

# Seafood Progress

Brand's Commitment to Sustainable and Socially Responsible Seafood

**88**

2023 aggregate  
score

Seafood Progress Average <sup>?</sup>:  
66

Parent Company  
**Bolton Food**



Sustainable Seafood Policy  
[Seafood Sourcing Statement](#)



Headquarters  
Milan, Italy

# OVERVIEW



**85%**

of products sold in 2023 met commitment.

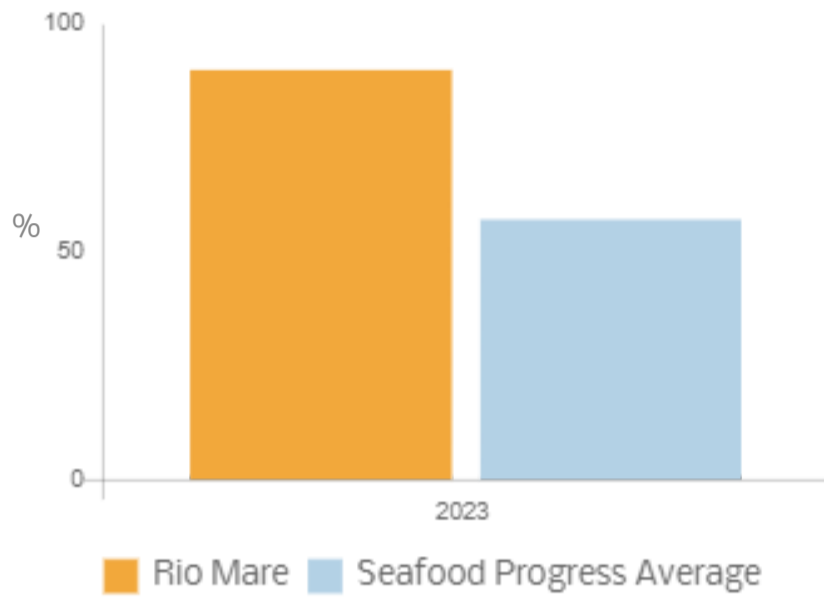
**Sustainability Commitment.** Rio Mare’s sustainable seafood commitment is informed by its parent company, Bolton Food Group, and its NGO partner, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) International. According to [its website](#), Bolton’s commitment is comprised of three goals: **(1)** preserve and improve the health of oceans and fish stocks. This means that 100% of the tuna sold by Bolton Food will be fished from MSC certified fisheries first or from fisheries taking part in credible and comprehensive Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) when MSC certified tuna is not available, and 100% of the other fish species sourced by Bolton Food (Salmon, Mackerel and Sardines) will come from MSC/ASC fishing activities first or from FIPs/AIPs when MSC/ASC certified products are not available by 2024, **(2)** guarantee transparency from boat to plate. This means extending Bolton’s certified traceability system from tuna to all species and adding information on species, ocean of catch, FAO area and fishing method on all product labels and providing realtime communication on traceability on its website by 2024, and **(3)** promote seafood market positive change. This means continuing to form partnerships with NGOs, engaging stakeholders on its commitment and educating consumers on responsible purchasing. Additionally, Bolton’s [Year 5 Progress Report](#) states that “the company has agreed to increase the traceability and transparency of its tuna products, by guaranteeing that 100% of its supply vessels are tracked and listed publicly and that 100% of the tracking data of its company-owned vessels will be transparently shared online. The same traceability and transparency systems developed for tuna will be applied to all the other species marketed by the company by the end of 2024” (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 13/02/2023).

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

**Social Responsibility Commitment.** Bolton Food’s latest [Human Rights Policy](#) (published in February 2023) was prepared with the support of Oxfam. The company is the first in the world to have partnered with Oxfam to raise the standards that protect human rights in the global seafood supply chain. The policy is directly derived from the Bolton’s Code of Ethics [need new link] and applies to its entire family of suppliers and other relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, the policy states that the company is committed to upholding internationally recognized human rights, as laid out in the Universal Bill of Human Rights and the conventions which it has inspired, such as the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the United Nations Conventions

on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Where national laws and international human rights standards differ, Bolton will follow the higher standard. Finally, the partnership with Oxfam involves Bolton reporting on its activities through a Human Rights Impact Assessment Report within the next year. Beyond that, the partners will design a Human Rights Due Diligence Management System, that will provide a framework and tools to adopt a governance process through which the company puts in place a series of tools or measures to identify, avoid, prevent, mitigate and explain how it addresses actual and potential negative impacts in its own activities, its supply chain and other business relationships to ensure that respect for Human Rights is effectively monitored throughout the company's supply chain (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 13/02/2023).

# STEP 1: COMMITMENT

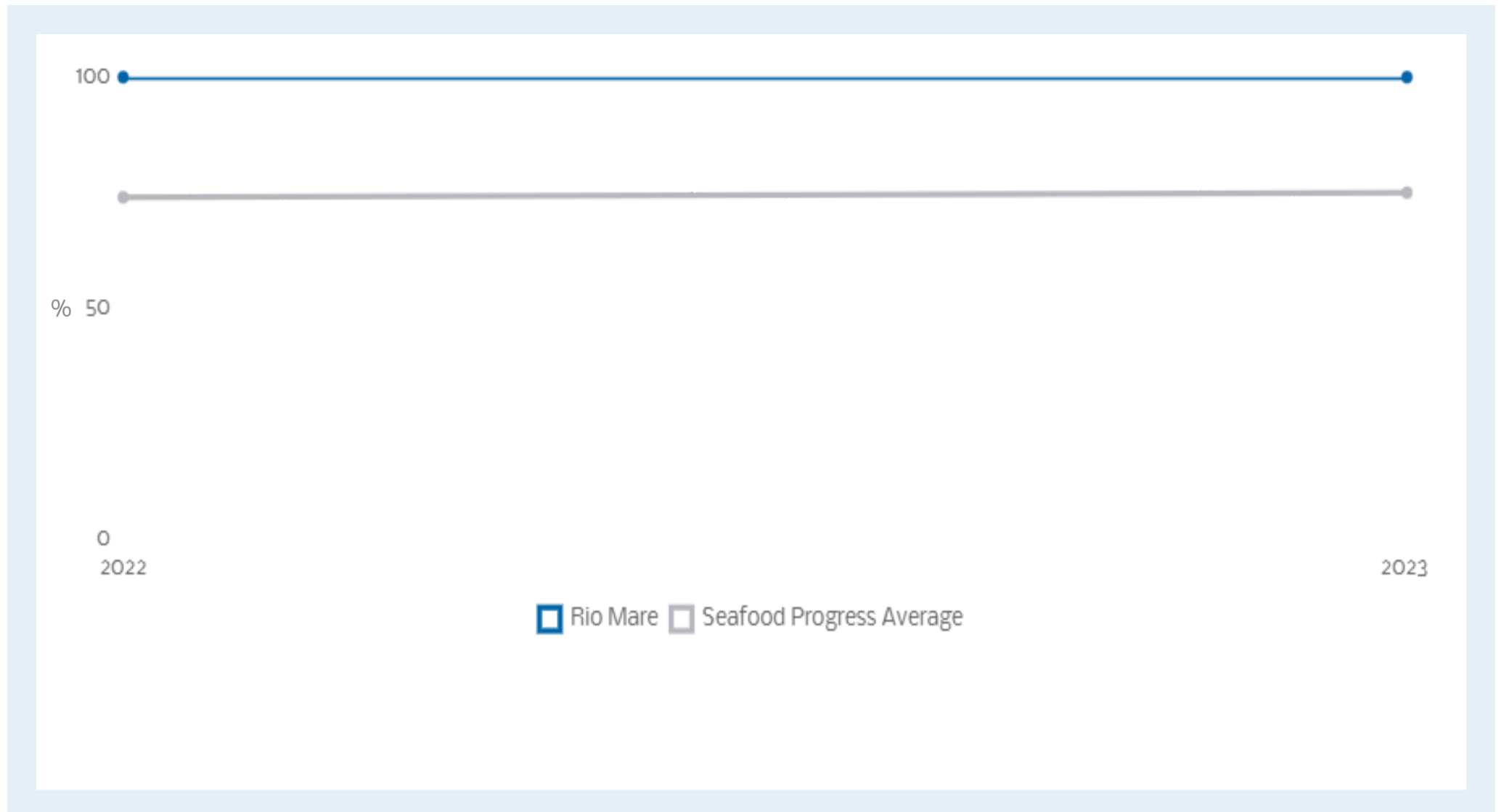


1

## Commitment

Does the brand have comprehensive seafood commitments?

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



Rio Mare's sustainable seafood commitment is informed by its parent company, Bolton Food, and its NGO partner, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) International. According to [its website](#), Bolton's commitment is comprised of three goals: (1) preserve and improve the health of oceans and fish stocks. This means that 100% of the tuna sold by Bolton Food will be fished from MSC certified fisheries first or from fisheries taking part in credible and comprehensive Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) when MSC certified tuna is not available, and 100% of the other fish species sourced by Bolton Food (Salmon, Mackerel and Sardines) will come from MSC/ASC fishing activities first or from FIPs/AIPs when MSC/ASC certified products are not available by 2024, (2) guarantee transparency from boat to plate. This means extending Bolton's certified traceability system from tuna to all species and adding information on species, ocean of catch, FAO area and fishing method on all product labels and providing realtime communication on traceability on its website by 2024, and (3) promote seafood market positive change. This means continuing to form partnerships with NGOs, engaging stakeholders on its commitment and educating consumers on responsible purchasing. Additionally, Bolton's [Year 5 Progress Report](#) states that "the company has agreed to increase the traceability and transparency of its tuna products, by guaranteeing that 100% of its supply vessels are tracked and listed publicly and that 100% of the tracking data of its company-owned vessels will be transparently shared online. The same traceability and transparency systems developed for tuna will be applied to all the other species marketed by the company by the end of 2024" (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 13/02/2023).

### 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.



Bolton Food's latest **Human Rights Policy** (published in February 2023) was prepared with the support of Oxfam. The company is the first in the world to have partnered with Oxfam to raise the standards that protect human rights in the global seafood supply chain. The policy is directly derived from the Bolton's Code of Ethics [need new link] and applies to its entire family of suppliers and other relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, the policy states that the company is committed to upholding internationally recognized human rights, as laid out in the Universal Bill of Human Rights and the conventions which it has inspired, such as the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Where national laws and international human rights standards differ, Bolton will follow the higher standard. Finally, the partnership with Oxfam involves Bolton reporting on its activities through a Human Rights Impact Assessment Report within the next year. Beyond that, the partners will design a Human Rights Due Diligence Management System, that will provide a framework and tools to adopt a governance process through which the company puts in place a series of tools or measures to identify, avoid, prevent, mitigate and explain how it addresses actual and potential negative impacts in its own activities, its supply chain and other business relationships to ensure that respect for Human Rights is effectively monitored throughout the company's supply chain (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 13/02/2023).

## 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.

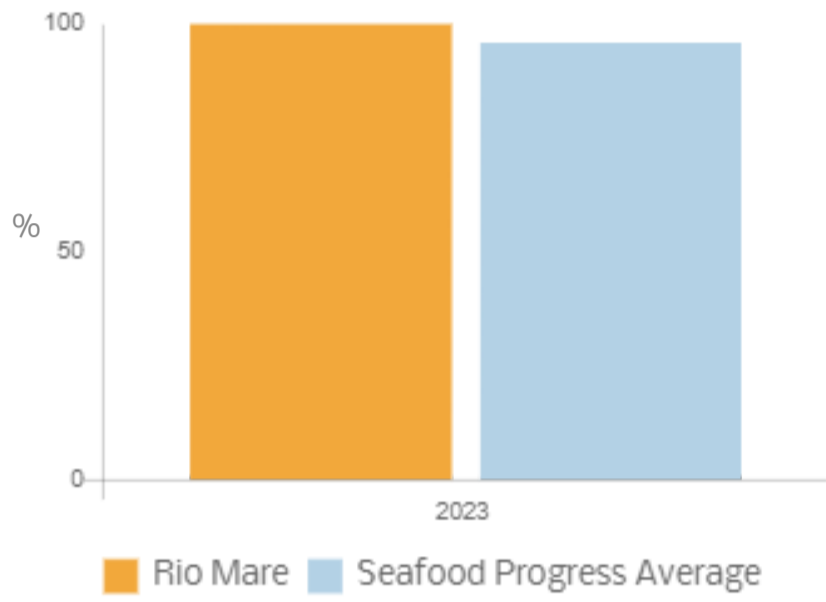
40% Commitment to social responsibility includes with worker driven objectives that are based on credible international standards (The UN's Guiding Principles, The WBA's Seafood Stewardship Index, ILO and the UN Declaration).

20% General commitment to socially responsible seafood.

0% No publicly available social responsibility commitment.



# STEP 2: COLLECTING DATA

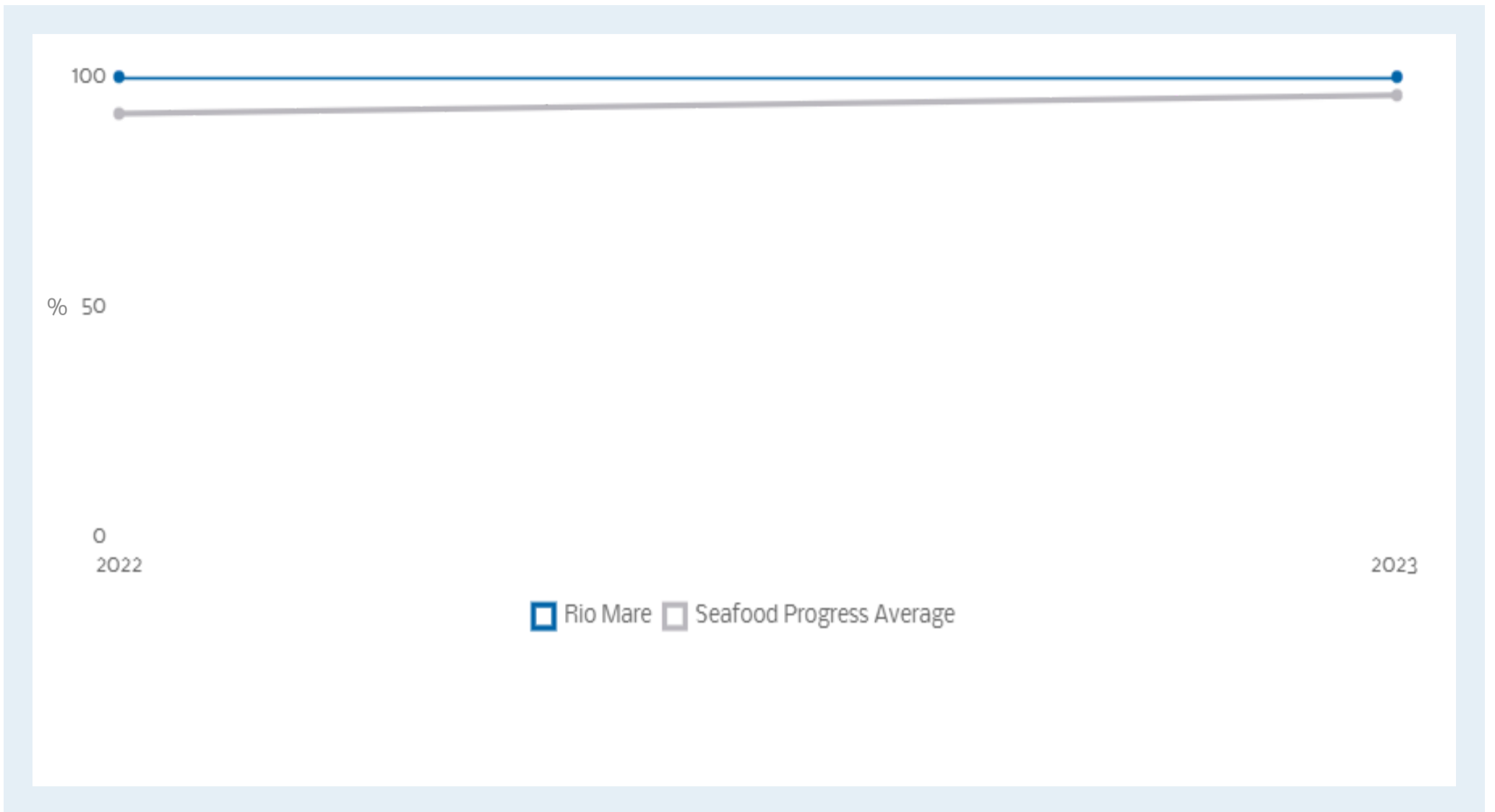


2

## Collecting Data

Is the brand collecting data to support its commitment?

## 2.1 The brand collects data on scientific name.



Rio Mare collects data on species' scientific name for all products (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 11/01/2023).

### Scoring

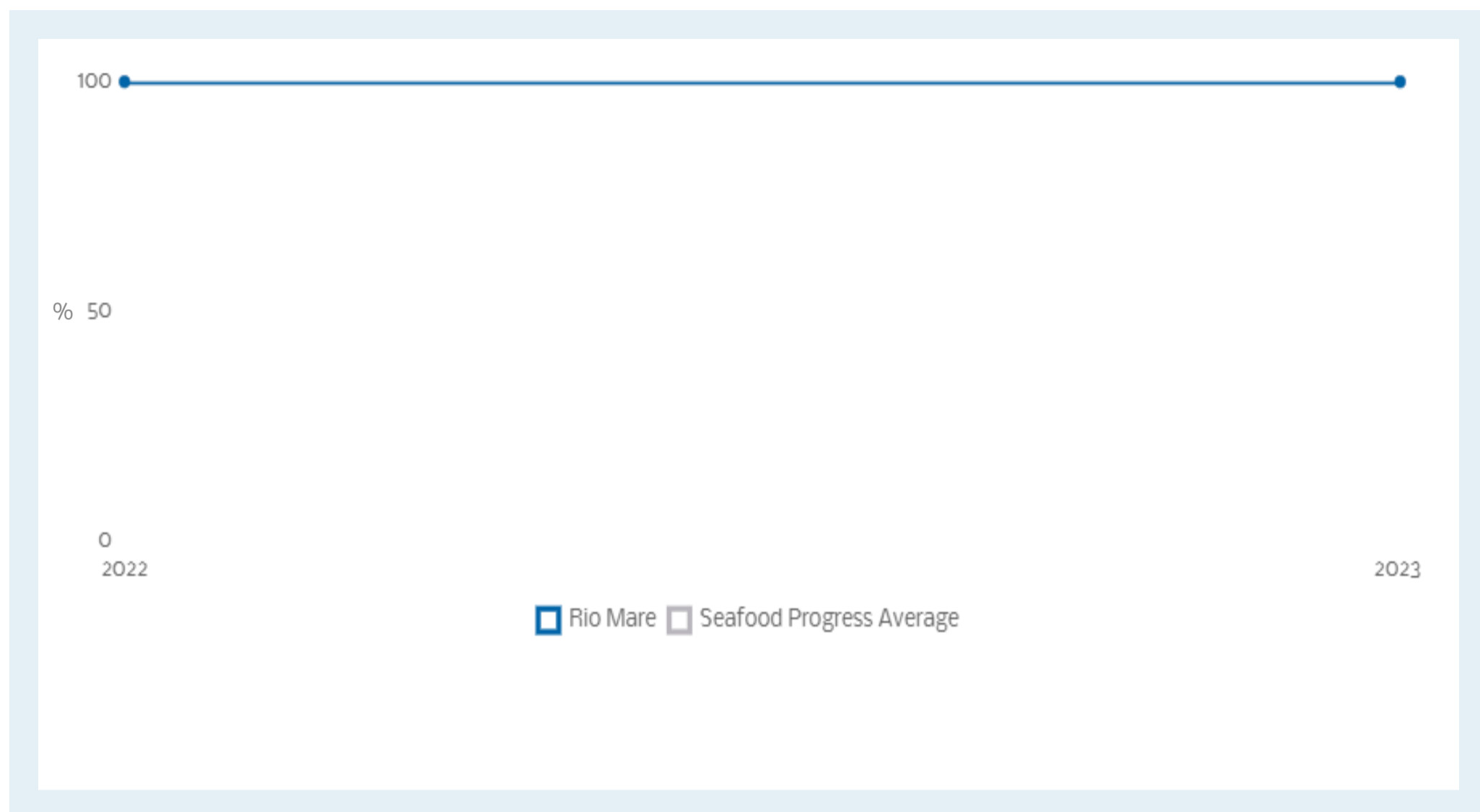


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

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.



Rio Mare collects data on geographic origin for all products (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 11/01/2023).

### Scoring

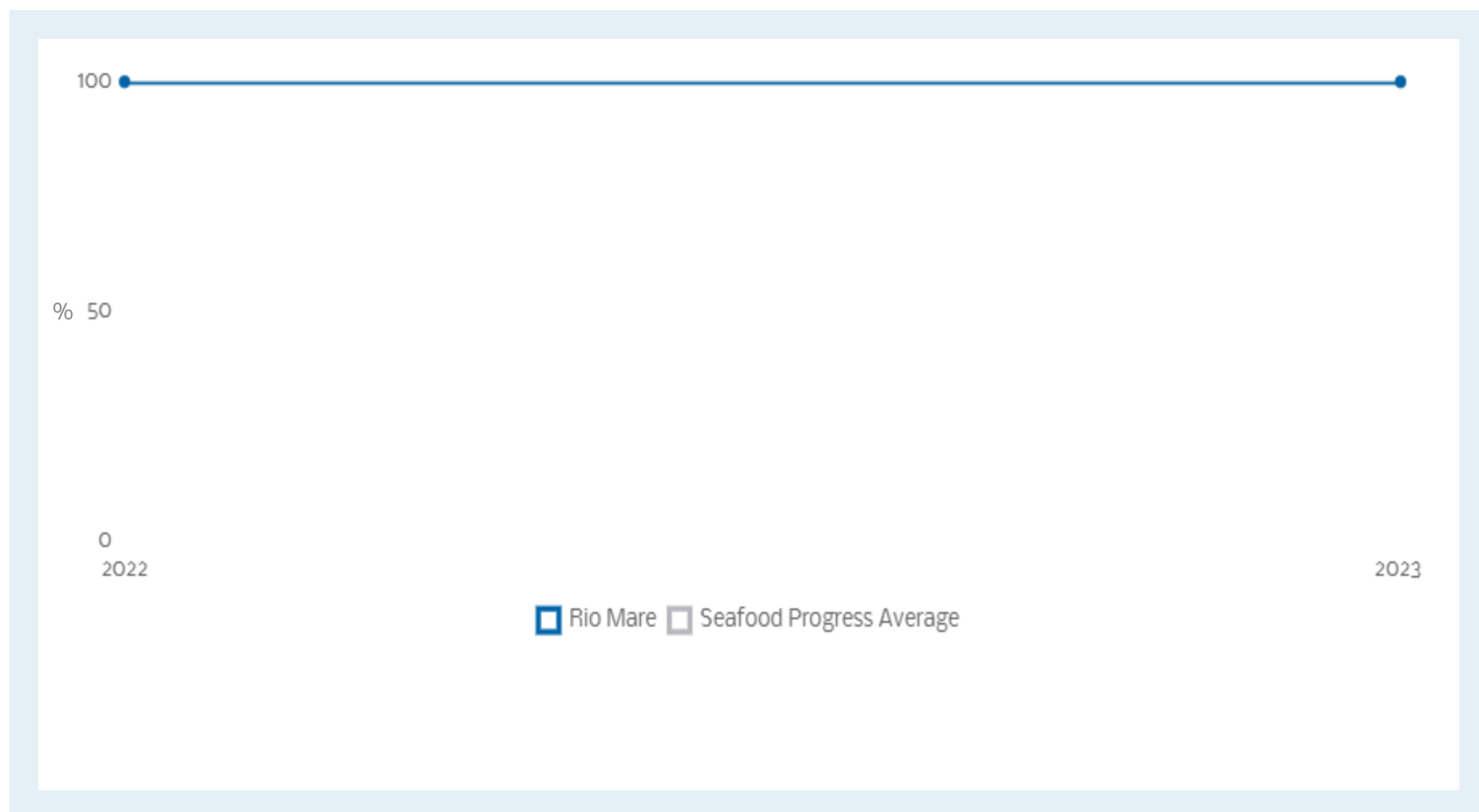


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

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.



Rio Mare collects data on whether wild or farmed for all products (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 11/01/2023).

### Scoring

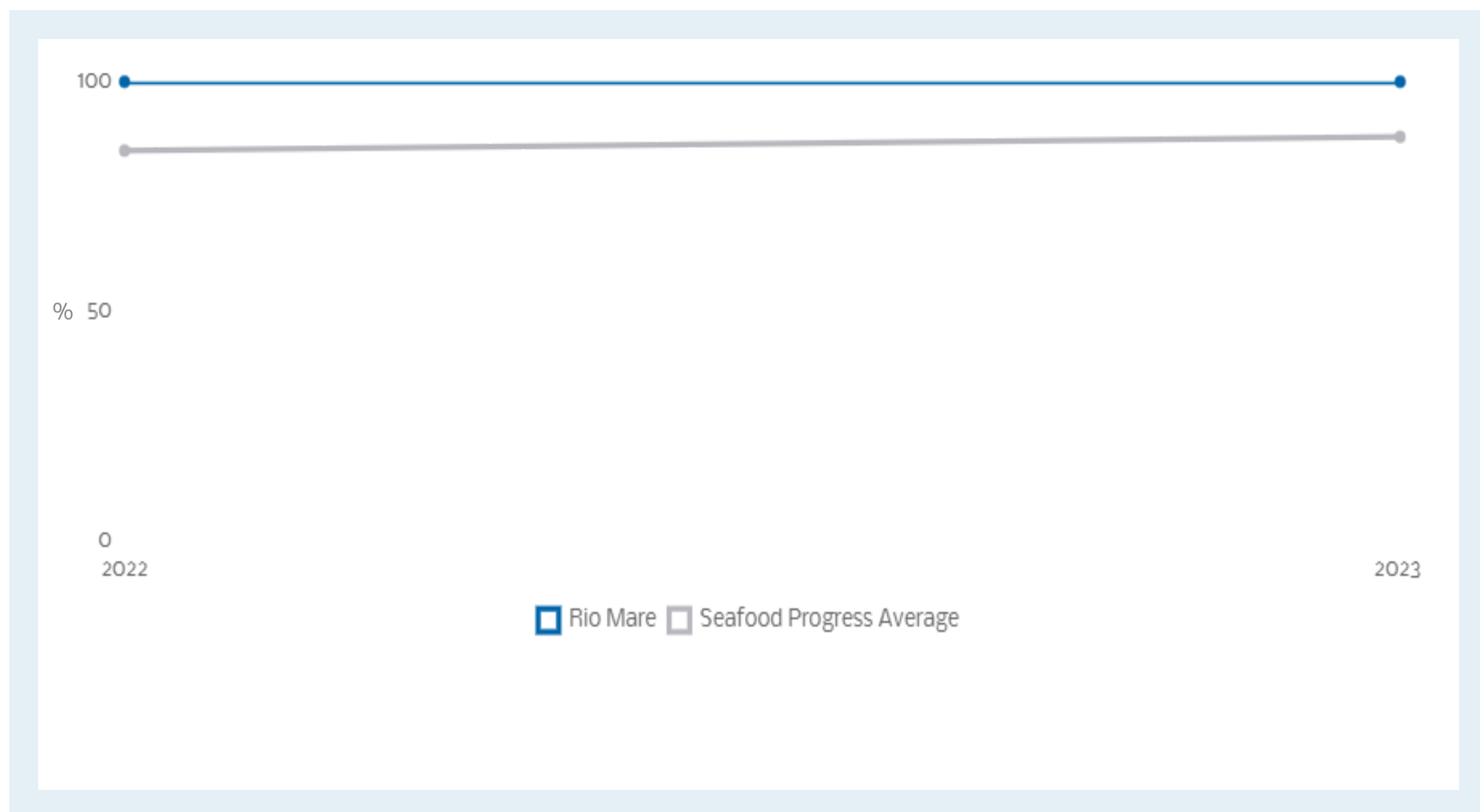


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

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.



Rio Mare collects data on gear type and farming method for all products (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 11/01/2023).

### Scoring

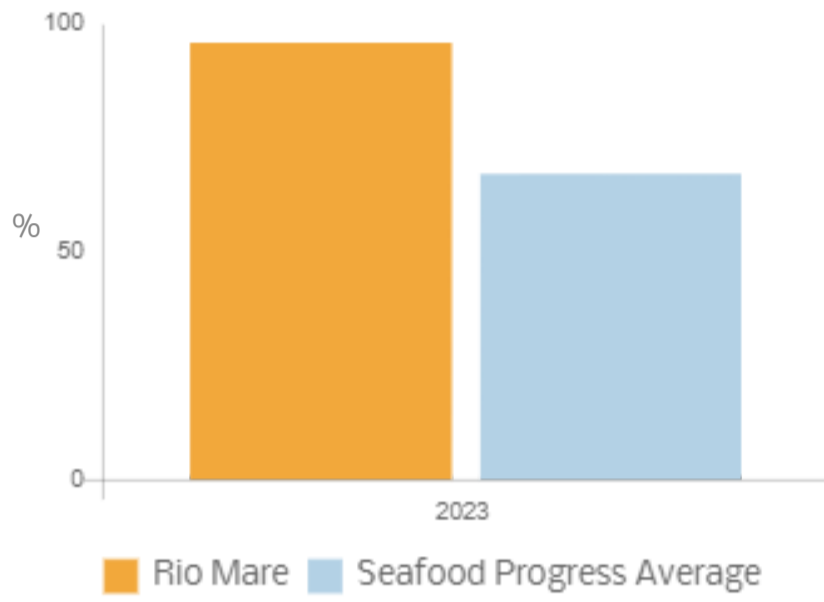


100% Collects data for all products included in the grocer's commitment.

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

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

# STEP 3: SOURCING

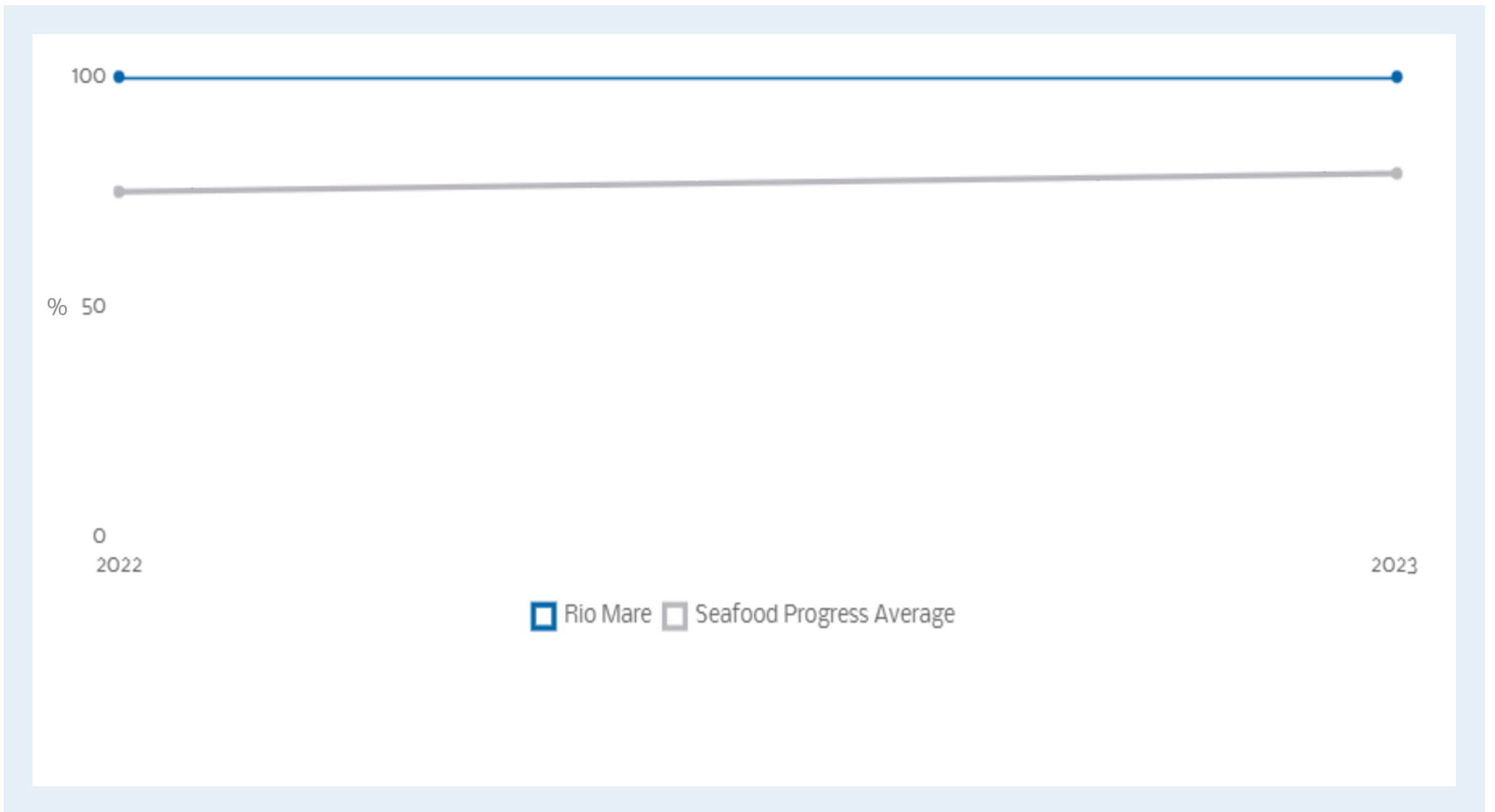


3

## Responsible Sourcing

Is the brand making responsible sourcing decisions?

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



Rio Mare publishes a clear hierarchy of sustainability standards demonstrating its sourcing priorities for all commodities it sells.

#### Scoring



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

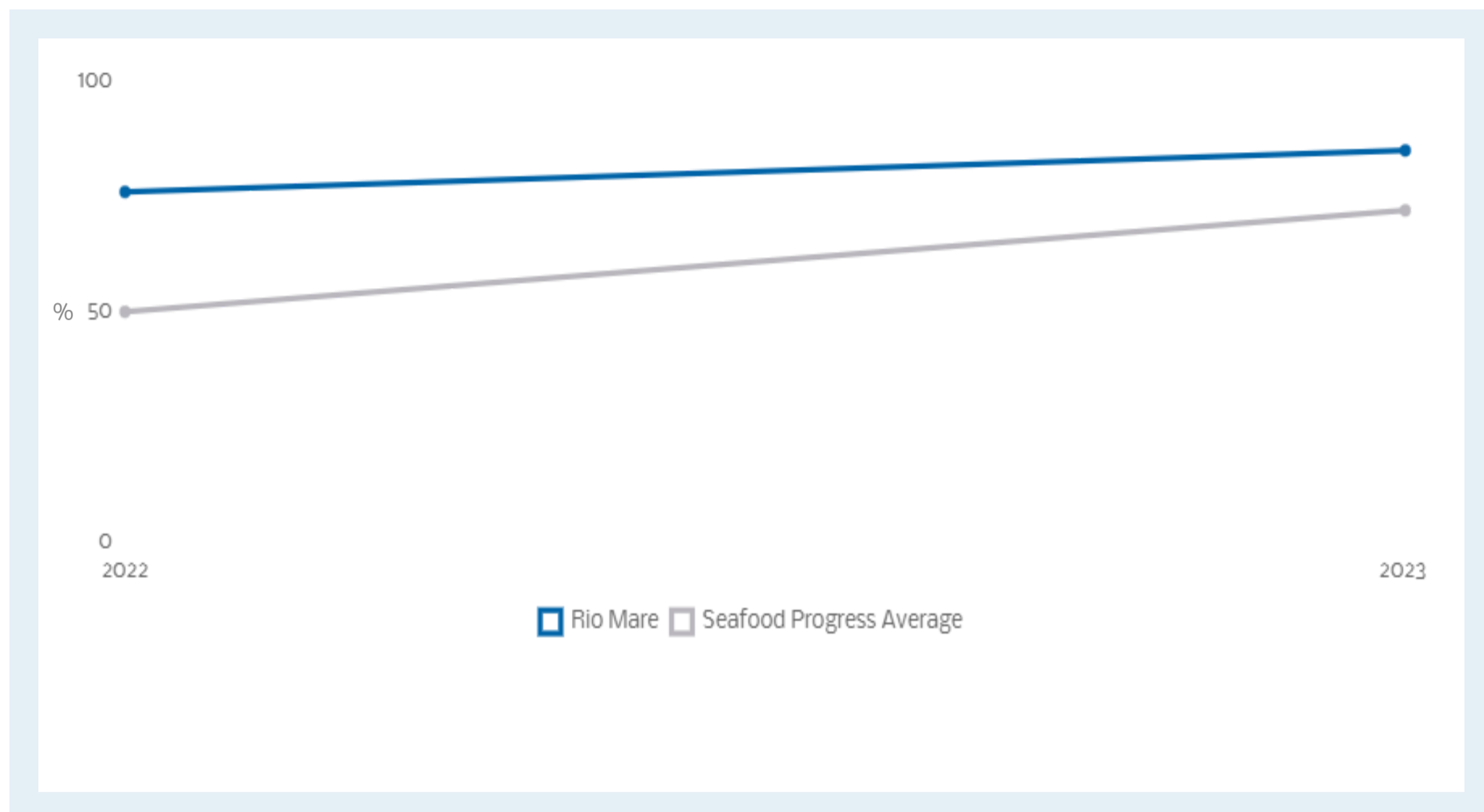
75% Publishes a clear hierarchy of sustainability standards used for sourcing some products, and identifies a general list of sustainability standards that it uses to inform its purchasing decisions for other products.

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.



Through its Seafood Progress profile, Bolton Food reported that 85% of its seafood products by volume and sold in 2022 were in line with its commitment (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 27/03/2023).

#### 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 brand's sustainability commitment.



Bolton Food requires all suppliers to sign commodity-specific policies that cover all of its environmental sustainability commitment. The company actively verifies compliance through product inspections upon receipt and DNA testing on a regular basis (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 13/02/2023).

#### 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.

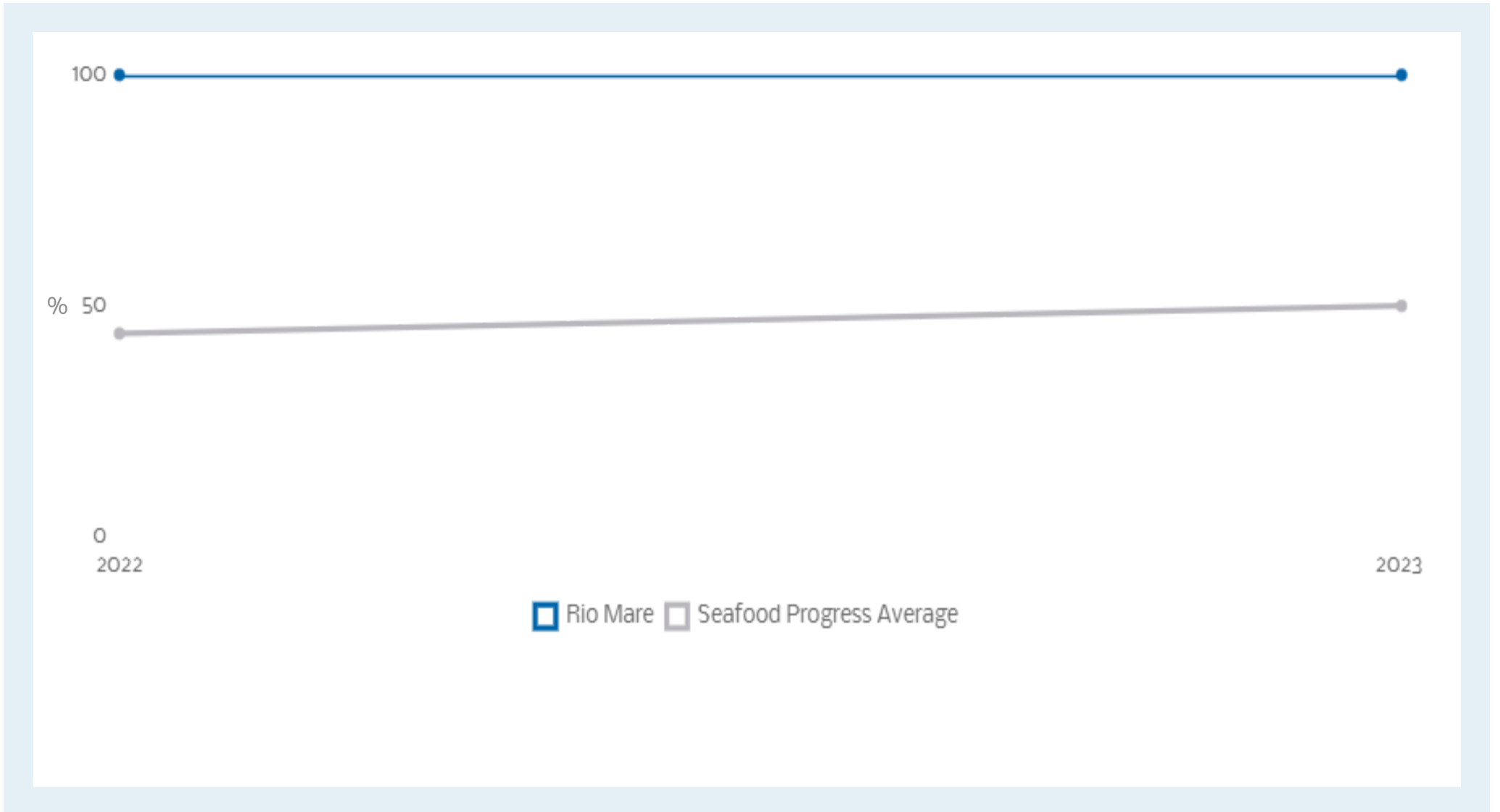
75% All suppliers are required to agree in writing to uphold all of the terms of the grocer's environmental sustainability commitment on at least an annual basis.

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 brand's social responsibility commitment.



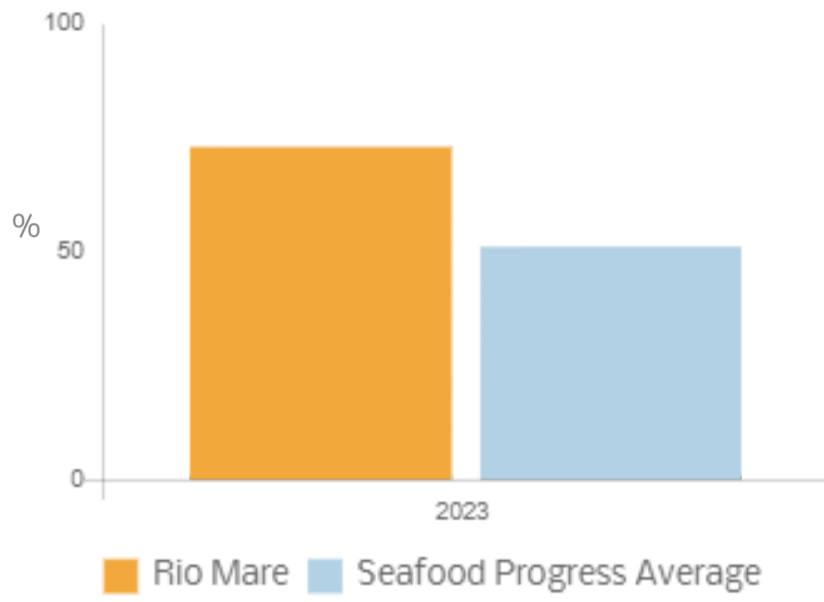
Bolton Food's suppliers are required to comply with its [Human Rights Policy](#) which is informed by its code of ethics. Furthermore, suppliers are subject to internal assessment and annual audit from a third party certification body. Finally, in partnership with Oxfam, the company is working on designing a Human Rights Due Diligence Management System, that will provide a framework and tools to adopt a governance process through which the company puts in place a series of tools or measures to identify, avoid, prevent, mitigate and explain how it addresses actual and potential negative impacts in its own activities, its supply chain and other business relationships to ensure that respect for Human Rights is effectively monitored throughout the company's supply chain (personal communications, L Pirovano, 13/02/2023).

#### 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

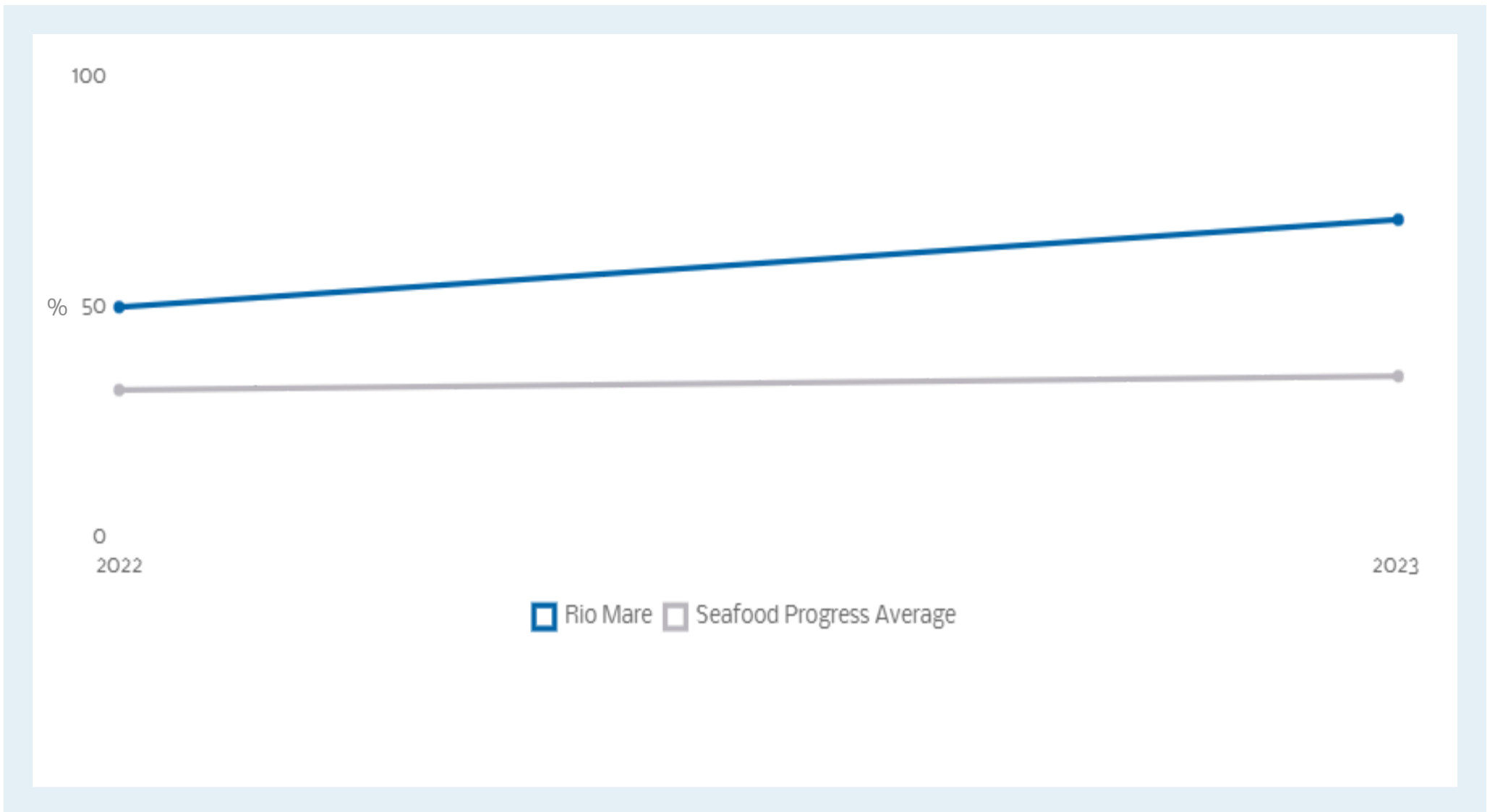


4

## 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.



Rio Mare labels all products with species' scientific name and geographic origin, and most products with gear type or farming method. Rio Mare does not label any products as wild or farmed. However, Bolton Food is committed to adding all of these key data elements to all product labels by 2024 (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 13/02/2023).

### Scoring



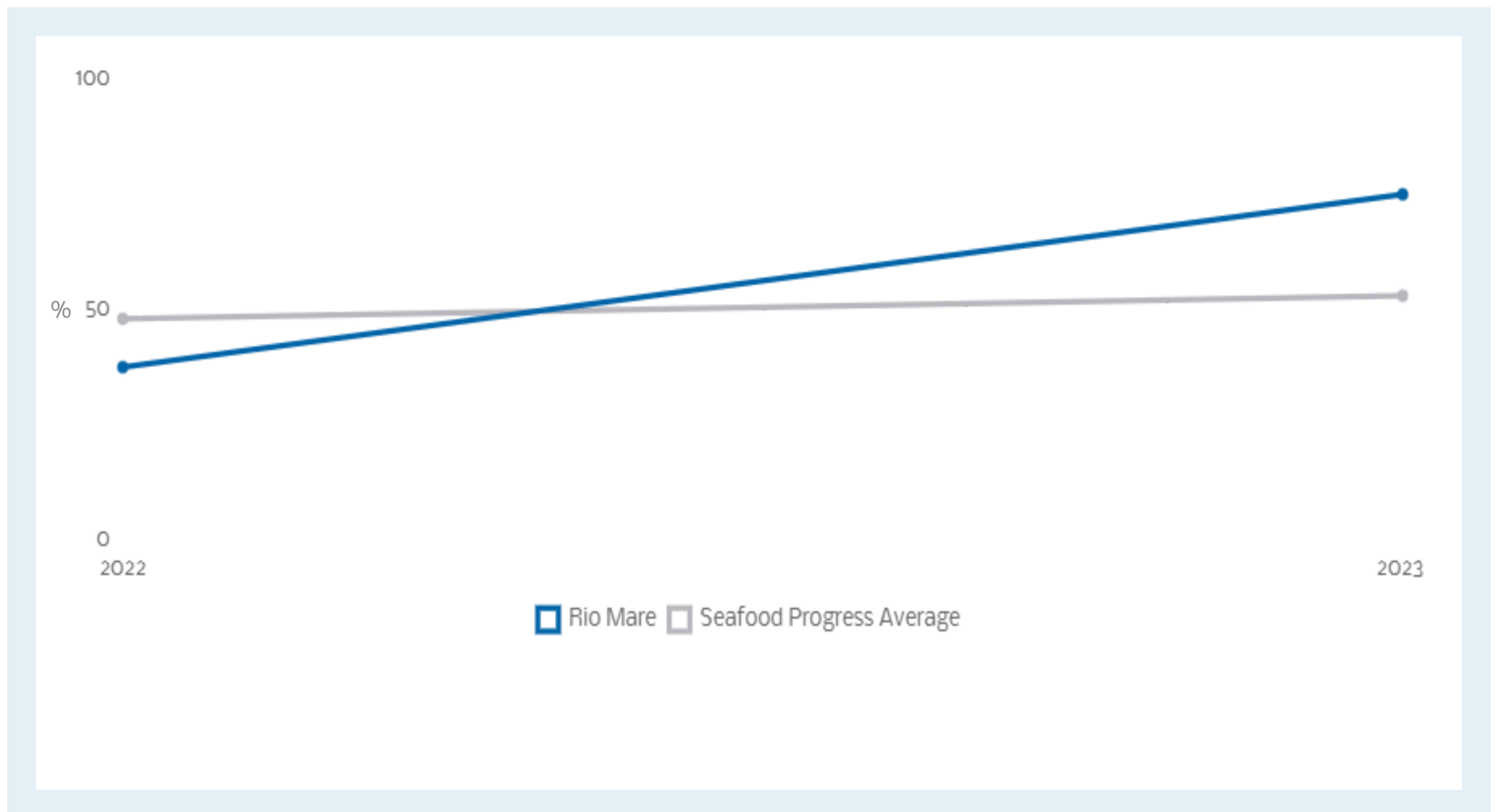
100% The grocer labels all products with the information.

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.



Following the guidance of SeaChoice and other NGOs, Rio Mare removed its “Responsible Quality” self claim from its packaging in 2022 (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 11/01/2023). Now Rio Mare only uses the MSC certification claim (which includes chain of custody to serve as evidence to back up its claim), and the Dolphin Safe endorsement on its packaging. The company makes evidence available to back up these claims on its website.

### 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).

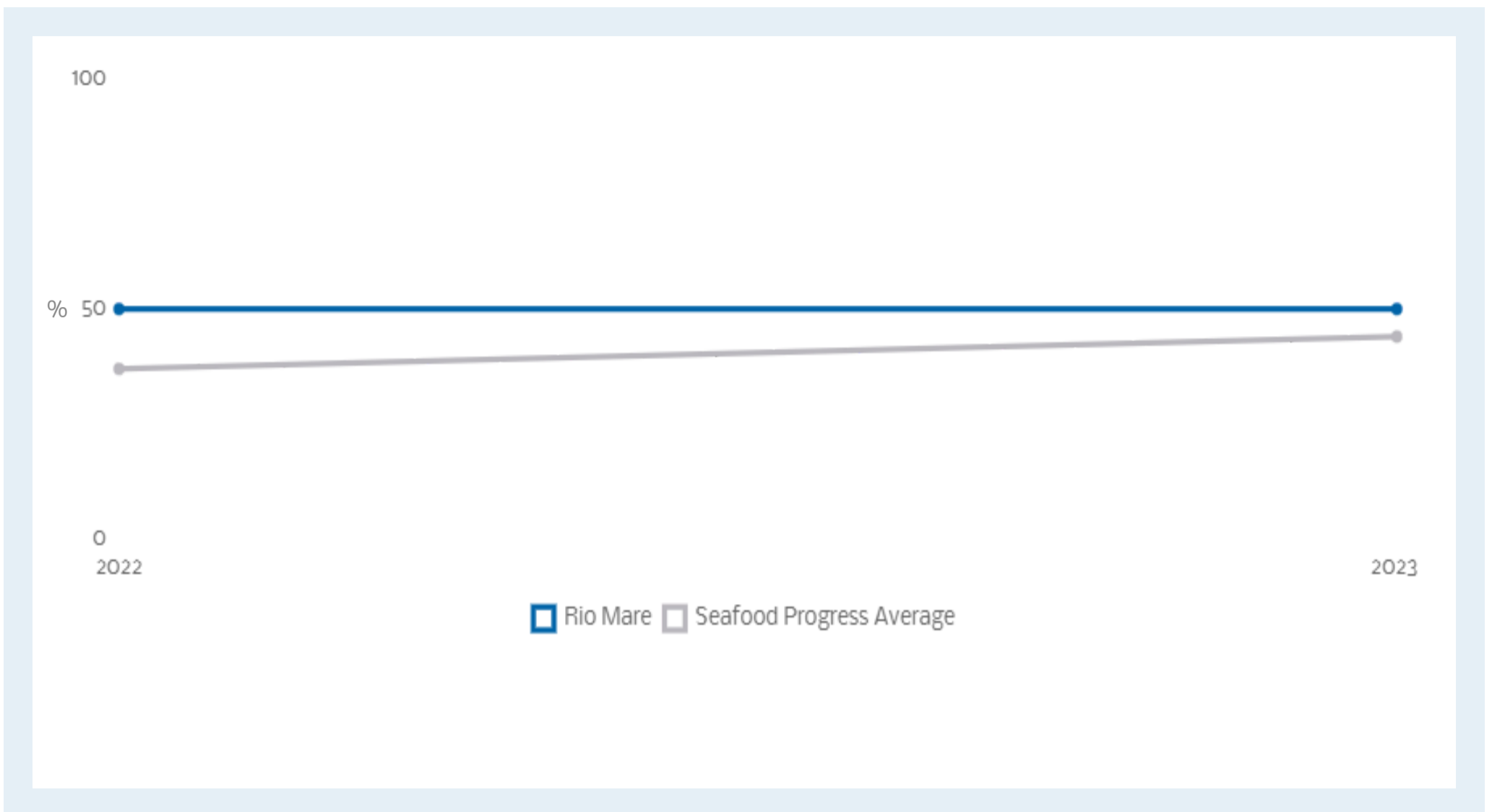
75% The grocer uses certification claims as well as endorsement claims and/or self-declared claims that 1) adhere to ISO 14021 Type II guidance and proof of third-party verification on product labels and 2) makes evidence to back up its claim(s) publicly available.

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.



Rio Mare shares the scientific name, geographic origin and harvest method of all its tuna products through the “Traceability” page on its website, and intends to share this information on all its other products by 2024 (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 13/02/2023).

#### 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.



Through its Seafood Progress profile, Bolton Food has reported annually on the percentage of Rio Mare brand products sold in Canada that were in line with its commitment for the past two consecutive years.

##### Scoring

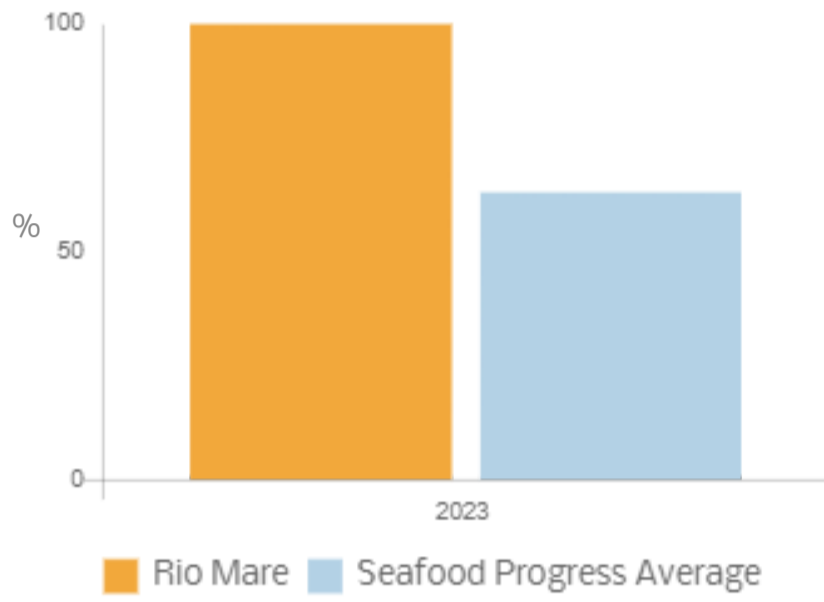


100% The grocer regularly reports publicly how much of its seafood sold meets its commitment by volume or value of sales every year.

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



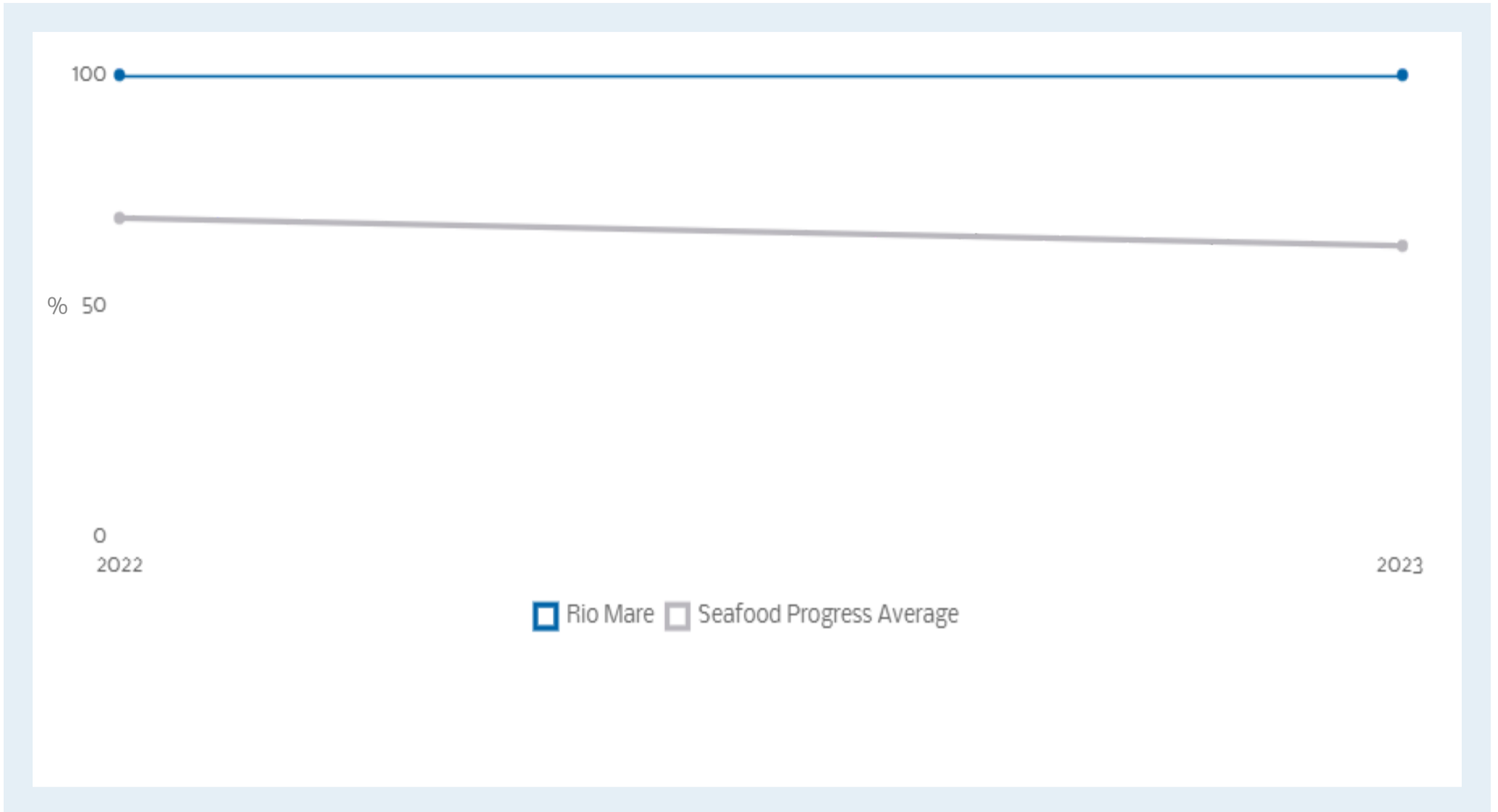
5

## 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.**

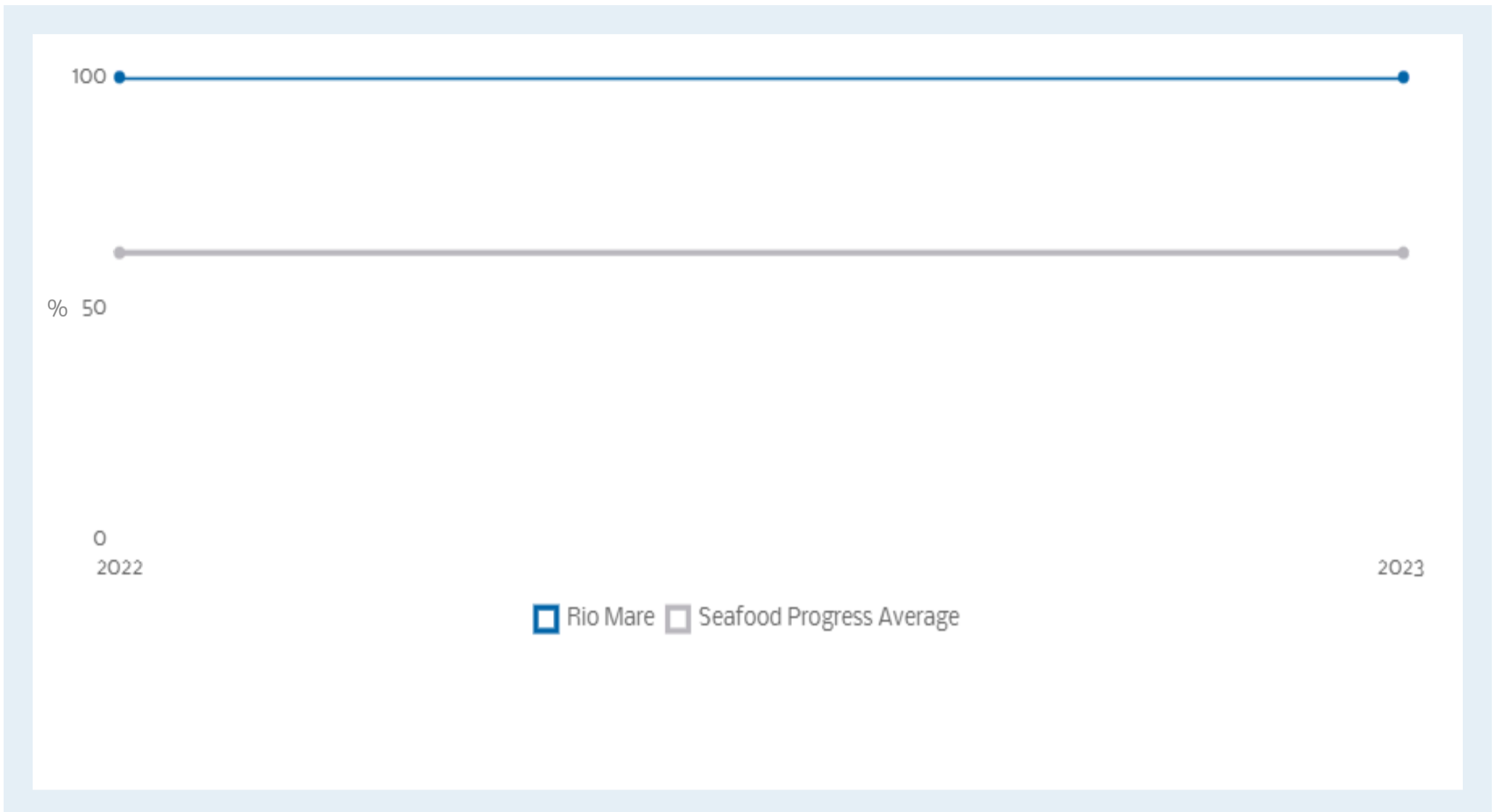


Rio Mare’s website links directly to Bolton Food’s [Responsible Quality](#) website which provides comprehensive descriptions of its commitments to sustainable and socially responsible seafood. Additionally, Bolton Food is working on linking to this information from its [corporate website](#) (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 11/01/2023).

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



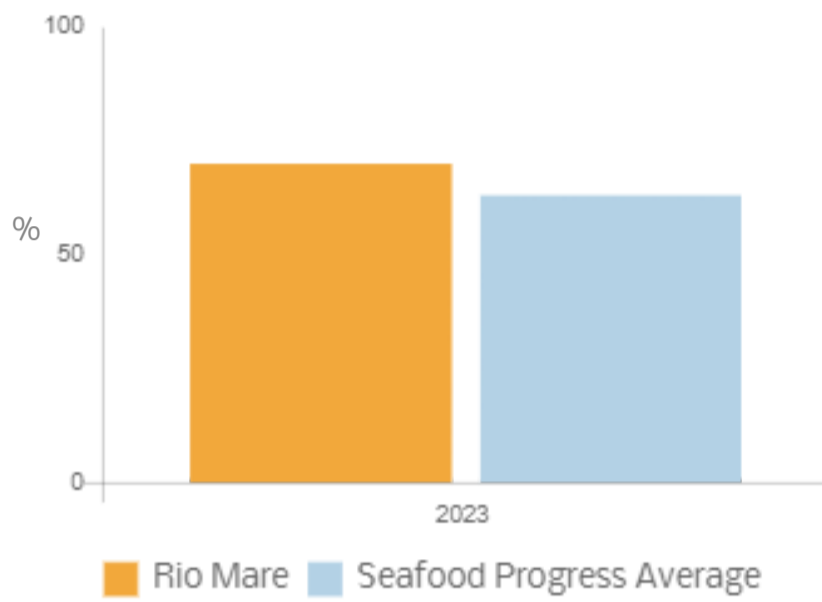
Bolton Food shares its sustainability commitment with all its suppliers through its commodity-specific policies that they are required to sign and uphold. The company is currently revising all documents related to its commitments and will share those through its supplier work portal. Suppliers will be required to confirm that they have reviewed the documents prior to their next shipment. The company also periodically meets with its main supplier, Tri Marine, to ensure its policies align with Bolton's and to follow up on progress. Bolton works with all other suppliers on a regular basis to address compliance problems and to help guide them on reporting against the company's sustainability requirements (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 11/01/2023).

### 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.

# STEP 6: TAKING INITIATIVE

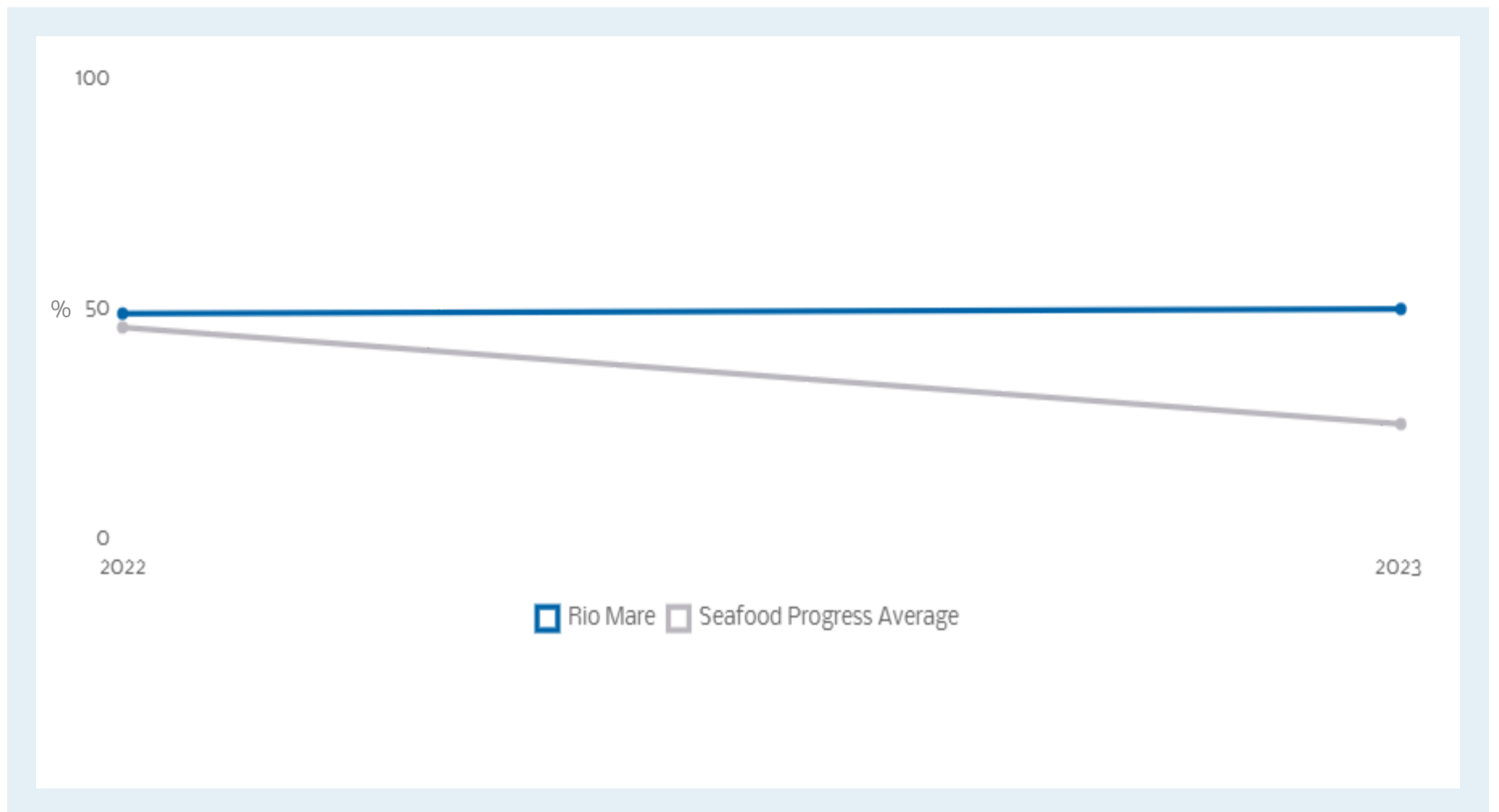


6

## Taking Initiative

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

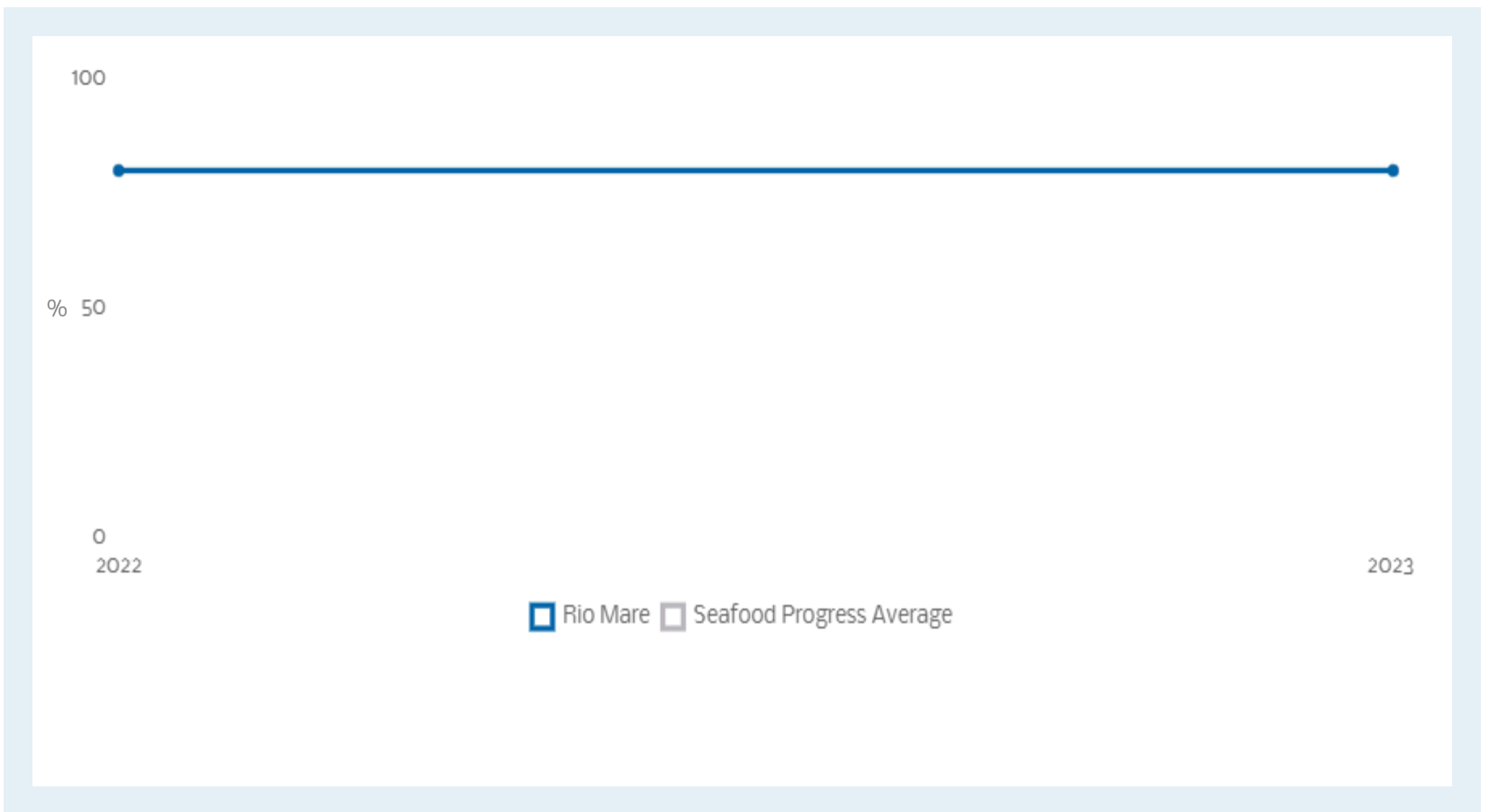
## 6.1 Farmed Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)



Following SeaChoice's guidance, Bolton Food advocated for improvements to the ASC's draft farm standard through its official submission in April, 2022. The company is also committed to not selling any genetically engineered or modified farmed salmon (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 11/01/2023).

- ✘ 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 (25 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 (25 pts).
- ✘ Preferentially procures farmed salmon from closed containment producers and sources that are Recommended by Ocean Wise or rated Best Choice by Seafood Watch (25 pts).
- ✔ Does not sell genetically engineered (GE) or genetically modified (GM) farmed salmon (25 pts).

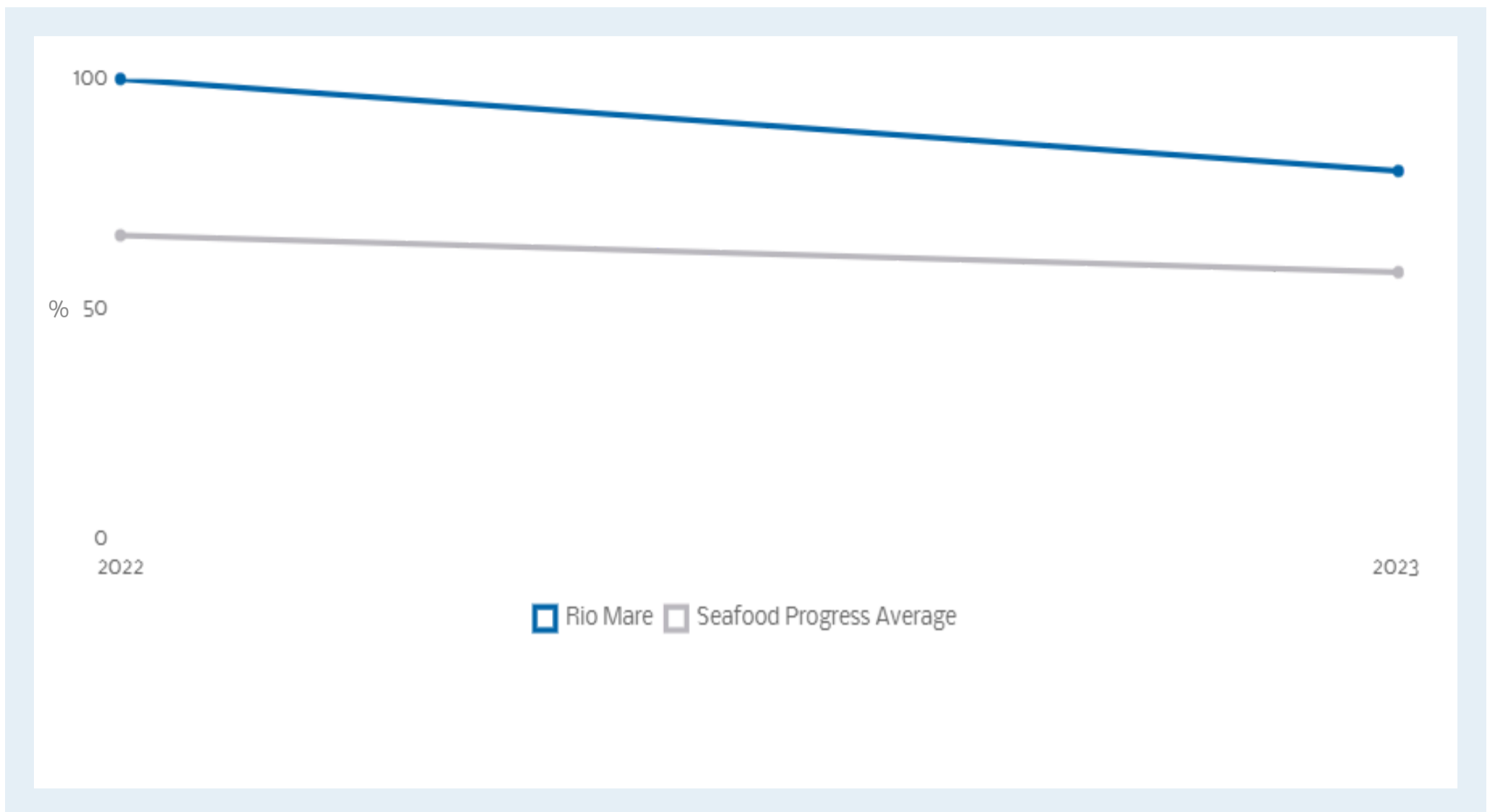
### 6.3 Skipjack tuna (Katsuwonus pelamis)



Bolton Food is a founding member and active participant of the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF). Bolton also prioritizes traceability with its advanced system that allows all products to be traced from the the fishing area and boat to the supermarket shelf. Furthermore, in February 2023, Bolton Food released **a statement** relaying its commitment to reduce sourcing of purse seine-caught yellowfin tuna by 20% by 2024 in an effort to help rebuild stocks. Also in February 2023, the company released its **Shark Finning Policy** that requires sharks to be landed with fins naturally attached (personal communication, L. Pirovano, 13/02/2023)

- ✘ 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 (20 pts).
- ✔ Collaborates with other companies pre-competitively to improve skipjack fishery management practices (20 pts).
- ✔ Works with suppliers or producers directly to improve skipjack fishing practices (20 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 (20 pts).
- ✔ Prioritizes sourcing products with high levels of social responsibility and/or traceability (20 pts).

## 6.4 Other species



Bolton Food prioritizes sourcing MSC and ASC certified products and has an advanced traceability system for all products. The company is also a founding member of the new [Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability](#) (GDST). Additionally, as a member of the North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group, Bolton Food signed on to a letter to Fisheries Ministers in October 2022 calling for tangible action on the sustainable management of pelagic stocks. Finally, Bolton financially supports the [Atlantic Ocean French purse seine FIP](#) for skipjack and yellowfin tuna (personal communications, L. Pirovano, 11/01/2023).

- ✘ 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).