

## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT 2021-22

Established in 2010, Associated Seafoods brought together two of Scotland's specialist seafood companies – Lossie Seafoods, a smoked fish specialist and Moray Seafoods, a leading business in shellfish production. We are now one of Scotland's leading seafood processors with a strong focus on Scottish Smoked Salmon and Scottish *Nephrops* Scampi Cores.

As a responsible business with a proud heritage, we believe that trust, transparency and integrity are essential elements of a good business philosophy. Our Corporate Social Responsibility statement considers the social and environmental impacts our operations have on all of the stakeholders that we interact with.

### Business Values

At ASL, we have 5 values at the heart of our enterprise: Integrity, Compliance, Food Values, Respect and Customers and Consumers.

### Covid-19 and Beyond

2020 brought the ongoing global pandemic and we have all had to learn to adapt to new ways of working. In early 2020, a Continuity Management Team was formed to introduce new protocols to ensure business continuity and staff safety, including, but not limited to:

- Daily temperature checks and temperature controlled entry points
- Increased sanitising stations, screens and PPE including face coverings in all areas of the site
- Staggered start and break times and reduced capacity in social areas
- Restricted access to visitors and increased health screening for new/returning staff
- Increased cleaning schedules and the deployment of extra cleaning personnel
- Home working for office staff and furlough for high risk individuals
- The appointment of COVID monitors to support staff in understanding and following protocols
- Use of virtual meetings wherever possible to minimise risk
- Two vaccination days held by NHS Grampian to offer all staff members their first and second doses of the vaccine
- Restructure of office and meeting areas to increase space for social distancing. In doing so we: doubled the space available in the factory changing areas; created an extra canteen and created two large offices ahead of the return of home and furloughed workers.

The changes over the past year are now an intrinsic part of our working lives as we plan the latest expansion of the business. Refurbishment of the former Lossie Seafoods factory site, more recently used as a storage facility, is almost complete and expected to be operational in late 2021. The refurbishment of this site will increase operational capacity in an additional factory and will also create many new jobs for the local community.

### Sustainability

Sustainability is important for a wider range of issues beyond that of sourcing seafood, and we seek to ensure that sustainability is a central consideration in all of our business decisions, from the sourcing of goods and services to our manufacturing and distribution operations. In order to guide and align our thinking about sustainability, we recognise the role of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. Established in 2015, the UN SDGs provide a global agenda to produce a more sustainable future for all. The 17 goals embrace all three pillars of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. We are working to ensure our business aligns with these goals to help achieve the SDGs by 2030 and have recognised 4 that our business currently has the greatest influence on:



## Responsible Sourcing

### Sustainable Seafood Coalition

The Sustainable Seafood Coalition (SSC) is a collaborative partnership of businesses that work together to address key issues in seafood sustainability. By becoming a member, businesses agree to implement their two Voluntary Codes of Conduct on Responsible Sourcing and Environmental Claims.



To help drive the sustainable seafood movement, in 2020 ASL became a member of the SSC. This helps us to establish consistency on sourcing and labelling across the seafood industry, and improve policy alignment with our customers and suppliers. Our Responsible Sourcing Policy is built upon the SSC codes and outlines the requirement for all seafood sources to be risk assessed in terms of sustainability to ensure responsible procurement at all times.

We are passionate about working towards sustainability. As a finite resource, it is critically important that our wild captured seafood comes from sustainable sources, as this not only ensures a healthy marine environment, but also that our business has longevity.

### Aquaculture

Our product range includes a variety of farmed fish and so we are aware of the important role of Good Aquaculture Practice in the fish farming sector, both as a means of producing healthy and nutritious food, and also in managing and mitigating the impacts that farms may have on the environment in which they operate. All of our farmed fish comes from farms that are certified to a standard that has been benchmarked by the Global Seafood Sustainability Index (GSSI). At this time, this includes the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), the Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) Best Aquaculture Practices or Global G.A.P certification standards.



### Wild Caught Seafood

As part of our commitments to responsible sourcing, our wild caught seafood is sourced from fisheries that are certified to a third party sustainability certification, such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), or are part of a credible Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) in order to drive improvements within the fishery.



We are members of the steering group for the ongoing Project UK Fishery Improvement Project for *Nephrops*, and are working alongside a range of interested stakeholders such as retailers, NGO's, processors, fishing organisations and scientists, in order to guide the fishery towards a level consistent with MSC certification.

We do not condone Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing and will never knowingly deal with suppliers that are involved in any sort of IUU activity or fishing. Our supply vessels are regularly checked against global IUU vessel blacklists.

We never purchase species that are classified as 'endangered' or 'critically endangered' on the IUCN Red list or CITES Appendices and we will not trade with any business that is directly involved in the targeted capture and/or commercial slaughter of non-seafood species such as marine mammals, sea turtles or are involved in the practice of shark finning.

## Environmental

### Going Green

The food manufacturing industry is responsible for one third of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. This year we are working with RSK and have started to measure our carbon footprint for the first time. We are currently still in assessment but will use the results to inform and develop a carbon management plan to reduce our emissions and mitigate our contribution towards the climate crisis. While still conducting the assessment we have already made some notable progress:

- Installation of a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Plant in the summer of 2020 – an efficient source of power that allows us to capture wasted energy to heat water in the factory and to heat roof spaces and workshops. We are also having another CHP installed at our new manufacturing site.
- Replacement of all lighting on site with LED bulbs which are 80% more efficient than conventional styles of lighting as only 5% of the energy they use is wasted as heat (compared to 95%)
- We plan to phase out all our petrol and diesel company cars by changing them to either fully electric or hybrid models by mid 2023 and have phased out several to date
- Installation of numerous electric charging points for company vehicles at our new manufacturing site.
- No food is wasted – any by-products created from production are used to make fish meal and fish oils

### At-Sea Innovation

This year we are collaborating with Marks & Spencers and Young's Seafood on a bycatch reduction project in the Mixed Demersal Fishery in the North Sea. The trial began in April on board our supply vessel, *The Virtuous*, and will assess the impact of Safety Net Technologies 'Pisces' on unwanted bycatch in the fishing nets. Pisces is a configurable set of LED lights that has the ability to create an increasingly selective fishing gear by either guiding unwanted fish towards escape routes or deterring them from ever entering the net.

The trial is due to run for a 12-month period and all data is being monitored and analysed by crew or scientists. We are delighted to have supported this innovative project and to see the interesting results.

More information on the project is available at:

<https://sntech.co.uk/blog/asl-ms-youngs-and-sntech-partner-up-to-support-british-fishermen-to-push-the-ne-scottish-mixed-demersal-fishery-towards-bycatch-reduction-and-msc-certification/>

# Modern Slavery & Ethical Trade

## At-Sea Supply Chain

We recognise the challenges in assuring decent working conditions for crew on board fishing vessels whilst they are operating at sea. For this reason, we have been supportive of the development and roll-out of The Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard (RFVS), a voluntary vessel-based programme, certifying high standards of crew welfare and responsible catching practices aboard fishing vessels. The strong focus on crew welfare on vessels is underpinned by the Work in Fishing Convention ILO 188.

This new RFVS standard was rolled out globally in mid2020 and has been successfully implemented on several vessels so far. This year we started working with our local suppliers to sign them up to join the group certification model that was being tested in the Scottish White Fish Producers Association (SWFPA) group. The initial group to trial this method of certification were vessels previously certified to the RFS and through our work, one of our supply vessels, the Steadfast Hope, was the first to go into the group scheme that had not been previously certified. The Steadfast Hope is also the first in our entire supply chain to be certified to the new RFVS.

We will continue to engage with our supply base with the vision that all vessels that supply us are either certified to the RFVS, or are actively in the process of becoming so.

We have been engaged supporters of the Seafood Ethics Action Alliance (SEA Alliance) since 2020. This pre-competitive engagement group address key ethical issues within seafood supply chains. The SEA Alliance works collaboratively to develop guidance on the practical implementation of such supply chain tools as the PAS 1550 Code of Practice, BRC IUU Advisory Note (2015) as well as ILO C188.

## Modern Slavery

At Associated Seafoods we have a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery and we are committed to acting ethically with integrity and transparency in all business dealings and relationships, including implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure that modern slavery and human trafficking are not taking place anywhere within ASL as well as in any of our supply chains.

We are a corporate Partner of Scotland Against Modern Slavery, a collaborative group of partners sharing experience and helping to eradicate modern slavery by tackling issues and raising awareness.

## Ethical Trade

We recognise the responsibility that we have to operate ethically. Promoting decent working conditions in our factories and supply chains is an important part of our commitment to acting in a socially responsible manner. Our Ethical Standards Policy is in place for our direct work force, and ethical working conditions in our upstream supply chains are based on the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) base code and the Conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). All of our staff are given training on the ETI base code at induction.

Our Supplier membership of the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange (SEDEX) allows our customers to have full visibility of our supply chain to ensure continuous improvement and we are a partner of Stronger 2gether which aims to tackle hidden labour exploitation.

In 2021 we have joined the Food Network for Ethical Trade (FNET) and will use their tools and expertise to inform our due diligence approach towards managing ethical trade and human rights within global supply chains.

Our full Modern Slavery and Ethical Standards policies are available on our website at:

<https://www.associatedseafoods.com/our-policies>



## ASL in the Community

Our business is at the heart of our local community and so we are aware of the importance of encouraging and informing the next generation about the benefits and opportunities of working in the seafood industry. We work closely with local primary and secondary schools to teach and inspire young people about the career opportunities available in the seafood sector and we often run recipe competitions in schools where the students use our salmon as the main ingredient.

We have close links to the Moray Chamber of Commerce and Moray Council, as well as working with national initiatives such as Developing the Young Workforce and the Career Ready Programme. Several of our staff members have taken part as a mentor within the Career Ready Programme and we have hosted several mentees in summer internship positions. In 2021 we even had our first Alumni mentee become a first-time mentor.

During the past year we have tried to support our local communities in different ways:

- We supported our local food banks by donating some of our delicious Salmon
- We partnered with local smokehouse, Meat Monsters, and donated sides of fresh Scottish Salmon in which they hot smoked and delivered as a surprise to keyworkers as a thanks for their ongoing services on the frontline during the pandemic
- We sponsored a local S6 school group for their uniforms to conduct PE classes in Primary Schools
- ASL staff collectively donated many bags of clothing to the Friends Helping the Homeless charity in Aberdeen over the 2020 Christmas period
- We collected over 200 Easter eggs for the 2021 Moray Easter Egg Appeal
- We raised money for the Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Group during Childhood Cancer Awareness Month 2021

