

# Seafood Progress

Grocer's Commitment to Sustainable and Socially Responsible Seafood

**68**

2023 score

Seafood Progress Average  
🔍: 68

↓ Score Trend  
**Decreased Since  
Last Year**

Parent Company  
**Pattison Food Group**

NGO Partner(s)  
**Ocean Wise**



[Stores owned by Buy-Low Foods](#)



Sustainable Commitment  
[click here](#)



Progress Reports  
[2022, 2021, 2020](#)



Location  
**British Columbia, Alberta  
and Saskatchewan**

# OVERVIEW

Which products does this grocer's sustainable seafood commitment cover?

	Fresh	Frozen	Shelf
Store brand ?	✓	✓	✗
Seafood brand ?	✓	✓	✗
No brand ?	✓	✓	

## SUMMARY



**100%**

of products sold in 2023 met commitment.

**Sustainability Commitment.** Buy-Low Foods reported to SeaChoice that it is still committed to procuring all its private label and national brand fresh and frozen seafood products from sources that are (in priority order): 1) Ocean Wise recommended, 2) Rated a “Good Alternative” or “Best Choice” by Seafood Watch, or 3) From fisheries and farms that are engaged in credible improvement projects. Buy-Low is also committed to not selling any farmed salmon. Buy-Low does not currently have a full chain traceability policy in place to support its commitment (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

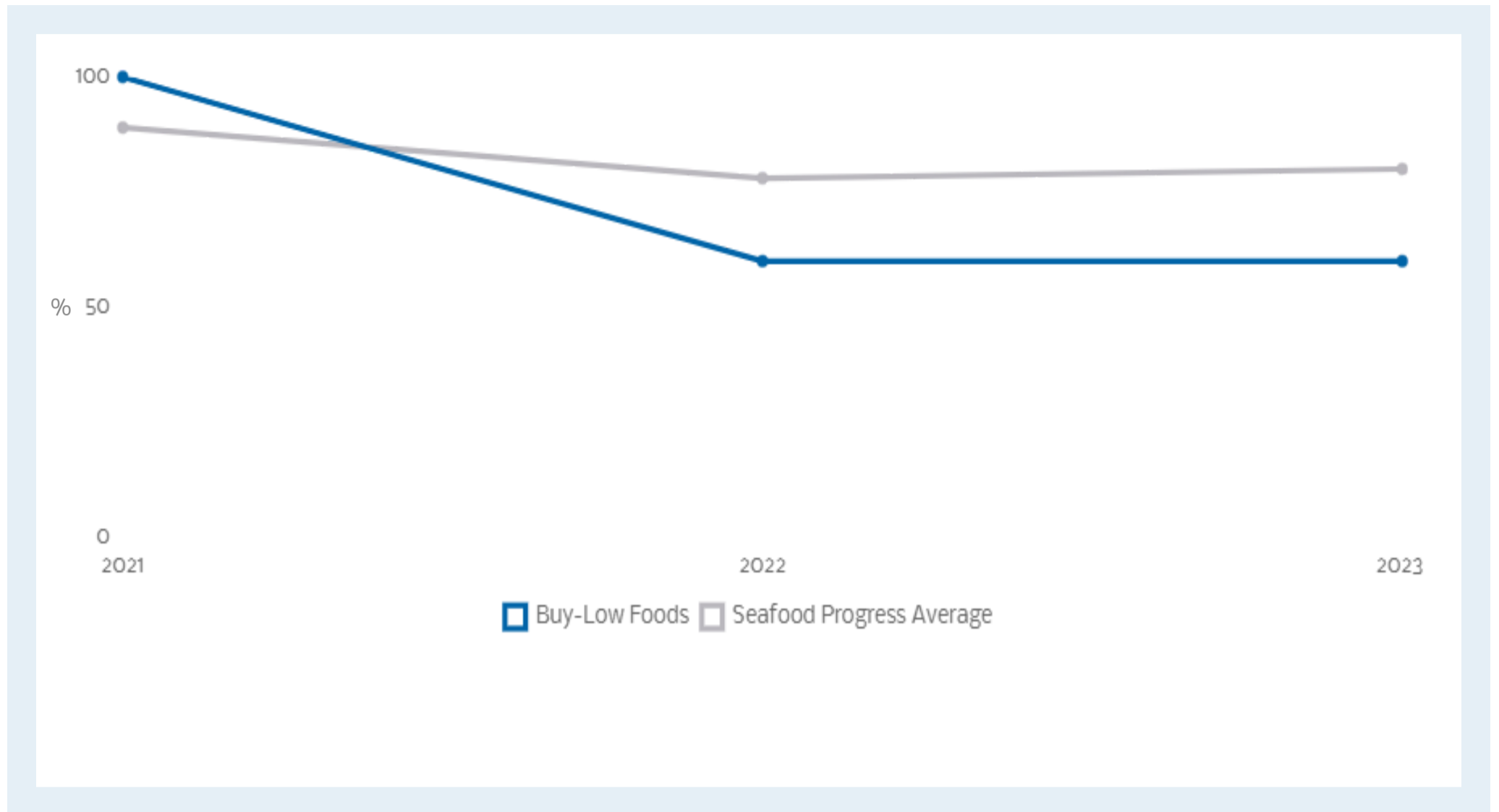
Clear Objectives	✓
Supplier Expectations	✗
Traceability Policy	✗
Reporting on Activities	✗

**Social Responsibility Commitment.** Buy-Low Foods' [website](#) states that it supports the UN's Universal Declaration on Human Rights and adherence to relevant Conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and expects its suppliers to ensure that its labour practices reflect national laws and international standards (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

# STEP 1: COMMITMENT



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



Buy-Low Foods reported to SeaChoice that it is still committed to procuring all its private label and national brand fresh and frozen seafood products from sources that are (in priority order): 1) Ocean Wise recommended, 2) Rated a “Good Alternative” or “Best Choice” by Seafood Watch, or 3) From fisheries and farms that are engaged in credible improvement projects. Buy-Low is also committed to not selling any farmed salmon. Buy-Low does not currently have a full chain traceability policy in place to support its commitment (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

### 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.

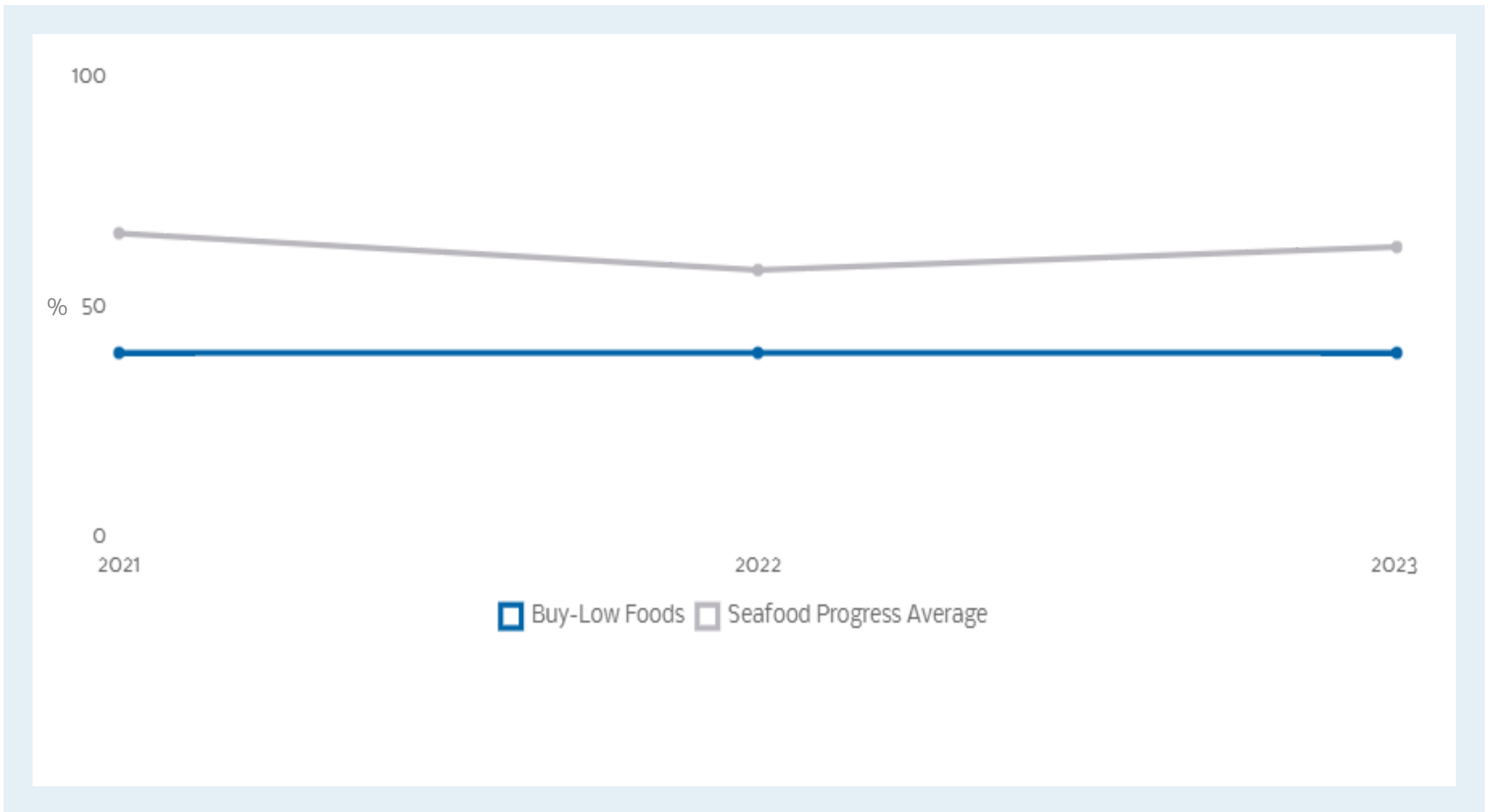
60% Commitment to environmental sustainability that includes clear objectives that are supported by references to credible standards (such as Seafood Watch or Ocean Wise ratings, eco-certifications, etc.).

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 grocer has a publicly available commitment on socially responsible seafood.



Buy-Low Foods' [website](#) states that it supports the UN's Universal Declaration on Human Rights and adherence to relevant Conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and expects its suppliers to ensure that its labour practices reflect national laws and international standards (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

### 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.

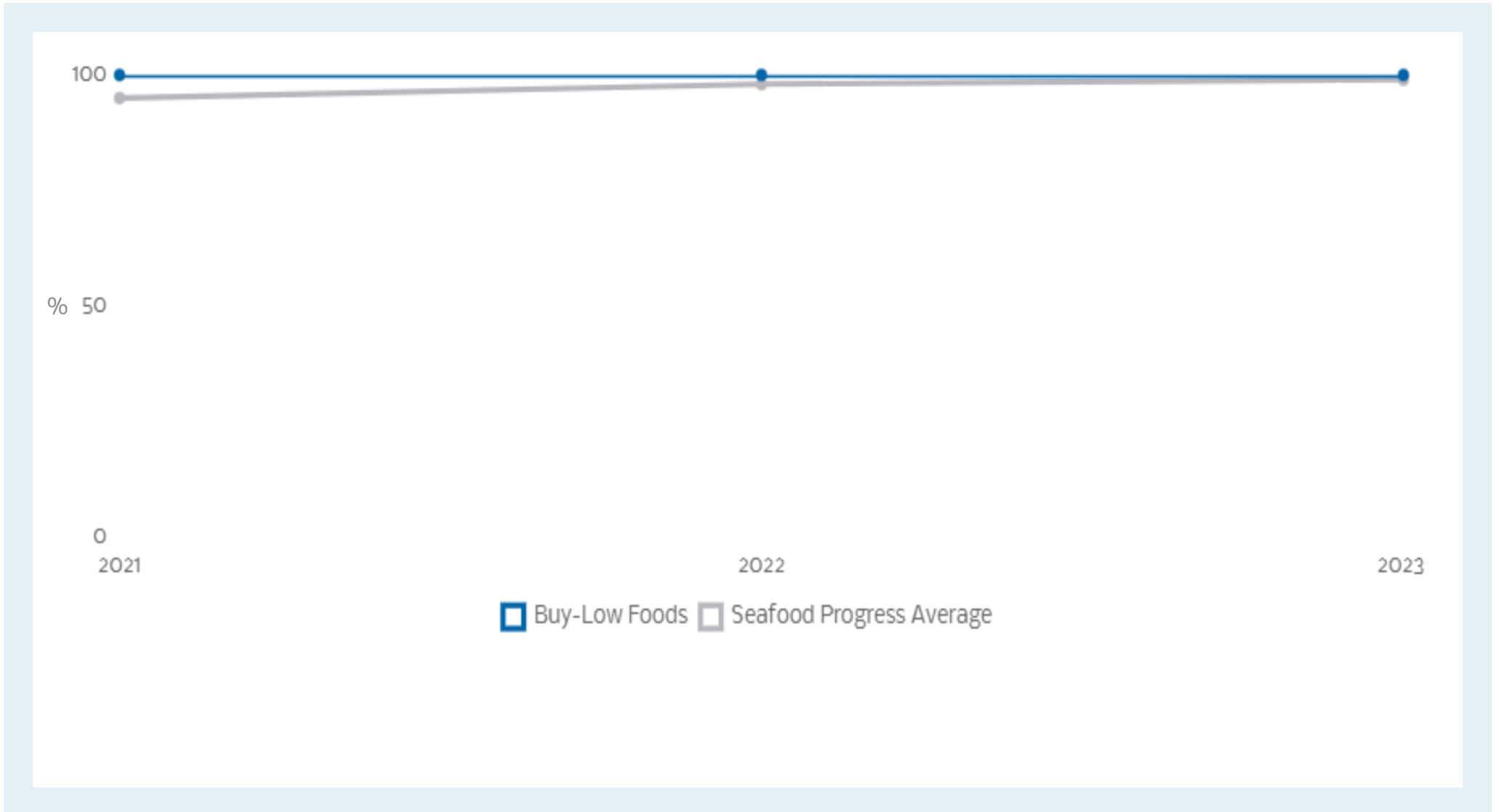
60% Commitment to social responsibility includes clear objectives and actions or expectations for seafood suppliers.

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.

### 1.3 The grocer includes all banners that sell seafood in its sustainable seafood commitment.



Buy-Low Foods' sustainable seafood policy applies to all Buy-Low Foods and Nesters Market stores (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

#### Scoring

100% The grocer includes 100% of its banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

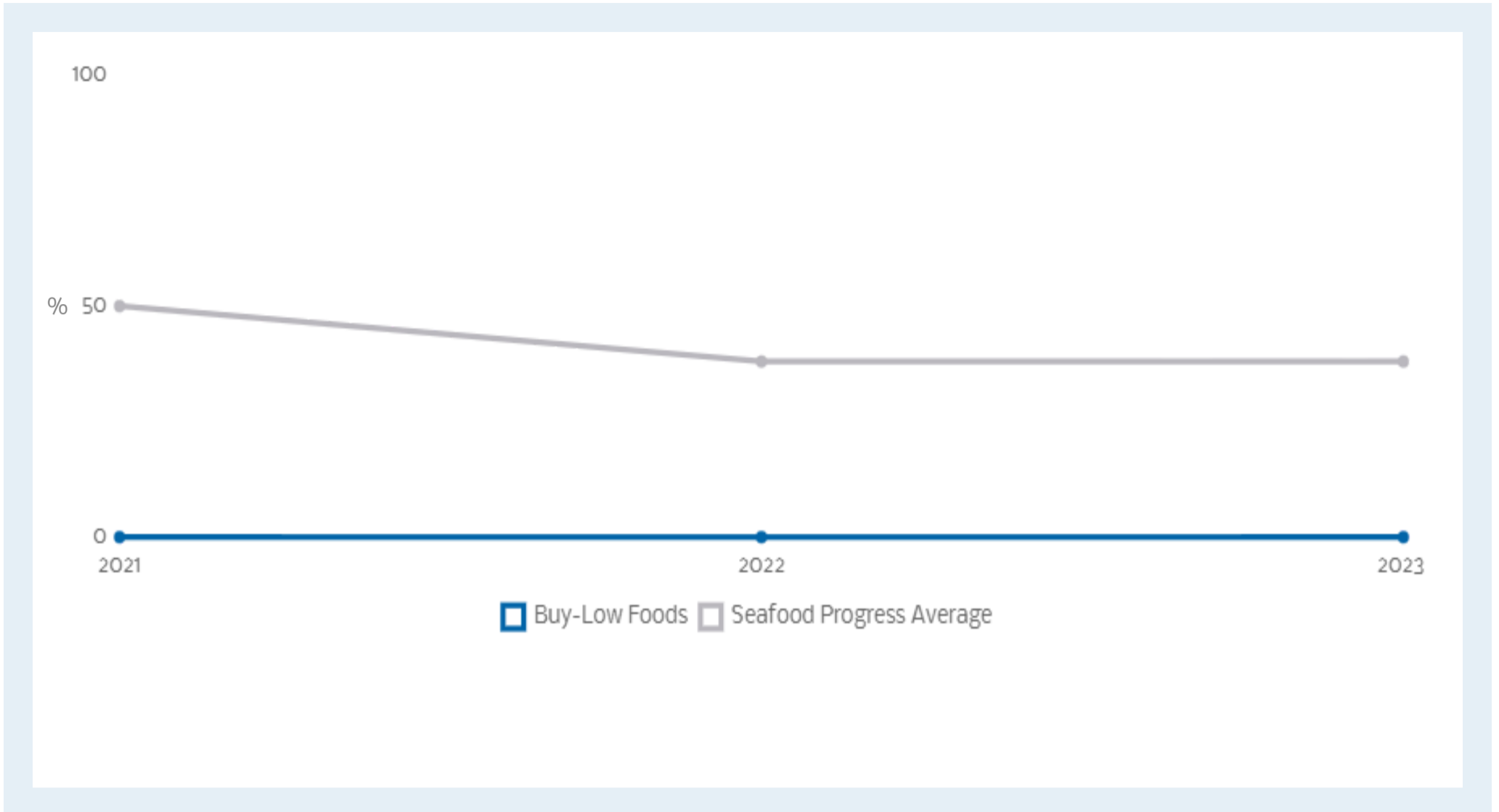
75% The grocer includes 75% or more of its banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

50% The grocer includes 50% or more of its banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

25% The grocer includes 25% or more of its banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

0% The grocer does not include any banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

## 1.4 The grocer includes all shelf stable and national brand products in its sustainable seafood commitment.



Buy-Low Foods' sustainable seafood policy does not yet cover its private label or national brand shelf stable products, but it is working on bringing these product categories under its commitment (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

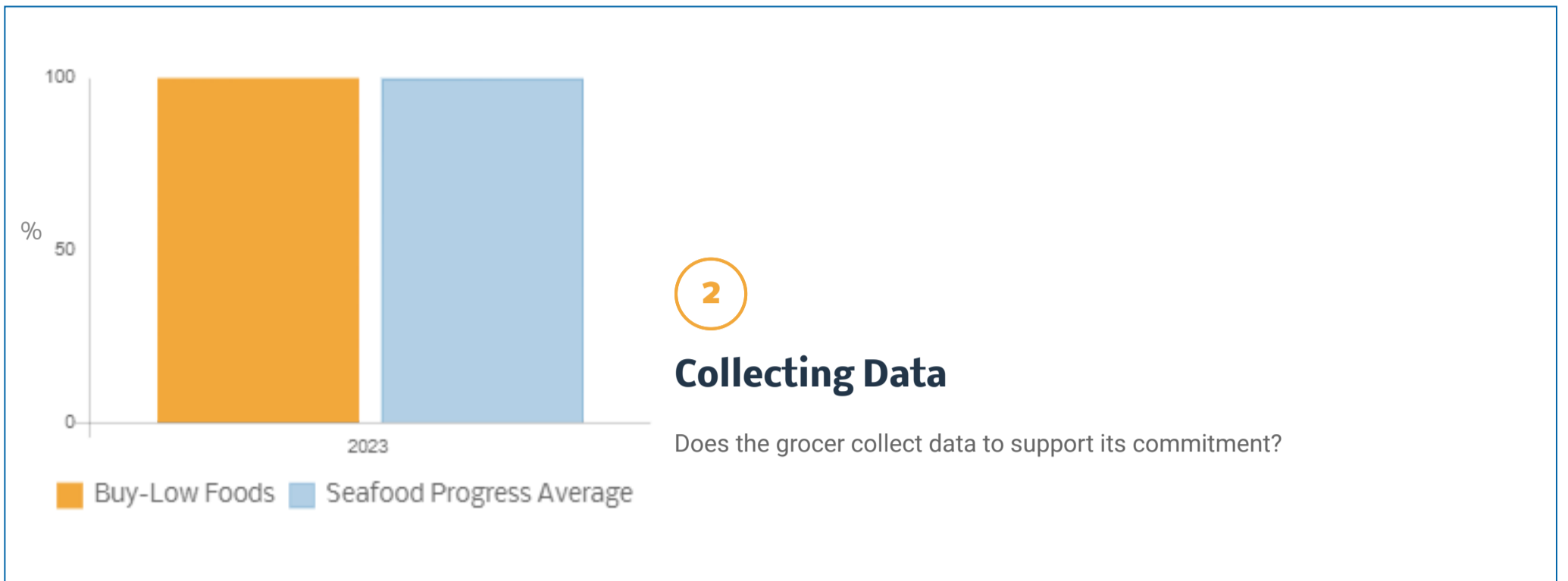
### Scoring

100% The grocer's commitment includes all of its shelf stable AND national brand products.

50% The grocer's commitment includes all of its shelf stable or national brand products.

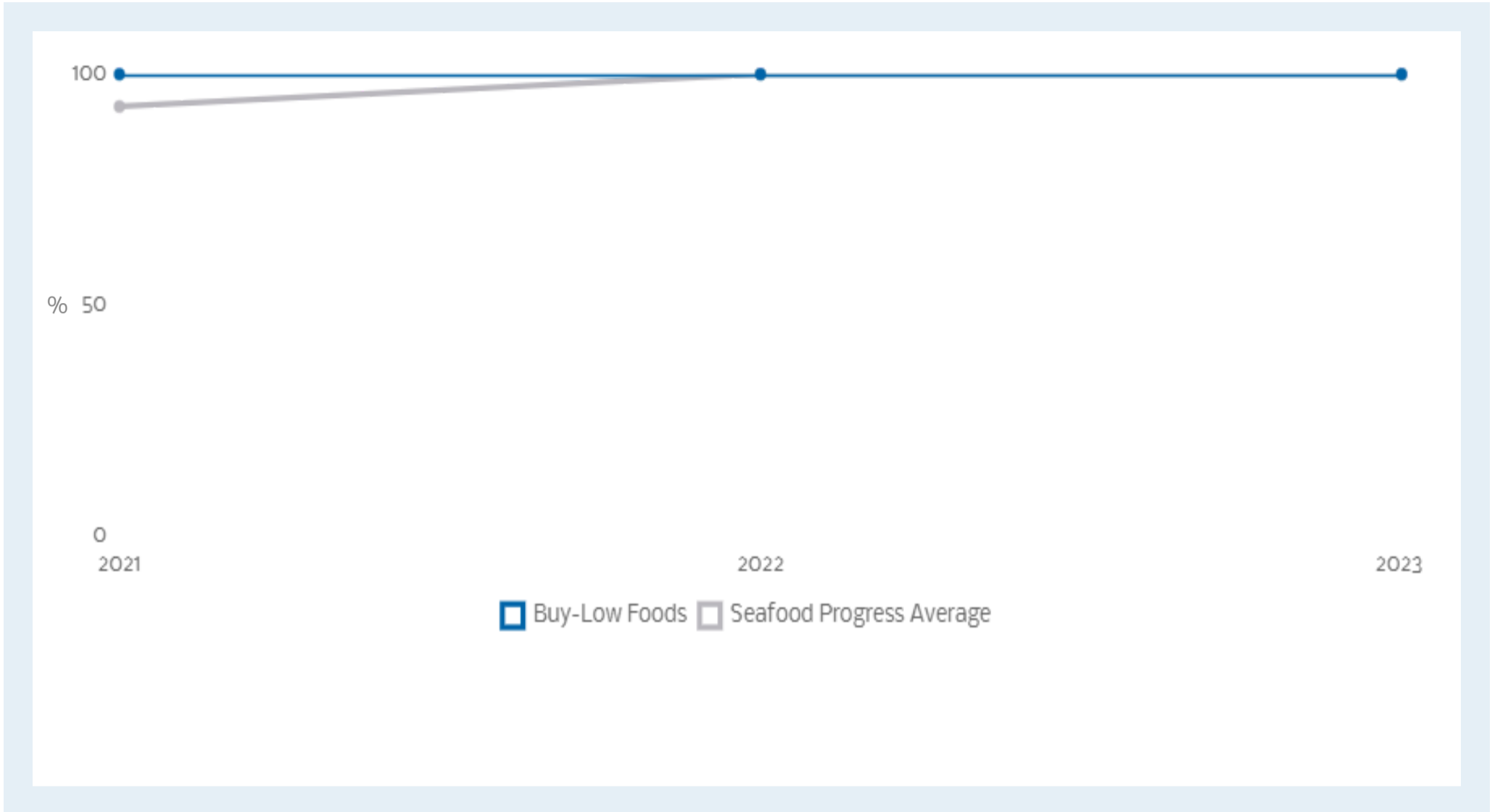
0% The grocer's commitment includes neither all of its shelf stable or national brand products.

# STEP 2: COLLECTING DATA





## 2.1 The grocer collects data on scientific name.



Buy-Low Foods collects data on species' scientific names for all products covered by its seafood commitment (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

### Scoring

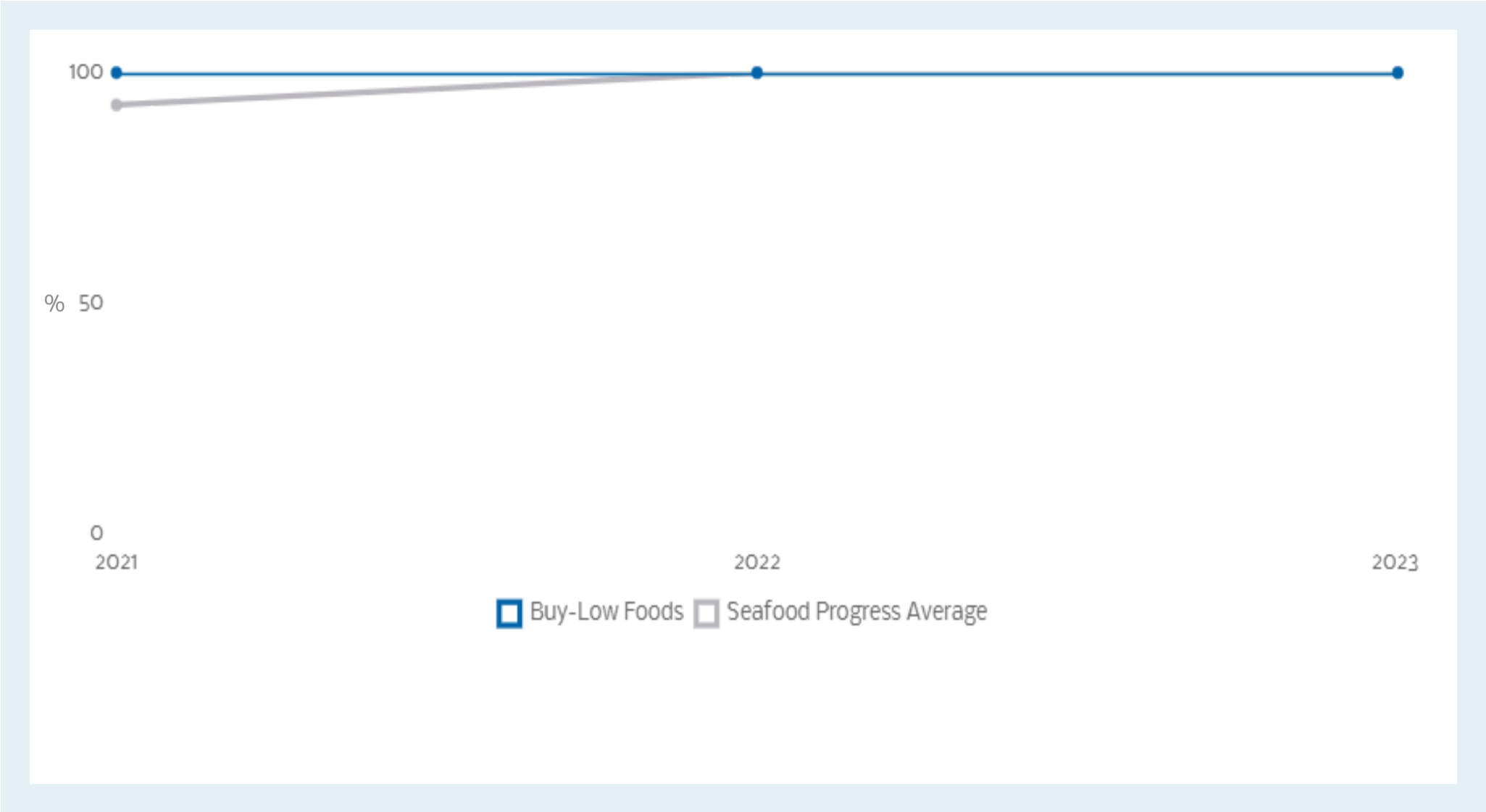


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

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

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

## 2.2 The grocer collects data on geographic origin.

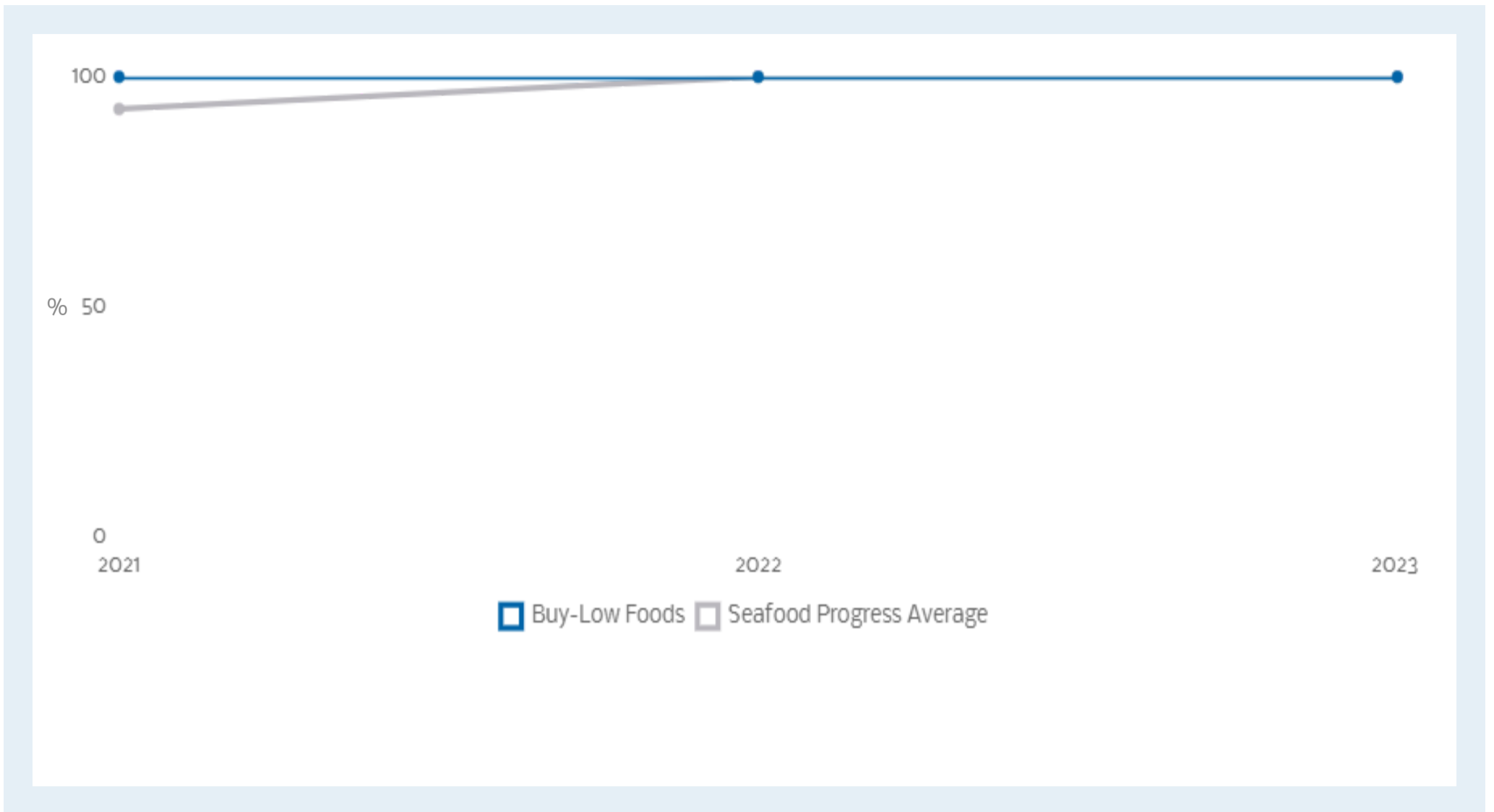


Buy-Low Foods collects data on geographic origin for all products covered by its seafood commitment (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

**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 grocer collects data on whether wild or farmed.



Buy-Low Foods collects data on whether wild or farmed for all products covered by its sustainability commitment (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

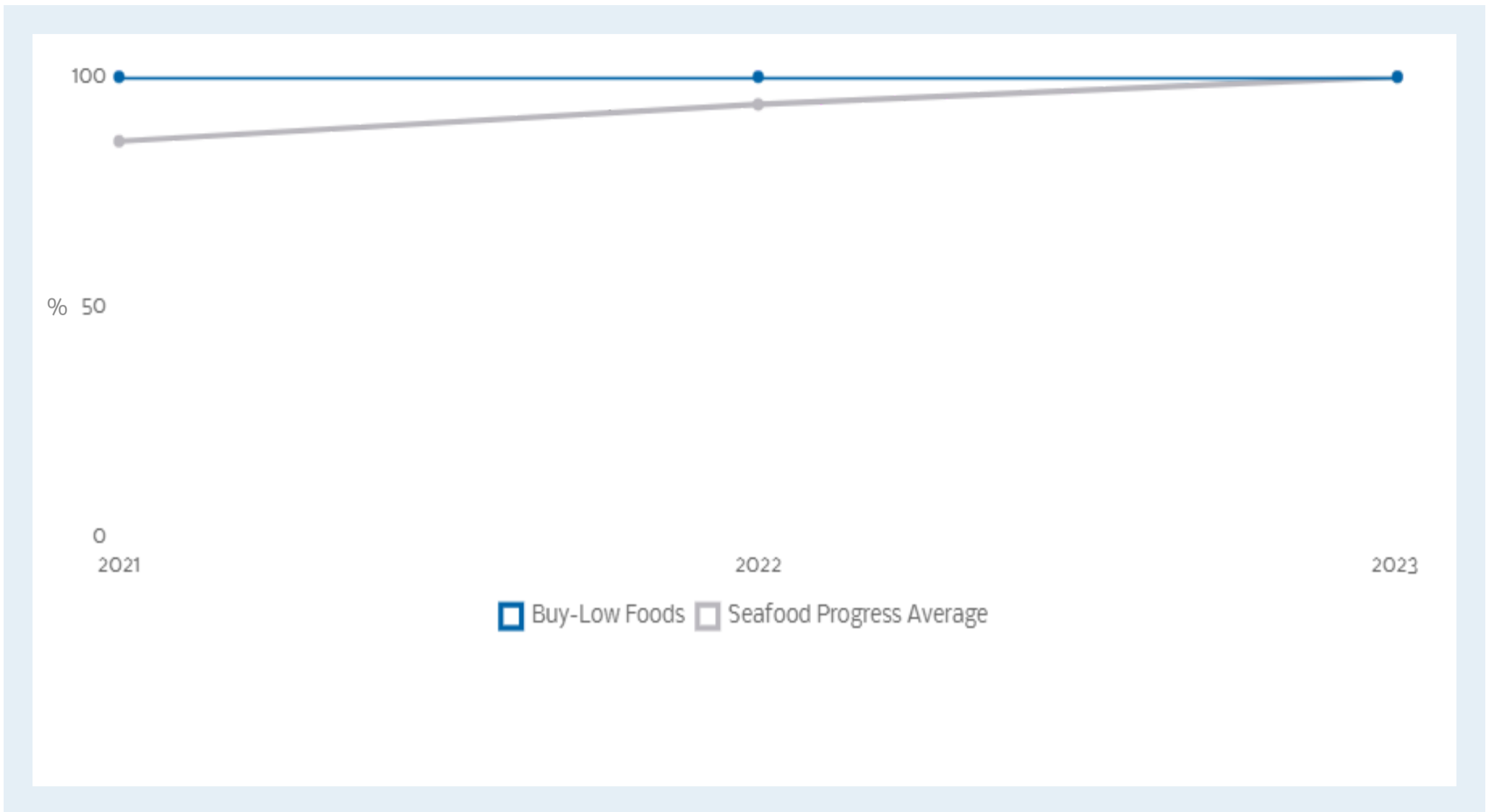
### Scoring

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 grocer collects data on gear type or farming methods.



Buy-Low Foods collects data on gear type or farming method on all products covered by its sustainability commitment (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

### Scoring

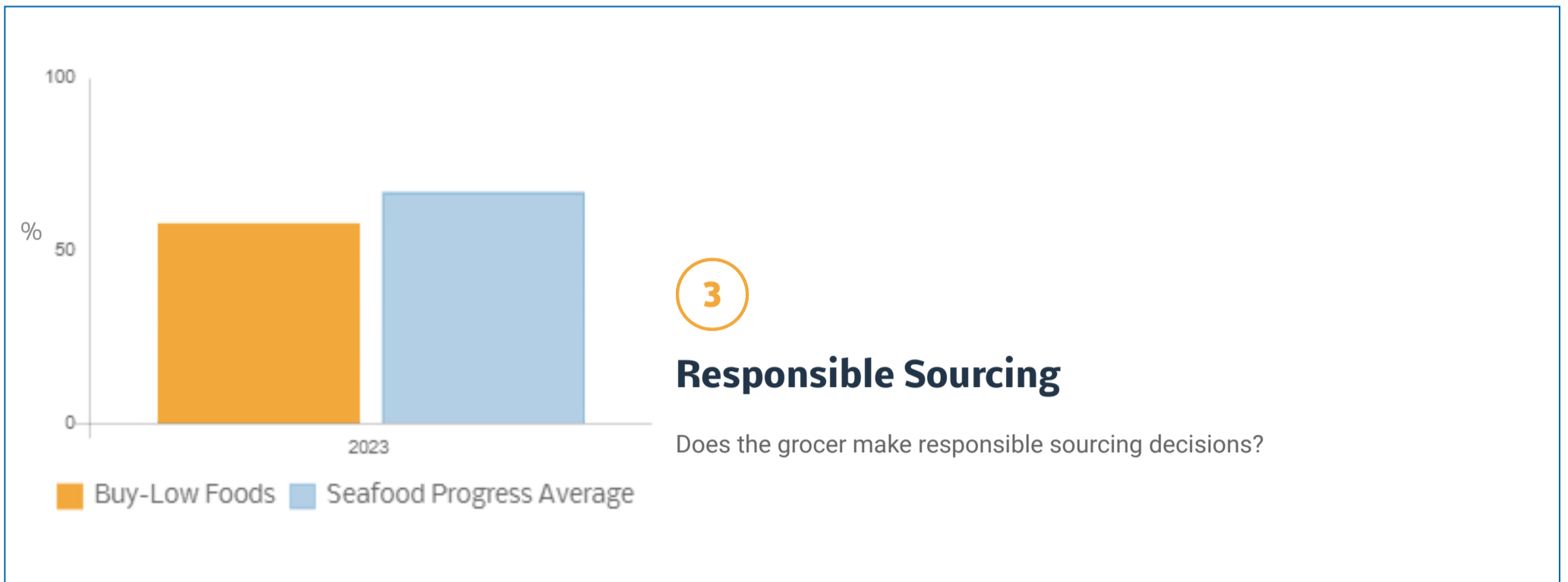


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

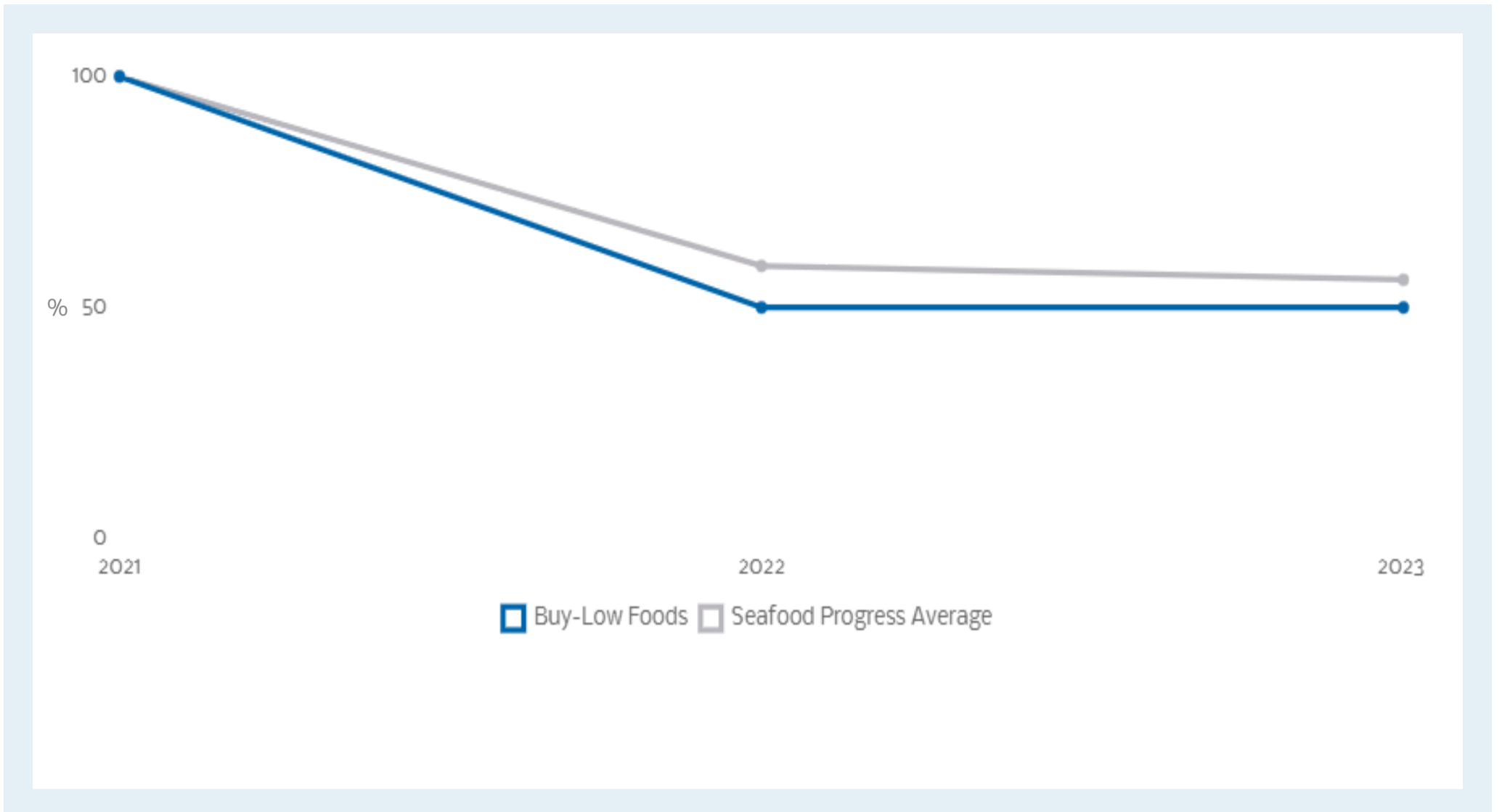
50% Collects data for some products included in the grocer's commitment.

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

# STEP 3: SOURCING



### 3.1 The grocer publishes a clear hierarchy demonstrating its sourcing priorities.



Through its Seafood Progress profile, Buy-Low publishes a clear hierarchy of sustainability standards it uses for sourcing its private label fresh and frozen products, and salmon, but doesn't identify the standards it uses to inform its purchasing decisions for national brand or shelf stable products.

#### Scoring

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

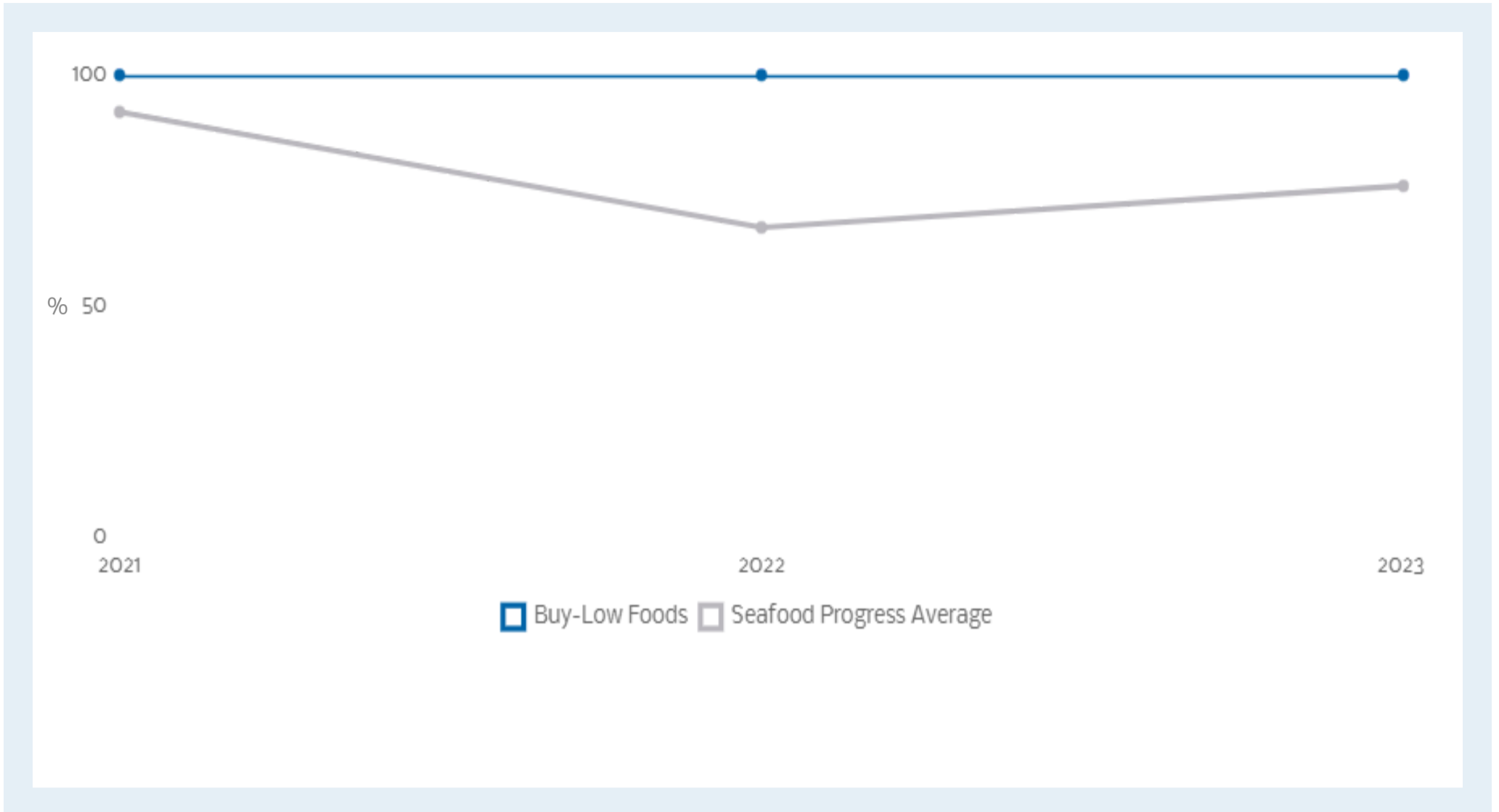
75% Publishes a clear hierarchy of sustainability standards used for sourcing some products, and identifies a general list of sustainability standards that it uses to inform its purchasing decisions for other products.

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 grocer has reported on the percentage of its seafood sold in the last year that met its sustainability commitment by volume or value.



Buy-Low achieved its sustainability commitment in 2015 and reports 100% compliance to SeaChoice on an annual basis (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

#### Scoring

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

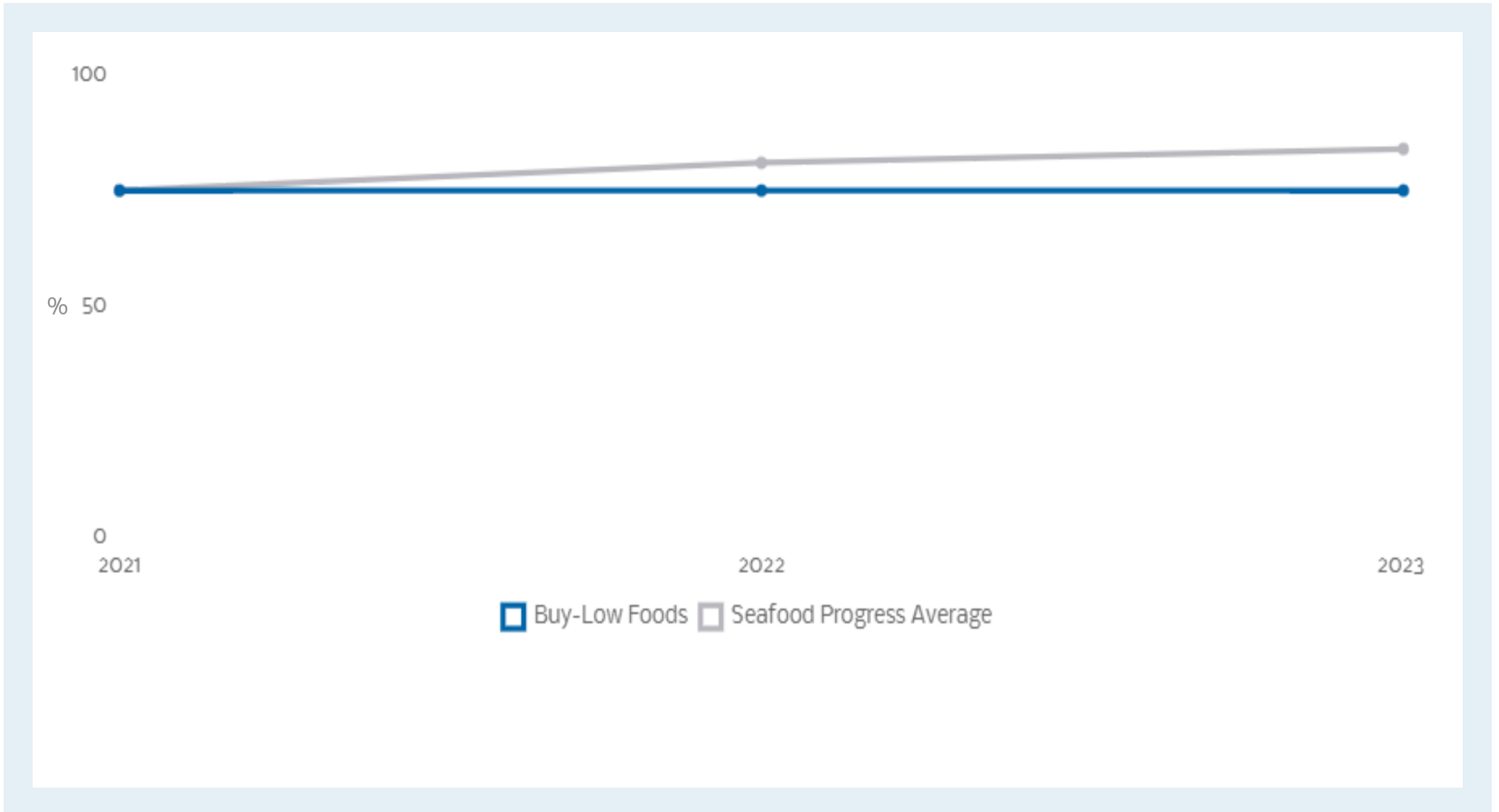
75% Grocer has reported that 75% or more of its seafood sold meets its sustainability commitment.

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 grocer's commitment to sustainable seafood.



Buy-Low sends an email to all suppliers on an annual basis relaying its sustainability commitment, and requires that they respond to indicate compliance. The company is not currently taking any actions to verify that this commitment is being upheld (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

#### 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.

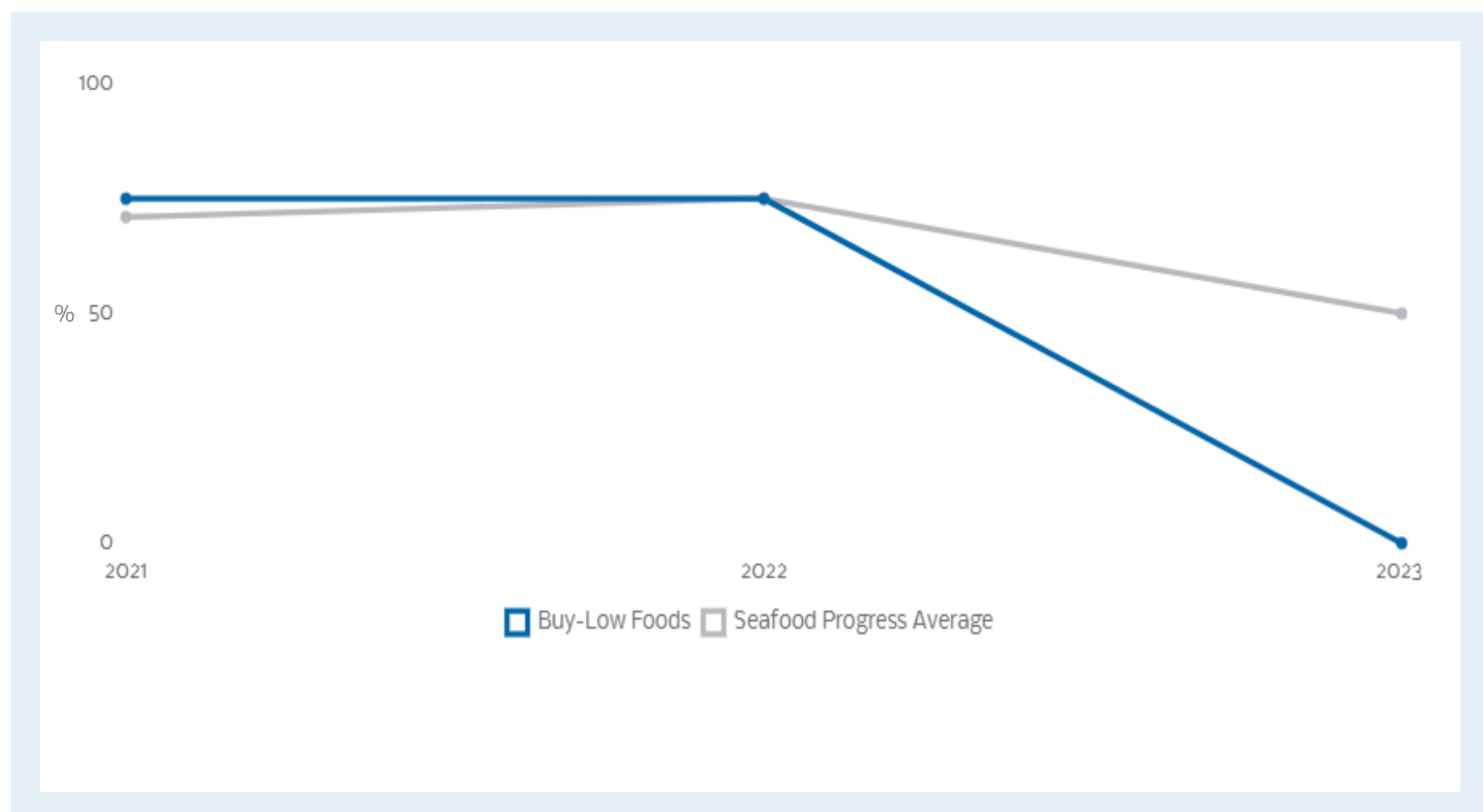
50% All suppliers are required to agree in writing to uphold some of the terms of the grocer's environmental sustainability commitment.

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 grocer's commitment to socially responsible seafood.



All of Buy-Low Foods' seafood suppliers have signed a Code of Conduct on social responsibility that reflects their public social responsibility commitment to support the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights, adhere to relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization, and ensure that their labour practices reflect national laws and international standards. Buy-Low is not currently taking any actions to verify that this commitment is being upheld (personal communication, G. Genreux, 18/04/2023).

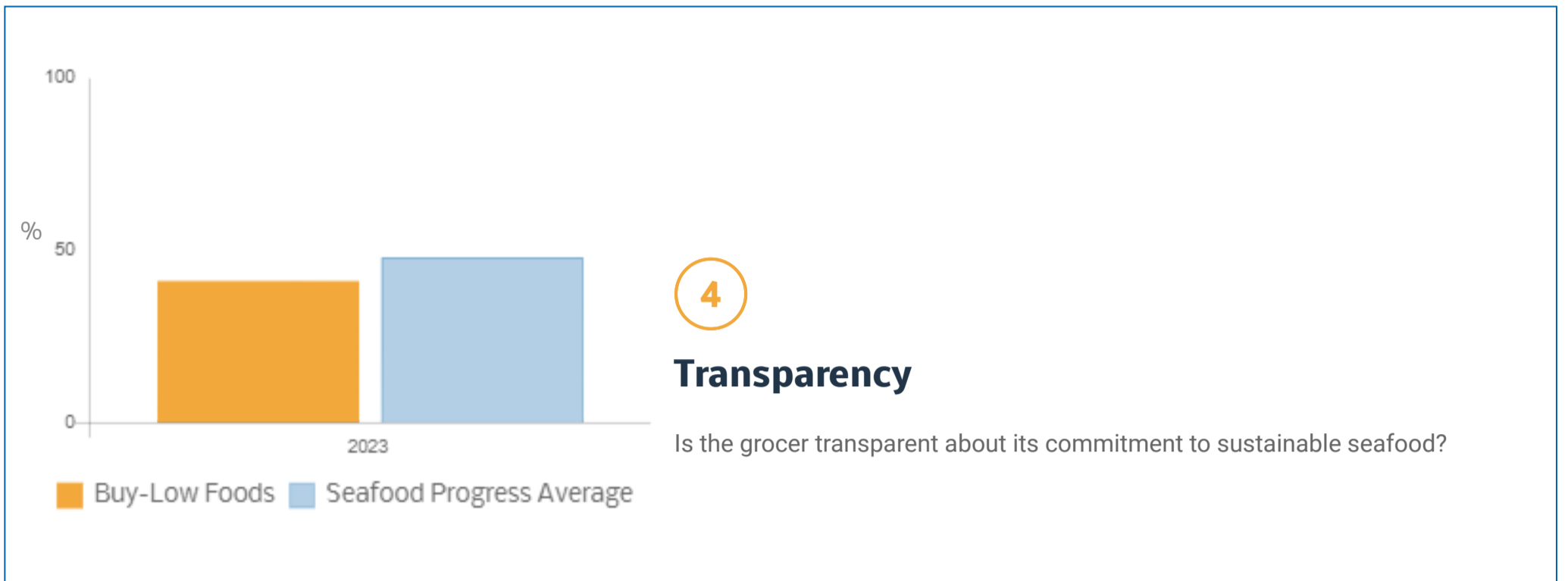
#### Scoring

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.

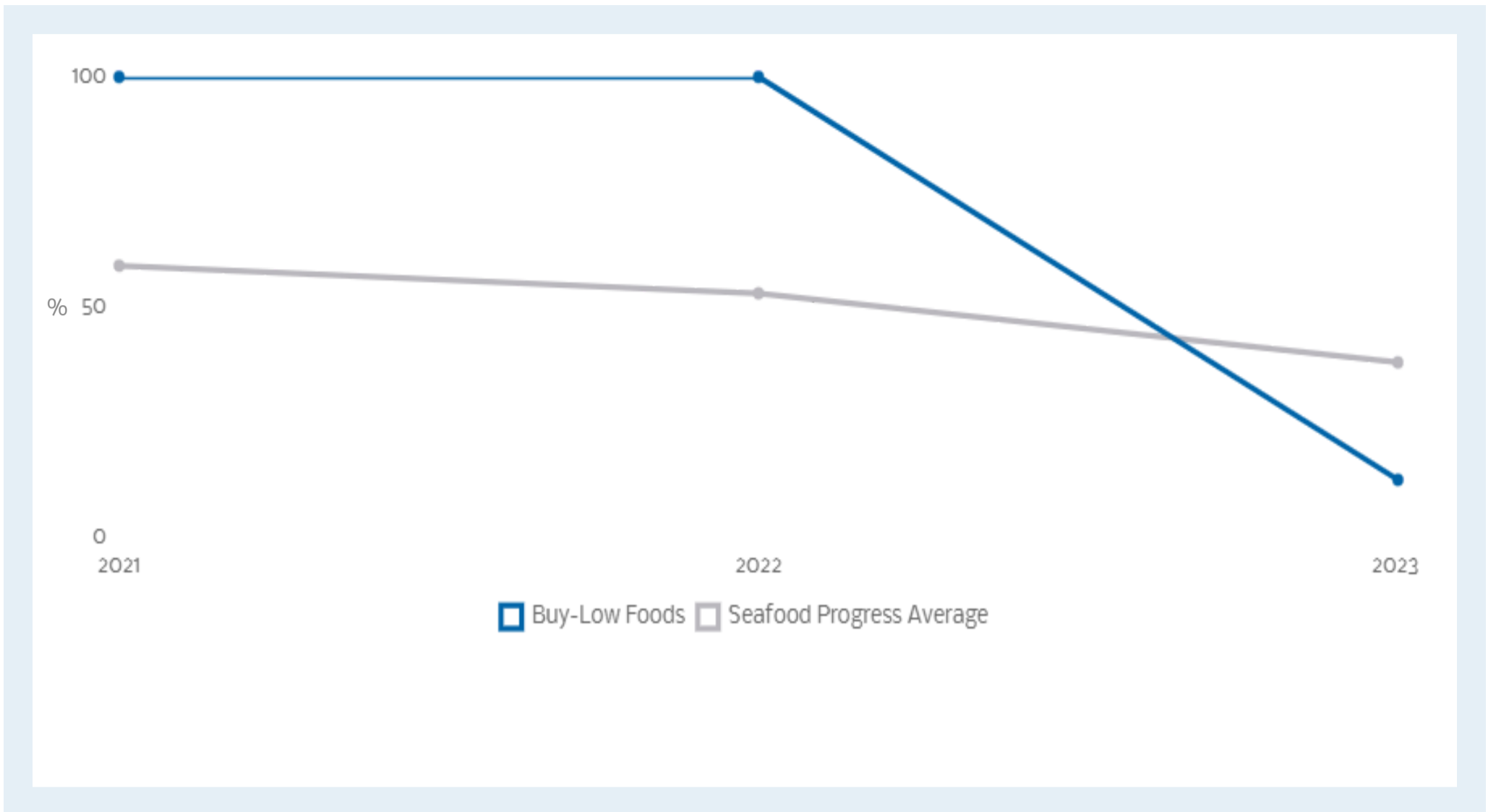
50% All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers all of the grocer's social responsibility commitment on at least an annual basis.

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

# STEP 4: TRANSPARENCY



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



Buy-Low labels some private label products as wild or farmed, but none with species' scientific name, geographic origin or harvest method (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

### Scoring



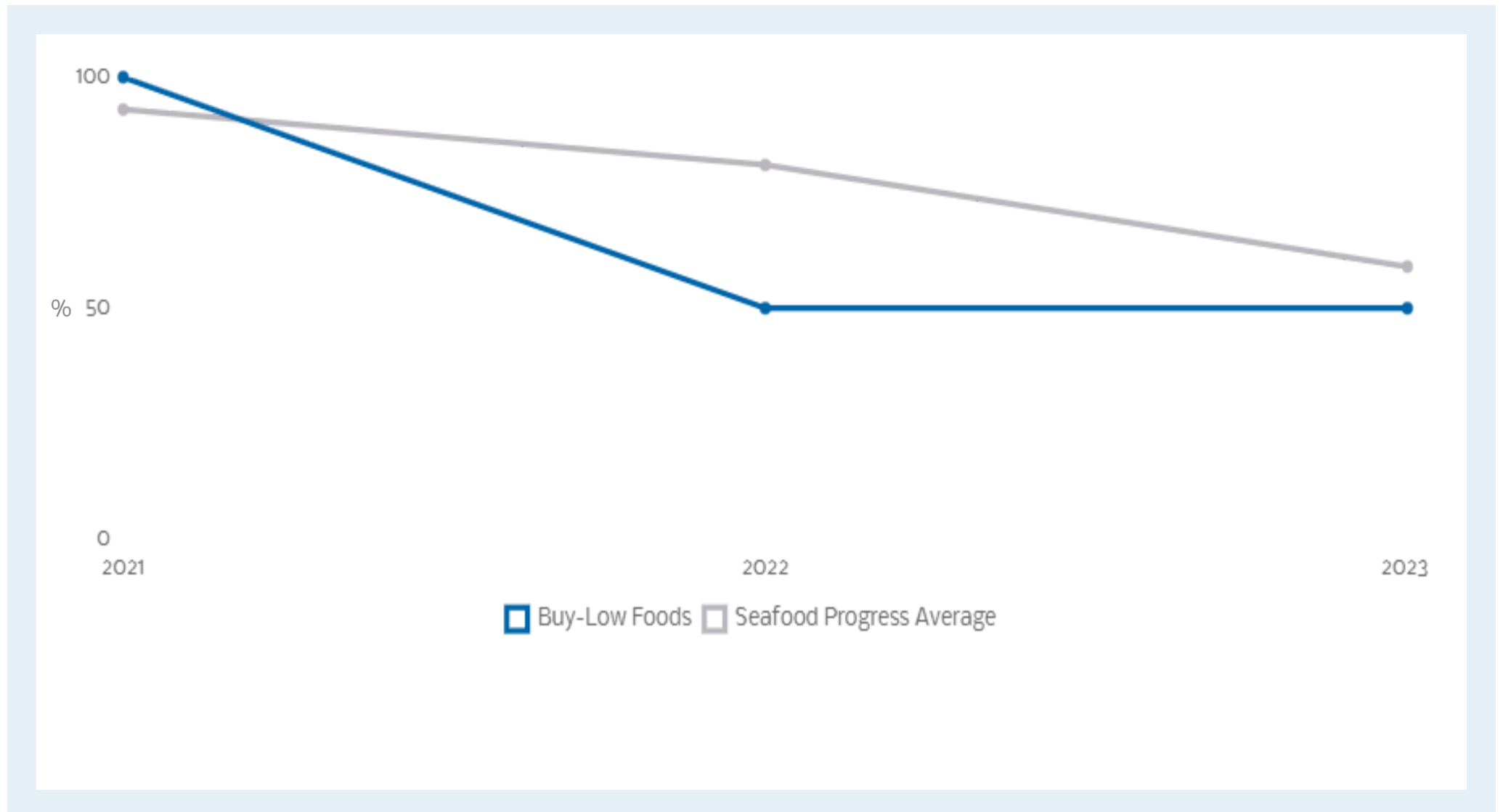
100% The grocer labels all products with the information.

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 grocer follows best practice guidelines for making environmental claims on its products.



Buy-Low Foods labels all applicable products with the Ocean Wise ecolabel but does not make evidence available to support this claim (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

### 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).

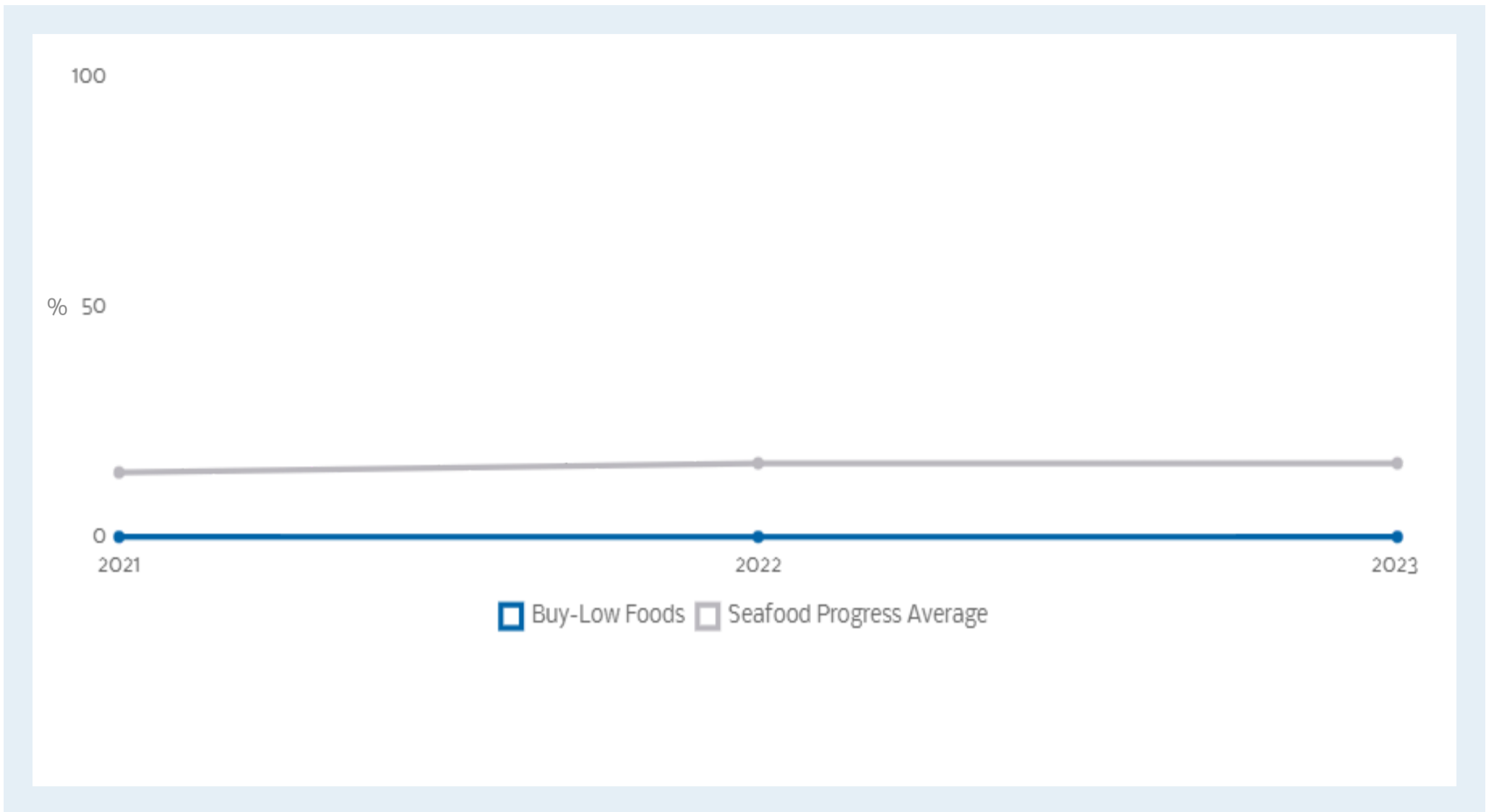
75% The grocer uses certification claims as well as endorsement claims and/or self-declared claims that 1) adhere to ISO 14021 Type II guidance and proof of third-party verification on product labels and 2) makes evidence to back up its claim(s) publicly available.

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 grocer's products has been made publicly available.

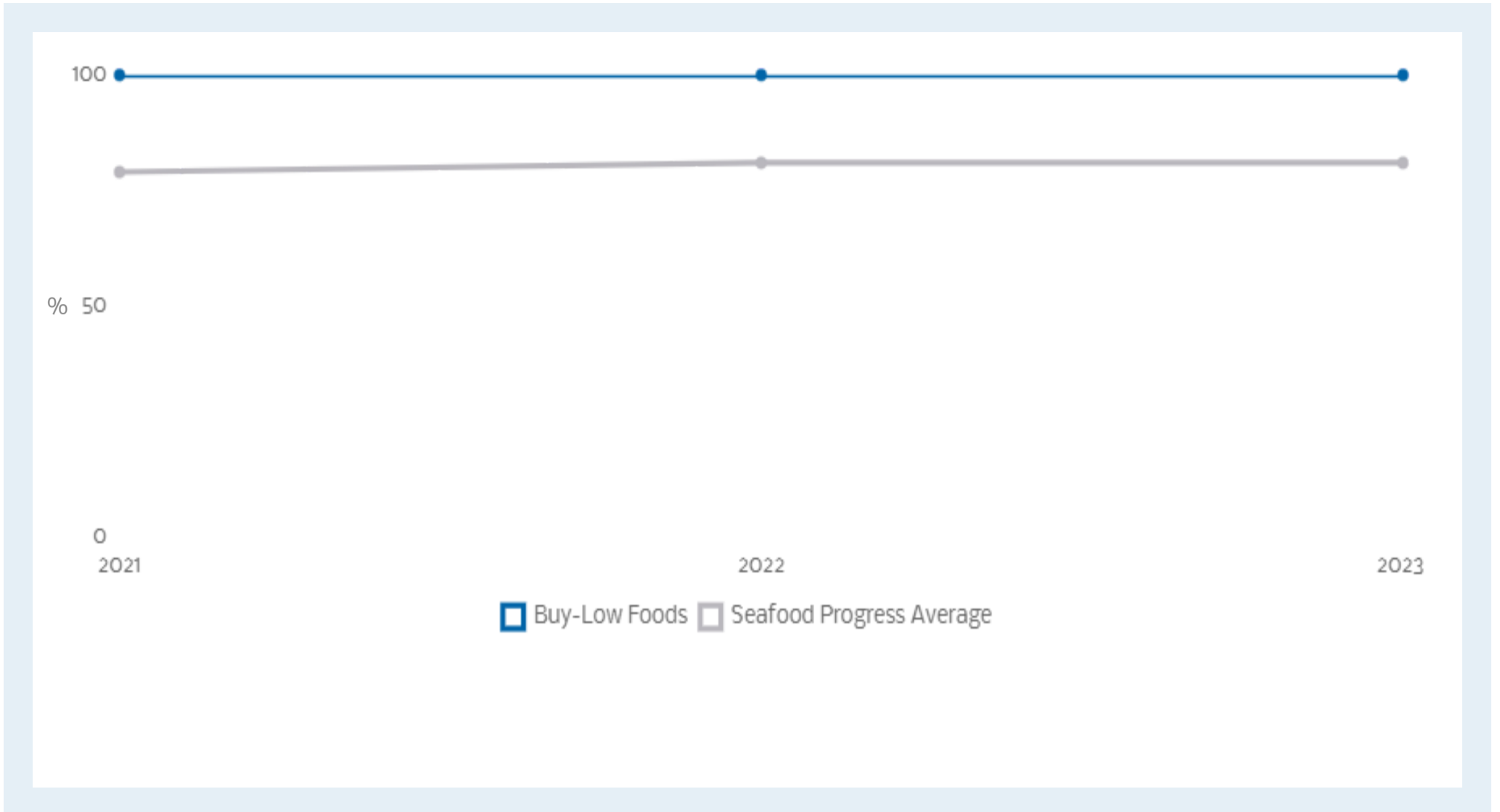


Buy-Low Foods currently does not disclose this information.

#### 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 grocer reports how much of its seafood meets its sustainability criteria by volume or value of sales on an annual basis.



Buy-Low has reported 100% compliance against its commitment on an annual basis to SeaChoice since 2015.

##### Scoring

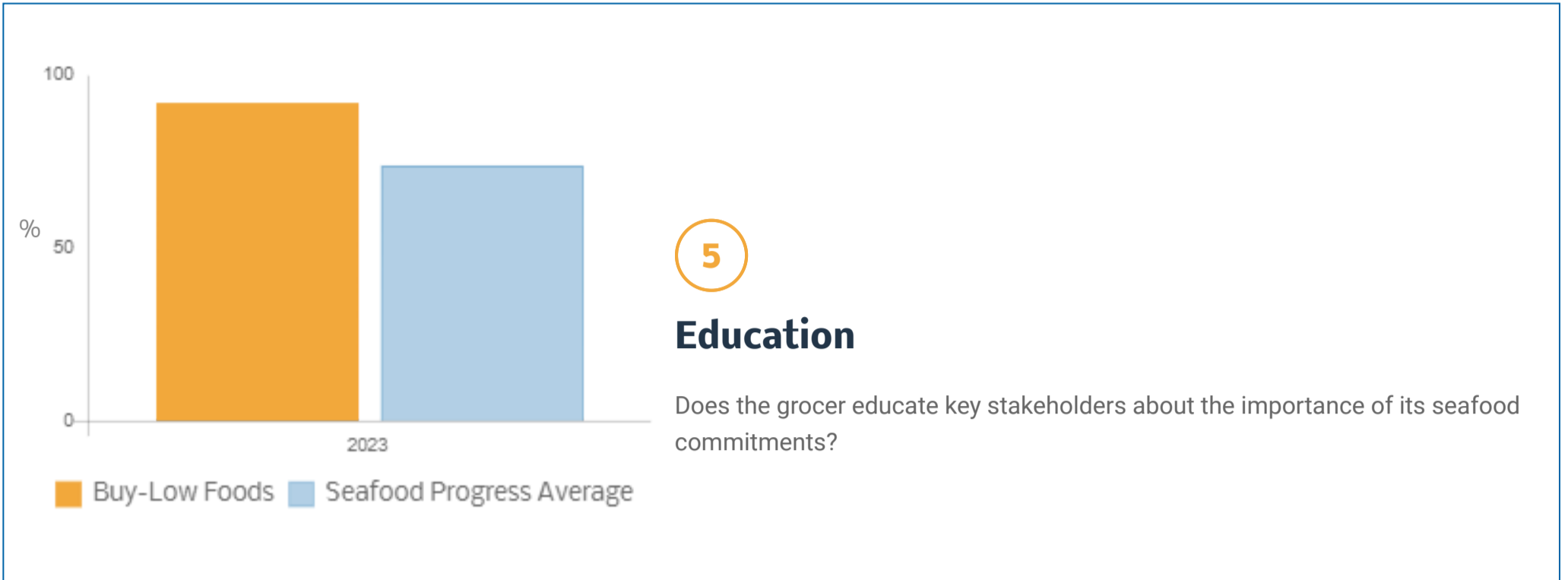


100% The grocer regularly reports publicly how much of its seafood sold meets its commitment by volume or value of sales every year.

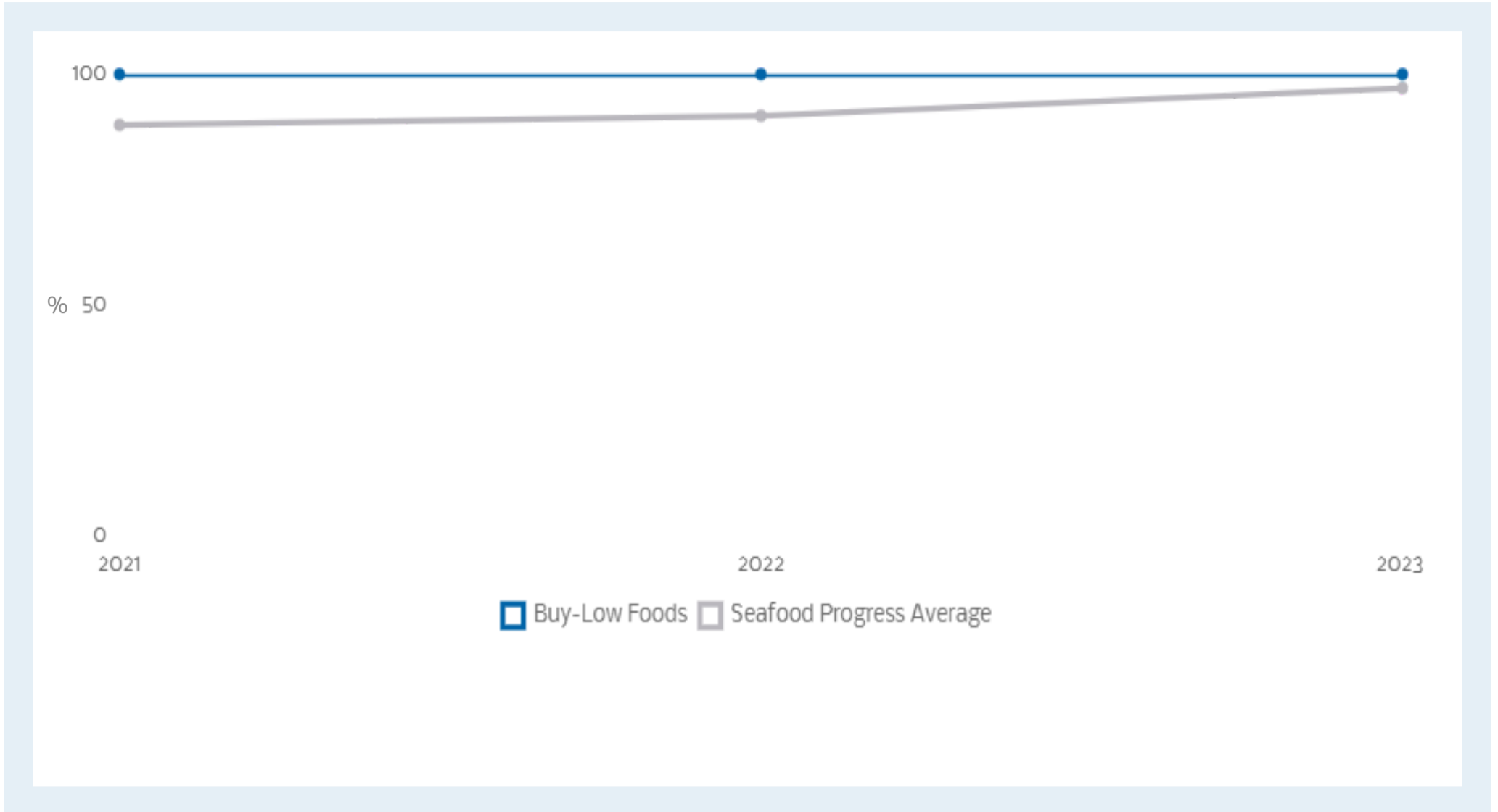
50% The grocer has at one point reported publicly how much of its seafood sold meets its commitment.

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

# STEP 5: EDUCATION



## 5.1 Training programs are conducted for seafood staff.



Buy-Low Foods is committed to creating materials and training programs to ensure its employees have a thorough understanding of seafood sustainability, the Ocean Wise Seafood Program, and certification standards (such as MSC and ASC) so they can offer their customers advice on sustainable seafood options. Seafood counter staff are updated regularly on Buy-Low's sustainable product options so that they can in turn educate and engage customers (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

### Scoring

100% Training programs regularly conducted for all seafood staff.

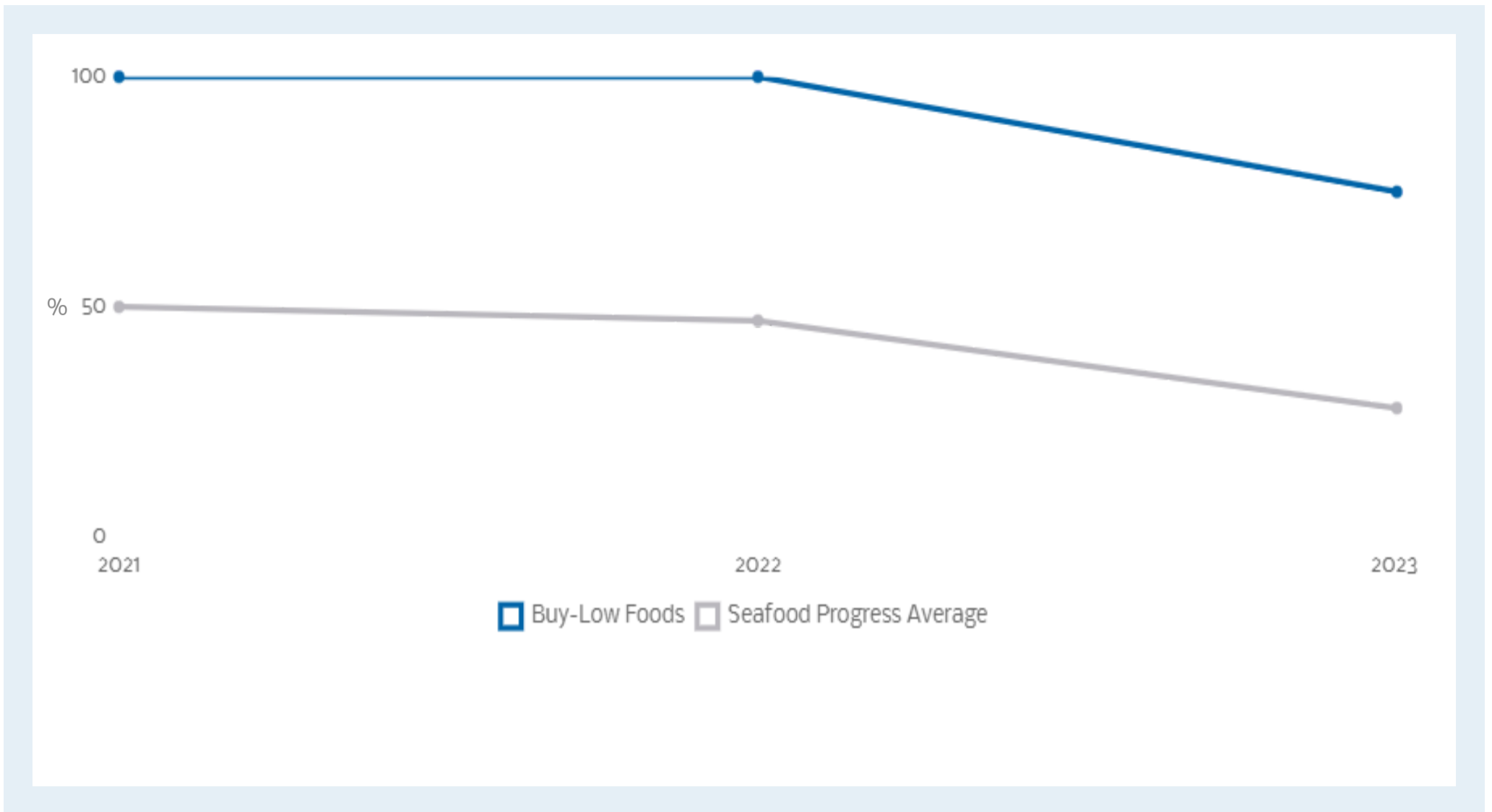
75% Training programs conducted for all seafood staff, but only once.

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 There is a description of the grocer's seafood commitments in store.



Since 2021, Buy-Low has displayed signage that clearly communicates its comprehensive commitment to sustainable seafood and its commitment to social responsibility in all its Buy-Low Foods and Nesters stores (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

### Scoring



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

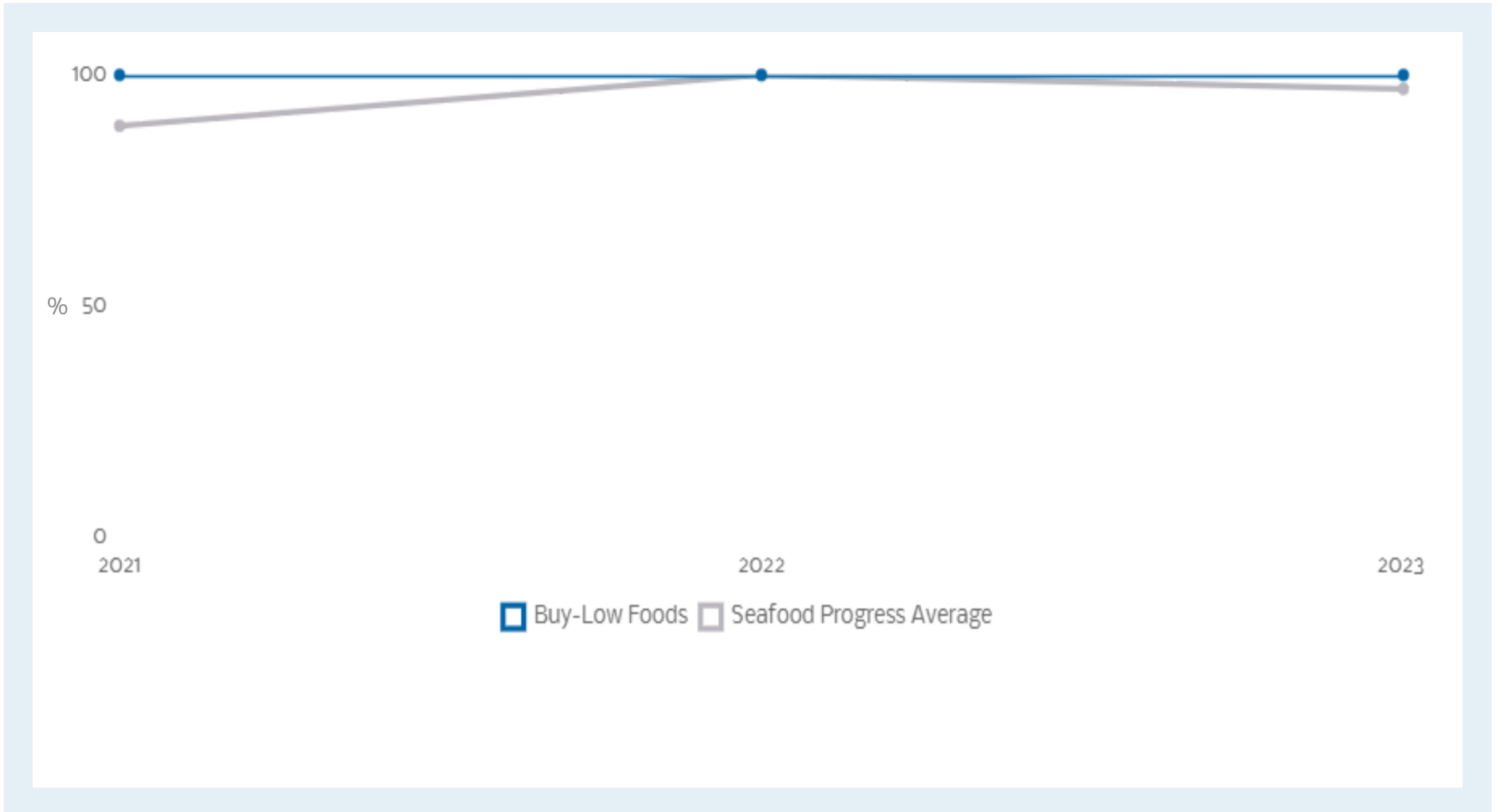
75% There is a comprehensive description of the grocer's commitments to sustainability OR social responsibility in store.

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.

### 5.3 The grocer has taken actions to ensure its suppliers are aware of its sustainable seafood commitment.



Buy-Low Foods engages regularly with its suppliers to ensure that the products they supply are in line with its commitment. The retailer also actively seeks out more sustainable options from its suppliers to ensure its customers have access to seafood produced according to best practice (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

#### Scoring

100% The grocer shares its sustainable seafood commitment and any updates made to its commitment, has a clear strategy to engage with its suppliers and provides direct support (e.g. training, resources) to help ensure all seafood products are procured in line with its policies.

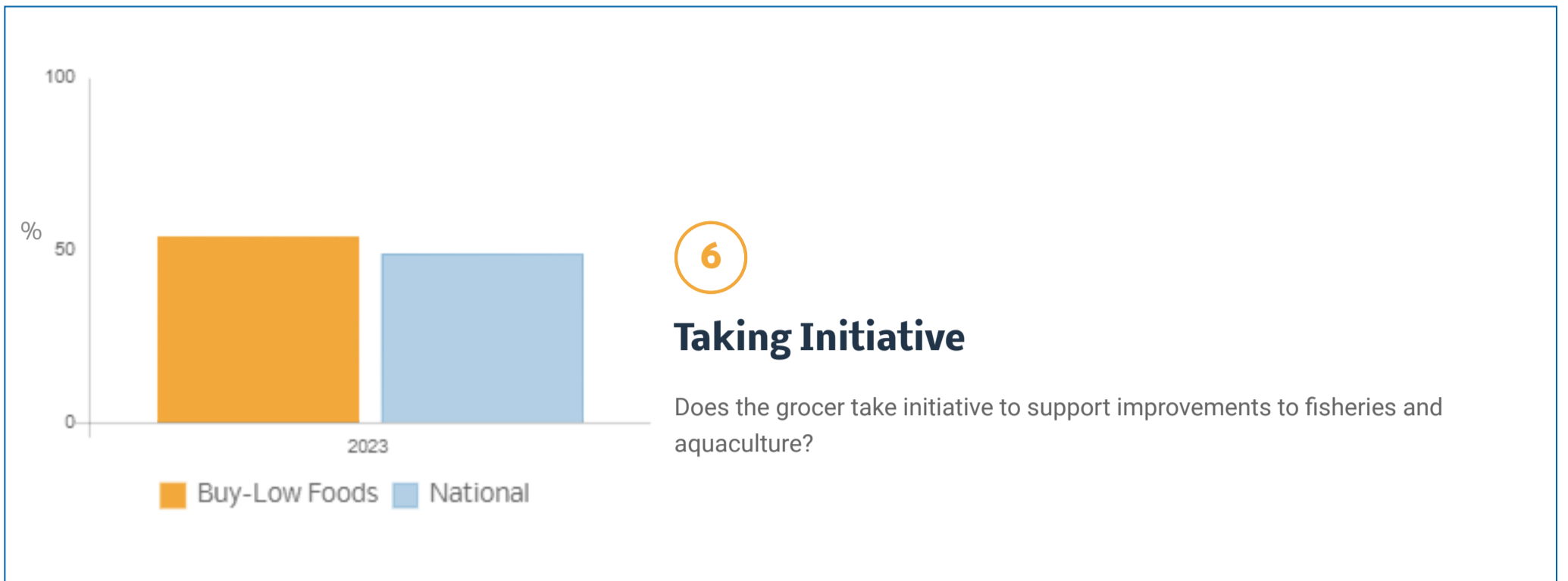
75% The grocer shares its sustainable seafood commitment and any updates made to its commitment and regularly engages with its suppliers to help ensure the products they supply meet its expectations.

50% The grocer shares its sustainable seafood commitment and any updates made to its commitment and sometimes engages with its suppliers to help ensure the products they supply meet its expectations.

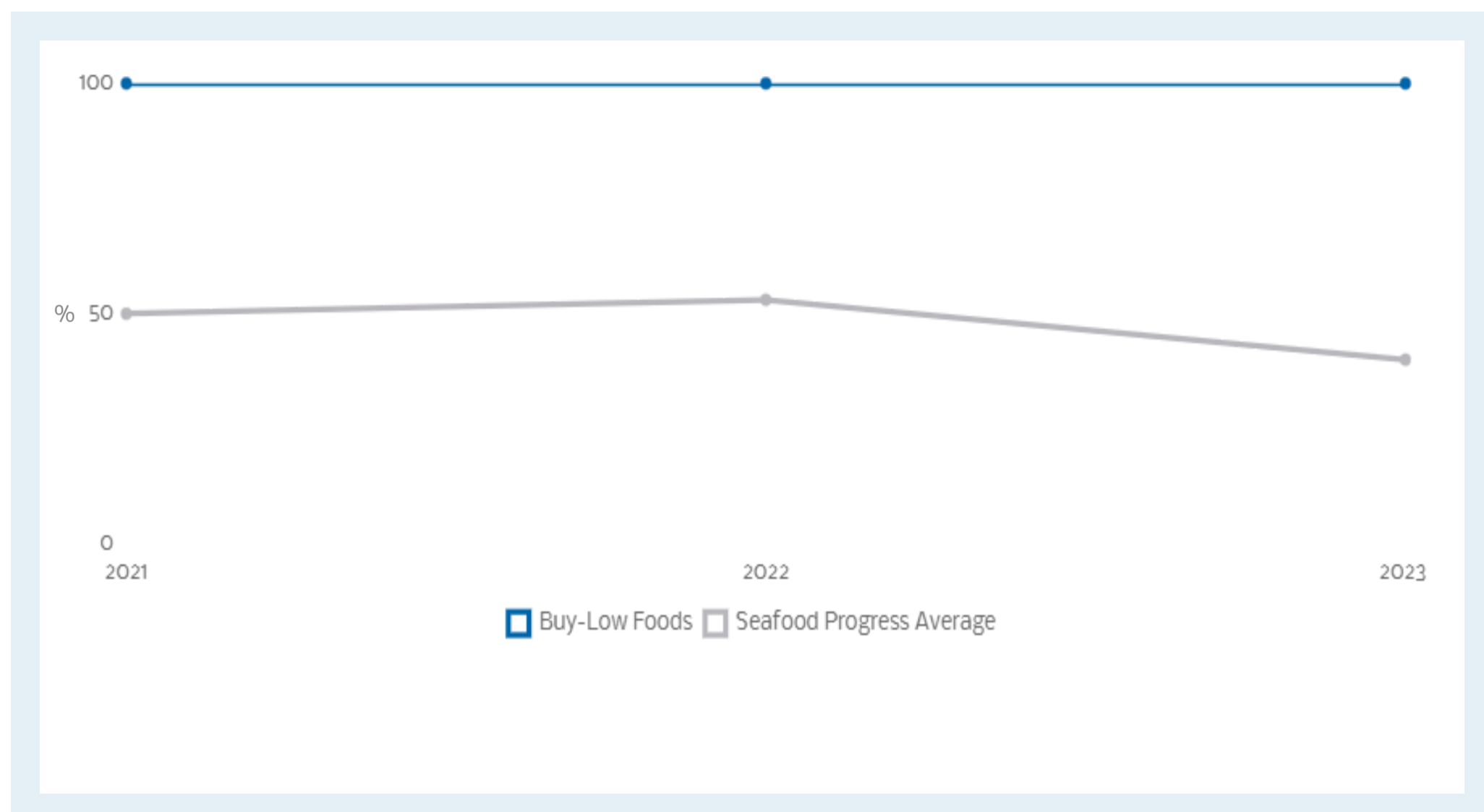
25% The grocer sends its suppliers a copy of its sustainable seafood commitment.

0% The grocer has taken no actions OR no information is available.

# STEP 6: TAKING INITIATIVE



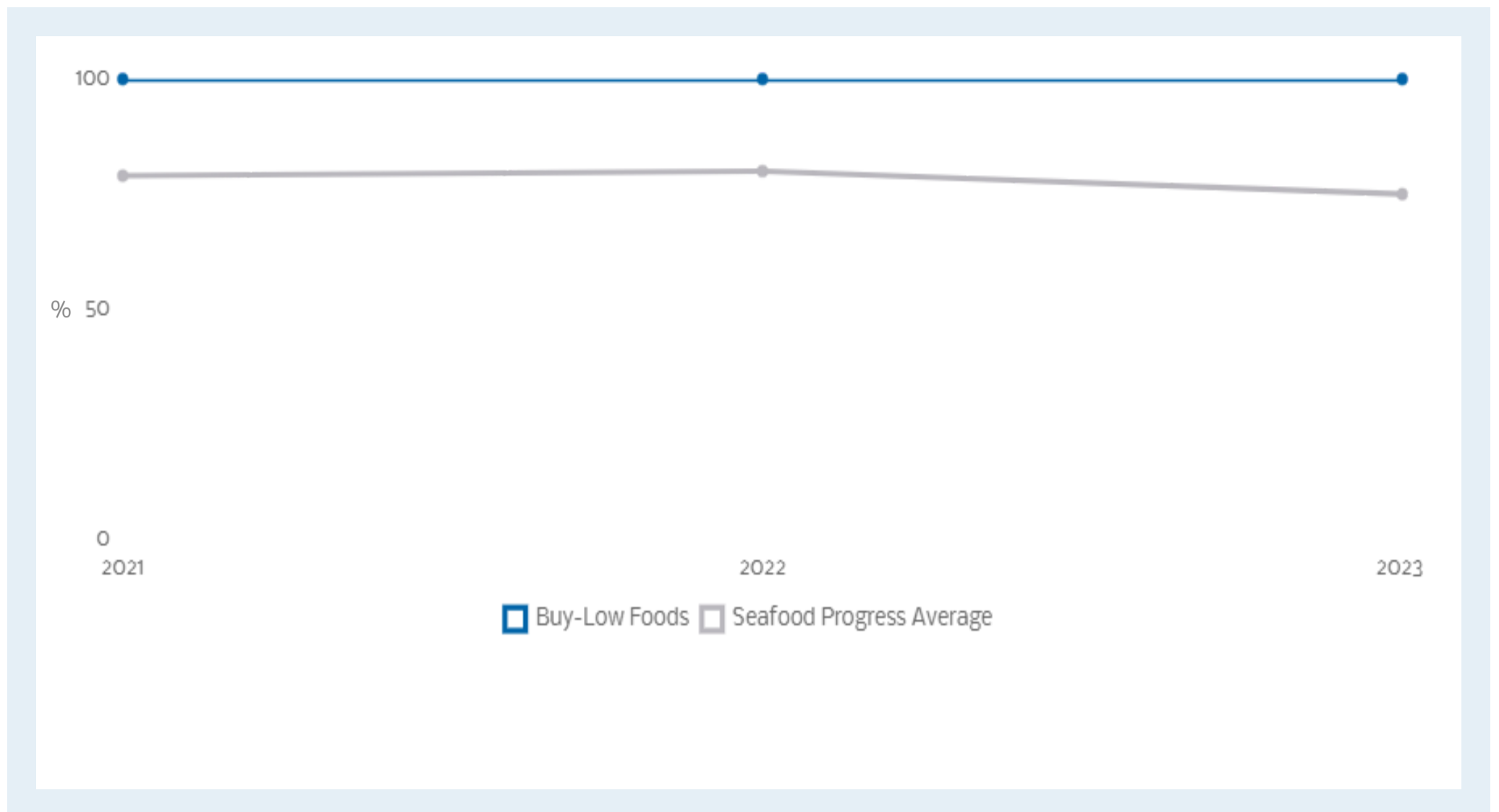
## 6.1 Farmed Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)



Buy-Low Foods does not sell any farmed salmon (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

- ✓ 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).

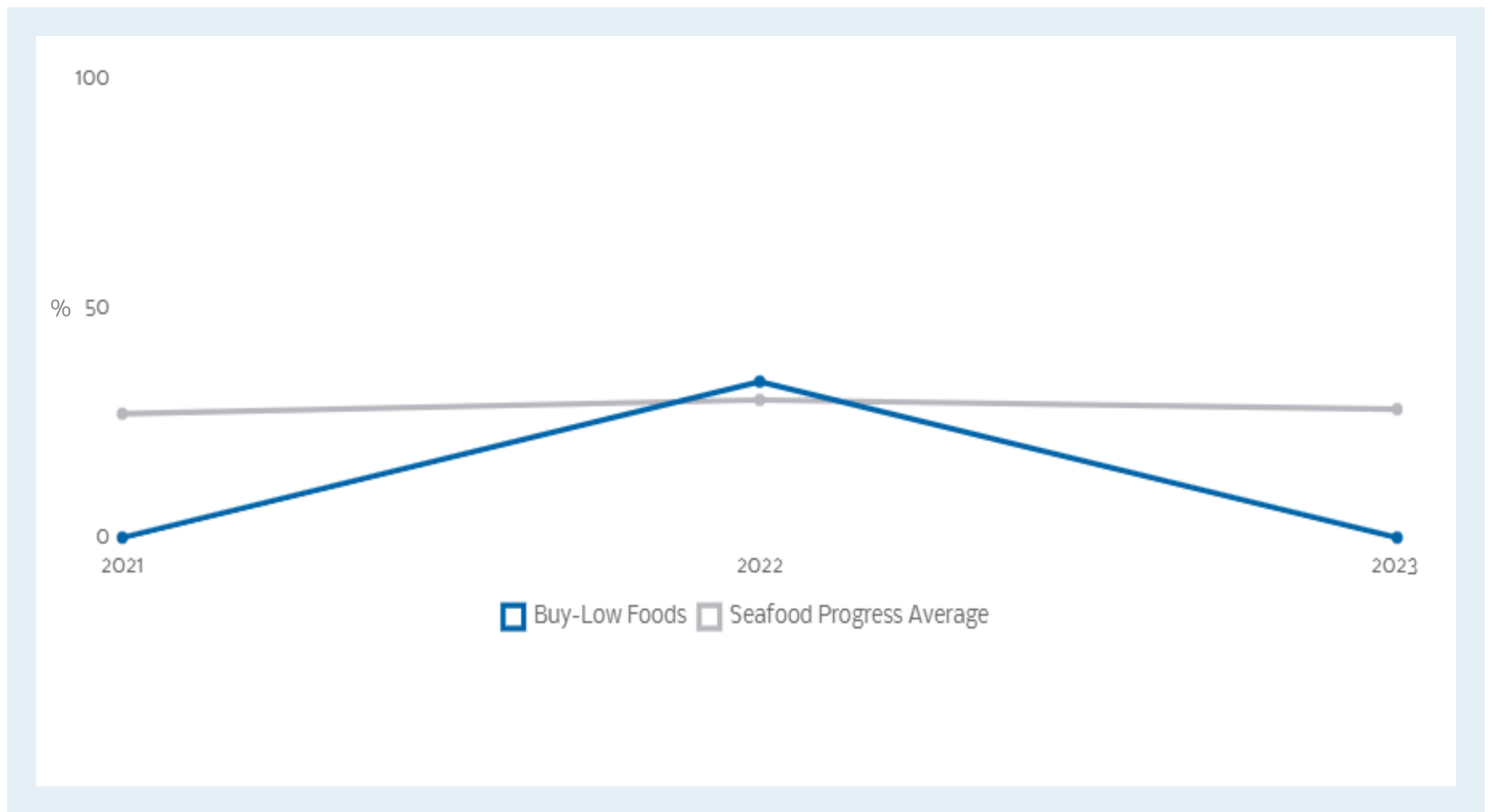
## 6.2 Farmed shrimp and prawns (Multiple spp).



All of Buy-Low's farmed shrimp is minimum BAP 2 Star certified or ASC certified (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

- ✓ 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 (17 pts).
- ✗ Collaborates with other companies pre-competitively to improve shrimp and prawn farming practices (17 pts).
- ✗ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve shrimp and prawn farming practices (17 pts).
- ✗ Refrains from advertising versions of this product that are not ASC or BAP 2 star plus certified, Not Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or rated Avoid by Seafood Watch
- ✗ 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 (17 pts).
- ✗ Prioritizes sourcing from suppliers committed to full chain traceability and/or making social responsibility improvements (17 pts).

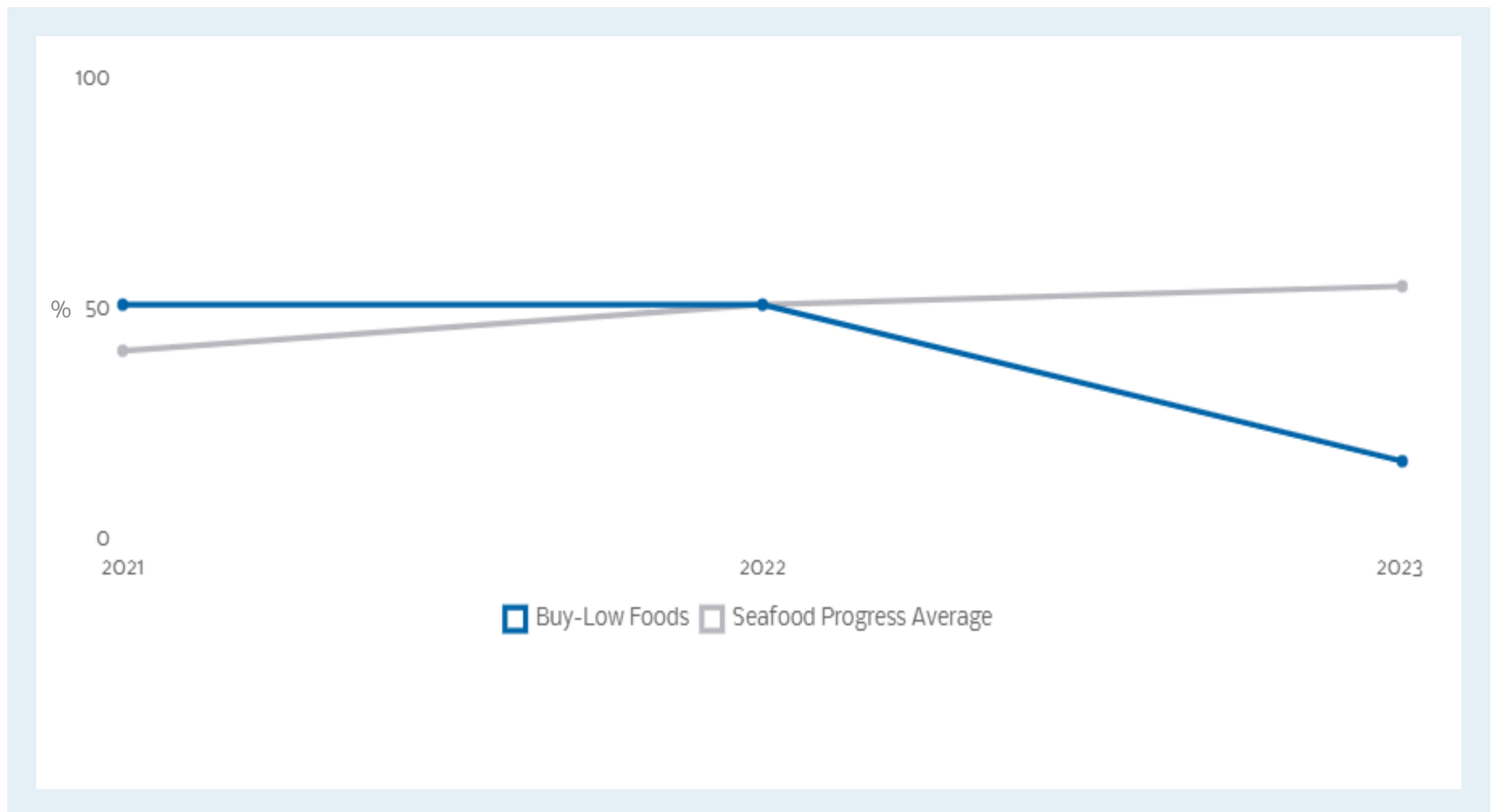
### 6.3 Skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*)



Buy-Low has not taken any actions to support improvements to skipjack tuna within the past year (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

- ✘ Only sells pole and line caught skipjack tuna products that meet the highest bars for sustainability, i.e. are MSC certified, 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 skipjack fishing methods and management to be more environmentally sustainable (17 pts).
- ✘ Collaborates with other companies pre-competitively to improve skipjack fishery management practices (17 pts).
- ✘ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve skipjack fishing practices (17 pts).
- ✘ Only advertises pole and line caught skipjack tuna products that meet the highest bars for sustainability, i.e. are MSC certified, Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or rated Best Choice by Seafood Watch (17 pts).
- ✘ Preferentially sources pole and line caught skipjack tuna products that meet the highest bars for sustainability, i.e. are MSC certified, Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or rated Best Choice by Seafood Watch (17 pts).
- ✘ Prioritizes sourcing from suppliers committed to full chain traceability and/or making social responsibility improvements (17 pts).

## 6.4 Other species



Buy-Low preferentially sells Ocean Wise Recommended seafood products (personal communication, G. Genereux, 18/04/2023).

- ✘ Only sells versions of a certain species 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 (17 pts).
- ✘ Collaborates with other companies pre-competitively to improve fishing or aquaculture practices (17 pts).
- ✘ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve fishing or farming practices (17 pts).
- ✘ Refrains from advertising versions of a certain species that are not MSC/ASC certified, Not Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or rated Avoid by Seafood Watch (17 pts).
- ✔ Preferentially sources from more sustainable sources that are MSC/ASC certified, Recommended by Ocean Wise or Best Choice by Seafood Watch (17 pts).
- ✘ Prioritizes sourcing from suppliers committed to full chain traceability and/or making social responsibility improvements (17 pts).