

Seafood Progress

Brand's Commitment to Sustainable and Socially Responsible Seafood

41

2023 aggregate
score

Seafood Progress Average :
66



Sustainable Seafood Policy
[Seafood Sourcing Statement](#)



Headquarters
Seattle, USA

OVERVIEW



0%

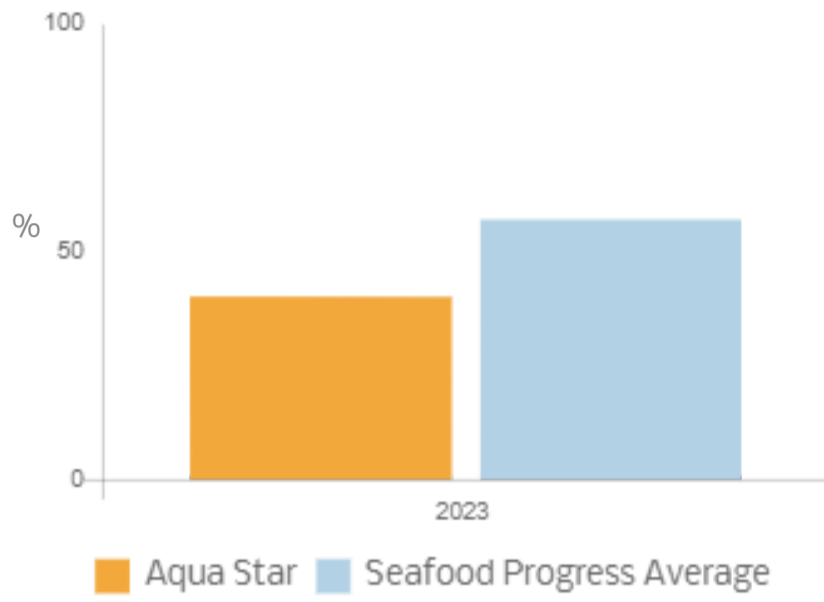
of products sold in 2023 met commitment.

Clear Objectives	✓
Supplier Expectations	✓
Traceability Policy	✗
Reporting on Activities	✗

Sustainability Commitment. Aqua Star has a general commitment to sustainable seafood that lacks clear objectives. [Aqua Star's website](#) does mention that it sells a wide range of MSC, ASC and BAP certified, and Ocean Wise Recommended products, but it doesn't specify goals in relation to these, or any other, standards. Aqua Star also works with a third-party traceability provider to serve its goal of increasing verification throughout its supply chains from the point of harvest for wild products and hatchery for farmed products (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023).

Social Responsibility Commitment. [Aqua Star's website](#) indicates that its commitment to social responsibility is informed by its Supplier Code of Conduct which is based on the [Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code](#). This code addresses issues like wages, hours of work, child labor and health and safety, and requires that suppliers undergo third-party social audits. SeaChoice could not find evidence that Aqua Star has a traceability policy in place to support its commitment to social responsibility or that it reports publicly on activities to support its commitment.

STEP 1: COMMITMENT

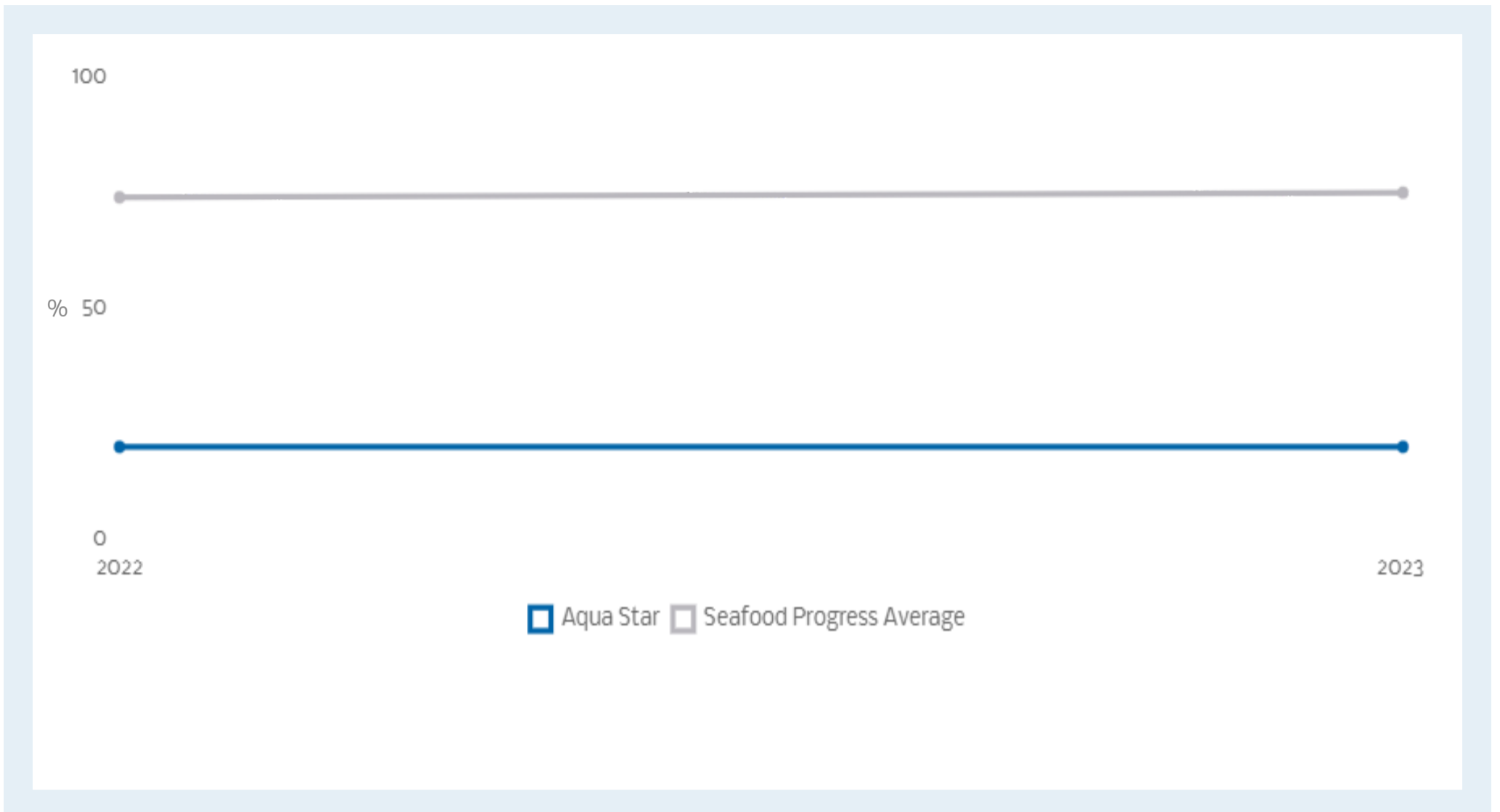


1

Commitment

Does the brand have comprehensive seafood commitments?

1.1 The brand has a publicly available commitment on environmentally sustainable seafood.



Aqua Star has a general commitment to sustainable seafood that lacks clear objectives. [Aqua Star's website](#) does mention that it sells a wide range of MSC, ASC and BAP certified, and Ocean Wise Recommended products, but it doesn't specify goals in relation to these, or any other, standards. Aqua Star also works with a third-party traceability provider to serve its goal of increasing verification throughout its supply chains from the point of harvest for wild products and hatchery for farmed products (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023).

Scoring



100% Commitment to environmental sustainability includes clear objectives that are supported by references to credible standards, a full chain traceability policy and a timeline for meeting the commitment (unless the commitment has already been met).

80% Commitment to environmental sustainability that includes clear objectives that are supported by references to credible standards and a full chain traceability policy in place (or a timeline set for implementation) that traces at least the product scientific name, geographic origin, farmed/wild and harvest method.

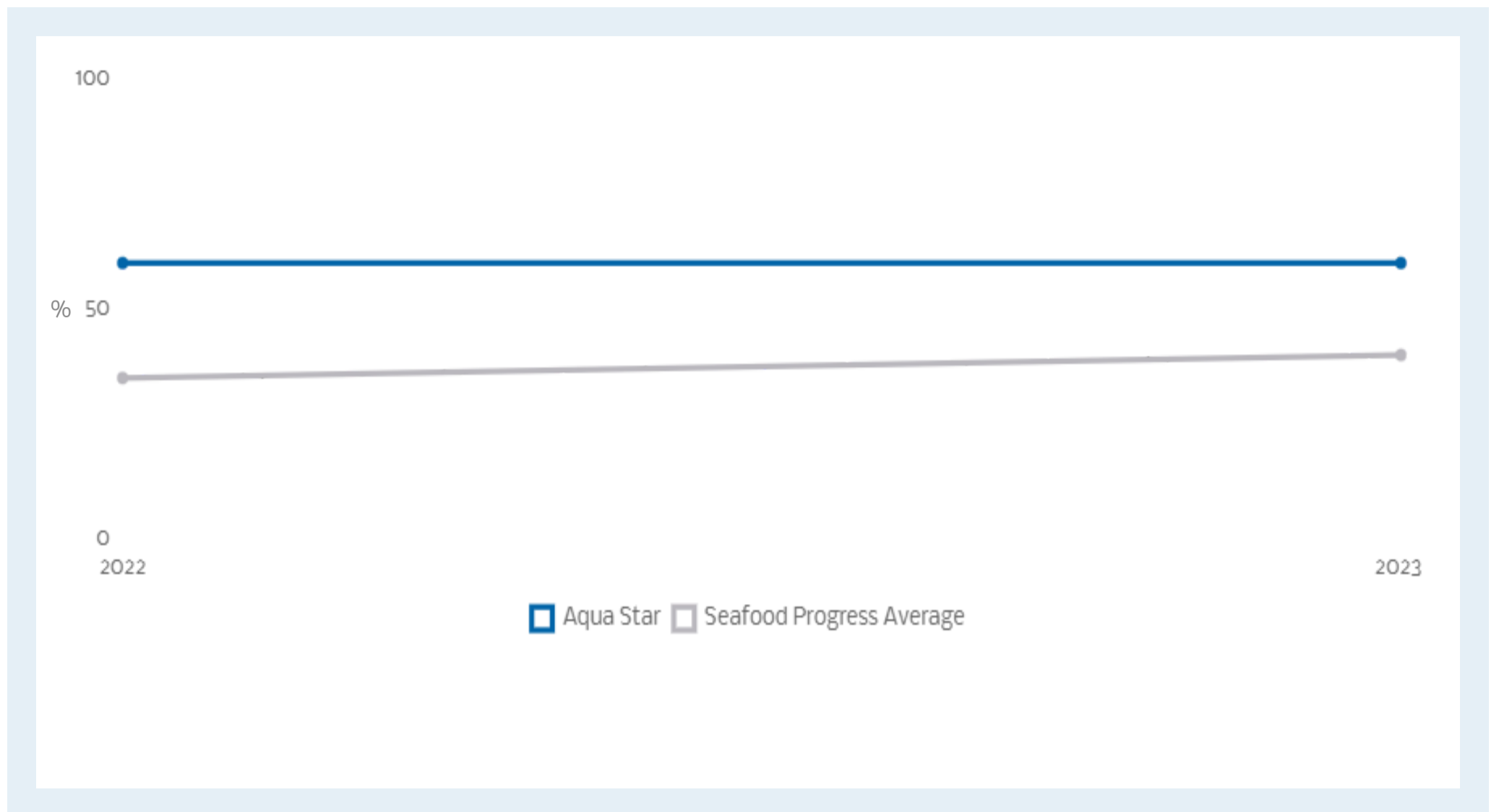
60% Commitment to environmental sustainability that includes clear objectives that are supported by references to credible standards (such as Seafood Watch or Ocean Wise ratings, eco-certifications, etc.).

40% Commitment to environmental sustainability that includes clear objectives for sustainable procurement.

20% General commitment to environmentally sustainable seafood.

0% No publicly available environmental sustainability commitment.

1.2 The brand has a publicly available commitment on socially responsible seafood.



Aqua Star's website indicates that its commitment to social responsibility is informed by its Supplier Code of Conduct which is based on the **Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code**. This code addresses issues like wages, hours of work, child labor and health and safety, and requires that suppliers undergo third-party social audits. SeaChoice could not find evidence that Aqua Star has a traceability policy in place to support its commitment to social responsibility or that it reports publicly on activities to support its commitment.

Scoring



100% Commitment to social responsibility includes clear objectives, actions or expectations for seafood suppliers, a clear and effective traceability policy, and the grocer reports publicly on activities to support social responsibility on at least an annual basis.

80% Commitment to social responsibility includes clear objectives, actions or expectations for seafood suppliers, and a clear and effective traceability policy that at least involves tracing data on the existence of an independent trade union or representative worker organization.

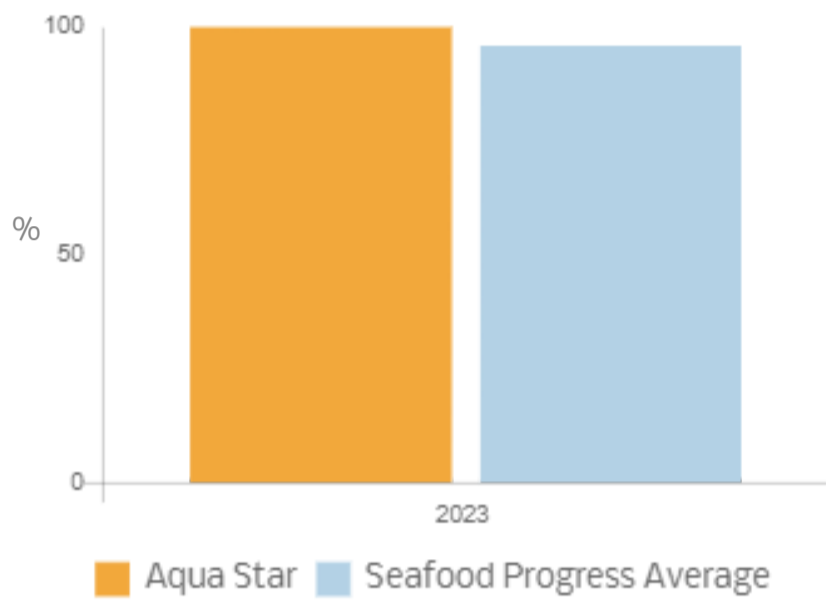
60% Commitment to social responsibility includes clear objectives and actions or expectations for seafood suppliers.

40% Commitment to social responsibility includes with worker driven objectives that are based on credible international standards (The UN's Guiding Principles, The WBA's Seafood Stewardship Index, ILO and the UN Declaration).

20% General commitment to socially responsible seafood.

0% No publicly available social responsibility commitment.

STEP 2: COLLECTING DATA

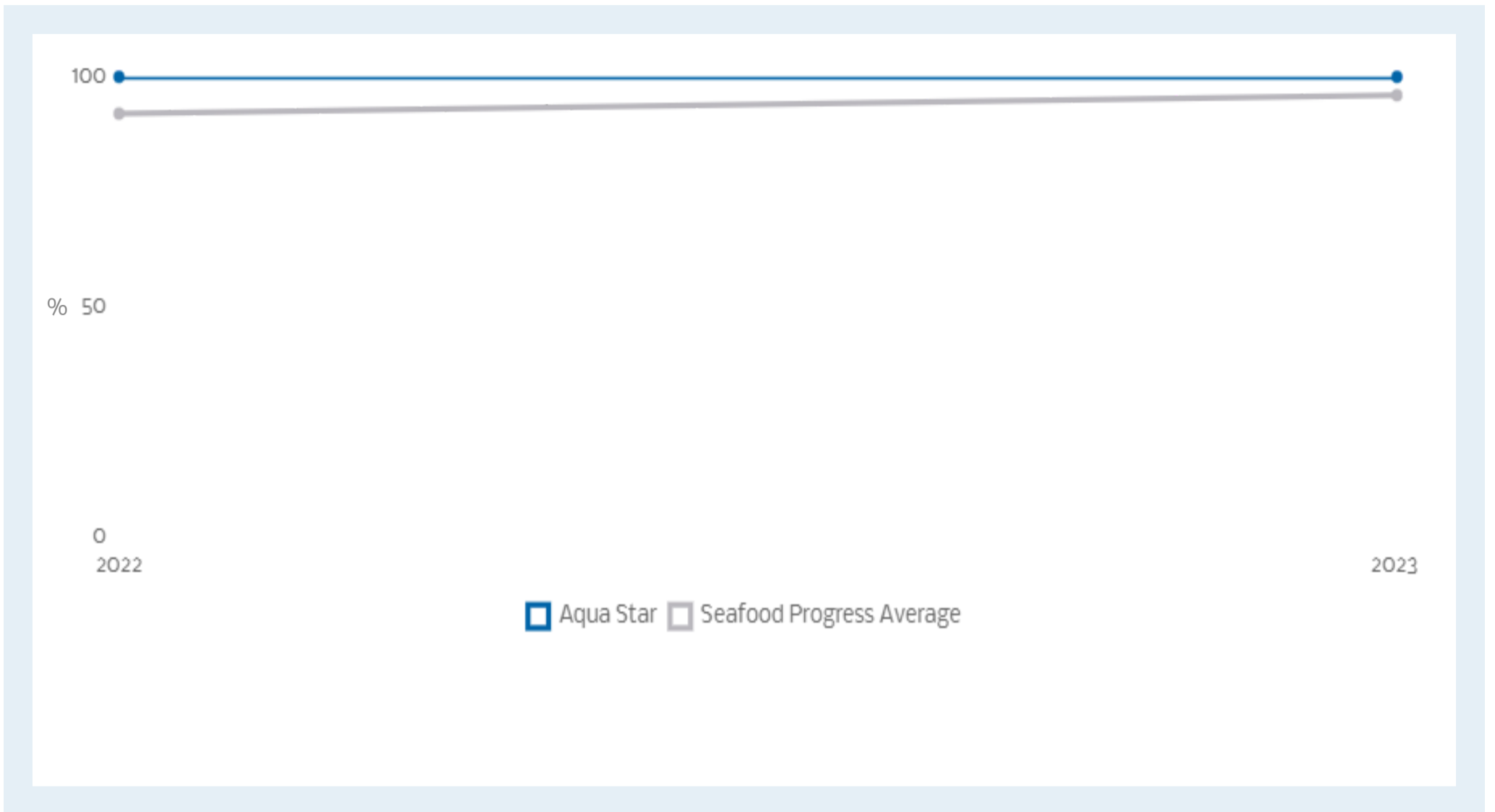


2

Collecting Data

Is the brand collecting data to support its commitment?

2.1 The brand collects data on scientific name.



Aqua Star collects data on scientific name for all products (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023).

Scoring

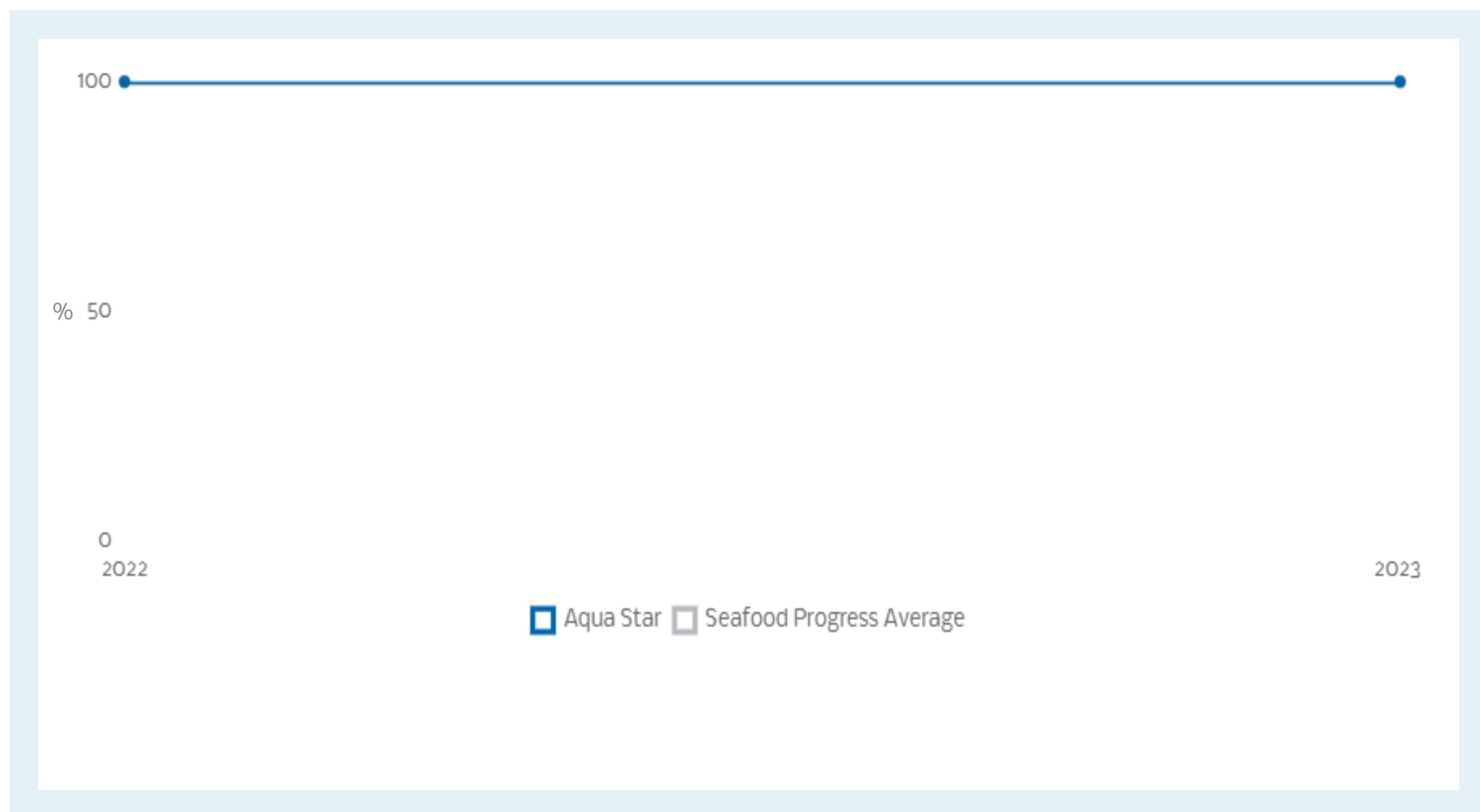


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

50% Collects data for some products included in the grocer's commitment.

0% Does not collect data (or no information available).

2.2 The brand collects data on geographic origin.



Aqua Star collects data on geographic origin for all products (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023).

Scoring

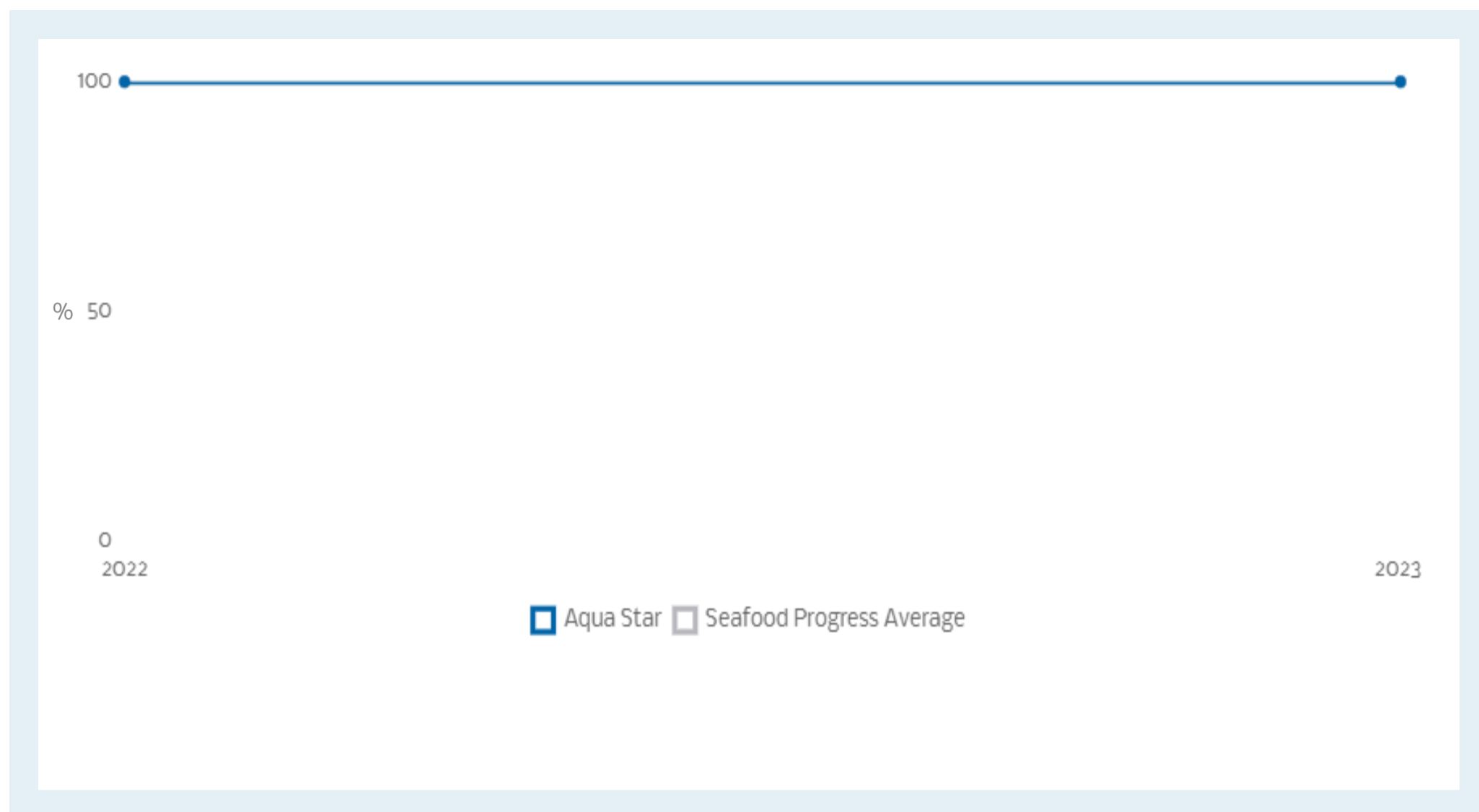


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

50% Collects data for some products included in the grocer's commitment.

0% Does not collect data (or no information available).

2.3 The brand collects data on whether wild or farmed.



Aqua Star collects data on whether farmed or wild for all products (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023).

Scoring

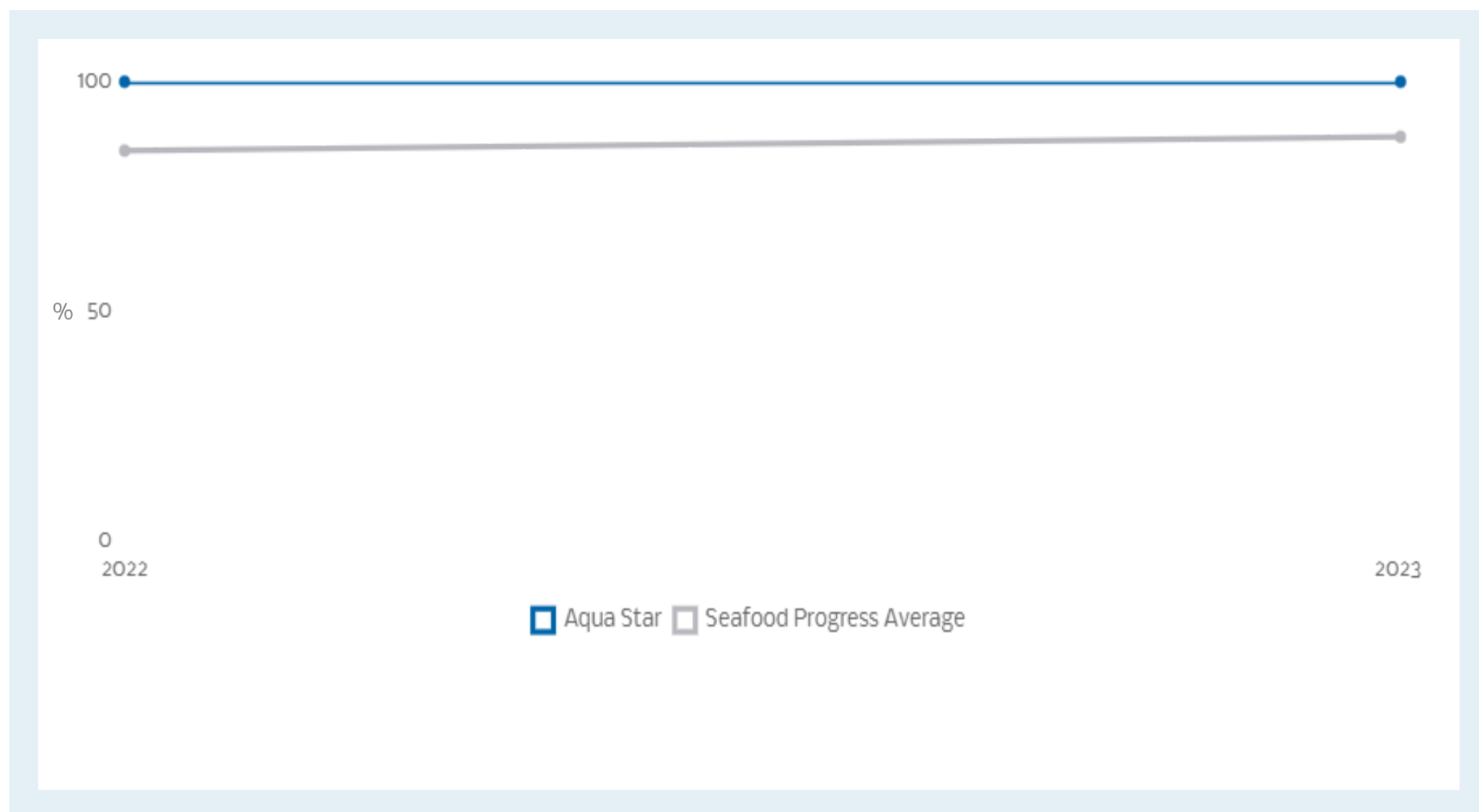


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

50% Collects data for some products included in the grocer's commitment.

0% Does not collect data (or no information available).

2.4 The brand collects data on gear type or farming methods.



Aqua Star collects data on gear type or farming method for all products (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023).

Scoring

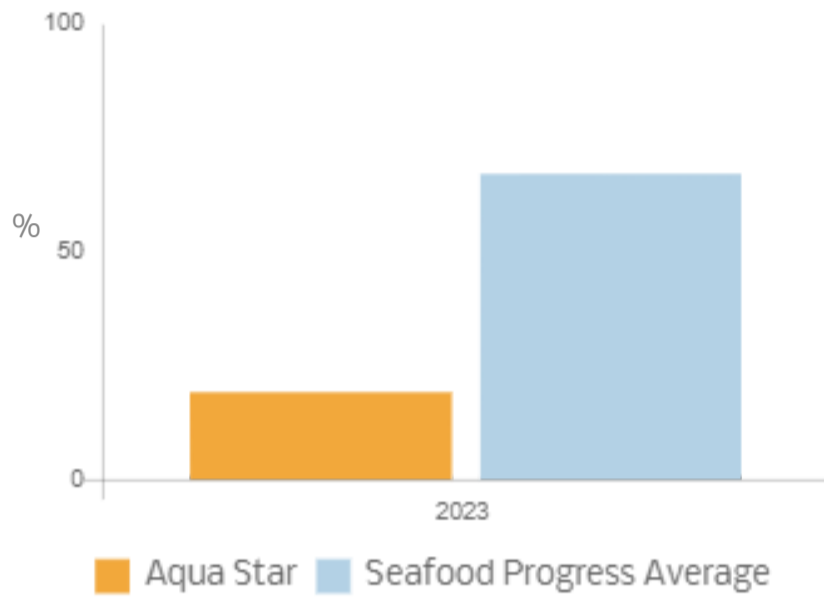


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

50% Collects data for some products included in the grocer's commitment.

0% Does not collect data (or no information available).

STEP 3: SOURCING

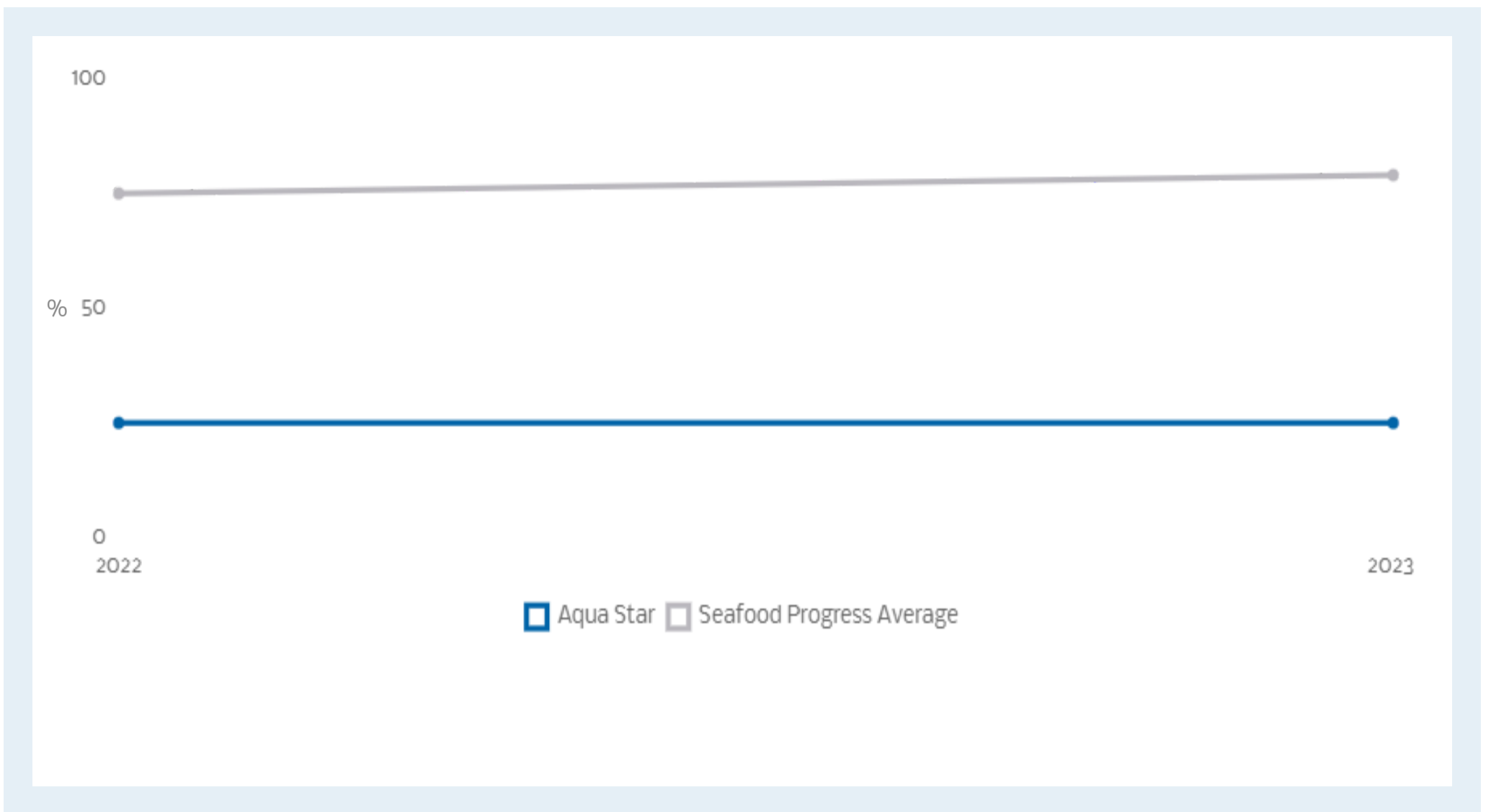


3

Responsible Sourcing

Is the brand making responsible sourcing decisions?

3.1 The brand publishes a clear hierarchy demonstrating its sourcing priorities.



Aqua Star publishes a general list of standards it uses to inform its purchasing decisions for some products.

Scoring



100% Publishes a clear hierarchy of sustainability standards demonstrating its sourcing priorities for all products it sells.

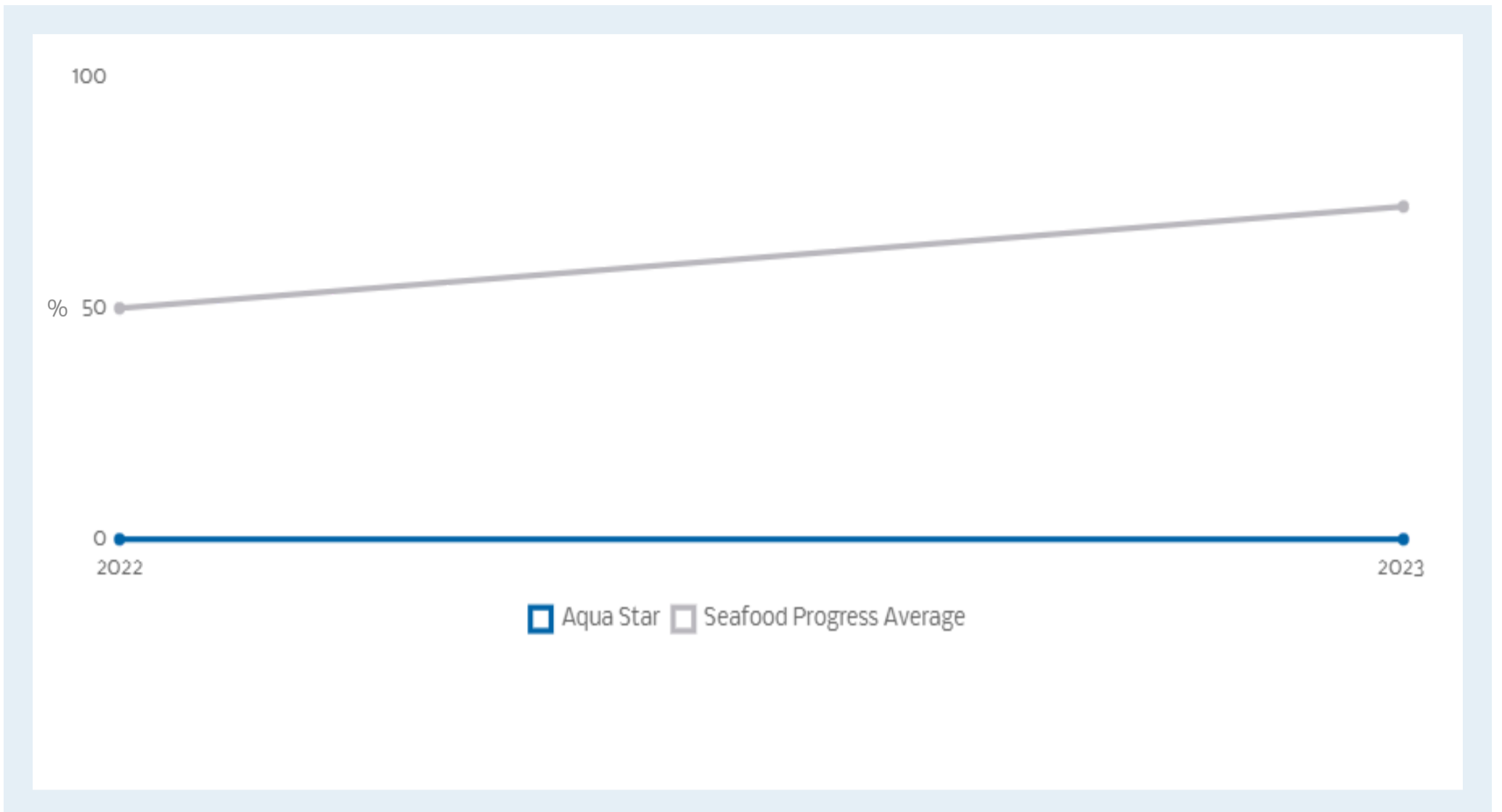
75% Publishes a clear hierarchy of sustainability standards used for sourcing some products, and identifies a general list of sustainability standards that it uses to inform its purchasing decisions for other products.

50% Publishes a clear hierarchy of sustainability standards used for sourcing some products, but doesn't identify the standards it uses to inform its purchasing decisions for other products.

25% Publishes a general list of sustainability standards that it uses to inform its purchasing decisions.

0% Does not publish the sustainability standards that it uses to inform its purchasing decisions.

3.2 The brand has reported on the percentage of seafood sold in the past year that met its sustainability commitment by volume or value.



Aqua Star does not publish any information about how much of its seafood sold meets any sustainability bars.

Scoring



100% Grocer has reported that 100% of its seafood sold meets its sustainability commitment.

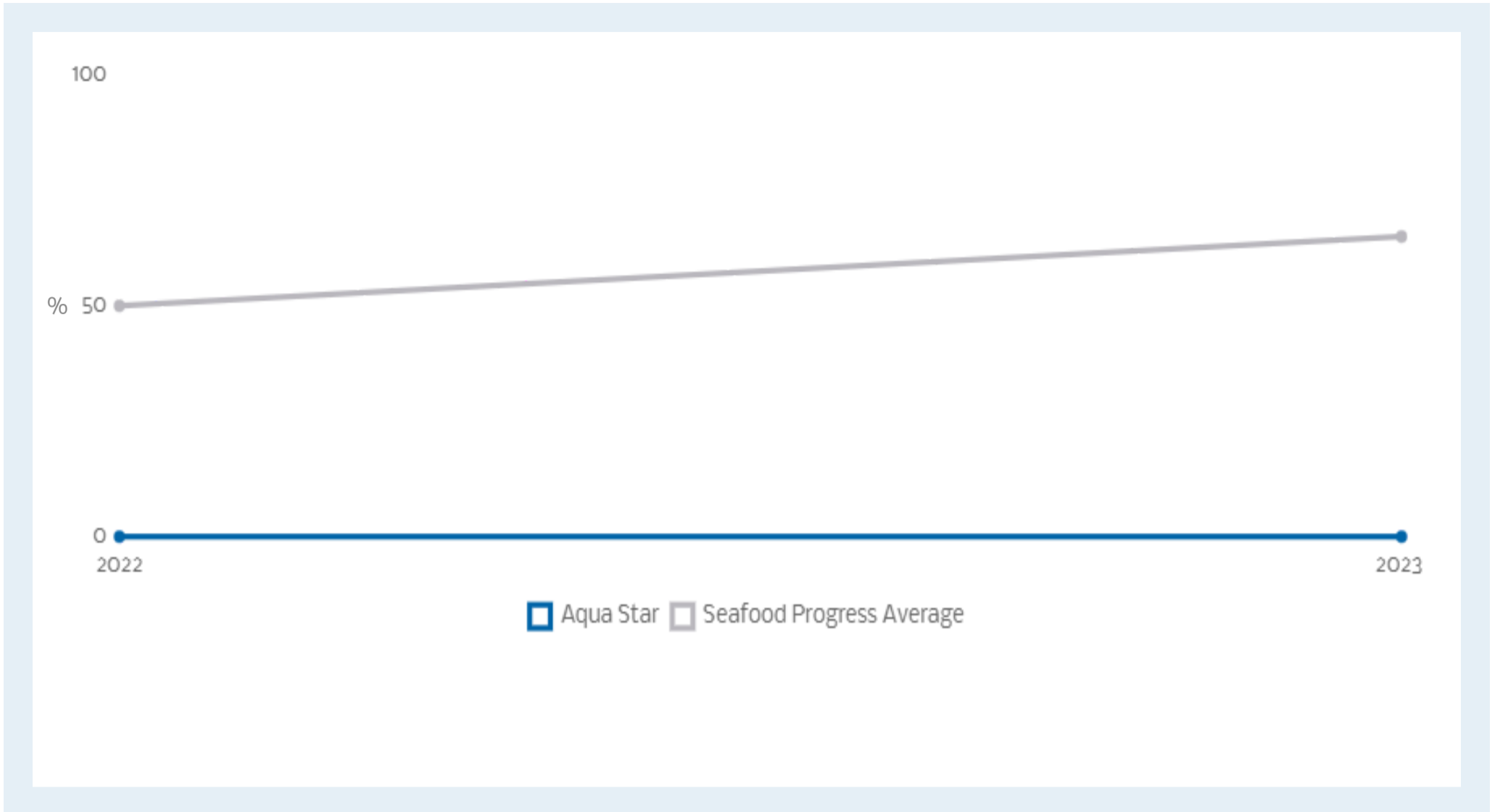
75% Grocer has reported that 75% or more of its seafood sold meets its sustainability commitment.

50% Grocer has reported that 50% or more of its seafood sold meets its sustainability commitment.

25% Grocer has reported that 25% or more of its seafood sold meets its sustainability commitment.

0% The grocer has not reported on the percentage of seafood sold that met its sustainability commitment (or no information available).

3.3 Suppliers are required to agree in writing to uphold the brand's sustainability commitment.



No information in Aqua Star's commitment.

Scoring



100% All suppliers are required to agree in writing to uphold all of the terms of the grocer's environmental sustainability commitment and the grocer actively verifies that this commitment is being upheld on at least an annual basis.

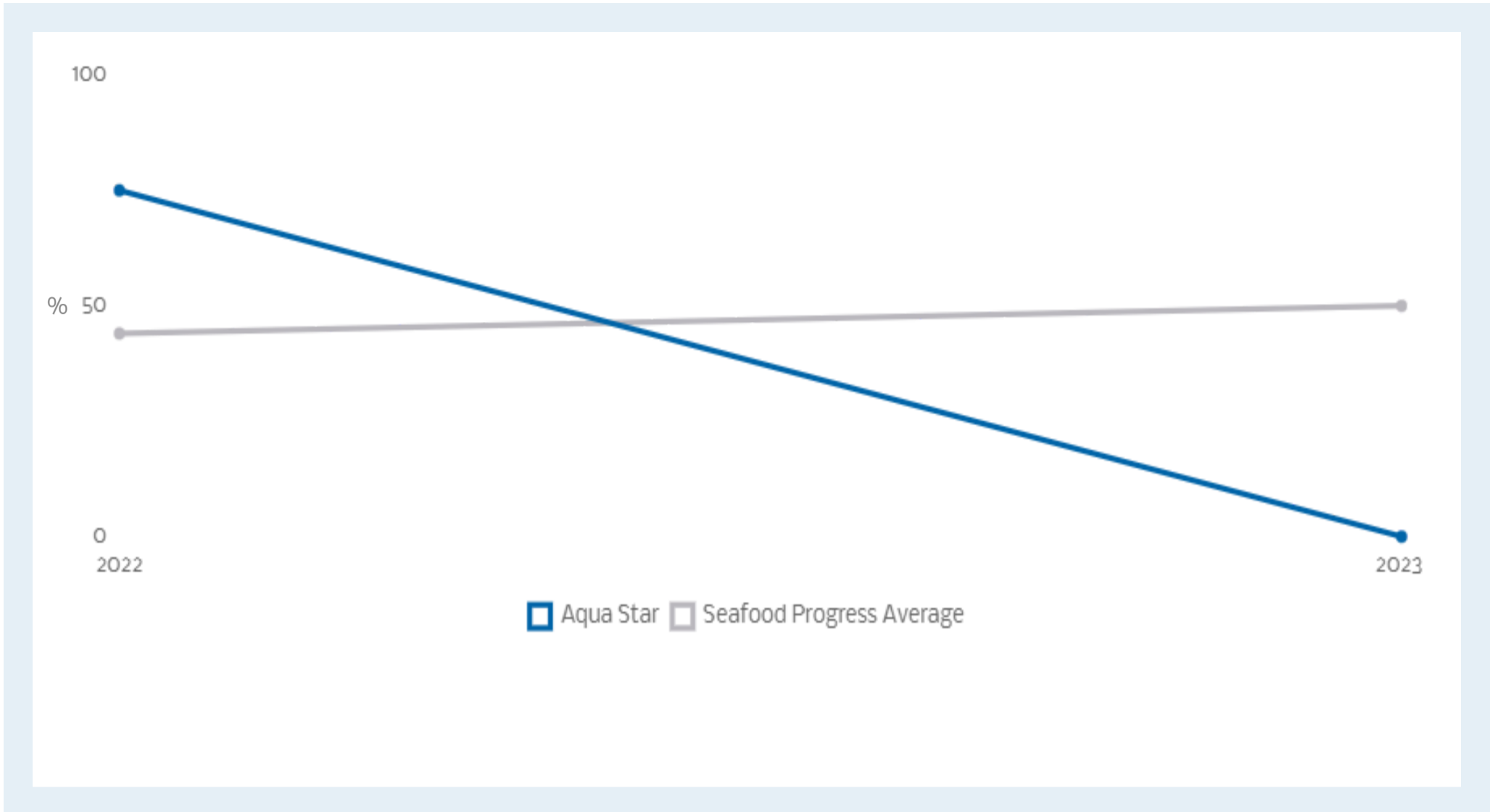
75% All suppliers are required to agree in writing to uphold all of the terms of the grocer's environmental sustainability commitment on at least an annual basis.

50% All suppliers are required to agree in writing to uphold some of the terms of the grocer's environmental sustainability commitment.

25% Some suppliers are required to agree in writing to uphold some of the terms of the grocer's environmental sustainability commitment.

0% Suppliers are not required to agree in writing to uphold the terms of the grocer's commitment.

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



Aqua Star has a Supplier Code of Conduct that is guided by the Ethical Initiative Base Code and that applies to all its employees and suppliers. Aqua Star's suppliers undergo third-party social audits as per its customers' requirements (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023).

Scoring

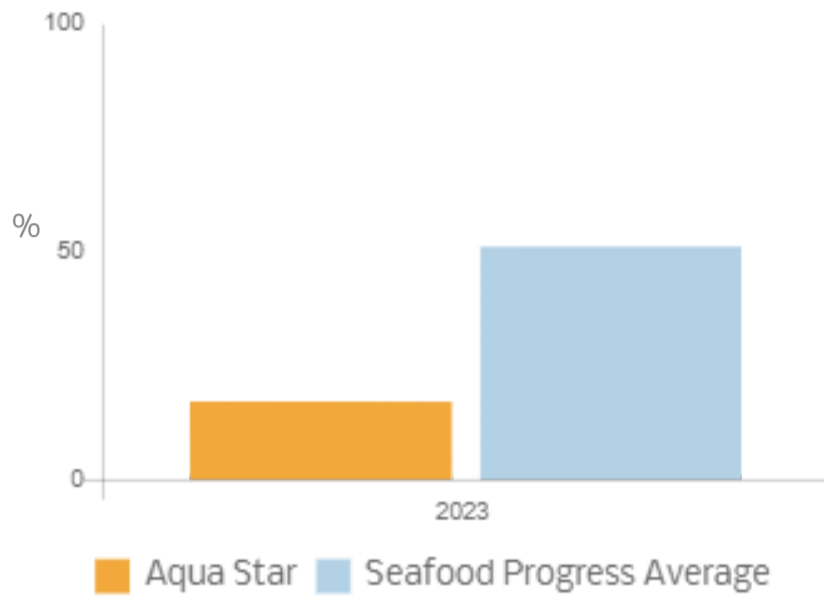


100% All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers all of the grocer's social responsibility commitment and the grocer actively verifies that this commitment is being upheld by suppliers of high risk products.

50% All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers all of the grocer's social responsibility commitment on at least an annual basis.

0% Suppliers are not required to sign a code of conduct (or no information).

STEP 4: TRANSPARENCY



4

Transparency

Is the brand transparent about its commitment to sustainable seafood?

4.1 The brand labels products with the information that allows consumers to make informed decisions.



Aqua Star labels some of its products with geographic origin and as wild or farmed but does not label any products with scientific name or gear type or farming method (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023).

Scoring



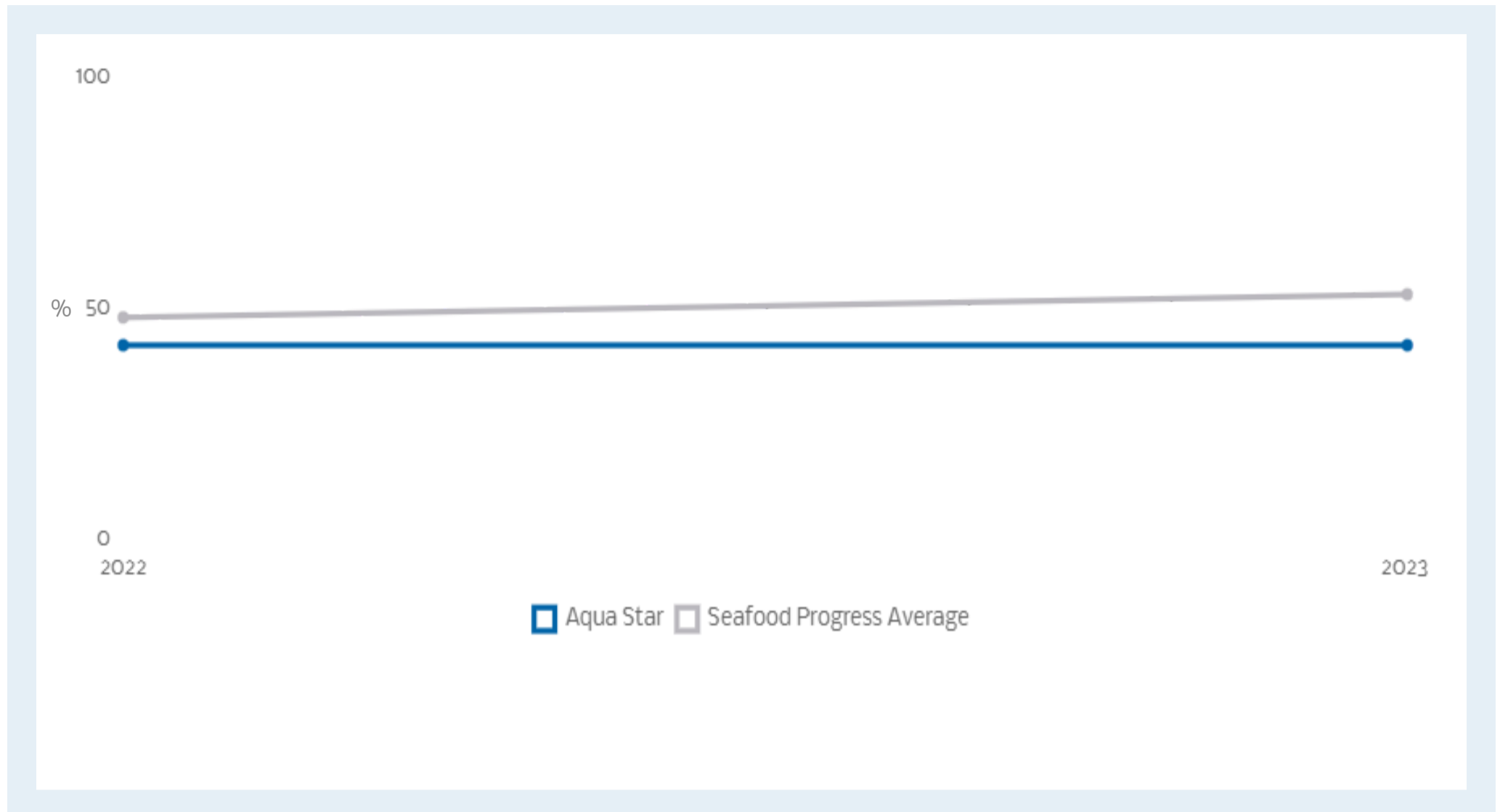
100% The grocer labels all products with the information.

75% The grocer labels most products with the information.

50% The grocer labels some products with the information.

0% The grocer does not label products with the information (or no information available).

4.2 The brand follows best practice guidelines for making environmental claims on its products.



Aqua Star uses its “Seafood Forever - responsibly sourced” self claim and the Ocean Wise endorsement claim on some products but does not make sourcing information publicly available to back up either claim. Additionally, its self claims do not adhere to ISO14021 Type II guidance due to the use of vague language and the fact that neither are accompanied by an explanatory statement. Aqua Star also uses the MSC and ASC certification claims on some products which include chain of custody to serve as evidence to back up these claims.

Scoring



100% The grocer only uses credible certification claims on product labels and includes a chain-of-custody identifier with publicly available evidence to back up its claim(s).

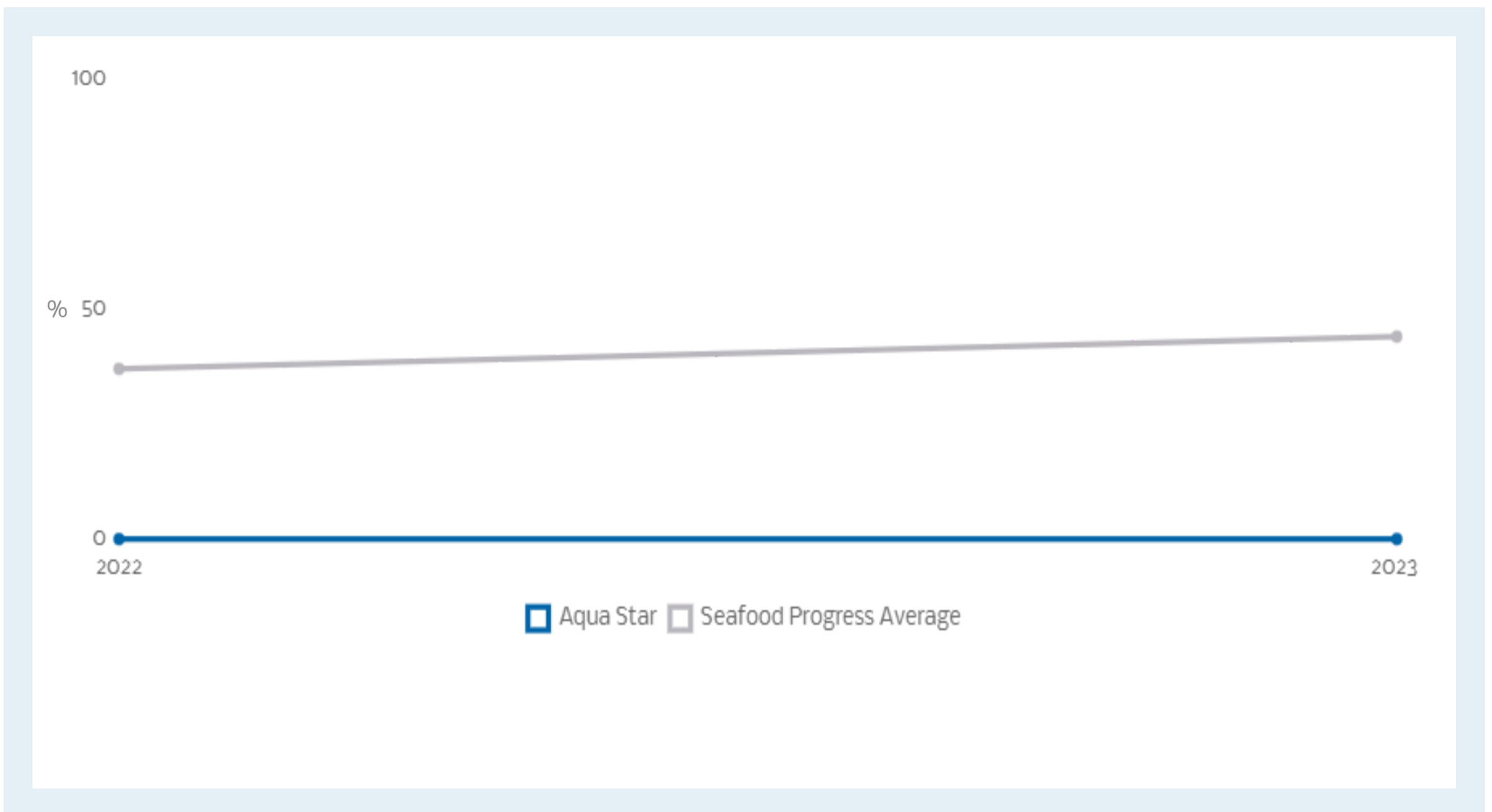
75% The grocer uses certification claims as well as endorsement claims and/or self-declared claims that 1) adhere to ISO 14021 Type II guidance and proof of third-party verification on product labels and 2) makes evidence to back up its claim(s) publicly available.

50% The grocer uses endorsement claims on product labels but does not make the evidence to back up its claim(s) publicly available - - OR - - The grocer uses self-declared claims on product labels that adhere to ISO 14021 Type II guidance and makes evidence to back up the claim(s) publicly available.

25% The grocer uses self-declared claims on product labels and makes evidence to back up the claim(s) publicly available.

0% The grocer uses self-declared claims on product labels and does not make evidence to back up its claim(s) publicly available.

4.3 Key information regarding the brand's products has been made publicly available.



Aqua Star has at one point made a list of products procured with scientific name, geographic origin and harvest method available to the public through its FishChoice profile. However, SeaChoice could not determine the date of its profile or whether it plans to update it.

Scoring



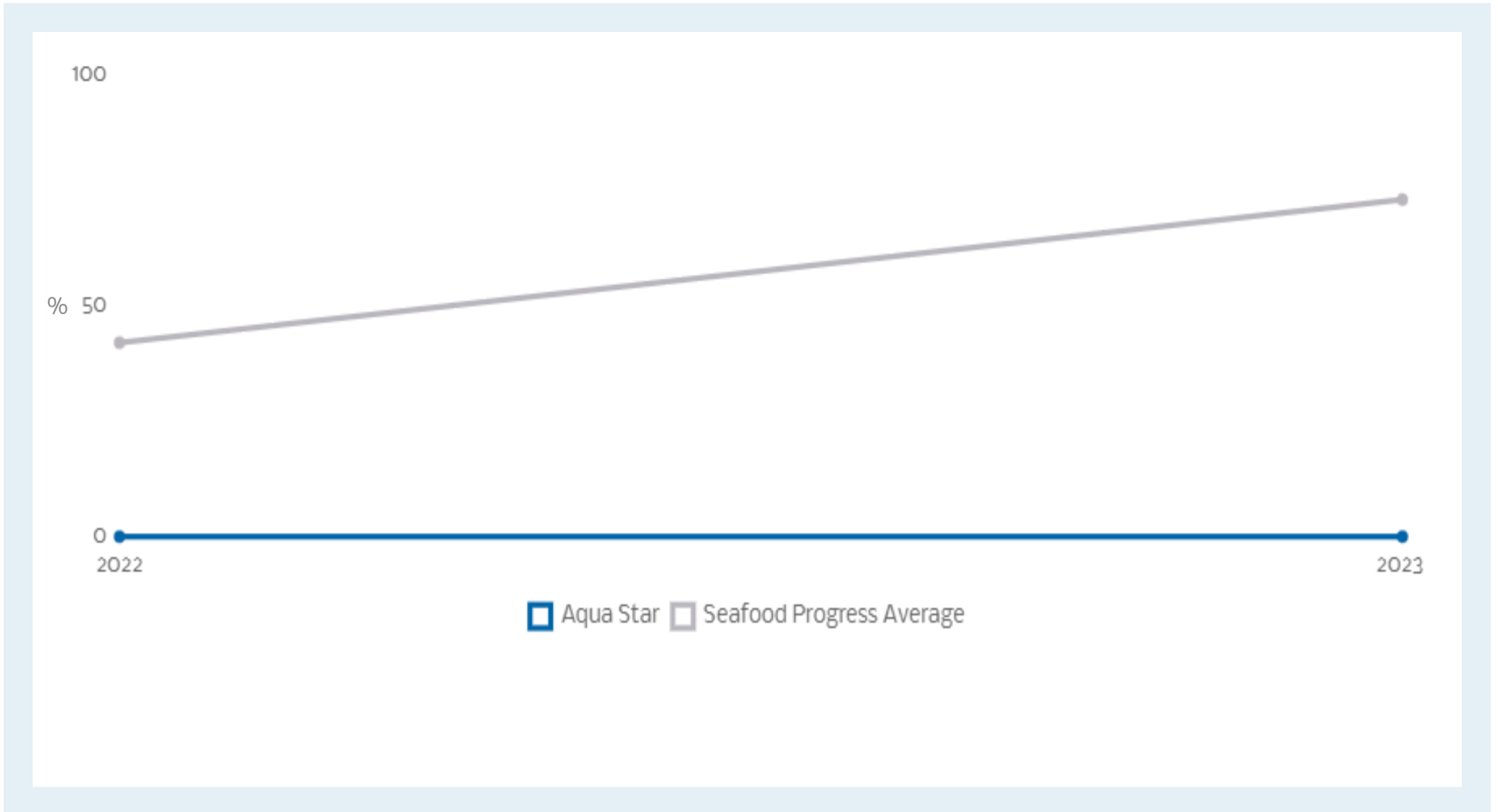
100% Scientific name, geographic origin, gear type AND farming method has been made publicly available for all products.

75% Scientific name, geographic origin, gear type OR farming method has been made publicly available for all products.

50% Scientific name, geographic origin, gear type or farming method has been made publicly available for some products.

0% No information has been made publicly available.

4.4 The brand publicly reports how much of its seafood meets its sustainability criteria by volume or value of sales on an annual basis.



Aqua Star does not have a clear commitment to sustainability to report against.

Scoring

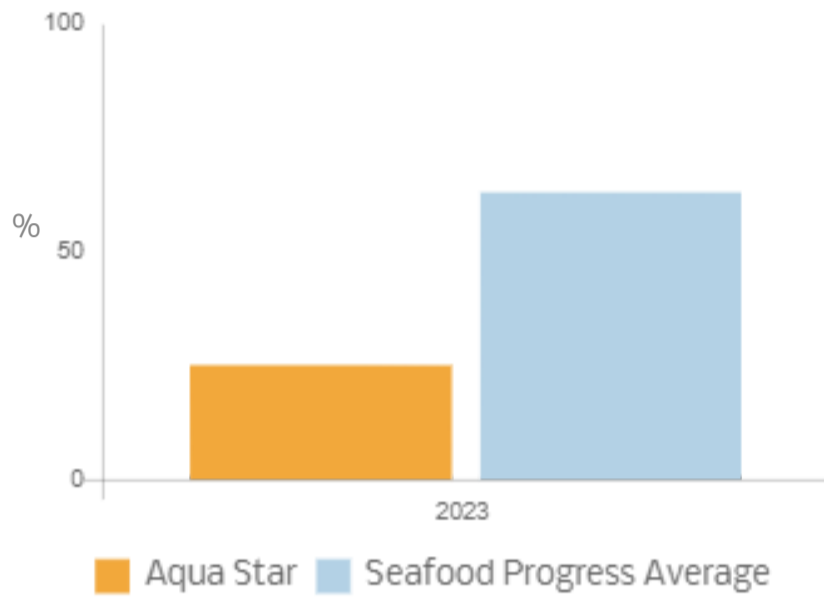


100% The grocer regularly reports publicly how much of its seafood sold meets its commitment by volume or value of sales every year.

50% The grocer has at one point reported publicly how much of its seafood sold meets its commitment.

0% No public information on how the grocer is doing to meet its commitment.

STEP 5: EDUCATION

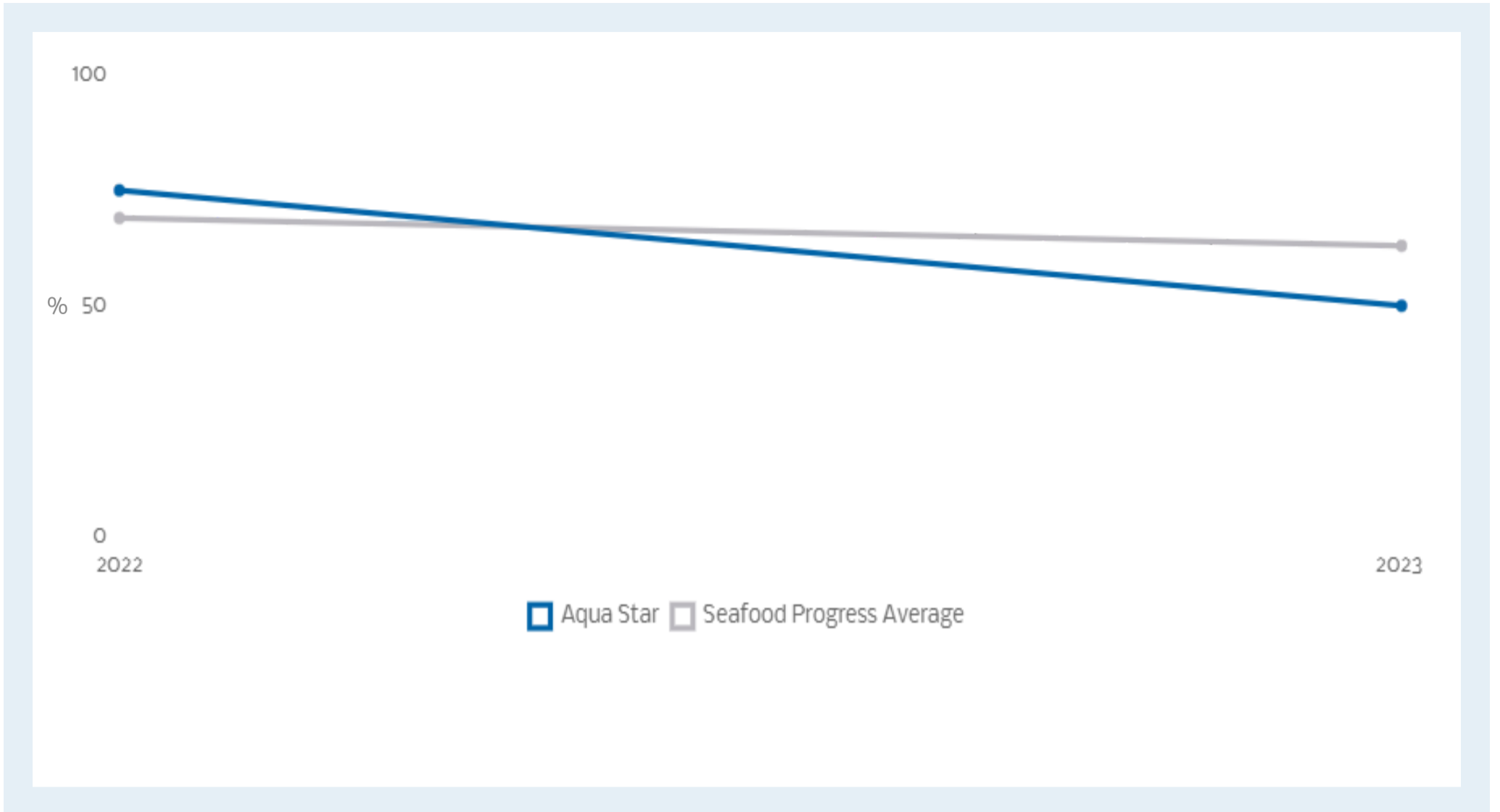


5

Education

Does the brand educate key stakeholders about its seafood commitments?

5.1 There is a description of the brand's commitments to sustainable and socially responsible seafood on its website.



Aqua Star provides some description of its commitments to sustainable seafood and socially responsible seafood on [its website](#).

Scoring



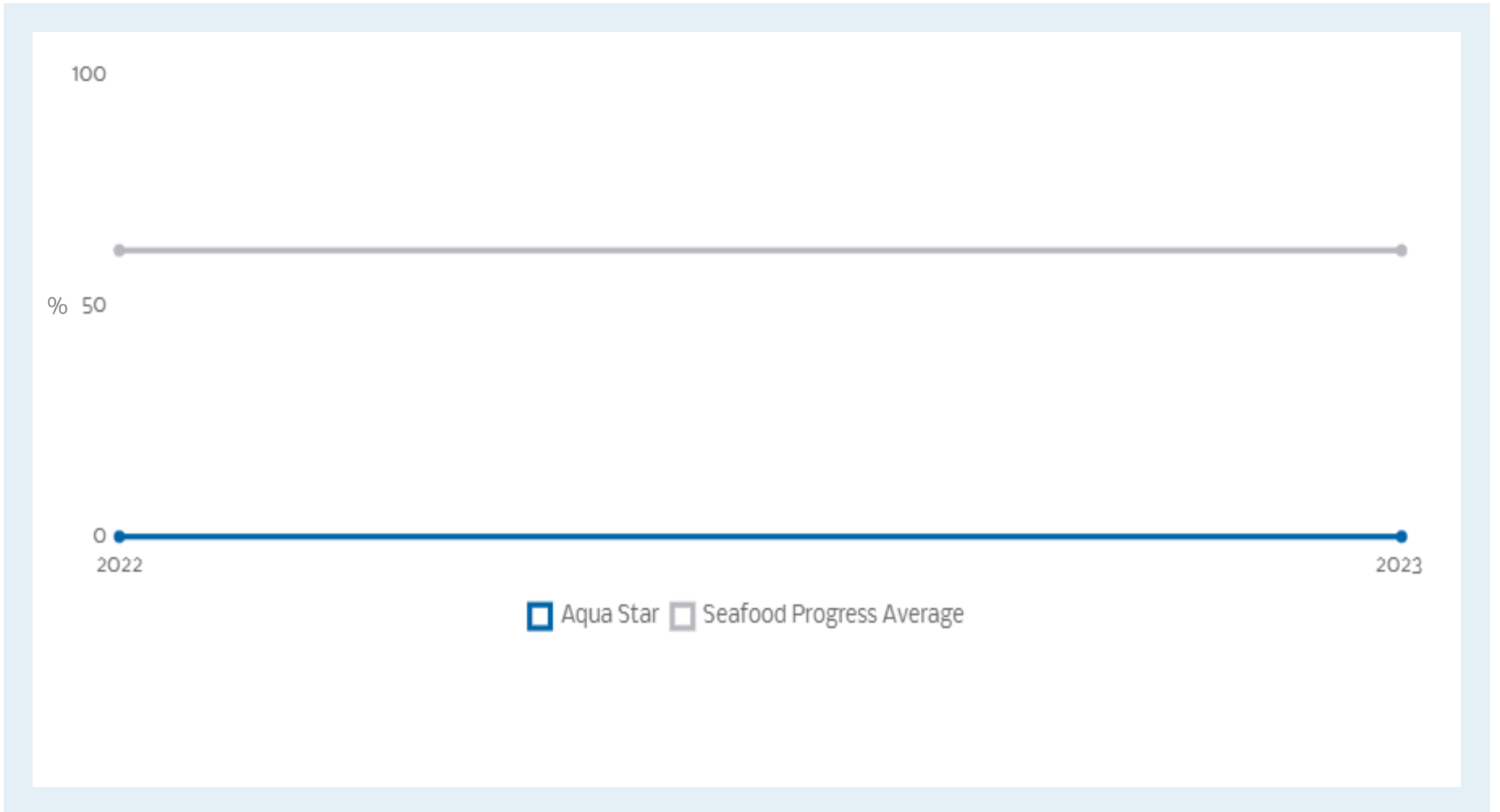
100% Training programs regularly conducted for all seafood staff.

75% Training programs conducted for all seafood staff, but only once.

50% Training programs sometimes conducted or for only some seafood staff.

0% Training programs not conducted for seafood staff (or no information available).

5.2 The brand has taken actions to ensure its suppliers are aware of its sustainable seafood commitment.



No information in Aqua Star's commitment.

Scoring



100% There is a comprehensive description of the grocer's commitments to sustainability AND socially responsibility in store.

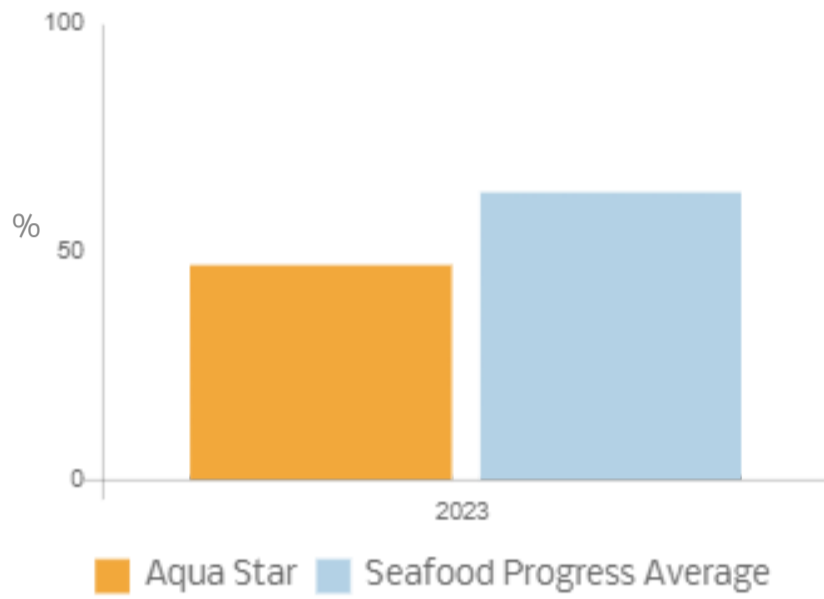
75% There is a comprehensive description of the grocer's commitments to sustainability OR social responsibility in store.

50% There is some description of the grocer's commitment to sustainability AND social responsibility in store.

25% There is some description of the grocer's commitment to sustainability OR social responsibility in store.

0% There is no description of the grocer's commitments in store.

STEP 6: TAKING INITIATIVE

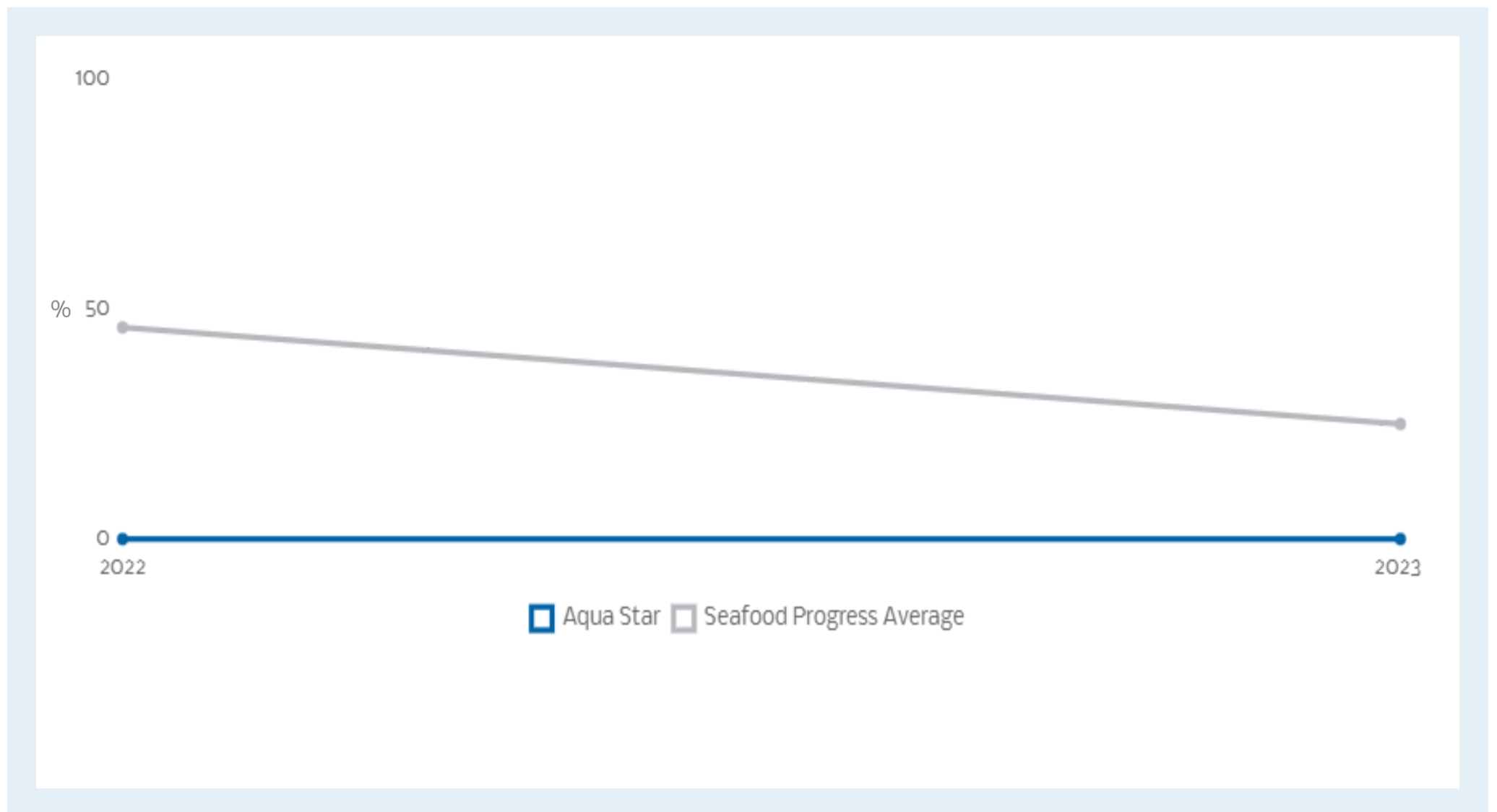


6

Taking Initiative

Does the brand take actions to support improvements to fisheries and aquaculture?

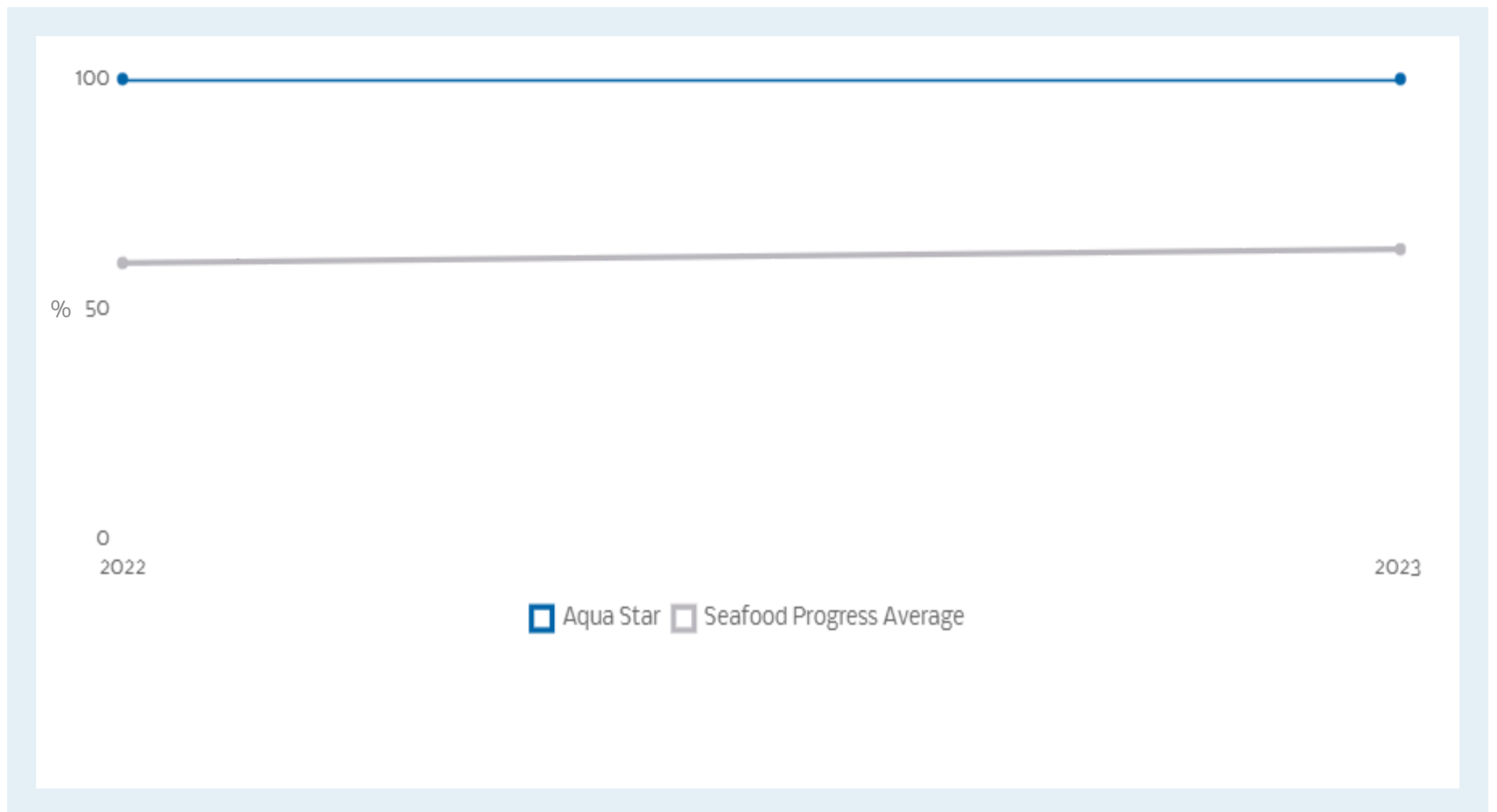
6.1 Farmed Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)



Aqua Star sells farmed Atlantic salmon products but SeaChoice could not find any evidence that the company has taken any actions to support improvements to the management of this species within the past year.

- ✘ Only sells farmed salmon products that meet the highest bars for sustainability, i.e. are produced in a closed containment facility, Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or rated Best Choice by Seafood Watch (100 pts).
- ✘ Conducts outreach to policymakers and/or certifying bodies to advocate for salmon farming management to be more environmentally sustainable (17 pts).
- ✘ Promotes farmed salmon products from closed containment producers through marketing efforts and/or distinguishes these products from open-net pen products at points of sale (17 pts).
- ✘ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve salmon farming practices and/or to support their transition from open-net systems to closed containment systems (17 pts).
- ✘ Refrains from advertising versions of this product that are Not Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or rated Avoid by Seafood Watch (17 pts).
- ✘ Preferentially procures farmed salmon from closed containment producers and/or sources that are Recommended by Ocean Wise or rated Best Choice by Seafood Watch (17 pts).
- ✘ Does not sell genetically engineered (GE) or genetically modified (GM) farmed salmon (17 pts).

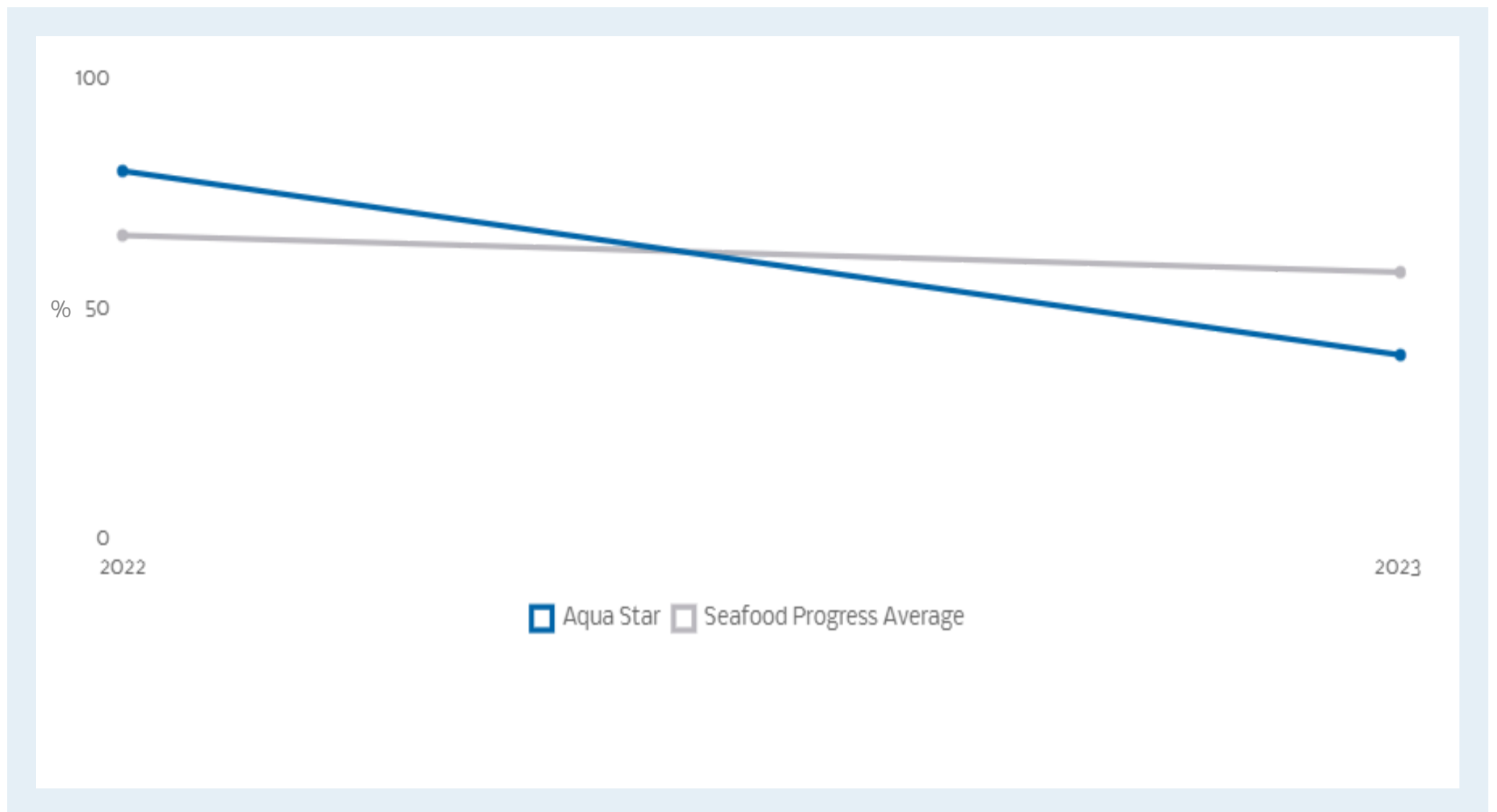
6.2 Farmed shrimps and prawns



Aqua Star only sells shrimp that is minimum BAP 2 star certified, which indicates that they are traceable through chain of custody (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023). SeaChoice found evidence that Aqua Star collaborates with other companies pre-competitively through the [Asian Shrimp roundtable](#) coordinated by the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP).

- ✔ Only sells farmed shrimp and prawn products that meet the highest bars for sustainability, i.e. are certified by ASC, BAP 2 star plus, Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or rated Best Choice by Seafood Watch (100 pts).
- ✘ Conducts outreach to policymakers and/or certifying bodies to advocate for shrimp and prawn farming management to be more environmentally sustainable (20 pts).
- ✘ Collaborates with other companies pre-competitively to improve shrimp and prawn farming practices (20 pts).
- ✘ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve shrimp and prawn farming practices (20 pts).
- ✘ Preferentially procures shrimp and prawns from sources that are ASC or BAP 2 star plus certified, Recommended by Ocean Wise or Best Choice by Seafood Watch (20 pts).
- ✘ Prioritizes sourcing products with high levels of social responsibility and/or traceability (20 pts).

6.4 Other species



SeaChoice found evidence that Aqua Star collaborates with other companies pre-competitively through the **global squid roundtable** coordinated by the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP). Additionally, Aqua Star has full chain traceability of all the seafood it sells (personal communication, C. Peet, 16/03/2023).

- ✘ 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 rated Best Choice by Seafood Watch (100 pts).
- ✘ Conducts outreach to policymakers and/or certifying bodies to advocate for harvest or farming method and management to be more environmentally sustainable (20 pts).
- ✔ Collaborates with other companies pre-competitively to improve fishing or aquaculture practices (20 pts).
- ✔ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve fishing or farming practices (20 pts).
- ✔ Preferentially sources from more sustainable sources that are MSC/ASC certified, Recommended by Ocean Wise or Best Choice by Seafood Watch (20 pts).
- ✔ Prioritizes sourcing products with high levels of social responsibility and/or traceability (20 pts).