood JIs. Blending various sources of financing—public, private, and, in some cases, philanthropic—is a way to manage the different risk profiles and risk appetites of the financing sources that will likely be needed to support the initiative over time (Tropical Forest Alliance 2021). As noted in Box 1, the PNA scheme provides a compelling example of how long-term financing mechanisms can be established to fund JIs, wherein high value daily access fees were levied on vessels who wished to fish in PNA waters.

2.6. Secure an agreement to implement

The final step in the co-design phase is to secure agreement by all pertinent stakeholders to implement the co-designed action plan, including by potentially signing an MOU or similar agreement. These documents should be shared with all relevant stakeholders to support long-term transparency and accountability.

Step 3. Co-Implementing

Once the milestones, timelines, and responsible parties have been identified in the action plan, implementation of these activities can begin by each pertinent partner but under the overall coordination of the multistakeholder body, which may integrate new scientific data or new stakeholders as needed.

3.1. Implement policy-based improvements

Public sector-led interventions should be undertaken in coordination with initiative partners and according to the action plan, which can be periodically updated and revised based on delays, progress, or updated information.

- Examples:
    - setting a minimum floor for seafood production performance through policy and/or regulatory levers
    - data collection and analysis to improve understanding of seafood production performance
    - improving regulations and associated enforcement regarding human and labor rights, right to organize, and equity

Note that JIs are not intended to be separate from and run parallel to existing government-led fisheries management frameworks for a particular geography and jurisdiction. JIs instead seek to address the siloed way in which these policy efforts have oftentimes been implemented, with limited engagement by market and industry actors, resulting in slow adoption of best practices for seafood production. As such, the existing fisheries management and stakeholder consultation efforts that are being led by governments should be incorporated within the multistakeholder JIs' efforts. The latter will help ensure that incentives among the pertinent public and private stakeholders remain aligned, enabling collective action in securing holistic seafood production improvements at scale. In Fiji, for instance, the government's efforts to adopt a fair and rights-based crewing policy to ensure worker safety in tuna fisheries are being embedded within the JI. The domestic tuna industry, which is also a participant in the JI and has a keen interest in addressing social responsibility in their fleets, is now able to engage more effectively in the improvement efforts through the JI multistakeholder platform.

3.2. Implement private-sector improvements

Private-sector-led interventions should be undertaken in coordination with initiative partners and according to the work plan, which can be periodically updated and revised based on delays, progress, or updated information.

- Examples:
    - gear trials to assess potential to reduce species and ecosystem impacts
    - adoption of best management practices specific to farm type (e.g., small/medium/large, extensive/intensive, open/closed, fed/unfed).
    - voluntary commitments such as expanding electronic monitoring beyond the existing regulatory requirements
    - conducting human rights due diligence processes within supply chains
    - adopting supplier codes of conduct for human and labor rights and equity

NGOs, scientists, and other JI partners should provide guidance in the design and implementation of these private-sector-led improvements. Market supply chain commitments will also play a critical role in driving the implementation of JIs, helping to ensure that the incremental costs of these initiatives can be offset by the benefits derived from longer-term preferential sourcing arrangements.

3.3. Monitor performance against identified metrics

After implementation has begun, stakeholders must regularly and publicly track progress against the milestones laid out in the action plan and as noted above, ensure tracking is as transparent as possible. This ensures that JI participants can credibly and publicly make associated claims. (See *Section 1.6: Claims* for additional information.)

As best practice, progress against the objectives and timelines outlined in the JI's action plan should be reported publicly every three to six months. After determining the agreed-upon frequency of monitoring and reporting, performance should be tracked against the outcome and pathway indicators identified in Step 2.4 and using the guidance and monitoring framework developed in Step 2.5.

A consistent monitoring and reporting template, tied to outcome and pathway indicators mapped directly to core objectives of the initiative, should be designed to enable continuous reporting, and improve processes and impacts over the course of the initiative.

3.4. Verify monitoring results and performance claims

Thoughtful, effective, and robust verification systems are critical to the credibility of the JI, especially when public-facing claims are being made. (See *Section 1.6: Claims* and *Section 1.7: Verification* for additional information.) A handful of organizations, including ISEAL, have developed guidelines on how credible verification and assurance should work for JIs (ISEAL 2022b); we suggest reviewing these documents for more detailed guidance.

The final verification approach should strive to meet the four key principles for verification of performance in jurisdictional projects defined by ISEAL (2022b): consistency, competence, impartiality, and transparency. Verification is ideally conducted by an independent third party to help ensure alignment with these principles.

3.5. Publicly report results

As these initiatives develop and advance, a public platform may be developed to house multiple seafood JIs in a consistent and robust manner. In the interim, individual JIs may choose to develop a website for their efforts. Elements that might be posted on the website may include a summary work plan, public and regular progress updates against the action plan, overall goals and metrics of the JI, participants and their roles, any data sources/scientific information, and funding sources for the initiative. As the initiative progresses, transparency around verification and reporting progress against goals must be included, especially once claims are used by participants. The website should also include a mechanism for feedback and guidance on responsible parties and roles. **Ultimately, there should be transparency in the structure, commitment, agreements, financing, and actions of the initiative, and this information should be publicly available.** Noting the diversity of stakeholders involved in JIs, mechanisms should be established that allow reporting by the various actors to be bottom up as well as top down.

Section 3. Importers, Brands, and End Buyers

Incentives to Participate in Jurisdictional Initiatives for Seafood

There are several reasons for seafood importers and end buyers to participate in a seafood JI. The following list includes incentives for importers, brands, and retailers to potentially incorporate JIs into their overall sustainability portfolio.

- **Long-term supply:** Improved production practices, technical training support, engaged communities, and enhanced conservation areas can help increase productivity and secure the long-term health of a given geographic production area, stabilizing supply. In addition, engagement in JIs can open new sourcing opportunities that may not have been previously available, adding shock-absorbing redundancy within sourcing geographies.
- **Proactive engagement in policy and regulations:** Engagement with policy-makers and government agencies as part of the JI process can provide industry members a way to proactively help shape environmental management and labor policies and their subsequent enforcement. In a world where many industries face increasing scrutiny, proactive engagement can help improve laggard performance and industry-wide reputational risks. In addition, buyer engagement may be an important and necessary tool in some geographies to encourage subsequent participation by policy-makers.
- **Reduction of leakage issues:** Leakage issues can be reduced through a JI. Traditional CRI efforts may avoid or limit harm locally, but the harm may be displaced nearby or transferred to other entities rather than eliminated. Working at a jurisdictional scale may reduce leakage; however, some pressures may move to other jurisdictions. Appropriate regional, national, and/or international policies will likely be necessary to eliminate issues altogether.
- **Scaled versions of systems needed for certification:** JIs can deliver a scaled version of the systems individual companies need in place to obtain certification. For example, if a certification standard requires that a company demonstrate zero bycatch from supplier vessels, a JI could develop a jurisdiction-wide system to monitor bycatch, which would obviate the need for companies to do so within their own supply chains and thus make it easier to meet certification requirements.
- **Cost-sharing:** Through the multistakeholder collaboration, companies can share costs with the public sector and other private-sector partners to complete essential actions that would likely be prohibitively expensive for any individual company to complete on their own (UNDP 2019).
- **Commitments beyond the supply chain:** Via JIs, companies can tackle issues that must be addressed beyond individual supply chains, such as climate resiliency and biodiversity loss. Seafood JIs provide a framework to contribute meaningfully to restoration, protection, and sustainable production that can address these larger, systemic challenges while simultaneously supporting individual corporate social responsibility and sustainability targets. A combination of CRI efforts and JIs can help demonstrate that seafood suppliers and buyers care about *both* the immediate impacts of seafood production and the long-

term sustainability of seafood supply chains, decent work, and the inclusiveness of local communities and IPs in setting goals and decision-making.
- **Claims:** When supported by robust monitoring and evaluation systems, JIs can provide companies with a way to credibly claim positive impacts as part of larger-scale improvements.

It is important to note that JIs should not be a replacement for direct, individual supply chain initiatives and/or continued work with seafood suppliers. Rather, JIs provide a complementary, value-add framework to support jurisdiction-wide environmental, social, and economic improvements that go beyond the sustainability of a single commodity or product. Given issues such as climate resilience, multi-industry impacts, biodiversity loss, and human rights, JIs can be incorporated as a critical framework to help support and strengthen long-term surety of supply.

Role of Importers, Brands, and End Buyers Within Jurisdictional Initiatives for Seafood

The primary goal of a JI is facilitating and promoting effective governance at a jurisdictional level by utilizing synergies, maximizing use of resources, and bringing positive incentives through market drivers. Government efforts alone to reduce ecosystem impacts are significant and immediate and can be politically costly. By contrast, economic benefits (i.e., increased profits) to governments that commit to environmental sustainability and social responsibility can be uncertain, particularly in the short term. Therefore, retailers and other seafood buyers play an important role in incentivizing environmental and socio-economic improvements through strong commitments and preferential sourcing via long-term contracts and other mechanisms.

Where governments have made strong commitments to reduce ecosystem impacts and drive environmental sustainability and social responsibility with clear, time-bound plans and are adhering to those plans, directing purchases and other business to these jurisdictions will create important and positive incentives for market participants at the producer and trader levels. This involvement and public support for efforts can lower perceived “costs” and barriers to addressing key challenges to sustainable development.

On the flip side, companies who are losing business because governments in their production areas are not seriously addressing environmental sustainability and social responsibility can engage governments to advocate for improvements in that jurisdictional area. In some instances, involvement of buyers within a JI may act as an important lever to drive participation of policy-makers. Seafood buyers can clarify market requests through direct engagement with governments or through precompetitive, multistakeholder platforms involving direct and indirect suppliers.

A buyer’s commitment to supporting JIs means they are committing to the transformative potential of a JI by rewarding positive change with purchases, better understanding and taking responsibility for company supply chains and their local and cumulative effects, using influence

and advocacy to bring together various parts of government with local communities and stakeholders to address systemic issues at jurisdictional scales, and becoming involved with the production of products fundamental to a company's portfolio. Table 5 highlights two case studies of how retailers are incorporating JIs into their purchasing practices and sustainability goals.

Table 5. Case studies illustrating two ways in which retailers are incorporating seafood jurisdictional initiatives into their purchasing practices and sustainability goals.

Tesco	Walmart, Inc.
In 2021, the UK supermarket chain Tesco introduced a new "Seascape" sourcing approach to marine sustainability (a similar concept to JI) to ensure whole marine ecosystems are maintained in a healthy and productive way. Through this new approach to tuna sourcing, developed in partnership with WWF, Tesco will work with suppliers and others across the industry to implement a road map that leads to sourcing only from fisheries with an ecosystem-based management (EBM) approach by 2030. The new Seascape approach, which mirrors the landscape approach adopted in the Tesco UK Zero Deforestation Soy Transition Plan (2021), has been specifically designed to align with and build on existing tools and guidelines already widely used by the industry, including the guidelines of the Global Tuna Alliance (GTA), the Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) Tuna Forum, and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) (Seafood Source 2021).	Under Walmart, Inc.'s Project Gigaton™, the company's initiative to engage suppliers in climate action, suppliers report on progress toward emissions reduction across six areas: energy use, nature, waste, packaging, transportation, and product use and design. Suppliers, including seafood suppliers, are encouraged to share their efforts through Project Gigaton™ in three ways, including via sourcing commodities using Walmart's Basic, Better, Best framework. Suppliers that source from a credible jurisdictional initiative (JI) linked to positive environmental, social, and economic impacts are classified as utilizing best practices (Walmart, Inc., 2022). The Basic, Better, Best framework is intended to help suppliers continuously improve from early to more advanced efforts that are transparent, traceable, and impactful and that deliver environmental, economic, and social outcomes across entire landscapes.

How Importers, Brands, and End Buyers Can Engage in Jurisdictional Initiatives for Seafood

ISEAL (2022a) provides steps for how seafood importers and end buyers can prioritize where and to what extent to engage in a JI:

1. Buyers prioritize which jurisdictions to engage in based on where they are potentially well-placed to have positive impacts. Determination of where to engage can consider the following, among other factors:
    a. the company's sourcing footprint
    b. current and future sourcing risks
    c. presence of high social or environmental values and threats to these values
    d. priority issues or regions for the company's broader strategy and with its buyers
    e. existence of collective action initiatives
    f. the company's potential to drive positive outcomes beyond its supply chain

2. Buyers refer to environmental sustainability and social responsibility assessments to determine which issues are critical to address in each prioritized jurisdiction:
    a. the assessments consider the relevance of different issues based on status, trends, drivers, risks, specific vulnerabilities, etc.
    b. the assessments include a participatory process to consider the views of a variety of jurisdictional stakeholders, including producers, community and Indigenous groups, local NGOs and civil society, local government, funding partners, and supply chain companies.

3. Total buyer investment in a jurisdiction is determined per commodity and is commensurate with the company's total global volumes sourced of that commodity:
    a. companies can target their investment or actions to specific regions and do not need to invest in every jurisdiction from which they source.
    b. investments can be financial or in-kind and can support
        i. direct, issue-focused actions in prioritized jurisdictions
        ii. actions that influence the enabling conditions in the jurisdiction
        iii. structural outcomes related to JI, such as co-developing action plans or implementing collective monitoring frameworks
    c. for buyers to engage in a JI, a traceability system must be in place to understand where products are coming from. (See *Section 1.8: Traceability and Transparency* for additional information.)

Determining the relationship between volumes sourced and the scale of investment is challenging, but ideally, buyers sourcing a specific commodity can align on what constitutes a proportionate investment. Sustainability investments or in-kind support in a jurisdiction can complement actions, financing, or preferential sourcing the company is implementing through its direct supply chain, as well as any broader investments it is making to support better practices within the seafood sector (ISEAL 2022b).

The form of company engagement will vary according to the specific circumstances of each JI. It is important to note that seafood buyers should not be tasked with leading JI efforts but rather should empower local teams to facilitate a collaborative approach and help provide necessary resources as dictated by local stakeholder needs. JI activities must be community-led to build the trust needed for any improvement to be lasting and successful. The following are examples of ways that importers and end buyers can support JIs (ISEAL 2022b, Tropical Forest Alliance 2020; UNDP 2019):

- Participate in the multistakeholder development of a JI (as detailed above).
- Precompetitively align seafood companies operating in the same geography to effectively participate in a JI.
- Lead a coalition of companies to participate in public-private collaborations that address specific challenges identified through the JI process.
- Encourage companies, suppliers, and industry associations to participate.

- Provide technical assistance and/or financial support for the process and implementation of the action plan.
- Use advocacy and communications to provide public support for the process.
- Align procurement specifications and supplier contract terms with goals and targets of the JI (e.g., longer-term sourcing contracts).
- Incentivize suppliers to engage in JIs through preferential sourcing based on demonstrated progress in the initiative.
- Incentivize governments to engage in JIs.
- Support fisher/farmer training on best management practices.
- Collaborate on traceability for the jurisdiction.
- Provide feedback on documents published for consultation.

Key factors to consider when engaging in a JI include the time scale and funding. Appropriate time frames of successful JIs often range from eight to 20 years due to the focus on policy change, participatory and MSPs, and ecosystem-level outcomes reliant on collective impact. In addition, long-term financing strategies are critical to cover the multimillion-dollar costs associated with large-scale environmental, social, and economic improvements. Seafood buyers may view JI investments as added costs to current sustainability efforts; however, individual supply chains currently absorb costs in the form of product traceability, verification, certification, and improvement projects. By leveraging activities already being undertaken within specific supply chains and geographies, investments can be utilized as springboards to kick-start larger-scale initiatives that support the stability of seafood sourcing over the long term.

Seafood buyers should also consider supporting JIs in regions where governments have demonstrated commitments to sustainable production, environmental protection, and comprehensive stakeholder engagement. As key JI partners, importers and end buyers can provide external validation and market-based rewards to governments willing to tackle such extensive and complicated projects (CI 2018).

Integration With Current Sustainability Targets

Seafood JIs are complementary to conventional CRI efforts and can be used to build off initiatives already underway to improve the environmental sustainability and social responsibility of seafood supply chains and sourcing geographies. As JIs aim to address sustainability issues across their full political and ecological ranges, encompass human and labor rights considerations, and incorporate broad and deep stakeholder engagement, JIs also create enabling conditions that help CRI efforts be more readily achieved, impactful, and/or expanded. Sourcing policies that already incorporate CRI targets can be augmented to also include objectives of JIs, amplifying (but not replacing) targets already set for specific geographies and/or commodities. In this way, companies can expand the reach of their sustainability commitments, setting targets that apply across production systems and not simply related to specific products or commodities.

Similar to CRI efforts, JIs must include a strong monitoring and evaluation framework and associated, relevant metrics. (See *Section 1.5: Metrics* for additional information.) Any claims made

by engaged stakeholders should be consistent with best-practice guidelines, and verification of claims made is crucial for buyers to ensure transparency and maintain credibility. (See *Section 1.6: Claims* and *Section 1.7: Verification* for additional information.)

Section 4. Policy-Makers and Management Authorities

Seafood JIs are designed to achieve a high level of government involvement. Multiple references and experts confirmed that policy-relevant boundaries are a key feature of JIs, as the underlying theory of change is to engage the leading decision-making authorities for natural resource planning and use and improve both policies and practices that directly contribute to conservation and social gains. Therefore, government must be a core stakeholder and, often, the driving force behind a JI.

Depending on the scale of the initiative, local, regional, and/or national government agencies may be involved, and each agency or administrative level may be motivated by different incentives. In many instances, a combination of levels of government is necessary to implement a full JI strategy. For example, national-level authorities may oversee high-level policies related to ocean/water use rights, trade, and supply chain transparency, while sub-national agencies oversee development of ocean/water use plans, and local authorities oversee licensing and permitting processes. Most current JIs are set up at a sub-national level, with leadership at the state, provincial, or regional level. For any level of government that is required, the JI depends on strong leadership from the head of that administrative tier (i.e., governors for state or province-level initiatives) that is closely engaged in the seascape. This leadership also includes a strong commitment to sustainability.

Government engagement is a distinguishing characteristic of JIs but must be married with formal multistakeholder participation and a decision-making platform to qualify as a JI. Initiatives that lack government engagement, such as supply chain improvements, fail to fit into the JI definition.

“As noted elsewhere, sustainability at the jurisdictional level is a difficult and long-term process. Implementing jurisdictional sustainability plans or ‘road maps’ will be expensive, and government leaders willing to take on the challenge will need to see that their courage and commitments are being recognized and rewarded during the journey and not only at the end point” (CI 2018).

Development and implementation of these road maps are critical parts of the JI process. In many cases, the beginning of the process may uncover additional and unknown problems or conflicts. Governments and other JI participants should be supported and encouraged to build the appropriate institutions, processes, and mechanisms for adaptive management to deal with these issues and challenges as they arise.

Incentives for Management Authorities to Adopt a Seafood Jurisdictional Initiative as a Part of Policy Strategies

As mandated managers of aquatic resources, management authorities (governments or governance bodies like regional fishery management organizations (RFMOs)) benefit when they

adopt a JI into their policy strategies and ensure valuable seafood resources are well-managed and ecosystems are healthy. While traditional CRI efforts have relied more heavily on the industry and market actors, seafood JIs provide government authorities with an opportunity to play a critical role. The obligations and potential benefits for management authorities are as follows:

Fulfillment of international commitments: Engaging in a JI can support national management authorities to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to achieve international commitments, such as United Nations (UN) SDGs, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in relation to sustainable use of aquatic resources, the integrity of aquatic ecosystems, the well-being of people, and mitigation of climate change. Many governments have been actively working on policies to deliver these commitments, and their engagement in a seafood JI increases the visibility of their actions to meet these public commitments.

Achieve national/local marine conservation, climate, and social targets: Seafood JIs aim to deliver ecosystem-based biodiversity targets (ecosystem function, cumulative impacts, and social inclusion). By engaging in these initiatives, management authorities are likely to achieve multiple national conservation targets rather than single targets. Again, government engagement in a JI increases the visibility of their actions to meet these public commitments.

Empowerment of local governments: For local/sub-national governments, a seafood JI provides a platform to not only support the delivery of national targets but also assert their control and influence in ways that can showcase their own regional reputation and increase revenues to their local areas.

Inclusive engagement of stakeholders in resource management: The multistakeholder participation and co-management elements of a JI provide a platform for management authorities to ensure all voices are heard. Issues can be addressed through open and honest dialogue among the stakeholders. A seafood JI also provides structure to better coordinate and leverage resources across local, regional, and national governance levels, which could potentially improve efficiency.

Cohesive policy reform and implementation: Successful policy development and implementation requires support from stakeholders, particularly market stakeholders (e.g., seafood businesses), to translate the reform into real-world benefits. Engaging in a JI allows management authorities to ensure policy reform is practical and feasible, as implementation of these policies will be tested by market stakeholders.

Stabilize production and improve social benefits: Large-scale management that is sustainable should stabilize production of the sector, which helps stabilize jobs and revenue/gross domestic product (GDP) for governments. Where JIs support livelihoods, increased income and stable production can help lift the quality of life in these communities.

Align political agendas: JIs provide government with the opportunity to align political agendas across different ministries and departments so that obstacles are addressed, and more collective momentum is created across a shared vision (UNDP 2019).

Attract increased investment and support for sector development: Having a stronger shared vision and a clearer action plan for sustainable seafood production provides a better context for attracting increased investment and support (across companies and international donors) for appropriate/responsible sector development (UNDP 2019).

Role of Policy-Makers Within Jurisdictional Initiatives for Seafood

Management authorities have typically played supportive and advisory roles within conventional CRI approaches, which are typically driven by market players. Conversely, management authorities/policy-makers play a lead, pivotal role in JIs, as explained in detail here. There can be no JI without the government playing a critical role.

Defining a clear jurisdictional boundary: A rigorous JI requires clear and coherent government policies to support improvement actions and to create a level playing field for all seafood producers. As such, a clear and defined jurisdictional boundary (geographically or geopolitically) is needed for which policies can be enforced.

Ultimate resources managers: Policy-makers, such as relevant ministers and their departments (e.g., fisheries, marine, labor, environment) are accountable for managing resources and safeguarding the people who rely on these resources. These policy-makers have the final decisions on catch levels for fish stocks, where fish/shrimp farms can operate, how workers in the seafood production system are treated, and ensuring climate-resilient management. Commitments and leadership for sustainable seafood production and social welfare by management authorities are crucial for the success of a JI.

Delivery of ecosystem-based and multiple targets: JIs focus on delivering high-level ecosystem-based and biodiversity targets (including maintenance and/or restoration of critical ecosystems and threatened species, increasing climate resilience, addressing cumulative impacts), as well as ensuring safe and decent working conditions, inclusion of IPs and local communities, and enhancement of the economic profitability of those involved. Achieving these targets is beyond the control of individual seafood supply chains and requires the involvement of national or regional governance.

Local JIs need policy support at the national level: Implementation of a JI at a local level often requires alignment and leadership of national policies to create enabling conditions so these policies can work more synergistically. For example, in Brazil, the Espiritu Santo state-level JI has benefited from the revision of the Forest Code that helped the alignment of multiple national policies.

Integrated and adaptive seascape management: A JI aims to mitigate impacts from multiple uses and provide resilience to climate-driven changes in the ecosystem (such as stock shifts),

market needs, and stakeholder interests. Best practice suggests that JIs align goals with international and national biodiversity and climate targets. At the same time, JIs should also incorporate climate and marine conservation projections to support adaptation and resilience.

Integrating the full life cycle of the production model and interdependency of the ecosystem: This is particularly important for aquatic ecosystems, where life cycles of commercial species occur across different habitats (e.g., salmon) and adults may travel great distances. Focusing on protecting and restoring essential fish habitats, such as nursery and spawning grounds, could provide an opportunity for advancing sustainable production across multiple fisheries within a single jurisdiction. For aquaculture, open production models will need to expand the boundaries of the JI to consider cumulative risks within the larger shared watershed to account for water quality and access issues, along with disease risk. This can only be achieved by the active involvement of policy-makers as the leaders of a JI.

How Policy-Makers Can Engage in Jurisdictional Initiatives for Seafood

Like seafood buyers, policy-makers (i.e., governments and seafood resource management authorities) are crucial to the success of a JI. The following practices that inform how policy-makers can best contribute to seafood JIs complement those identified within the *How Importers and End Buyers Can Engage in Jurisdictional Initiatives for Seafood* section (adapted from ISEAL 2022a).

Prioritizing Actions

Policy-makers should work with stakeholders to identify the policy gaps associated with seafood production and nature protection/conservation across the jurisdiction. In addition, policy-makers should engage in the baseline assessment for the JI to help identify policy gaps for critical issues in relation to nature, climate, and social aspects, which become obstacles to sustainable seafood production. This could cover a wide range of policies, including fishery management plans (FMPs), bycatch reduction/mitigation measures, MSP regulations, and human rights policies. Once policy gaps are identified, policy-makers will be able to identify existing public and private resources that have already been invested in the jurisdiction and resources gap for implementing a successful JI.

It should be noted that government interest in fisheries/aquaculture farms may be limited in some countries, especially at a sub-national level, without strong incentives from end buyers. Furthermore, resource management and governance capacity are generally weak around the world and may require substantial investment, particularly regarding national and international financial mechanisms, to support the long-term process of a JI.

Maximizing Impact

Once policy gaps have been identified, government and management authorities should develop policy and conservation measures to address key issues that were identified through engagement with stakeholders and baseline assessments. While local governments/authorities can support actions of market players and the producers at the ground/site level, some issues can only be addressed through changes of policy at the national and sometimes international levels (e.g.,

tuna-related policies). As such, the leadership of the national government and support of local/sub-national governments are crucial.

To ensure the effectiveness of the JI's monitoring framework, policy-makers should work with initiative partners to develop legal data requirements that could allow the initiative to measure progress against local, national, and international targets and commitments.

Policy-makers can also provide or realign required investments (financial, enforcement, and/or other forms) to support a JI. Leadership from the management authorities is particularly important in seeking international financial support for the initiative.

Measuring Progress and Communicating Results

Policy-makers play an important role in effectively monitoring and reporting on progress and communicating results. Policy-makers should do the following:

- Work with JI partners, in particular the project developers, to support the development of a collaborative monitoring framework with data that aligns with policy objectives. This allows policy-makers to demonstrate that investment and supports policy reforms to achieve the desired targets.
- Work with their associated organizations, such as national research institutes, to provide support for the validation of data (e.g., recovery of fish stocks, impacts to habitat, and socio-economic performance) in relation to the initiative's objectives.
- Work with JI partners to develop the validation of contributions to the initiative as well as possible claims.

Conclusion

As governments, seafood companies, and civil society organizations around the world seek opportunities to improve seafood production systems and commit to place-based ecosystem approaches, opportunities for seafood JIs are greater than ever. Initiatives that tackle systemic barriers to sustainable production are an important tool for working toward a future where ocean ecosystems can continue to support the people and businesses who depend on them. By bringing stakeholders together (such as IPs and local communities, government representatives, civil society organizations, and seafood supply chain companies) to implement and support these initiatives, we can deliver significant conservation outcomes by addressing environmental, social, and economic barriers to environmental sustainability and social responsibility at relevant political and ecological scales. We hope this guide will help you join these efforts.

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