

SEAFOOD PROGRESS: BUY-LOW FOODS



Legacy report of this retailer's Seafood Progress profile as published in July 2019.

Report generated on: August 8th, 2019

REPORTING PERIOD

June 2019 – May 2020

LOCATION

British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan

NUMBER OF STORES

38

WEBSITE

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

RETAILER SNAPSHOT

In 2013, Buy-Low Foods and Nesters Market ("Buy-Low") committed to removing all red-listed seafood (from sources rated 'Avoid' by Seafood Watch) and replacing them with more sustainable alternatives. In 2015, Buy-Low became the first major retailer in North America to have achieved this. Buy-Low has committed to procuring all its fresh and frozen seafood products from sustainable (seafood Recommended by Ocean Wise or rated either 'Good Alternative' or 'Best Choice' by Seafood Watch) and traceable sources, or from fisheries/farms that are engaged in credible improvement projects. Uniquely among major Canadian retailers, Buy-Low does not sell any farmed Atlantic salmon due to sustainability concerns.

Buy-Low provides good staff training on seafood sustainability issues and its suppliers must sign a comprehensive Code of Conduct that commits them to providing products that are in line with Buy-Low's environmental sustainability commitment. In 2019, Buy-Low formalized its social responsibility policy with suppliers by requiring them to sign a Supplier Code of Conduct on Social Responsibility.

In 2018, Buy-Low committed to increasing the information available to consumers on seafood labels by adding species' scientific names and whether the product was wild or farmed, and in 2019 it committed to adding country/region of origin on as many fresh and frozen products as possible.

Buy-Low is supporting improvements in the production of farmed imported shrimp and prawn through preferential sourcing of eco-certified and Ocean Wise recommended products, and SeaChoice recommends that Buy-Low now take action to support improvements on other Priority Seafood commodities, such as Skipjack tuna.

In the process of developing this profile, SeaChoice corresponded with Glen Genereux, the Meat Buyer/ Meat Merchandising Manager for Buy-Low Foods Ltd and Nesters Market, and Claire Dawson, Senior Accounts Representative at Ocean Wise.

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

Buy-Low Foods



National Average

Does the policy include time-bound objectives for addressing environmental issues, social concerns and traceability?

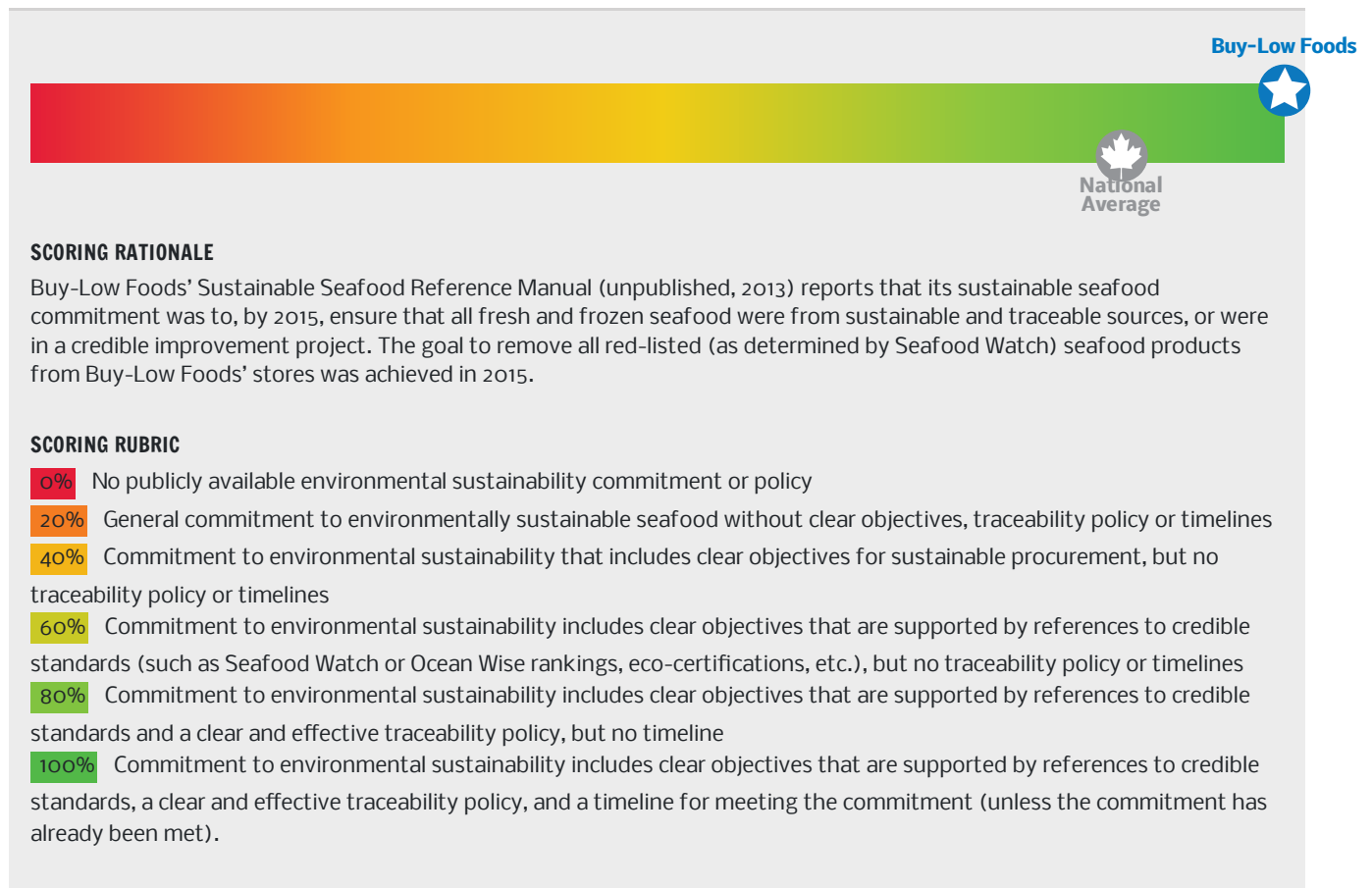
The step score is based on the average of Step 1 key performance indicators (KPIs, or step elements) listed below; click the + signs for more detailed information.

Note that the KPIs changed from 2018 to 2019 to move the assessment of retailers' traceability commitments from a stand-alone KPI to a component of the scoring for the KPIs relating to environmental and social commitments.

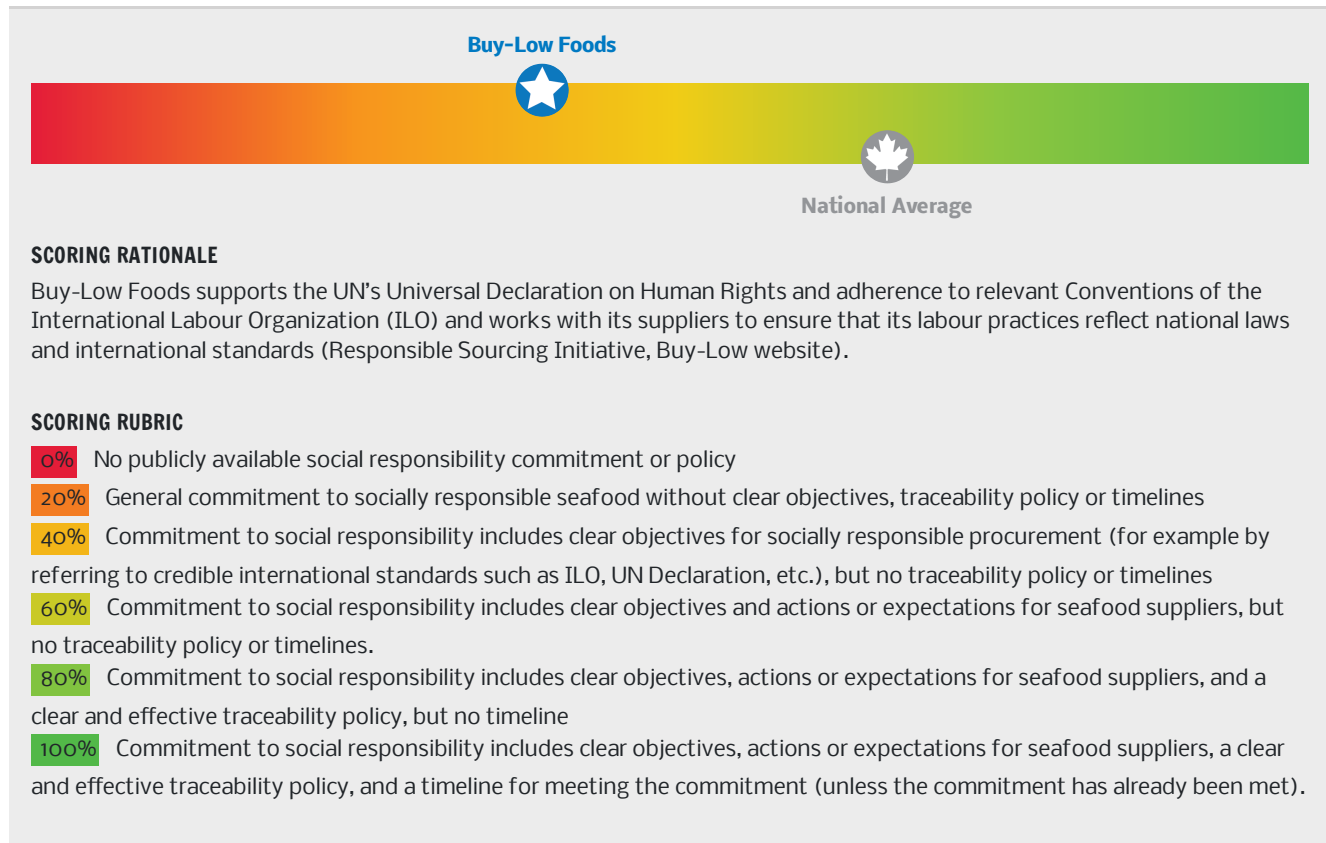
If it looks like you are only seeing the score for one year it is because the score did not change from year to year. Try clicking off the 'June 2019' button below the score bar.

STEP ELEMENTS

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



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



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



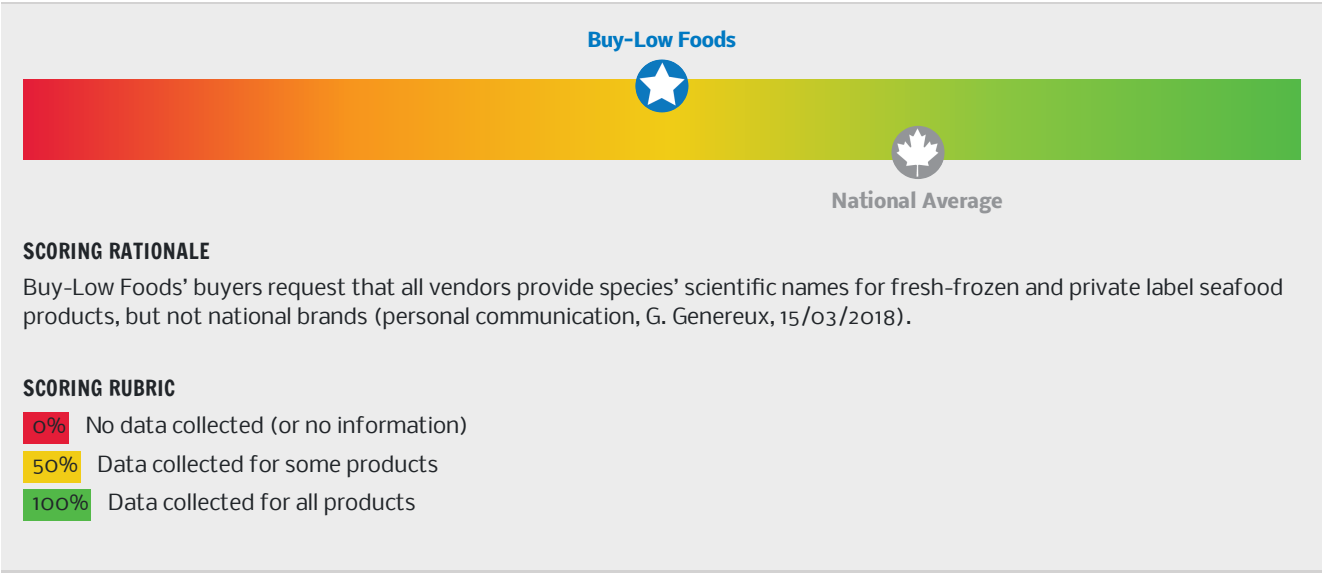
What information is the retailer collecting to monitor the environmental and social sustainability of their seafood products?

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.

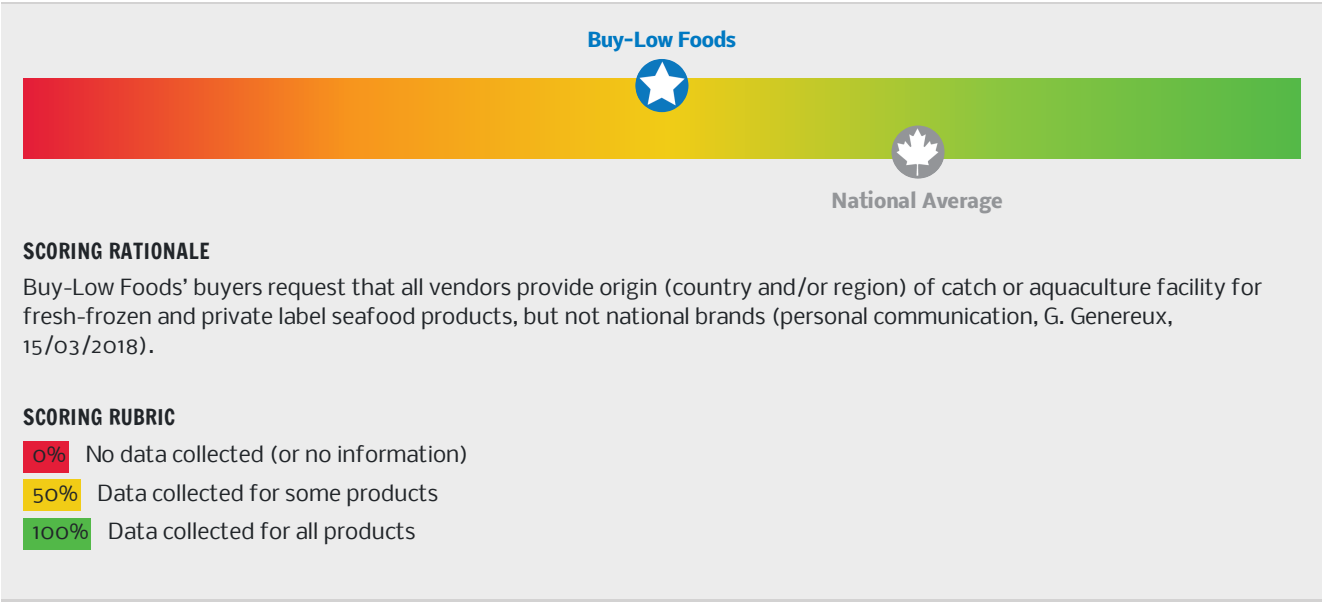
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STEP ELEMENTS

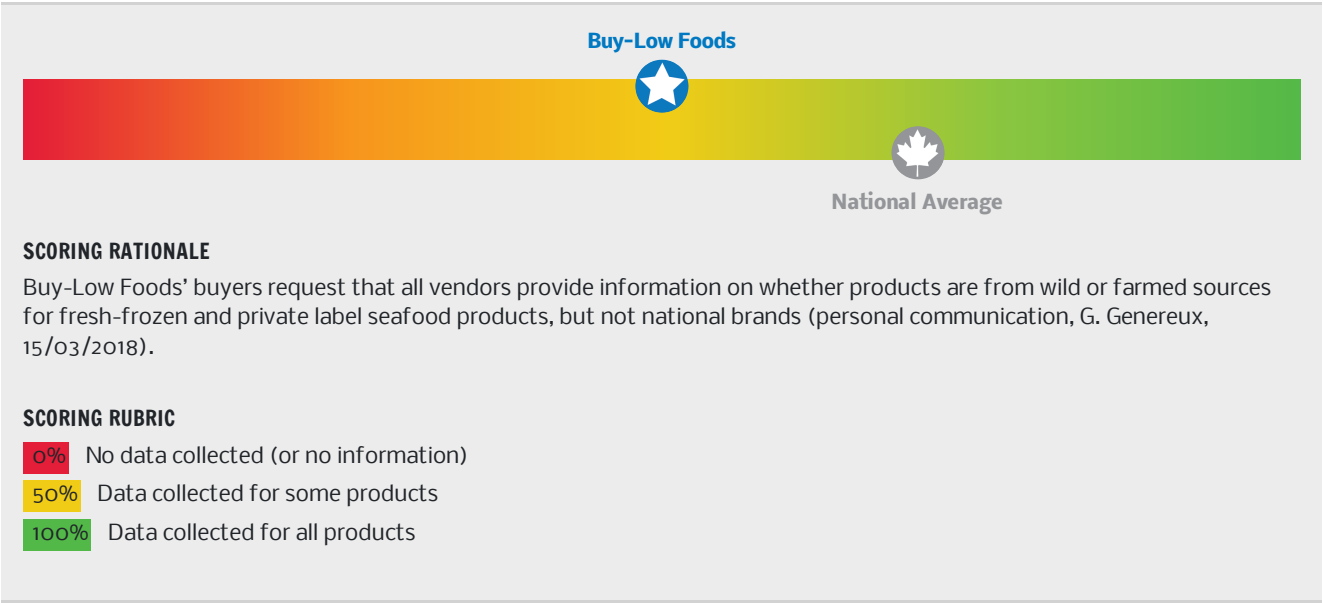
2.1 Retailer collects data on species scientific (Latin) name for seafood products being sold - the "what"



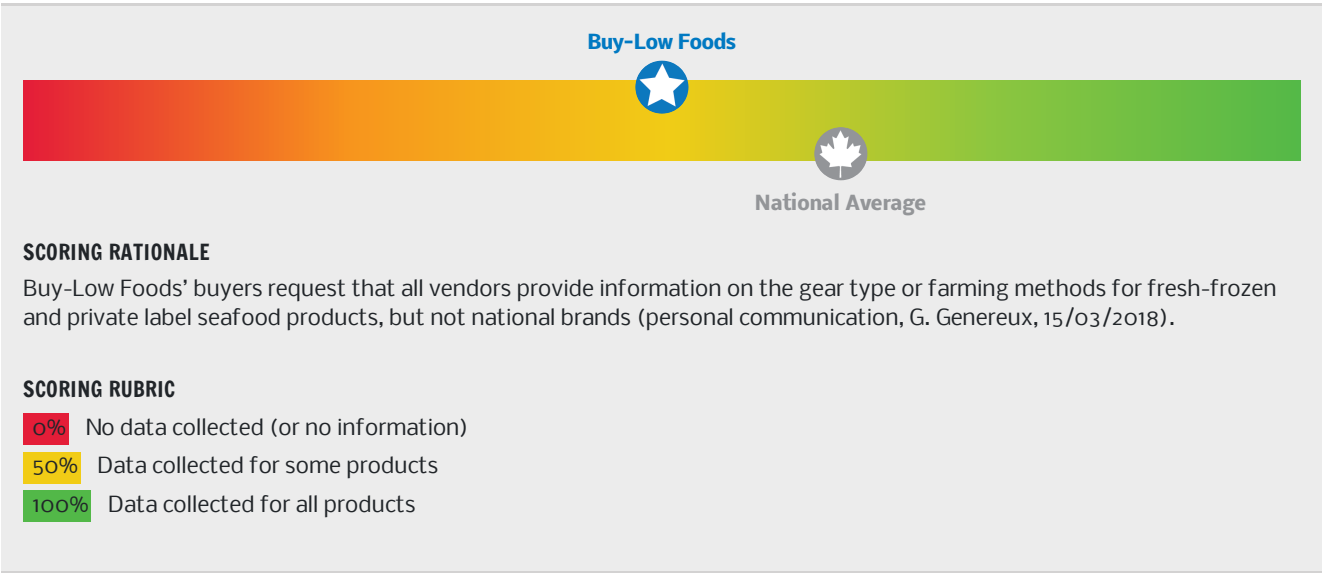
2.2 Retailer collects data on country of origin of seafood products being sold - the "where"



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?

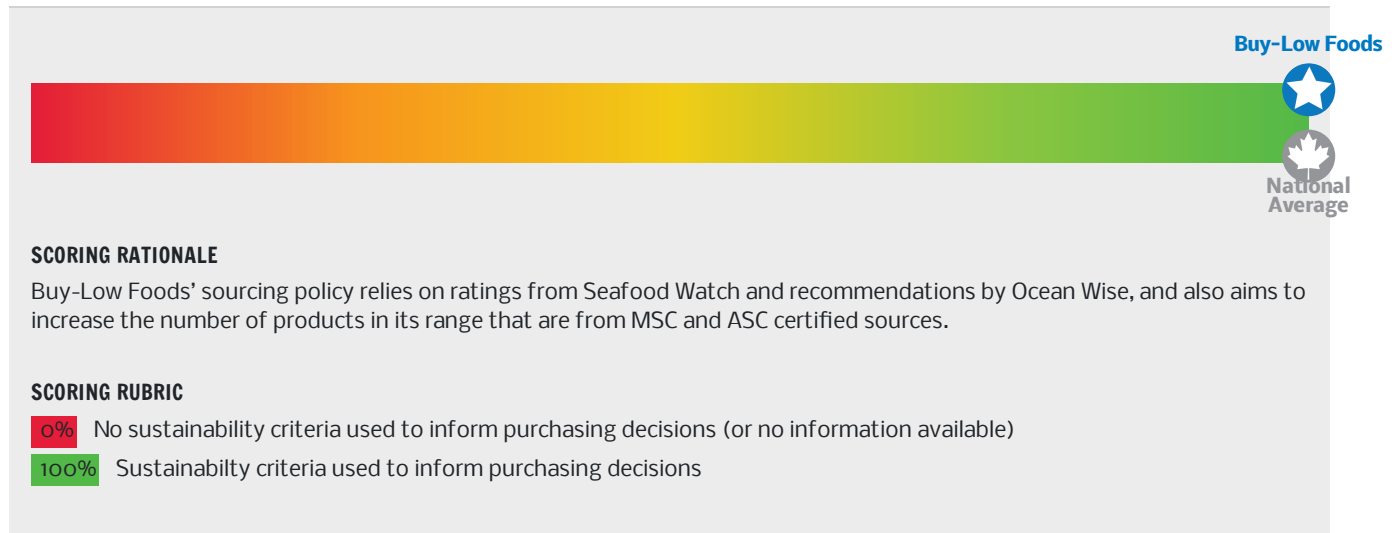
The step score is based on the average of Step 3 key performance indicators (KPIs, or step elements) listed below; click the + signs for more detailed information.

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.

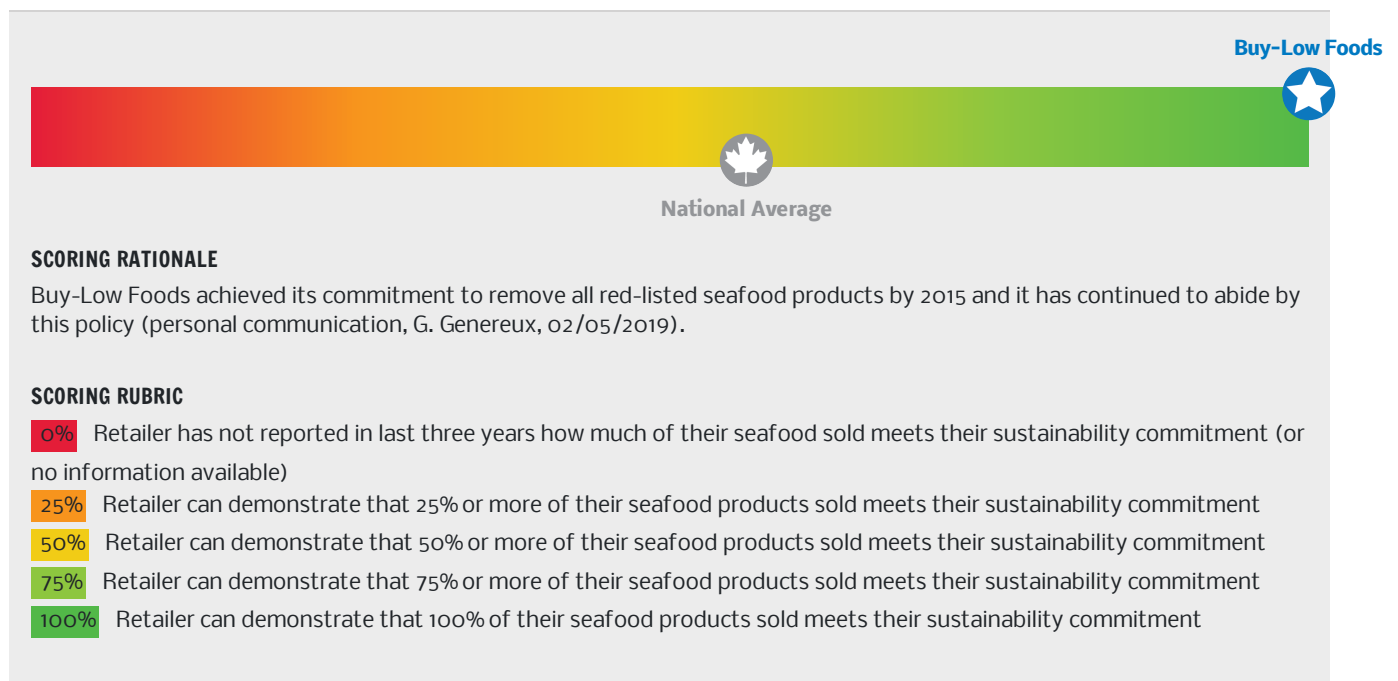
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STEP ELEMENTS

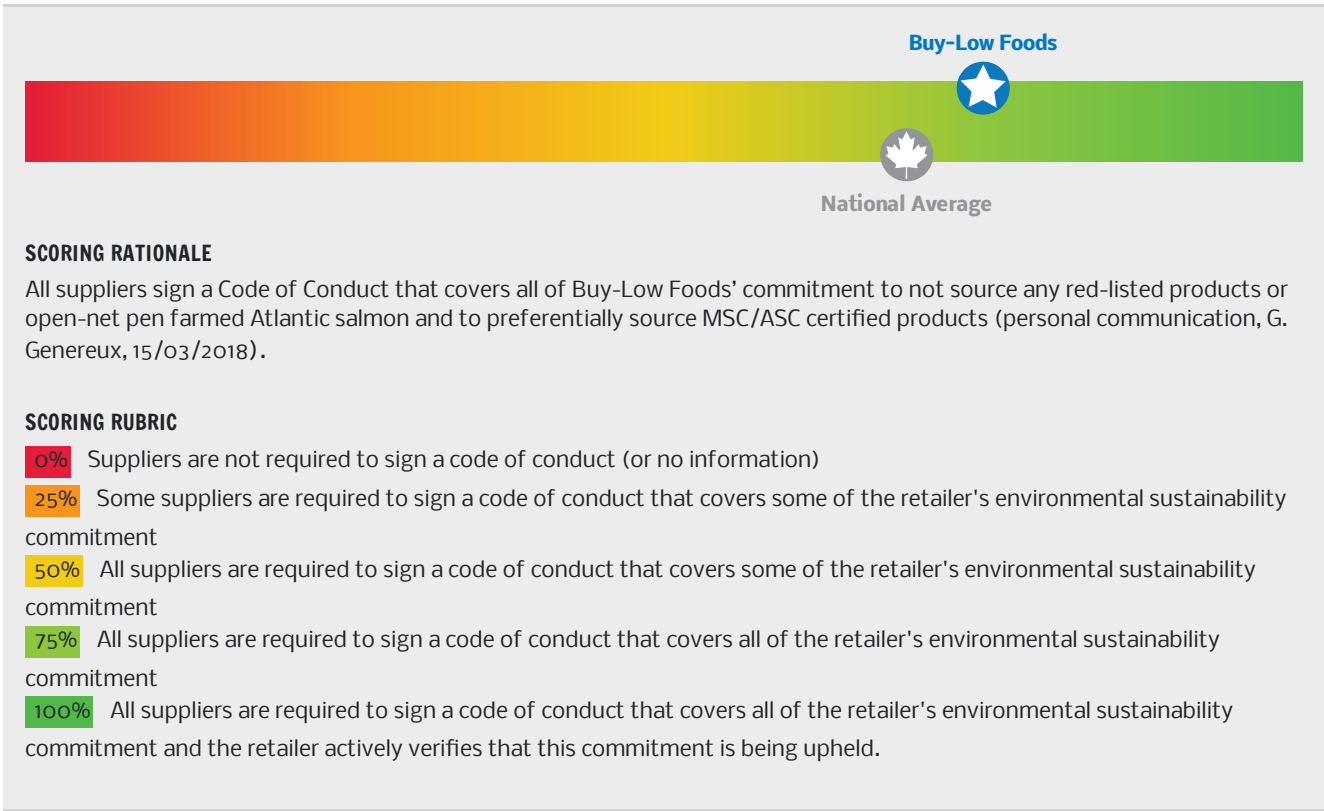
3.1 Retailer uses an established seafood certification or ranking standard to inform purchasing decisions.



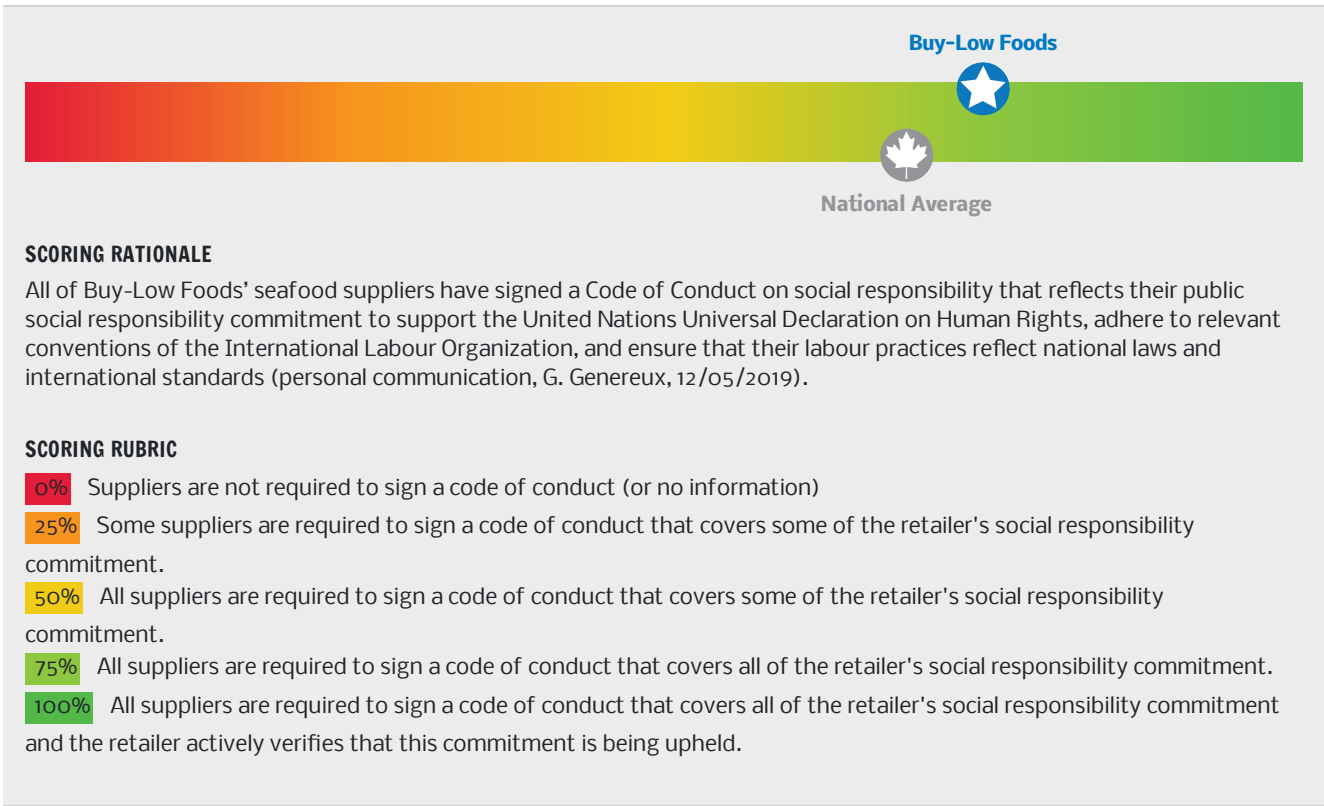
3.2 Retailer can demonstrate that X% of their seafood sold in the last three years meets their sustainability criteria by volume/value.



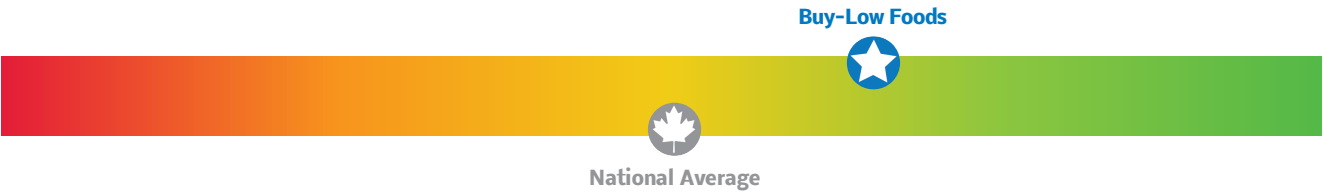
3.3 Suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct to uphold the retailer's environmental sustainability commitment.



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)

A horizontal score bar with a color gradient from red (0%) to green (100%). A grey maple leaf icon labeled 'National Average' is positioned at the 50% mark. A blue star icon labeled 'Buy-Low Foods' is positioned at approximately the 75% mark.

SCORING RATIONALE

In 2018, Buy-Low Foods changed its fresh counter and store packaged labels to include scientific (Latin) names and whether the product is wild or farmed. Buy-Low is now looking at adding country/region of origin labelling for its fresh and store packaged products (personal communication, G. Genereux, 02/05/2019).

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

Buy-Low Foods

National Average

0% 100% 100%

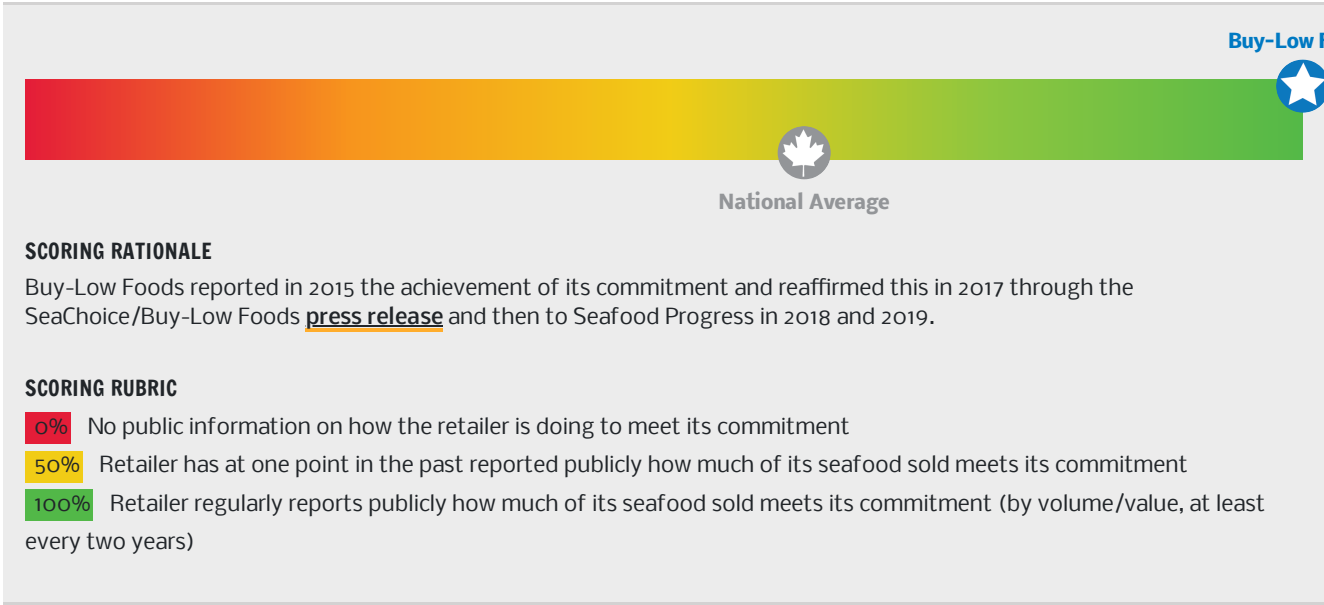
Low Foods

SCORING RATIONALE
Buy-Low Foods currently does not disclose this information.

SCORING RUBRIC

Percentage	Description
0%	No list of products procured with region and gear type has been made available (or no information)
50%	Some seafood products with region and gear type has been made available
100%	All seafood products with region and gear type has been made available

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?

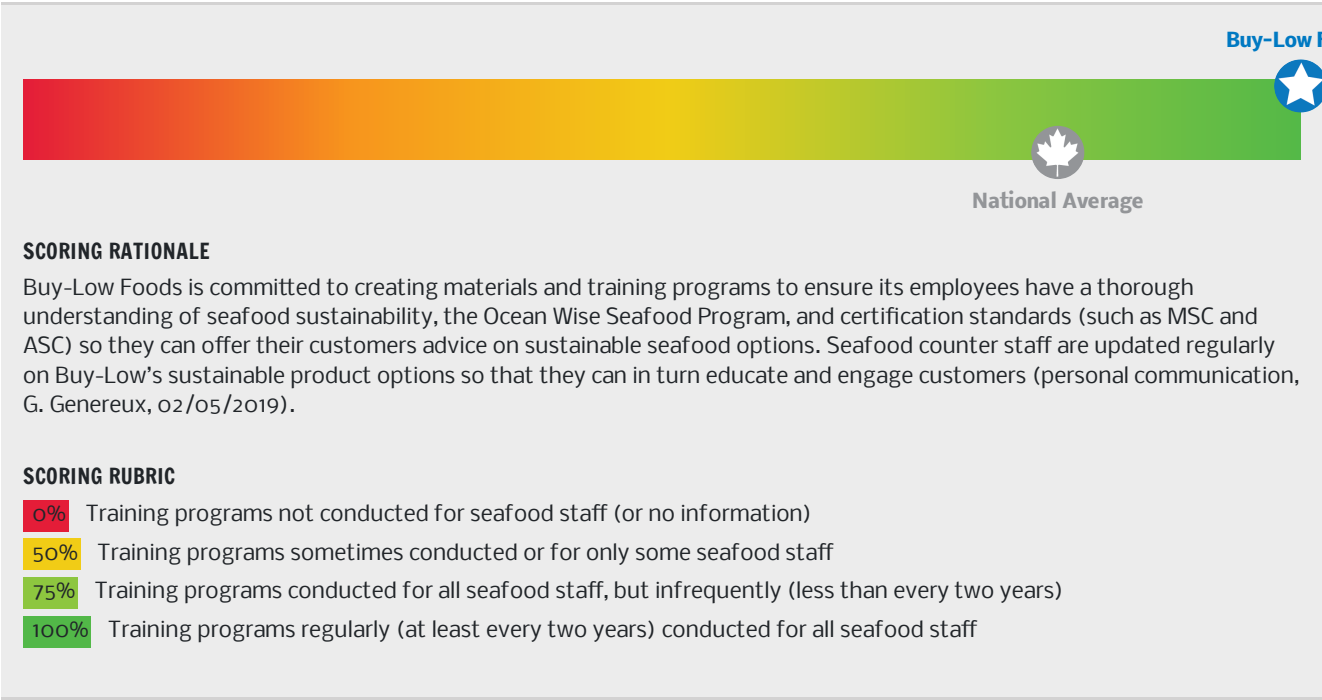
The step score is based on the average of Step 5 key performance indicators (KPIs, or step elements) listed below; click the + signs for more detailed information.

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.

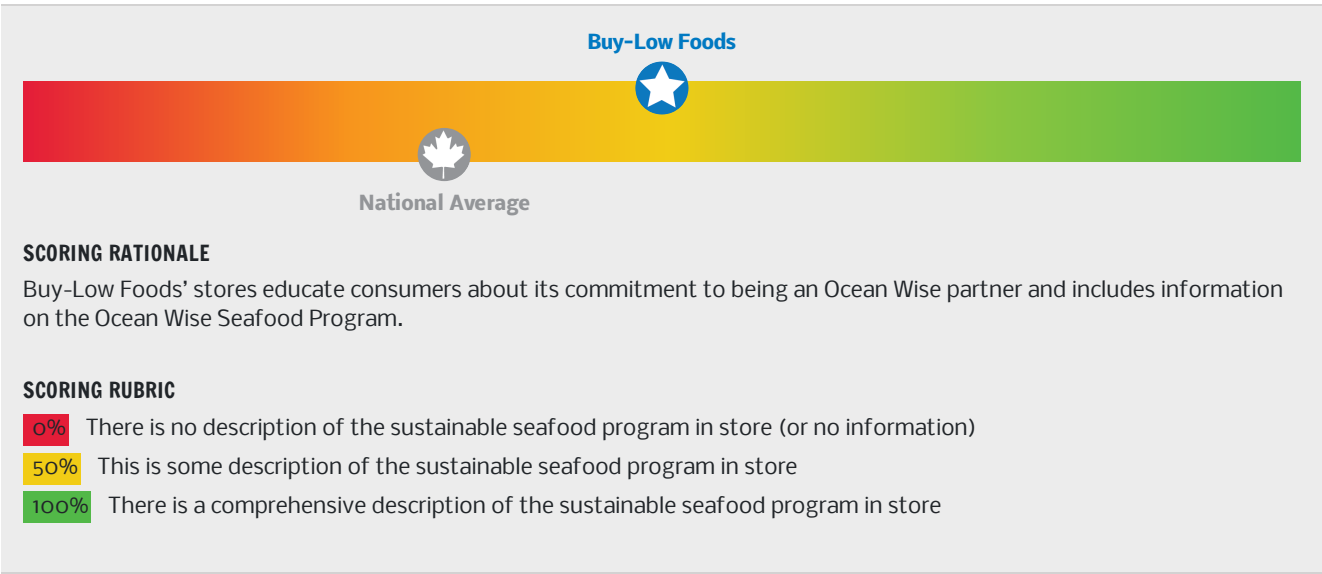
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STEP ELEMENTS

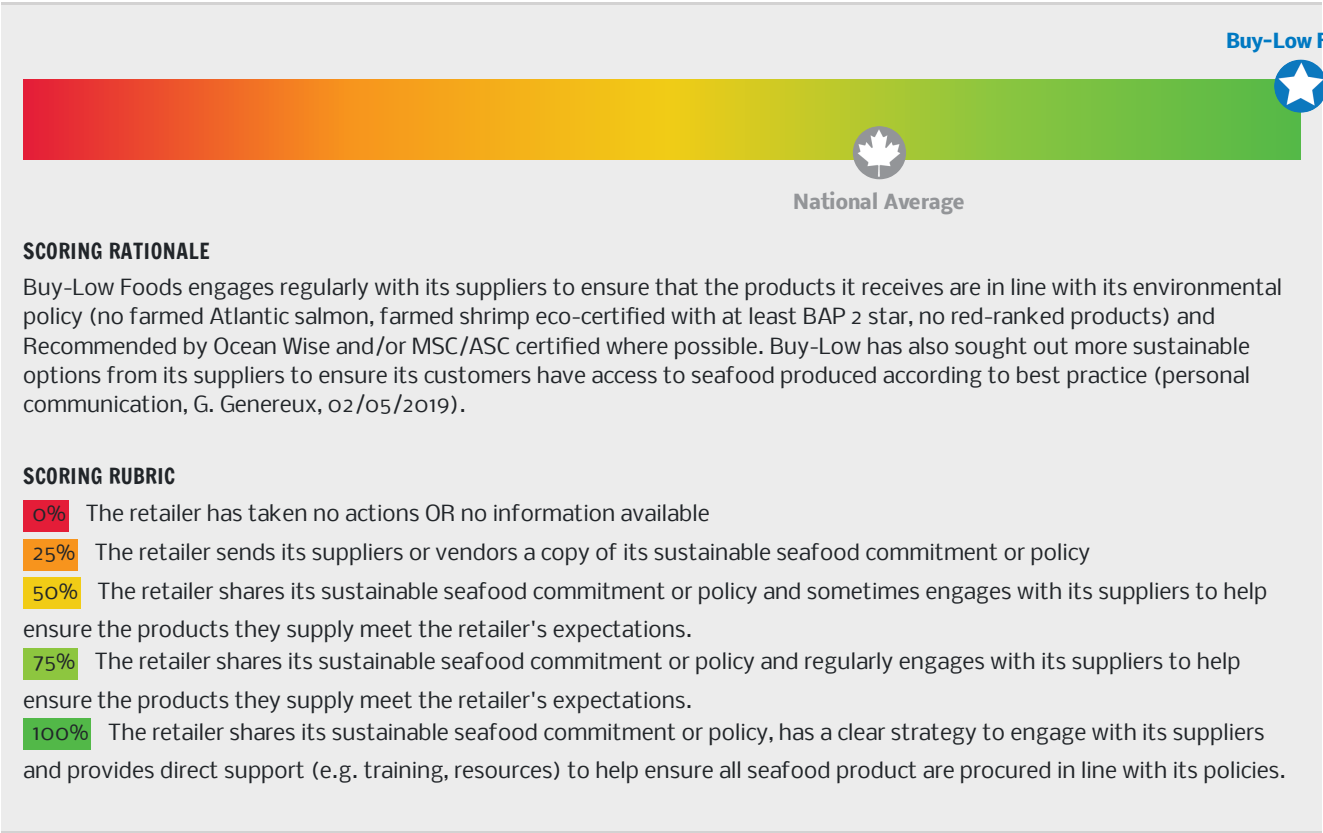
5.1 Training programs are conducted for seafood staff.



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.

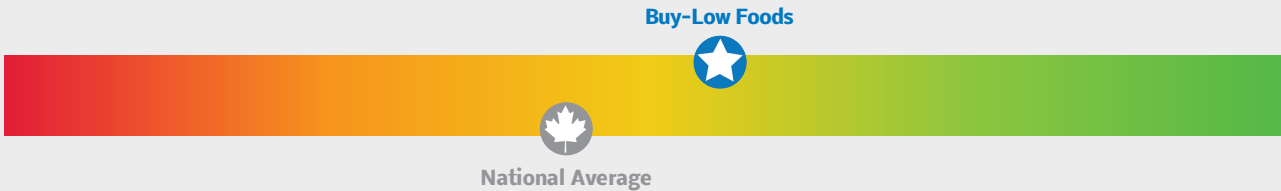
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STEP ELEMENTS

6.1 Does the retailer support improvements in the production of farmed Atlantic salmon (either Canadian produced or imported)?



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



SCORING RATIONALE

Buy-Low Foods preferentially sources ASC certified shrimps and prawns, and when those products are not available sources shrimps and prawns that are at least Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP) 2-star certified. Buy-Low offers a wide range of Ocean Wise Recommended shrimp products and over half of its shrimp sold is Ocean Wise. Buy-Low Foods does not offer any red-ranked shrimp (personal communication, G. Genereux, 02/05/2018).

- ✗ Only sells farmed shrimp and prawn 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 shrimp and prawn farming management to be more environmentally sustainable.
- ✗ Collaborating with other companies pre-competitively to improve shrimp and prawn farming practices
- ✓ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve shrimp and prawn farming practices
- ✓ Refrains from advertising versions of this product that are Not Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or ranked Avoid by Seafood Watch
- ✓ Preferentially procures shrimp and prawns from sources that are either Recommended by Ocean Wise or Best Choice by Seafood Watch
- ✓ Preferentially sources from farms that are ASC certified
- ✗ 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
- 14% Retailer is engaged in one action to support improvement
- 26% Retailer is engaged in two actions to support improvement
- 43% Retailer is engaged in three actions to support improvement
- 57% Retailer is engaged in four actions to support improvement
- 71% Retailer is engaged in five actions to support improvement
- 85% Retailer is engaged in six actions to support improvement
- 100% Retailer is engaged in all support improvement activities or doesn't sell the product

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.
- ✗ 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 Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or ranked Avoid by Seafood Watch
- ✗ Preferentially sources from more sustainable sources that are either Recommended by Ocean Wise or Best Choice by Seafood Watch
- ✗ Preferentially sources from fisheries that are MSC certified
- ✗ 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
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- 85% Retailer is engaged in six actions to support improvement
- 100% Retailer is engaged in all support improvement activities or doesn't sell the product

SCORING RATIONALE

X Sourcing decisions also prioritize products with high levels of social responsibility and traceability

100% Retailer is engaged in all support improvement activities