

## SEAFOOD PROGRESS: BUY-LOW FOODS

Seafood Progress profile as published in July 2021.



*Report generated on: August 24th, 2021*

### REPORTING PERIOD

August 2020 - July 2021

### LOCATION

British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan

### NUMBER OF STORES

38

### WEBSITE

<http://www.buy-lowfoods.com>

## RETAILER SNAPSHOT

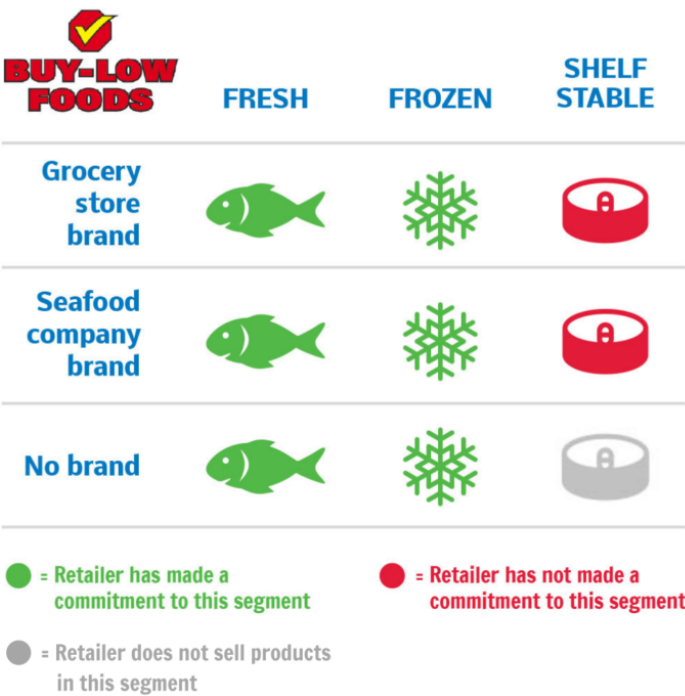
**Environmental Sustainability Commitment.** Buy-Low Foods achieved its commitment to remove all red-listed seafood in 2015 and has since committed to procuring products that are Recommended by Ocean Wise or rated either 'Good Alternative' or 'Best Choice' by Seafood Watch, or from fisheries and farms that are engaged in credible improvement projects. This commitment applies to all of Buy-Low's fresh and frozen seafood products (see infographic below) sold in all its store banners, and is supported by an effective traceability policy. Uniquely among major Canadian retailers, Buy-Low Foods does not sell any open net-pen farmed Atlantic salmon due to sustainability concerns.

**Social Responsibility Commitment.** Buy-Low Foods' commitment to social responsibility refers to credible international standards but does not include a traceability policy or timelines.

**Scope of Commitment.** See below for information on which types of products are included in the scope of Buy-Low Foods' sustainable seafood policy.

# COMMITMENT SCOPE

How retailers' sustainable seafood policies and commitments apply to different segments of their products.



*Note: Some shelf stable private label products, like smoked salmon, are covered by the policy, but items such as canned tuna are not.*

**Grocery store brands:** Owned and controlled by Buy-Low Foods

**Seafood company brands:** Owned by companies that supply many retailers

**No brand:** Fresh and frozen seafood packaged without branding

## WHAT CAN CONSUMERS DO TO HELP?

*Take action!*

Buy-Low Foods has made noteworthy improvements in the last year, but there is still important work to be done. Retailers listen closely to what **YOU** have to say. Leverage that power to drive important changes throughout the supply chain!

Select a topic to **ADVOCATE** for Buy-Low Foods to improve.

- Social Responsibility
- Transparency
- Supporting Industry Improvements

Another way to take action is to let retailers know that their efforts are noticed and that you want them to continue on the path towards best practice.

Select a topic to ACKNOWLEDGE Buy-Low Foods' efforts.

- ▶ Education
- ▶ Store Banners
- ▶ Supporting Industry Improvements

See below for the remainder of Buy-Low Foods' 2021 profile summary.

- ▶ More retailer information

Note: In the process of developing this profile, SeaChoice corresponded with Glen Genereux, Meat Buyer/Meat Merchandising Manager at Buy-Low Foods.

STEP 1: DOES THE RETAILER HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE COMMITMENT ON SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD?



If it looks like you are only seeing the score for one year it is because the score did not change from year to year.

STEP ELEMENTS

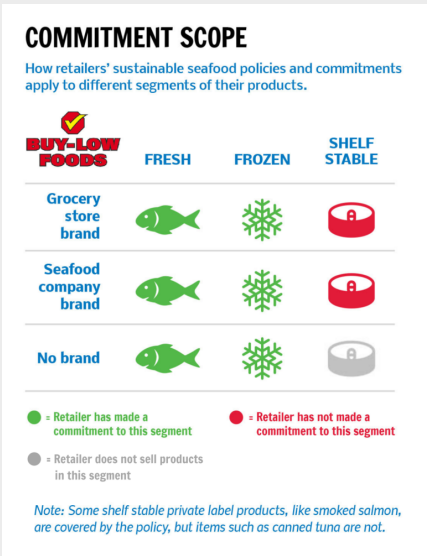
1.1 Has a publicly available commitment or policy to source more environmentally sustainable seafood

Buy-Low Foods



SCORING RATIONALE

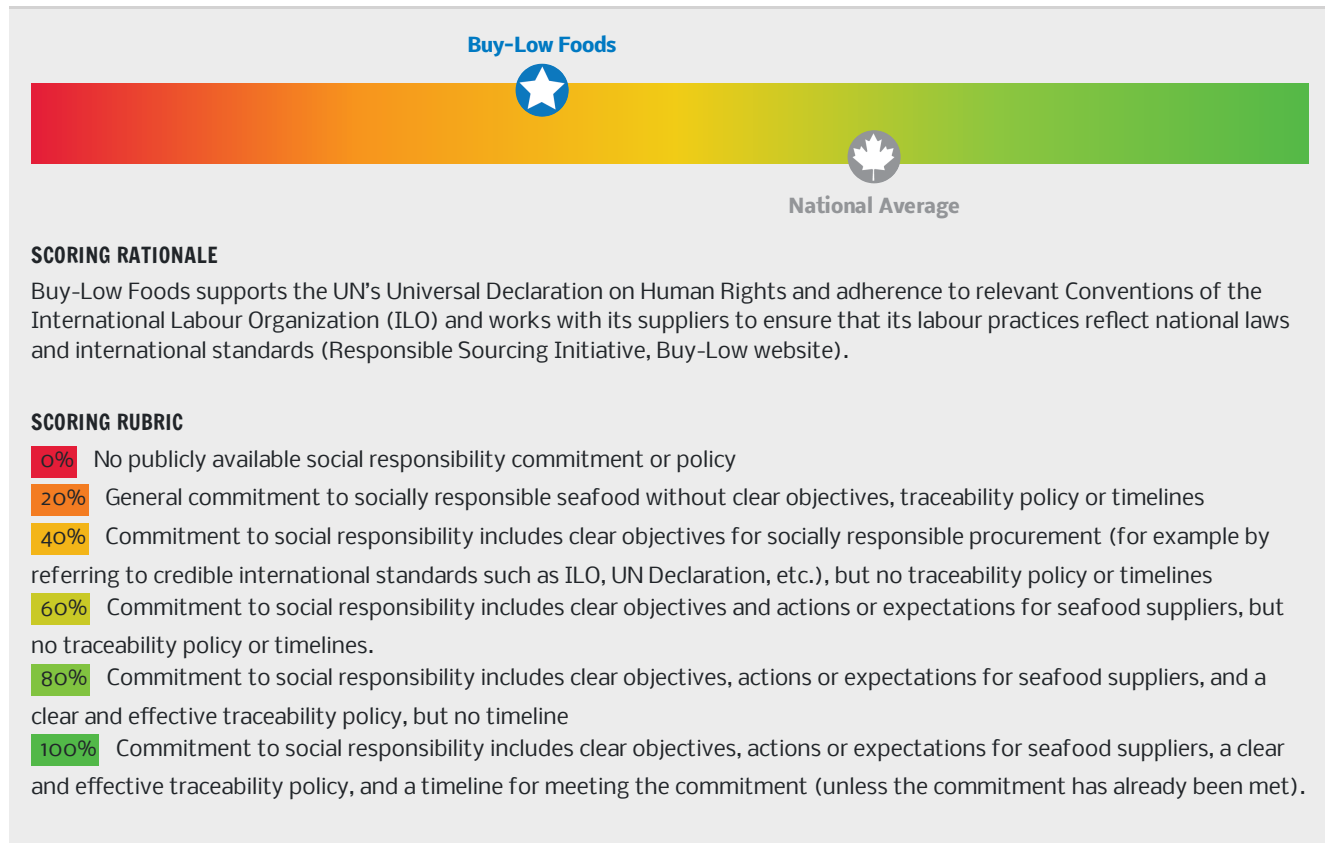
Buy-Low Foods' Sustainable Seafood Reference Manual (unpublished, 2013) reports that its sustainable seafood commitment was to, by 2015, ensure that all fresh and frozen seafood were from sustainable and traceable sources, or were in a credible improvement project. The goal to remove all red-listed (as determined by Seafood Watch) seafood products from Buy-Low Foods' stores was achieved in 2015.



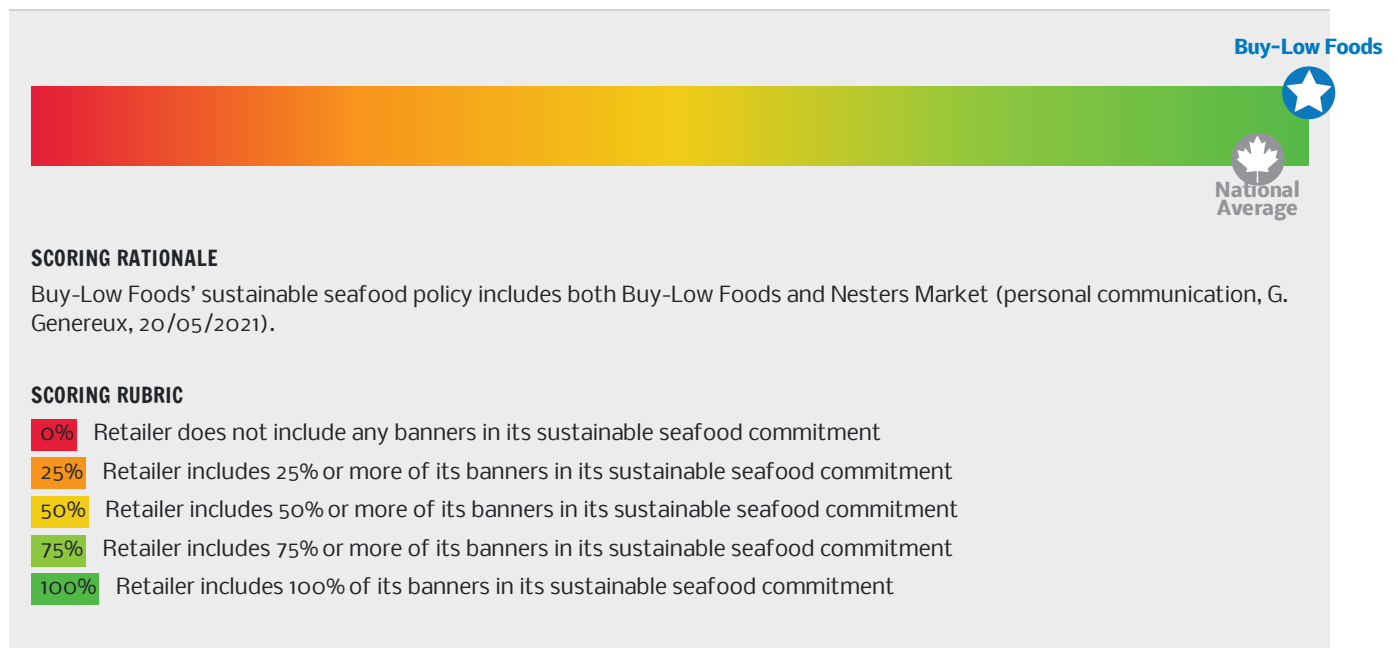
SCORING RUBRIC

- 0% No publicly available environmental sustainability commitment or policy
- 20% General commitment to environmentally sustainable seafood without clear objectives, traceability policy or timelines
- 40% Commitment to environmental sustainability that includes clear objectives for sustainable procurement, but no traceability policy or timelines
- 60% Commitment to environmental sustainability includes clear objectives that are supported by references to credible standards (such as Seafood Watch or Ocean Wise rankings, eco-certifications, etc.), but no traceability policy or timelines
- 80% Commitment to environmental sustainability includes clear objectives that are supported by references to credible standards and a clear and effective traceability policy, but no timeline
- 100% Commitment to environmental sustainability includes clear objectives that are supported by references to credible standards, a clear and effective traceability policy, and a timeline for meeting the commitment (unless the commitment has already been met).

## 1.2 Has a publicly available commitment or policy to source more socially responsible seafood?



## 1.3 Does the retailer cover all banners that sell seafood in its sustainable seafood commitment?



1.4 Does the retailer cover all shelf stable and national brand products in its sustainable seafood commitment?

Buy-Low Foods



National Average

SCORING RATIONALE

Buy-Low Foods’ sustainable seafood policy does not cover its private label or national brand shelf stable products, but is working on bringing these product categories under its commitment (personal communication, G. Genereux, 20/04/2021).

SCORING RUBRIC

- 0% Retailer’s commitment covers neither all of their shelf stable or national brand. products
- 50% Retailer’s commitment covers all of their shelf stable or national brand products
- 100% Retailer’s commitment covers all of their shelf stable AND national brand products

STEP 2: IS THE RETAILER COLLECTING DATA TO SUPPORT THEIR COMMITMENT?

Buy-Low Foods



National Average

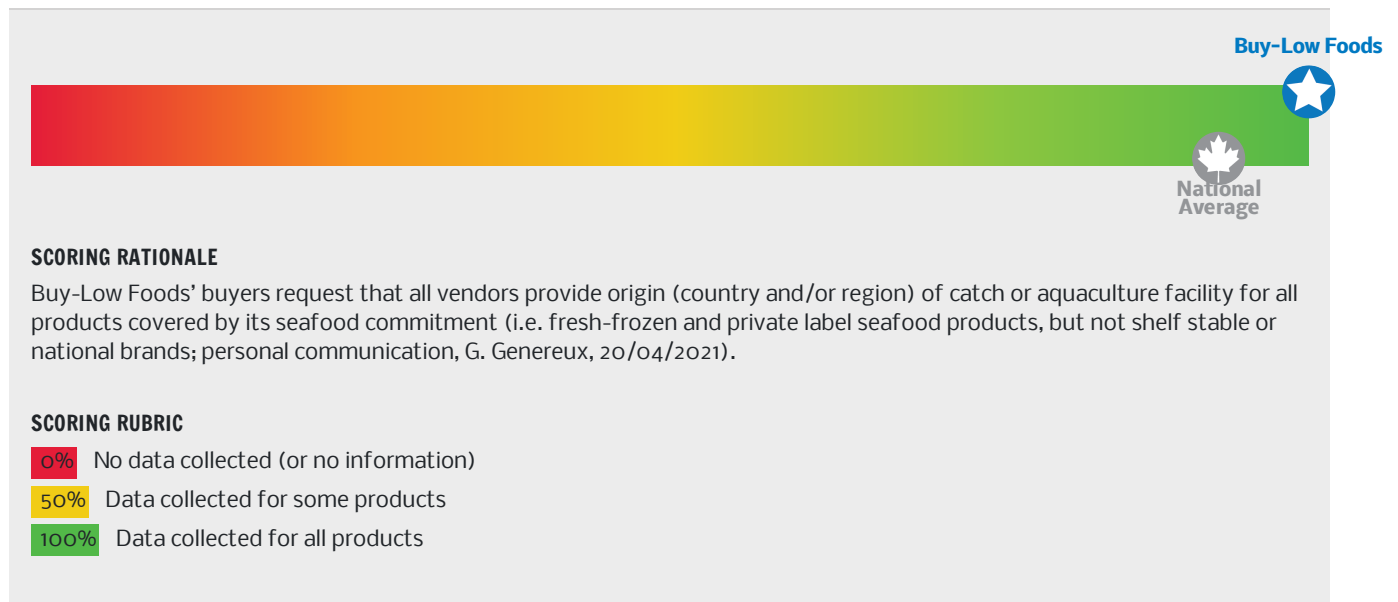
What information is the retailer collecting to monitor the environmental and social sustainability of their seafood products?

The step score is based on the average of Step 2 key performance indicators (KPIs, or step elements) listed below; click the + signs for more detailed information.

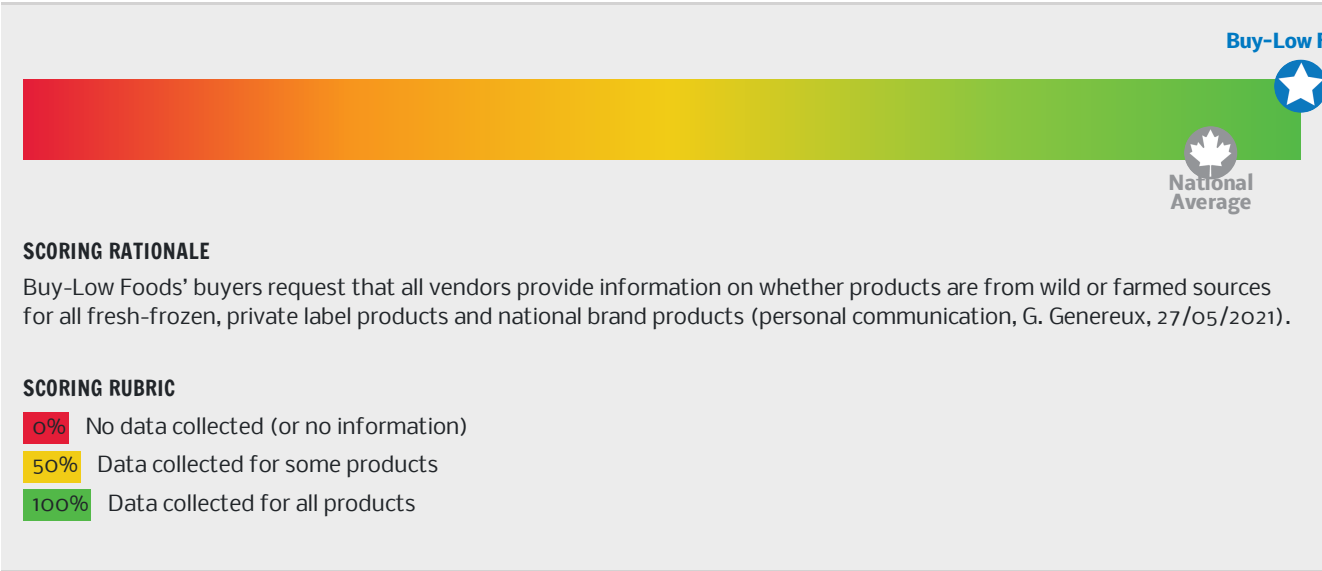
If it looks like you are only seeing the score for one year it is because the score did not change from year to year. Try clicking off the ‘June 2019’ button below the score bar.

STEP ELEMENTS

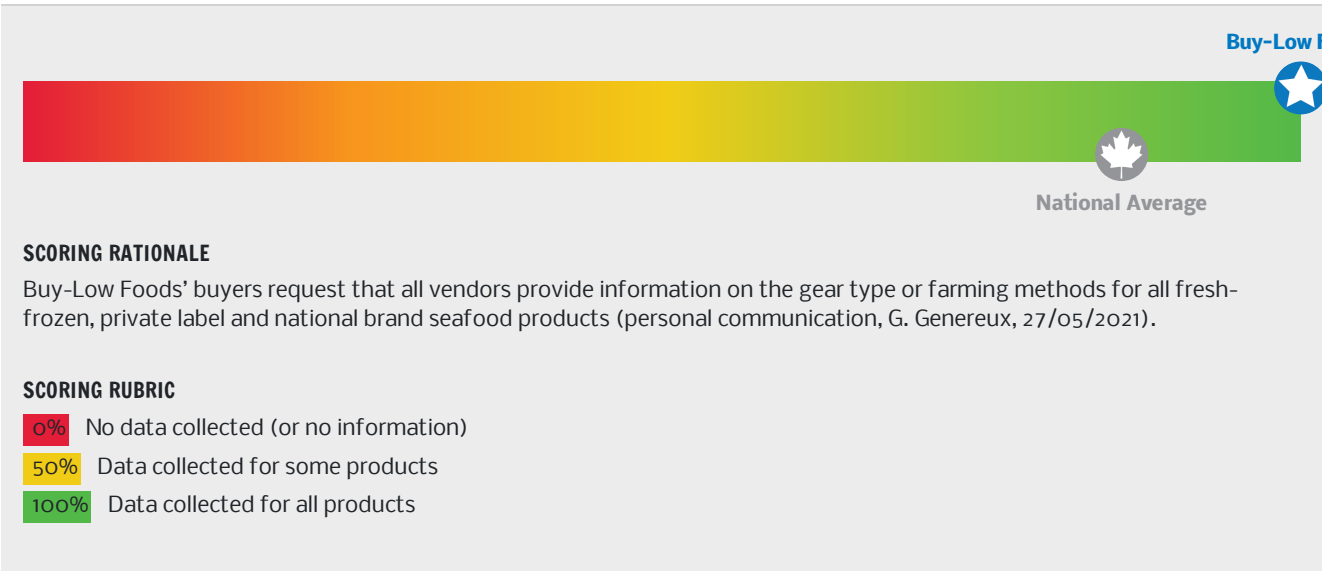
## 2.2 Retailer collects data on country of origin of seafood products being sold - the "where"



2.3 Retailer collects data on whether the seafood products being sold are wild or farmed - the "how"



2.4 Retailer collects data on the gear type or farming methods for seafood products being sold - the "how"



STEP 3: IS THE RETAILER MAKING RESPONSIBLE SOURCING DECISIONS?



Are the retailer’s procurement decisions supporting their environmental and social sustainability commitments?

The step score is based on the average of Step 3 key performance indicators (KPIs, or step elements) listed below; click the + signs for more detailed information.

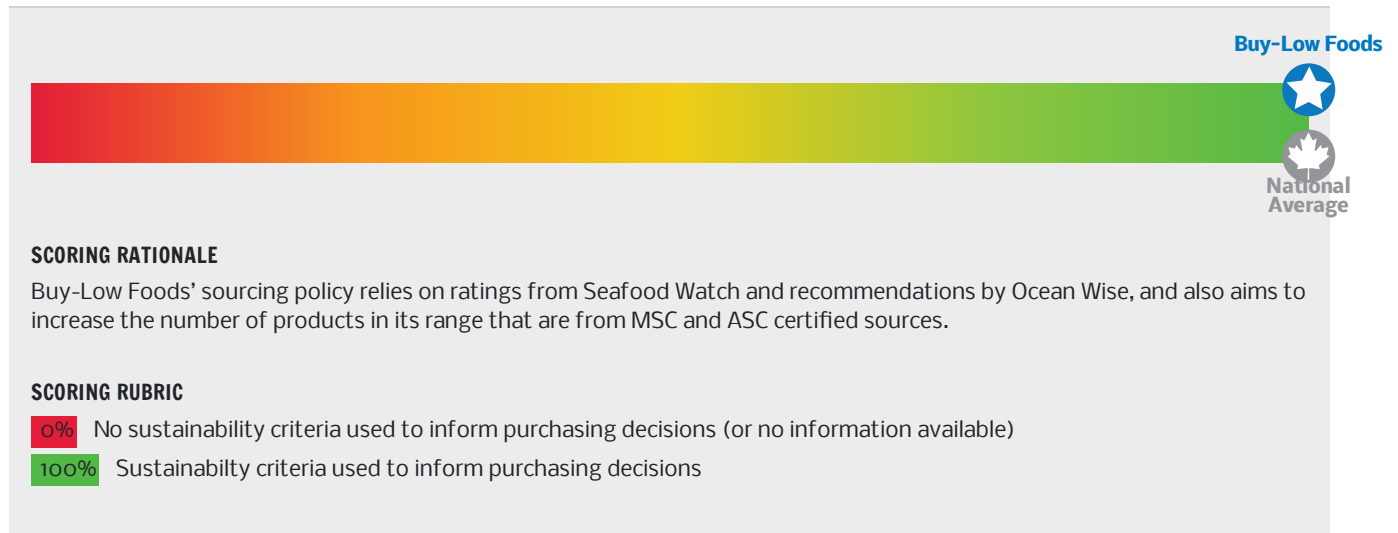


Note that KPI 3.3 was changed in 2019 from “Retailer works with suppliers to address potential human rights and labour abuses, and support sustainable livelihoods for producers” to more specific indicators around retailers’ agreements with their suppliers/vendors to uphold their environmental and social commitments.

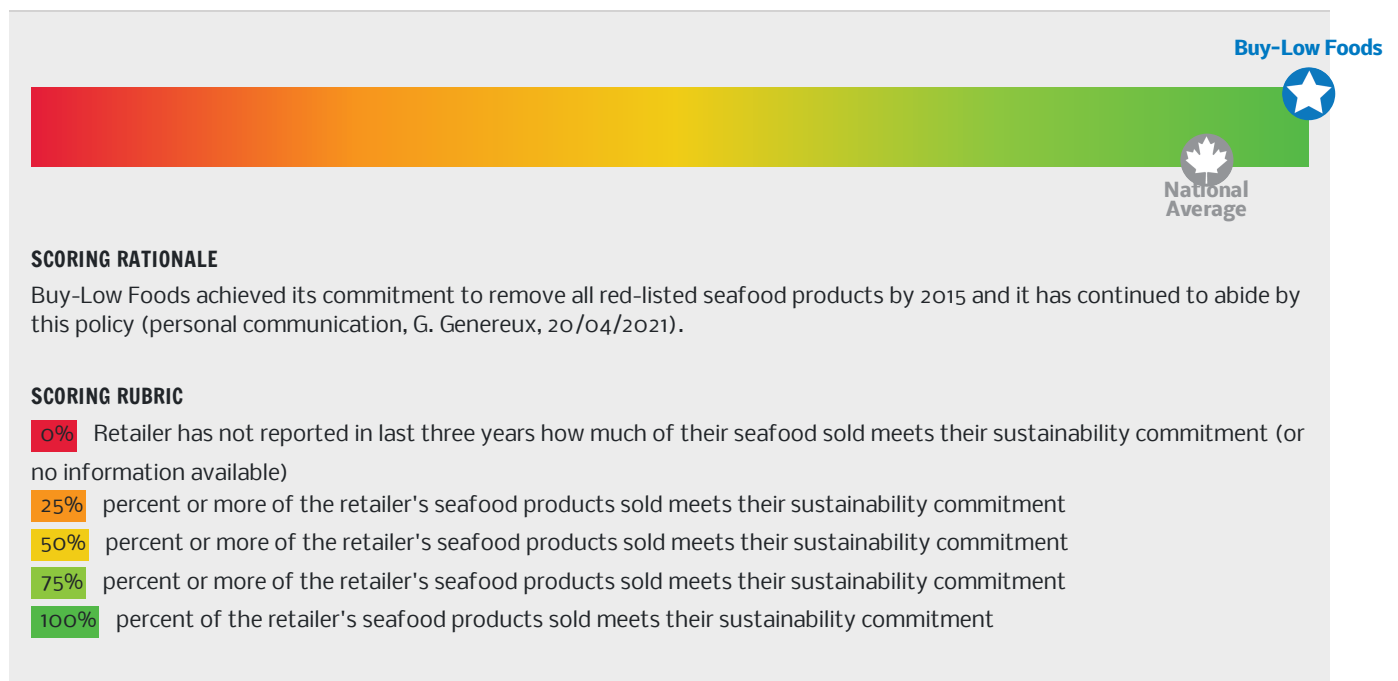
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### STEP ELEMENTS

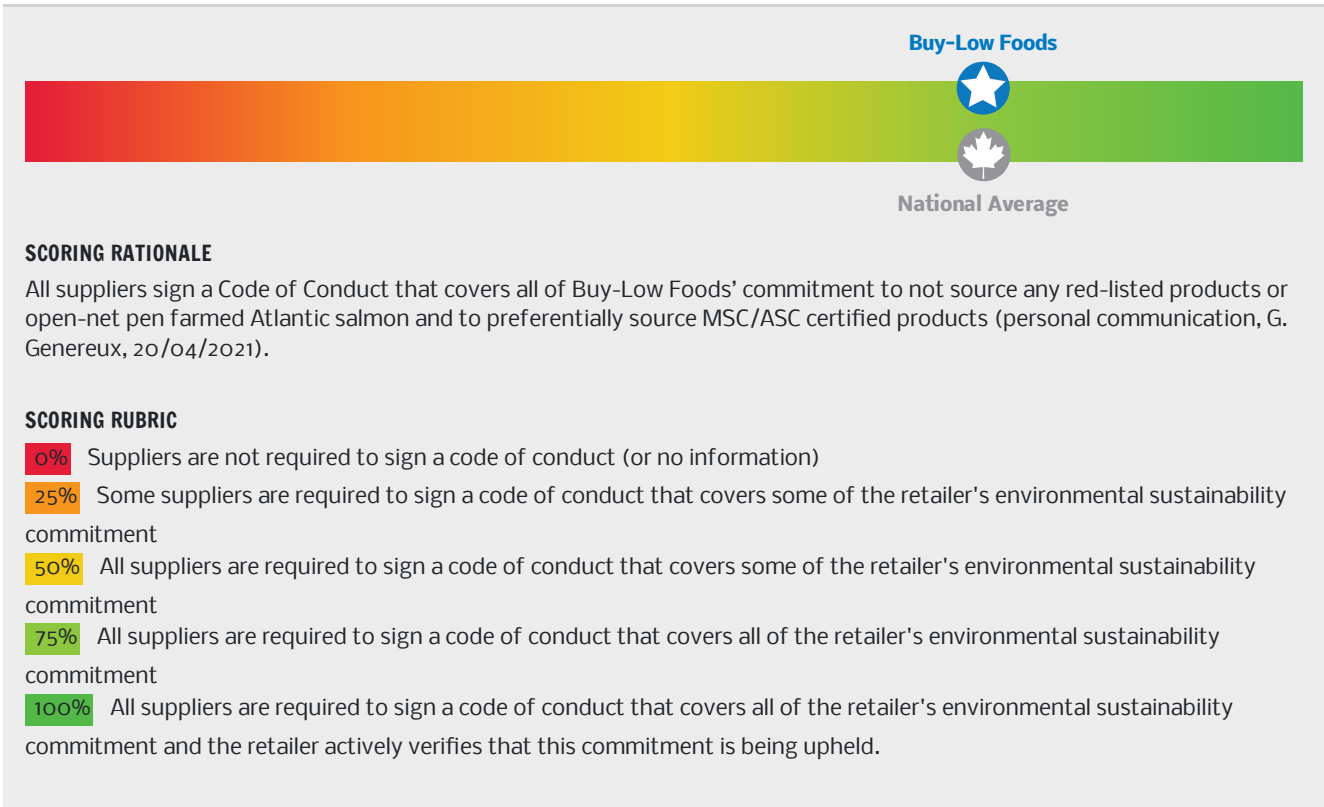
### 3.1 Retailer uses an established seafood certification or ranking standard to inform purchasing decisions.



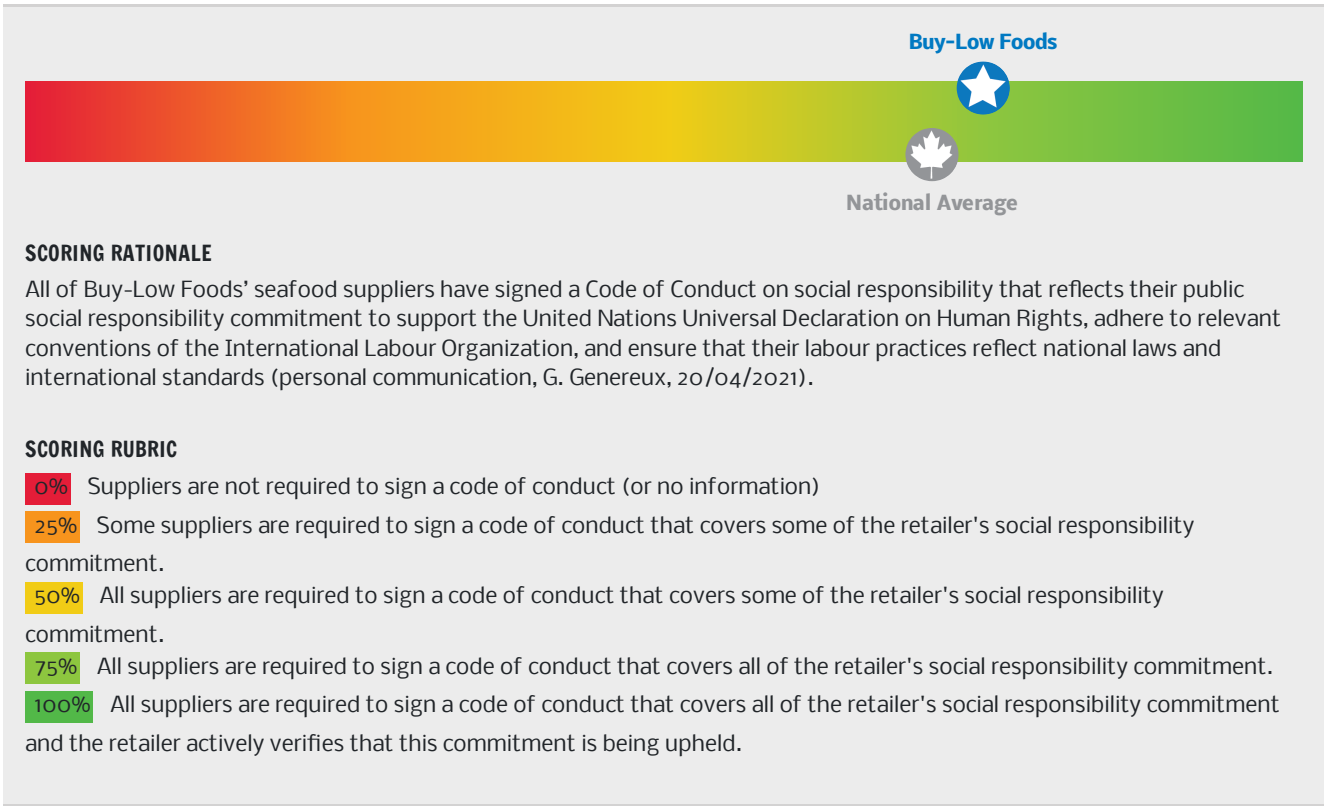
**3.2 Retailer can demonstrate that X% of their seafood sold in the last three years meets their sustainability criteria by volume/value.**



3.3 Suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct to uphold the retailer's environmental sustainability commitment.



3.4 Suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct to uphold the retailer's social responsibility commitment.



STEP 4: IS THE RETAILER TRANSPARENT ABOUT THEIR COMMITMENT?



Is the retailer making information regarding the environmental and social performance of their seafood products publicly available and are they reporting on progress against their sustainable seafood commitment?

The step score is based on the average of Step 4 key performance indicators (KPIs, or step elements) listed below; click the + signs for more detailed information.

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STEP ELEMENTS

4.1 Retailer labels seafood with the information that allows consumers to make informed decisions - what (species' scientific name), where (country or region of origin), and how (wild/farmed and harvest method)

Buy-Low Foods

National Average

**SCORING RATIONALE**

In 2018, Buy-Low Foods changed its fresh counter and store packaged labels to include scientific (Latin) names, whether the product is wild or farmed, geographic origin and gear type or farming methods (personal communication, G. Genereux, 26/05/2021).

Species Latin name (the what)

Country of origin (the where)

Wild or farmed (the how part 1)

Gear type or farming methods (the how part 2)

**SCORING RUBRIC**

0%

 Retailer does not label products with the information (or no information)

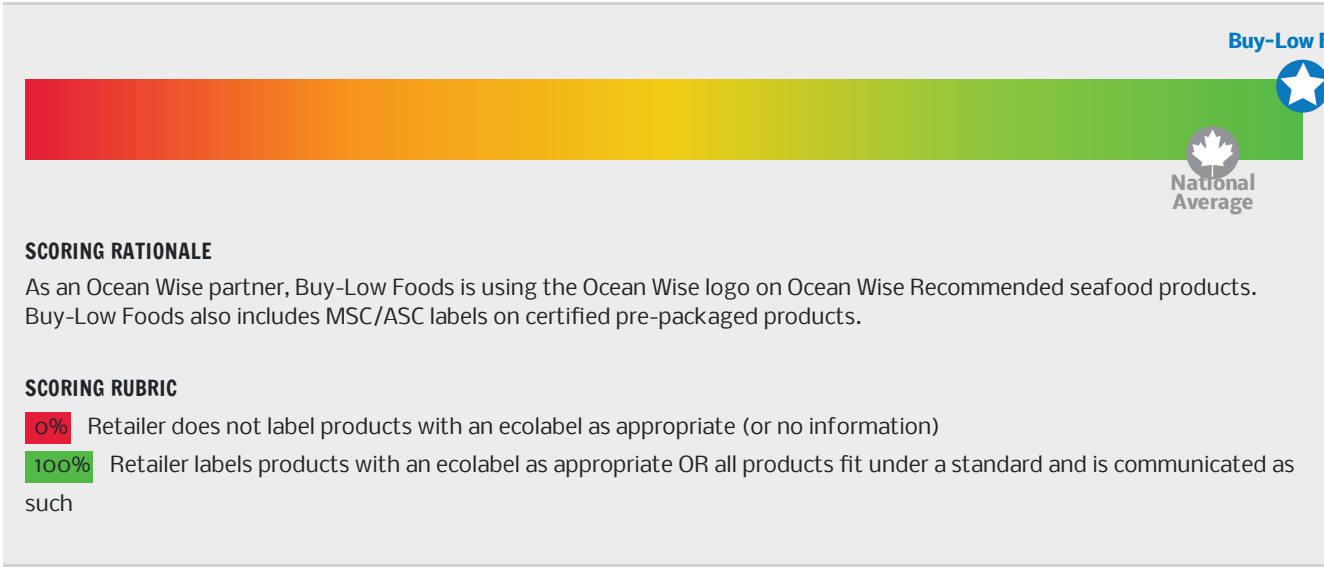
50%

 Retailer labels some products with the information

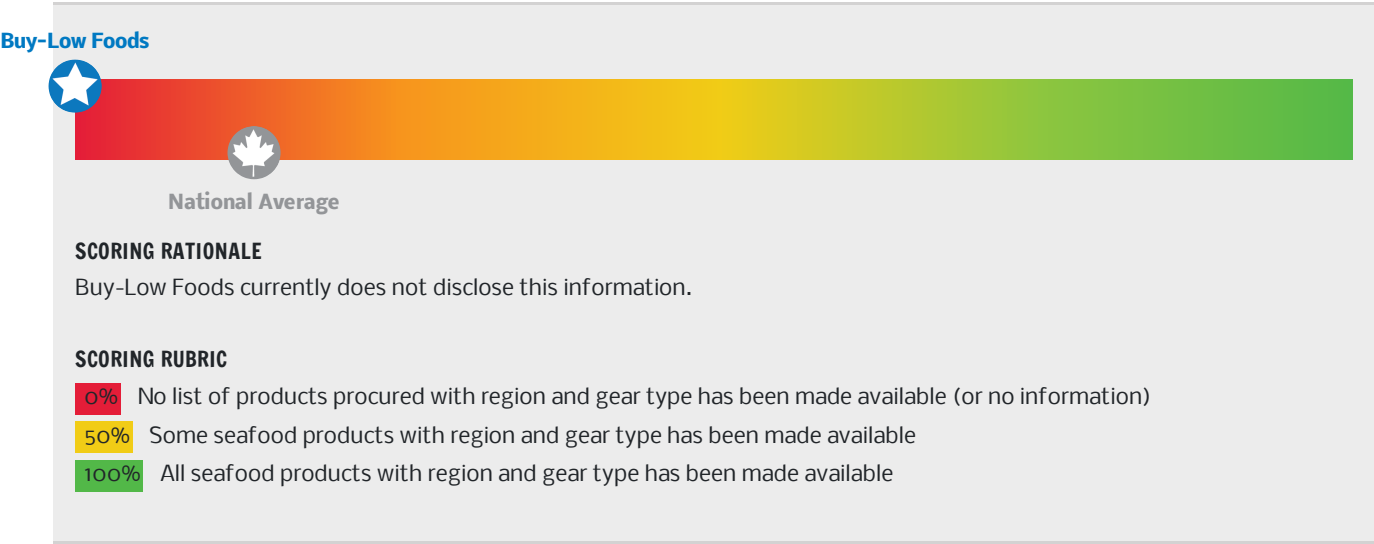
100%

 Retailer labels all products with the information

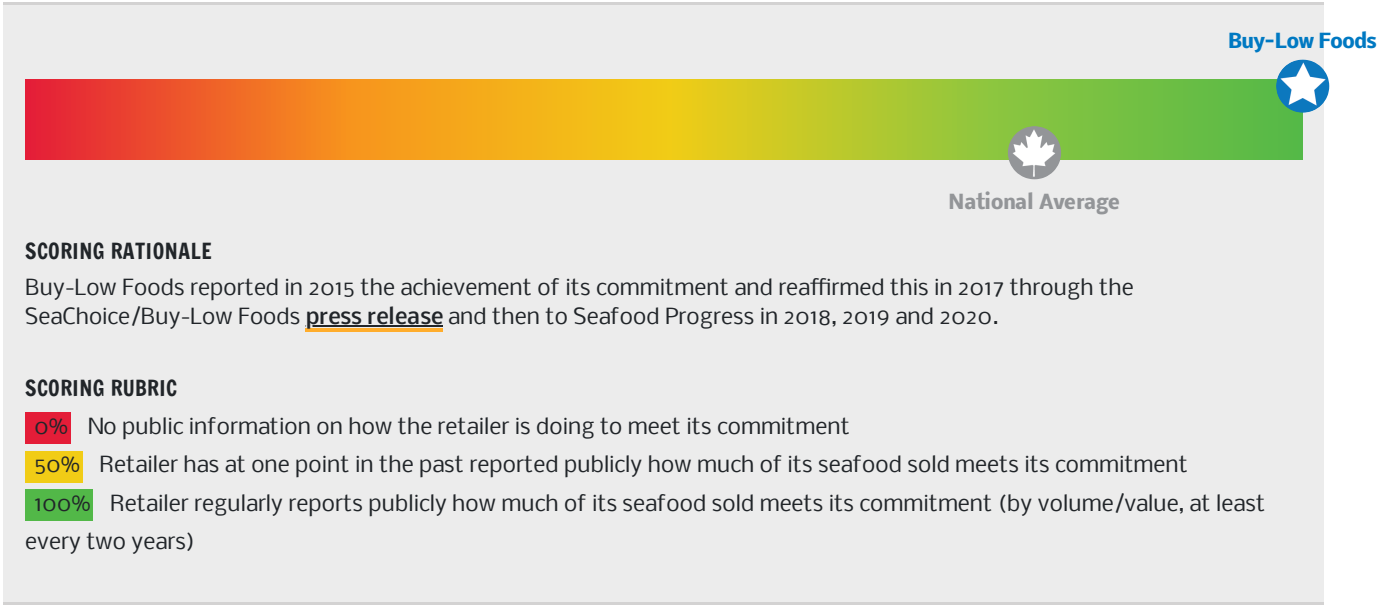
4.2 Retailer labels products with an ecolabel, allowing consumers to make informed decisions OR all products fit under a standard and is communicated as such



4.3 List of products procured with region and gear type data has been made available (e.g. as per Ocean Disclosure Project)



4.4 Retailer publicly reports how much of its seafood meets its sustainability criteria (by volume or value of sales).



STEP 5: DOES THE RETAILER EDUCATE STAFF, CUSTOMERS AND/OR VENDORS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD?



Is the retailer educating their employees, customers, suppliers and other key stakeholders about their sustainable seafood commitment, environmental and social issues in seafood, and the importance of traceability?

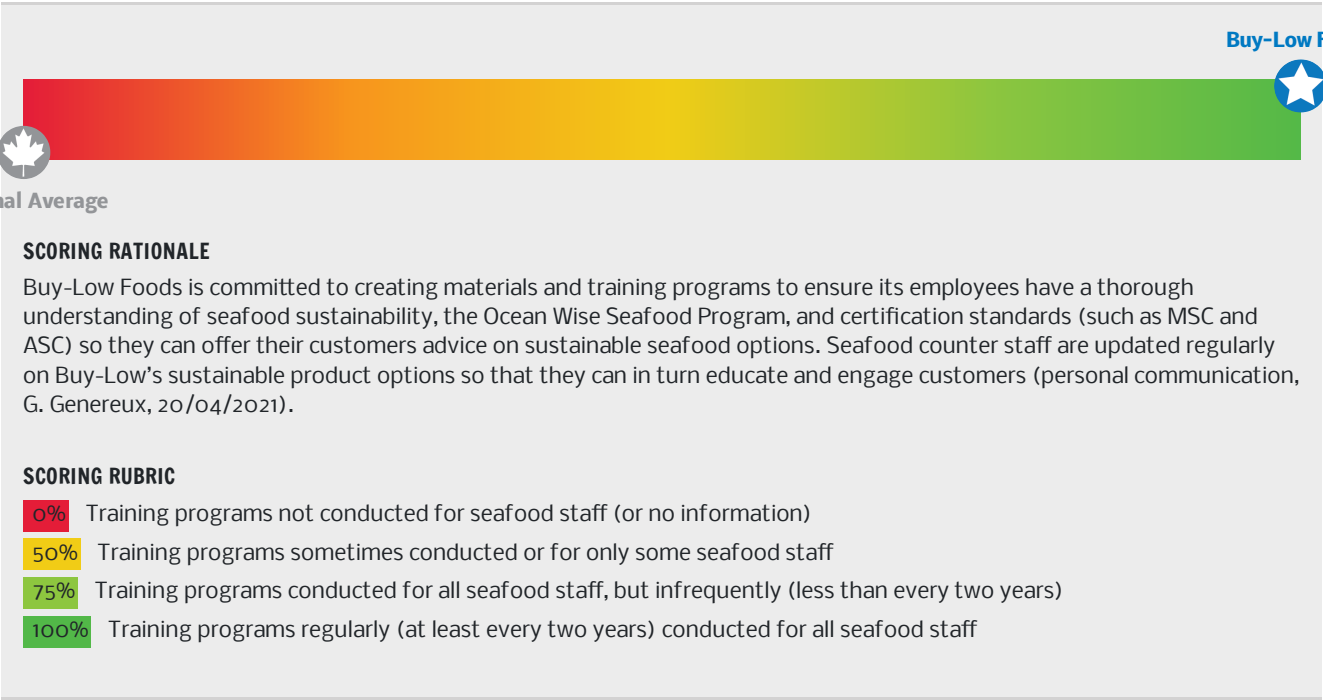
The step score is based on the average of Step 5 key performance indicators (KPIs, or step elements) listed below; click the + signs for more detailed information.

Note that KPI 5.3 changed in 2019 from “Suppliers are required to sign a Code of Conduct to uphold the retailer’s sustainable seafood policy” (now covered by KPIs 3.3 and 3.4) to an indicator of what actions retailers have taken to educate their suppliers/vendors about their sustainable seafood commitment.

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STEP ELEMENTS

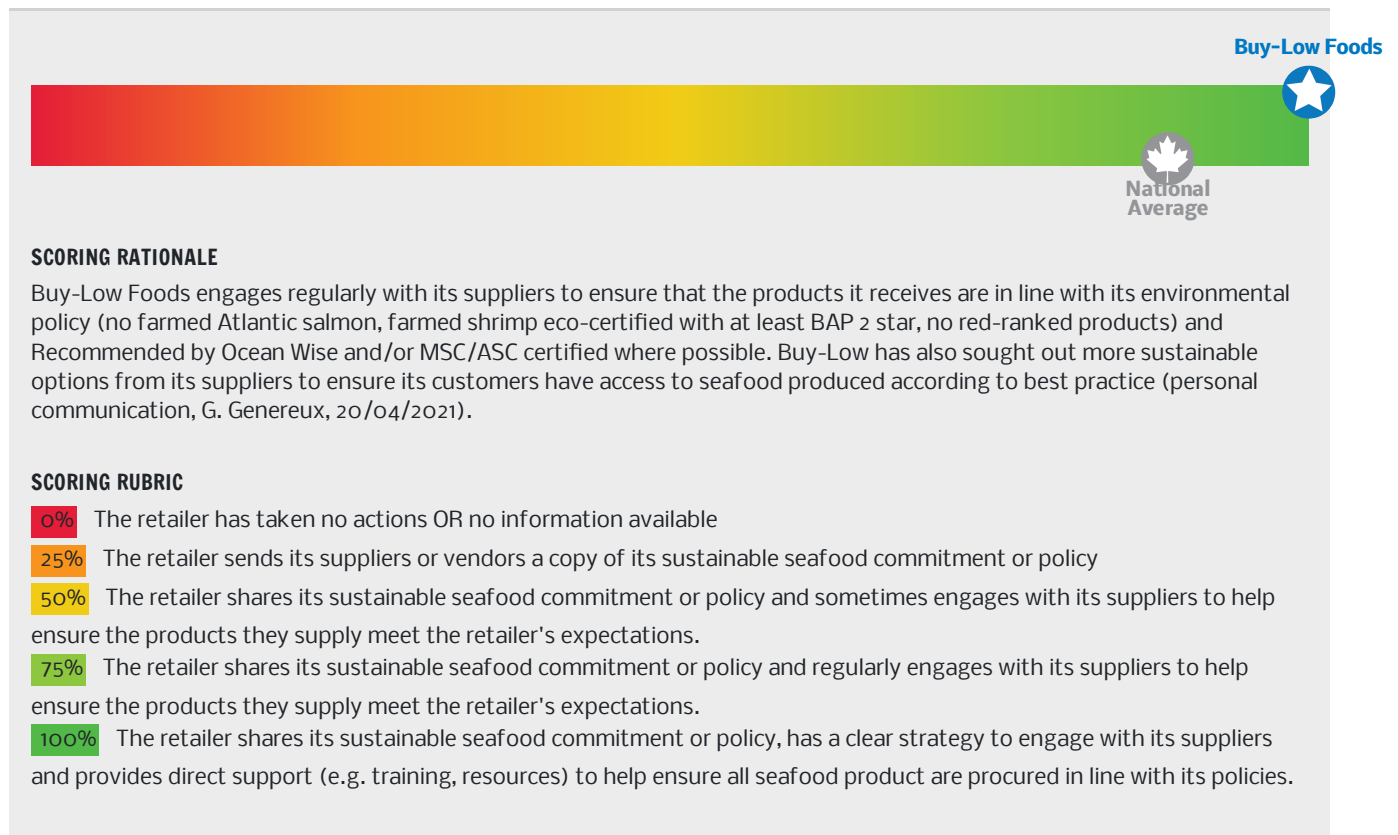
5.1 Training programs are conducted for seafood staff.



5.2 There is a description of the retailer's sustainable seafood program for customers in store



**5.3 The retailer has taken actions to ensure its suppliers or vendors are aware of its sustainable seafood commitment or policy.**



## STEP 6: DOES THE RETAILER SUPPORT IMPROVEMENTS IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE?



Does the retailer sell 'Priority Seafood' products (seafood that has high volume of sales in Canadian retail stores and that is generally not recommended by the Ocean Wise Seafood Program), and if so, do they support improvement and how?

The step score is based on the average of Step 6 key performance indicators (KPIs, or step elements) listed below; click the + signs for more detailed information.

Note that this Step was changed significantly in 2019 to introduce two additional 'Support Improvement' actions for each of the Priority Seafood products. This means that if a retailer was engaged in the same actions in 2019 as in 2018, and no more, their score will appear to have decreased). Additionally, KPIs 6.4 and 6.5 on other SeaChoice priority seafood products were generalized into a new KPI that allows retailers to showcase any other actions they are taking to support improvement of specific seafood products (besides shrimp, farmed salmon and skipjack), or to support improvements in seafood sustainability in general.

If it looks like you are only seeing the score for one year it is because the score did not change from year to year. Try clicking off the 'June 2019' button below the score bar.

### STEP ELEMENTS

## Buy-Low Foods

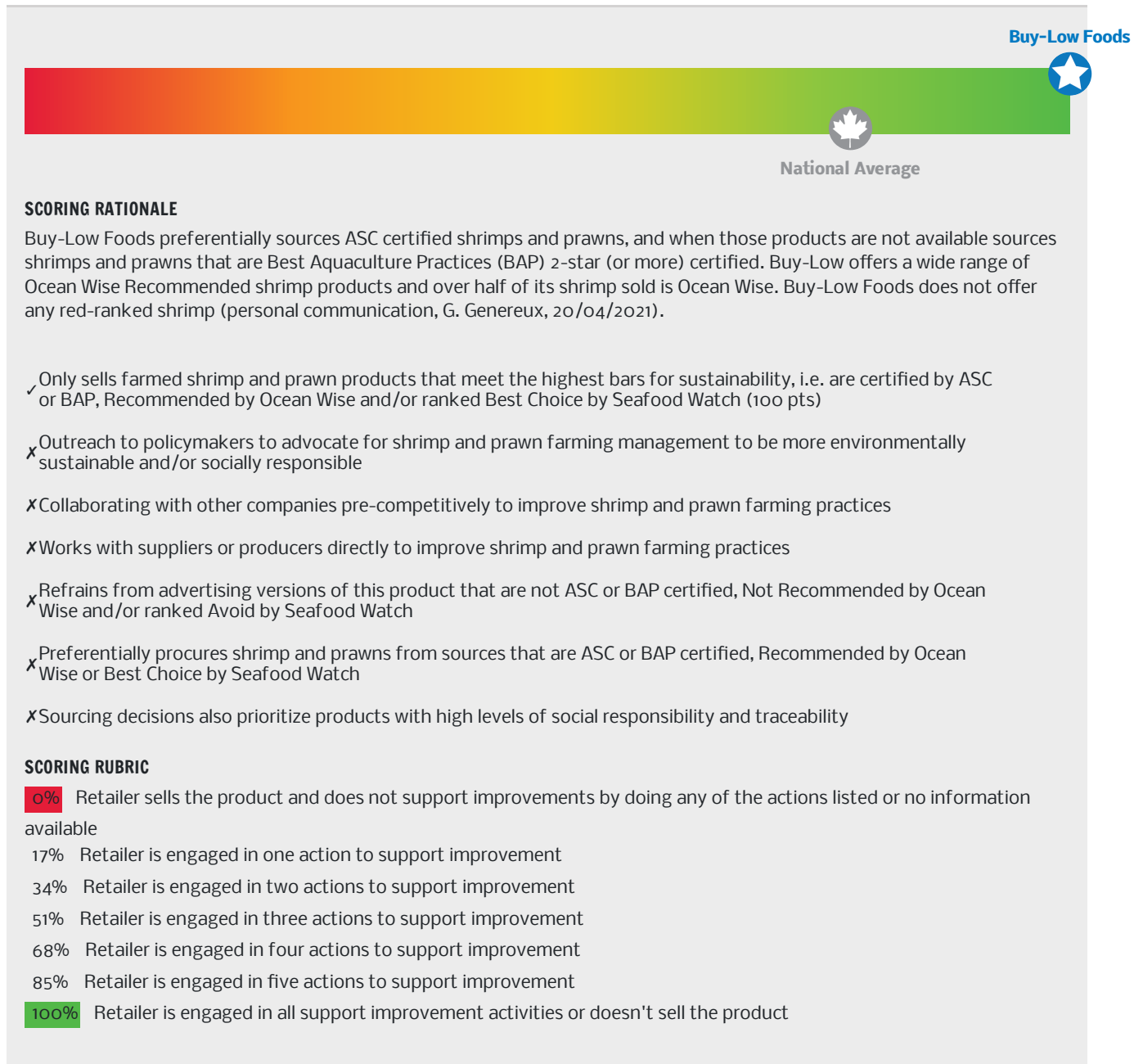


- ✓ Only sells farmed salmon products that meet the highest bars for sustainability, i.e. are certified by ASC, Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or ranked Best Choice by Seafood Watch (100 pts)
- ✗ Outreach to policymakers to advocate for salmon farming management to be more environmentally sustainable and/or socially responsible
- ✗ Collaborating with other companies pre-competitively to improve salmon aquaculture practices
- ✗ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve salmon farming practices
- ✗ Refrains from advertising versions of this product that are not ASC certified, Not Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or ranked Avoid by Seafood Watch
- ✗ Preferentially procures farmed salmon from sources that are ASC certified, Recommended by Ocean Wise or ranked Best Choice by Seafood Watch
- ✗ Sourcing decisions also prioritize products with high levels of social responsibility and traceability

0%	Sells the product and does not support improvements by doing any of the actions listed or no information available
17%	Retailer is engaged in one action to support improvement
34%	Retailer is engaged in two actions to support improvement
51%	Retailer is engaged in three actions to support improvement
68%	Retailer is engaged in four actions to support improvement
85%	Retailer is engaged in five improvement activities or doesn't sell the product
100%	Retailer is engaged in all improvement activities or doesn't sell the product



## 6.2 Does the retailer support improvements in the production of imported farmed shrimps and prawns?



6.3 Does the retailer support improvements in the production of skipjack tuna?

Buy-Low Foods



National Average

SCORING RATIONALE

Buy-Low Foods is not currently engaged in any of the following 'Support Improvement' actions on skipjack tuna.

- ✗ Only sells skipjack tuna products that meet the highest bars for sustainability, i.e. are certified by MSC, Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or ranked Best Choice by Seafood Watch (100 pts)
- ✗ Outreach to policymakers to advocate for skipjack fishing methods and management to be more environmentally sustainable and/or socially responsible
- ✗ Collaborating with other companies pre-competitively to improve skipjack fishery management practices
- ✗ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve skipjack fishing practices
- ✗ Refrains from advertising versions of this product that are not MSC certified, Not Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or ranked Avoid by Seafood Watch
- ✗ Preferentially sources from more sustainable sources that are MSC certified, Recommended by Ocean Wise or Best Choice by Seafood Watch
- ✗ Sourcing decisions also prioritize products with high levels of social responsibility and traceability

SCORING RUBRIC

- 0% Retailer sells the product and does not support improvements by doing any of the actions listed or no information available
- 17% Retailer is engaged in one action to support improvement
- 34% Retailer is engaged in two actions to support improvement
- 51% Retailer is engaged in three actions to support improvement
- 68% Retailer is engaged in four actions to support improvement
- 85% Retailer is engaged in five actions to support improvement
- 100% Retailer is engaged in all support improvement activities or doesn't sell the product

6.4 Is the retailer engaged in any actions to improve production of any other seafood products?



SCORING RATIONALE

Buy-Low Foods doesn't advertise any fresh or frozen products that are ranked 'Avoid' because it doesn't sell any! In 2019, Buy-Low Foods began using the Ocean Wise logo in their flyers to help alert its customers to sustainable products (personal communication, G. Genereux, 04/20/2021). In May of 2021, Buy-Low Foods sent a letter in support of a boat-to-plate traceability program to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (personal communication, G. Genereux, 05/14/2021).

- ✗ Only sells versions of this product that meet the highest bars for sustainability, i.e. are certified by MSC/ASC, Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or ranked Best Choice by Seafood Watch (100 pts)
- ✓ Outreach to policymakers to advocate for harvest or farming method and management to be more environmentally sustainable and/or socially responsible
- ✗ Collaborating with other companies pre-competitively to improve fishing or aquaculture practices
- ✗ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve fishing or farming practices
- ✓ Refrains from advertising versions of this product that are not MSC/ASC certified, Not Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or ranked Avoid by Seafood Watch
- ✓ Preferentially sources from more sustainable sources that are MSC/ASC certified, Recommended by Ocean Wise or Best Choice by Seafood Watch
- ✗ Sourcing decisions also prioritize products with high levels of social responsibility and traceability

SCORING RUBRIC

- 0% Retailer sells the product and does not support improvements by doing any of the actions listed or no information available
- 17% Retailer is engaged in one action to support improvement
- 34% Retailer is engaged in two actions to support improvement
- 51% Retailer is engaged in three actions to support improvement
- 68% Retailer is engaged in four actions to support improvement
- 85% Retailer is engaged in five actions to support improvement
- 100% Retailer is engaged in all support improvement activities