

# Seafood Progress

Grocery Stores' Commitment to Sustainable and Socially Responsible Seafood

# 57

2022 score

Seafood Progress Average ?  
: 71

↑ Score Trend  
**Increased Since Last Year**

Parent Company  
**Empire Company Ltd.**

NGO Partner(s)  
**Ocean Wise**



[Stores owned by Sobeys](#)



Sustainable Commitment  
[click here](#)



Progress Reports  
[2021, 2020, 2019, 2018](#)



Location  
**Across Canada's provinces**

# OVERVIEW

## Commitment to Sustainable Seafood

Which product types does this grocery store's sustainable seafood commitment cover?

	Fresh	Frozen	Shelf
Store brand <span>?</span>	✓	✓	✓
Seafood brand <span>?</span>	✗	✗	✗
No brand <span>?</span>	✗	✗	

### SUMMARY



0%

of products sold in 2022 met commitment.

**Sustainability Commitment.** Sobeys' 2021 Sustainable Business Report states that a minimum of 95% of the total weight of its fresh, frozen and shelf stable (excluding canned tuna) private label seafood will be third-party certified or Recommended by Ocean Wise by 2025, and the remainder will need to be involved in Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) or Aquaculture Improvement Projects (AIPs). Sobeys requires all canned tuna suppliers to source from packers that are ISSA members, and all vendors supplying products to Sobeys Private Label Programs to have Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) certification. In April 2022, Sobeys announced that it has signed an agreement with the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) to use its Seafood Metrics platform to begin collecting verified key data elements from all its private label and national brand seafood suppliers. Sobeys intends to assess the results of this action in a years' time before setting a timebound commitment to achieve full chain traceability.

- Clear Objectives
- Supplier Expectations
- Traceability Policy
- Reporting on Activities

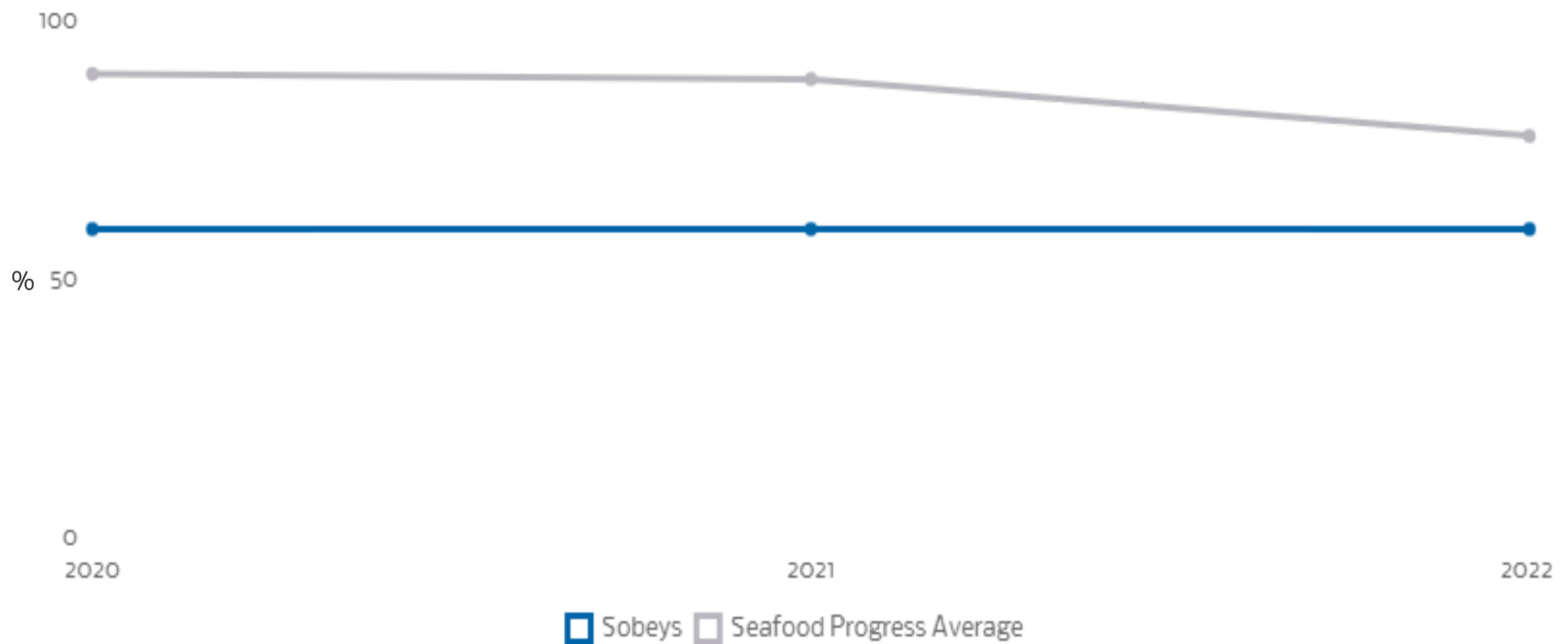


**Social Responsibility Commitment.** Sobeys Inc. partners with industry suppliers that share our values in responsibly sourcing fish and seafood. All vendors supplying products from high risk countries to Sobeys Inc.'s Private Label Programs are required to ensure the producers maintain acceptable Social Compliance Audit standards. The company recognizes the following social compliance audit standards: GSCP Reference Code, SA 8000, BSCI Code of Conduct and Fair Working Conditions (FWC). In April 2022, Sobeys shared that, over the next year, it will be working on an analysis of human rights practices and labour conditions in its supply chains which will inform the future of its governance perspective and social compliance auditing system.

# STEP 1: COMMITMENT



## 1.1 Grocery store has a publicly available commitment on environmentally sustainable seafood.



[Sobeys' 2021 Sustainable Business Report](#) states that a minimum of 95% of the total weight of its fresh, frozen and shelf stable (excluding canned tuna) private label seafood will be third-party certified or Recommended by Ocean Wise by 2025, and the remainder will need to be involved in Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) or Aquaculture Improvement Projects (AIPs). Sobeys requires all canned tuna suppliers to source from packers that are ISSA members, and all vendors supplying products to Sobeys Private Label Programs to have Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) certification. In April 2022, Sobeys announced that it has signed an agreement with the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) to use its Seafood Metrics platform [link] to begin collecting verified key data elements from all its private label and national brand seafood suppliers. Sobeys intends to assess the results of this action in a year's time before setting a timebound commitment to achieve full chain traceability (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 20/04/2022).

### 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 that traces at least the product scientific name, geographic origin, farmed/wild and gear type or farming method.

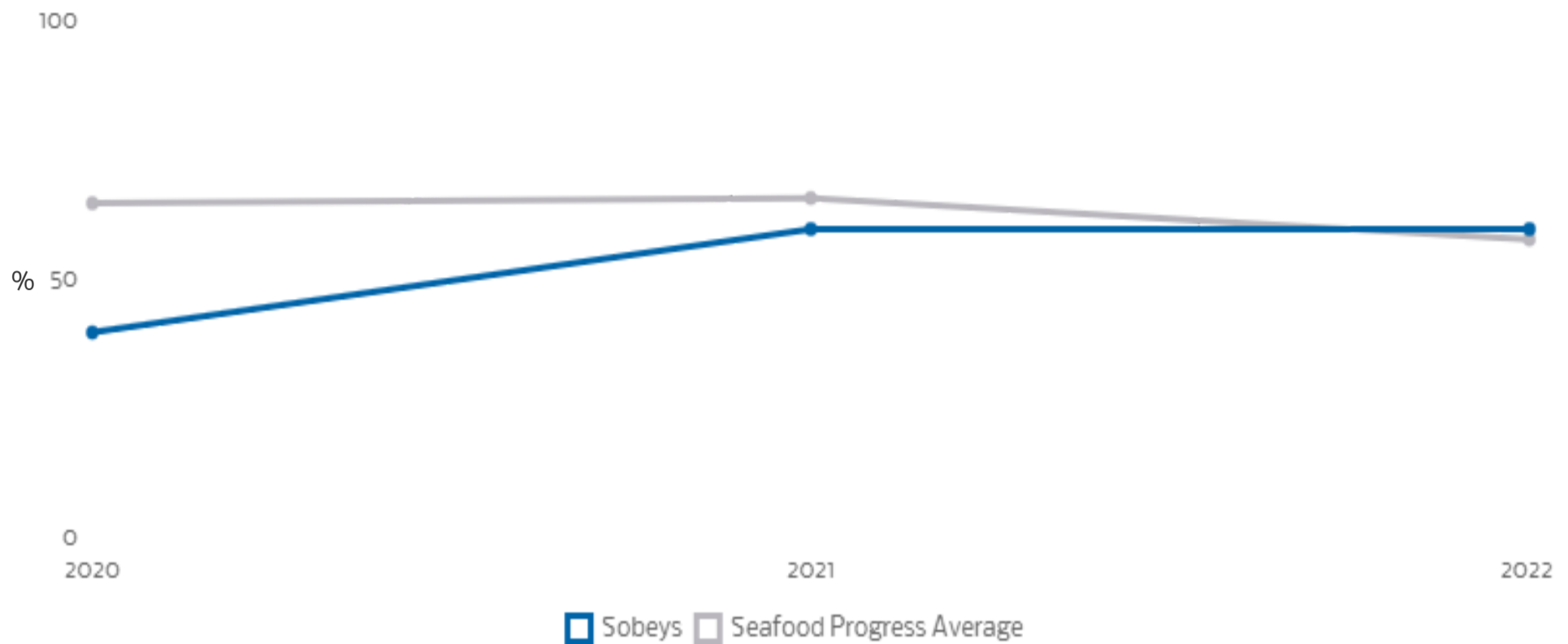
60% Commitment to environmental sustainability that includes clear objectives that are supported by references to credible standards (such as Seafood Watch or Ocean Wise ratings, eco-certifications, etc.).

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 Grocery store has a publicly available commitment on socially responsible seafood.



Sobeys' sustainable seafood policy states that "Sobeys Inc. partners with industry suppliers that share our values in responsibly sourcing fish and seafood. All vendors supplying products from high risk countries to Sobeys Inc.'s Private Label Programs are required to ensure the producers maintain acceptable Social Compliance Audit standards. Sobeys Inc. recognizes the following social compliance audit standards: GSCP Reference Code, SA 8000, BSCI Code of Conduct and Fair Working Conditions (FWC)." In April 2022, Sobeys shared that, over the next year, it will be working on an analysis of human rights practices and labour conditions in its supply chains which will inform the future of its governance perspective and social compliance auditing system (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

### 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.

80% Commitment to social responsibility includes clear objectives, actions or expectations for seafood suppliers, and a clear and effective traceability policy.

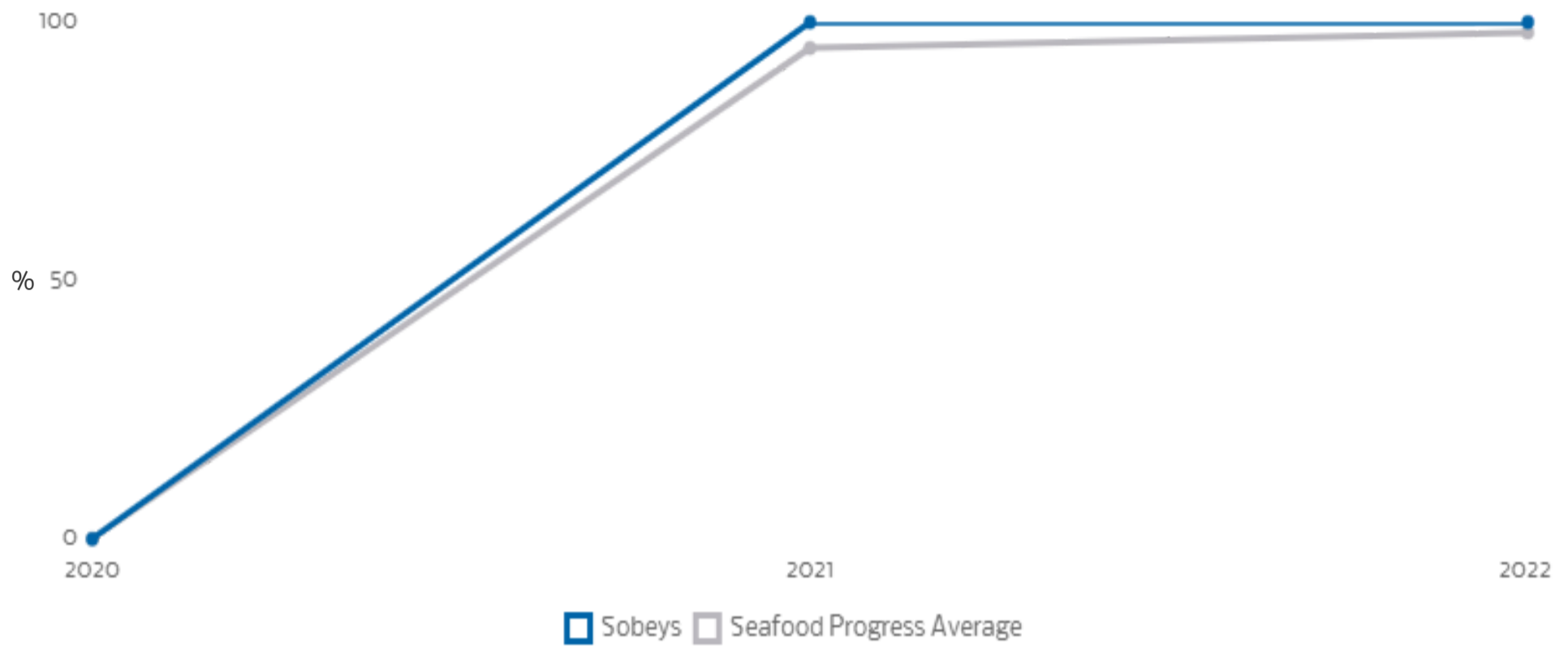
60% Commitment to social responsibility includes clear objectives and actions or expectations for seafood suppliers.

40% Commitment to social responsibility includes clear objectives for socially responsible procurement (for example by referring to credible international standards such as ILO, UN Declaration, etc.).

20% General commitment to socially responsible seafood.

0% No publicly available social responsibility commitment.

### 1.3 Grocery store covers all banners that sell seafood in its sustainable seafood commitment.



Sobeys includes all of its banners that carry private label seafood in its sustainable seafood commitment (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

#### Scoring

100% Grocery store includes 100% of its banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

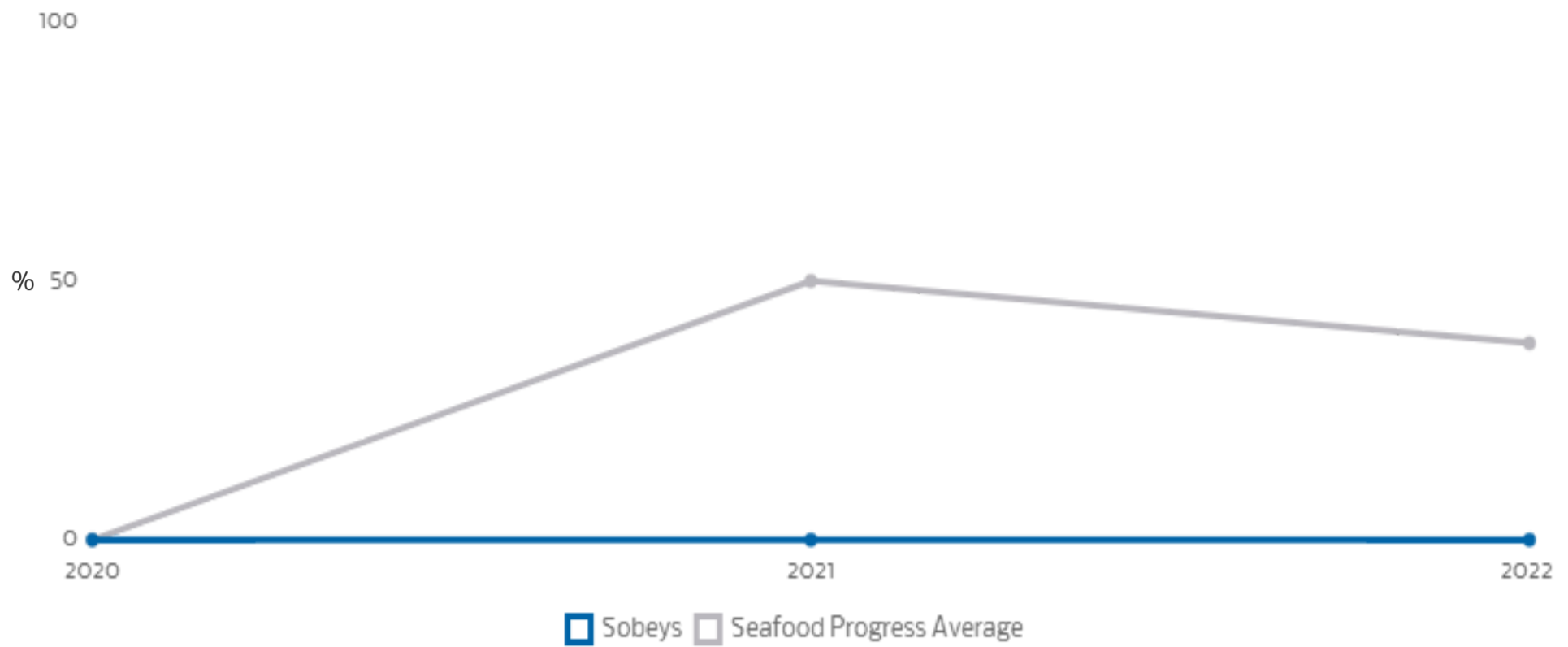
75% Grocery store includes 75% or more of its banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

50% Grocery store includes 50% or more of its banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

25% Grocery store includes 25% or more of its banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

0% Grocery store does not include any banners in its sustainable seafood commitment.

## 1.4 Grocery store covers all shelf stable and national brand products in its sustainable seafood commitment.



Sobeys' sustainable seafood commitment does not include any of its shelf stable products, but it is working on bringing its fresh and frozen national brand and unbranded products under its commitment within the next year (personal communication, M. Belbas, 31/03/2022).

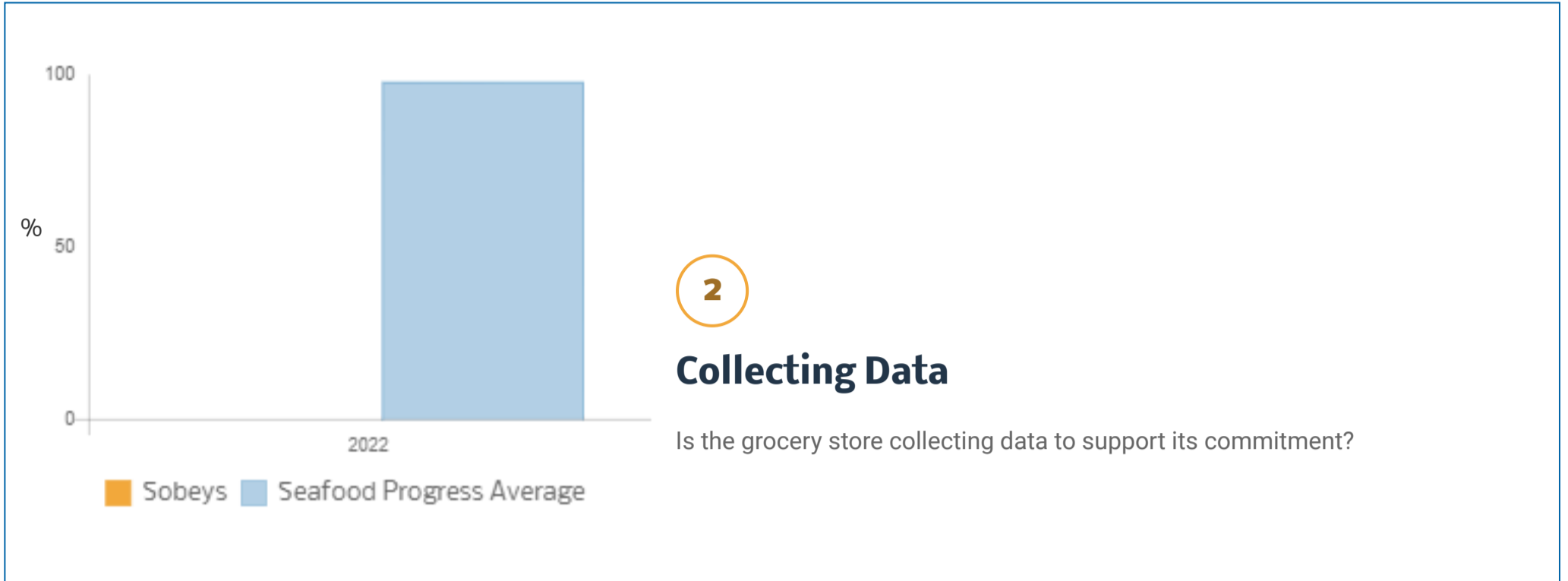
### Scoring

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

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

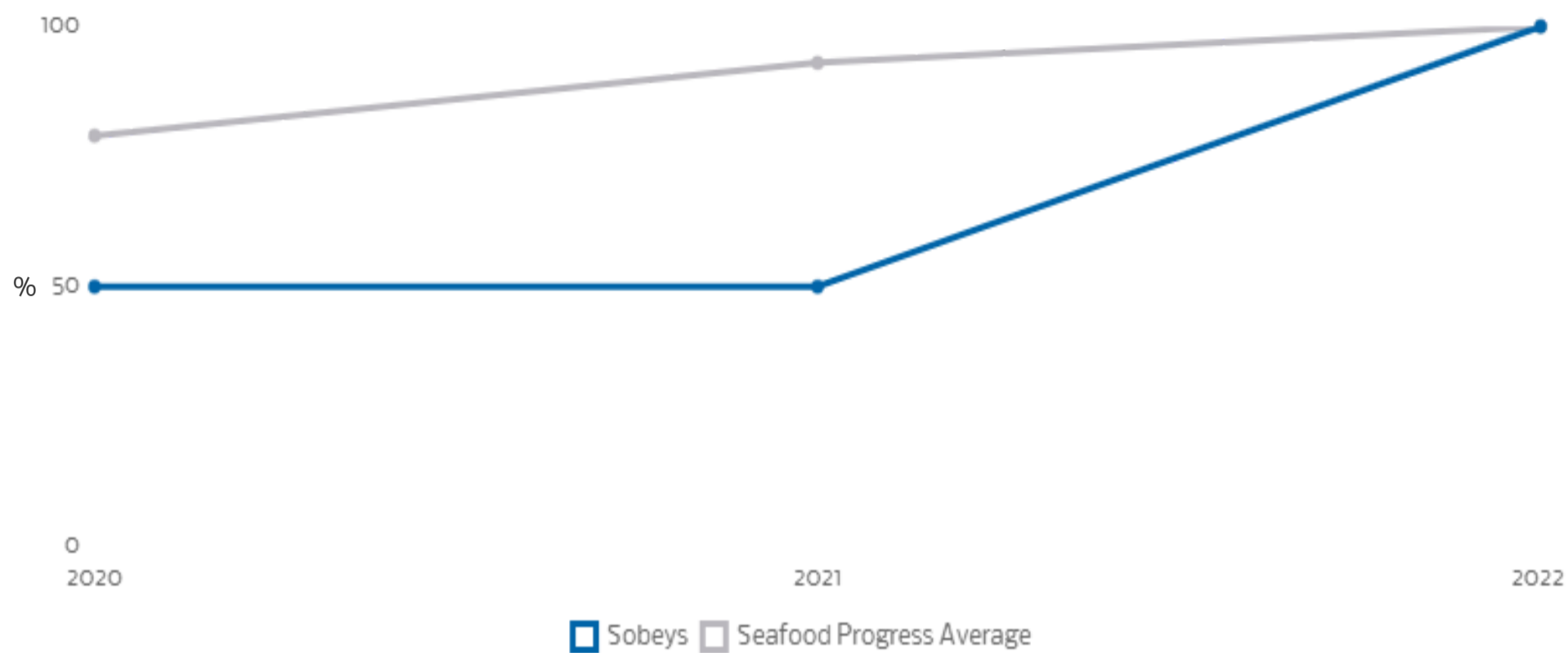
0% Grocery store's commitment includes neither all of its shelf stable or national brand products.

# STEP 2: COLLECTING DATA





## 2.1 Grocery store collects data on species scientific name.



In May 2022, Sobeys began the process of collecting data on scientific name for all its private label and national brand products on a quarterly basis through the Seafood Metrics platform (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

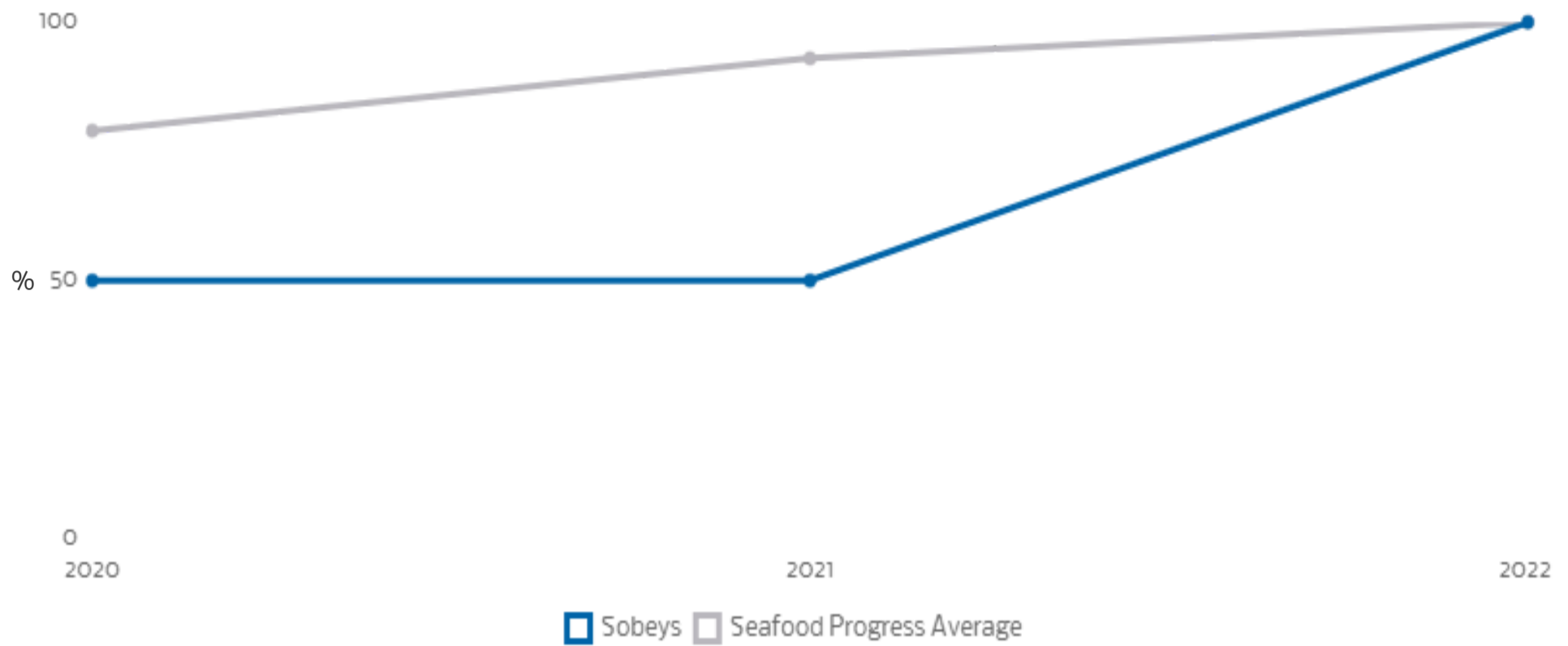
### Scoring

100% Collects data for all products.

50% Collects data for some products.

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

## 2.2 Grocery store collects data on geographic origin.



In May 2022, Sobeys began the process of collecting data on geographic origin for all its private label and national brand products on a quarterly basis through the Seafood Metrics platform (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

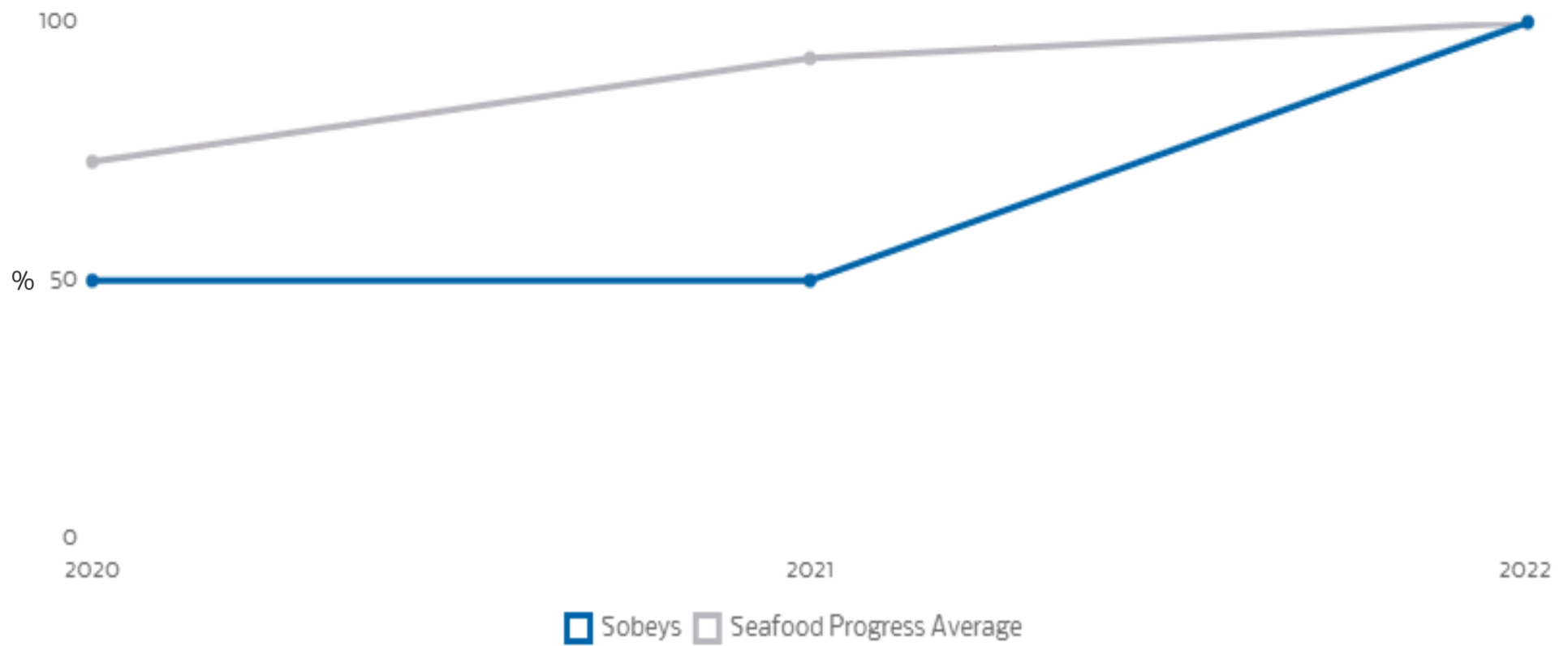
### Scoring

100% Collects data for all products.

50% Collects data for some products.

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

## 2.3 Grocery store collects data on whether wild or farmed.



In May 2022, Sobeys began the process of collecting data on whether farmed or wild for all its private label and national brand products on a quarterly basis through the Seafood Metrics platform (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

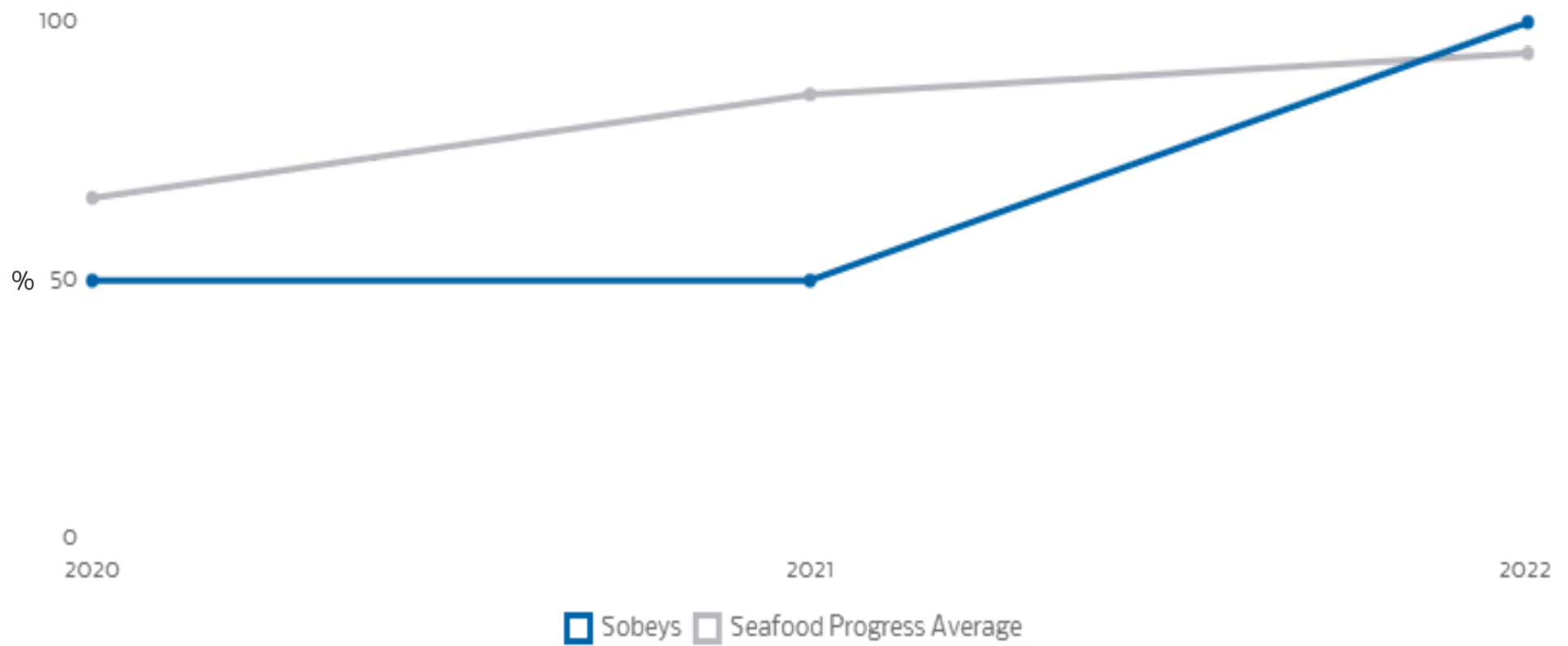
### Scoring

100% Collects data for all products.

50% Collects data for some products.

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

## 2.4 Grocery store collects data on gear type or farming methods.



In May 2022, Sobeys began the process of collecting data on gear type or farming method for all its private label and national brand products on a quarterly basis through the Seafood Metrics platform (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

### Scoring

100% Collects data for all products.

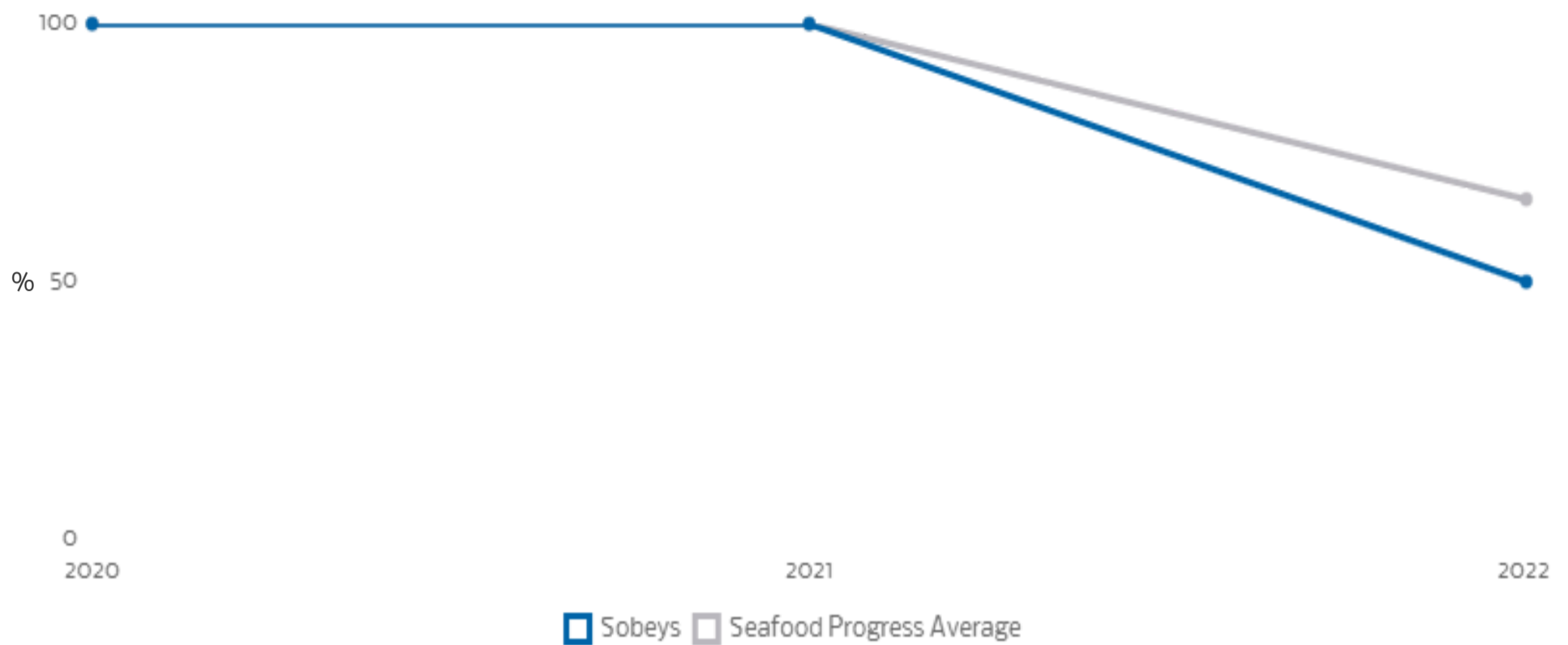
50% Collects data for some products.

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

# STEP 3: SOURCING



### 3.1 Grocery store publishes a clear hierarchy demonstrating its sourcing priorities.



Sobeys publishes a clear hierarchy of sustainability standards used for sourcing its fresh and frozen private label products, but doesn't yet identify the standards it uses to inform its purchasing decisions for any of its shelf stable or national brand products.

#### Scoring

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

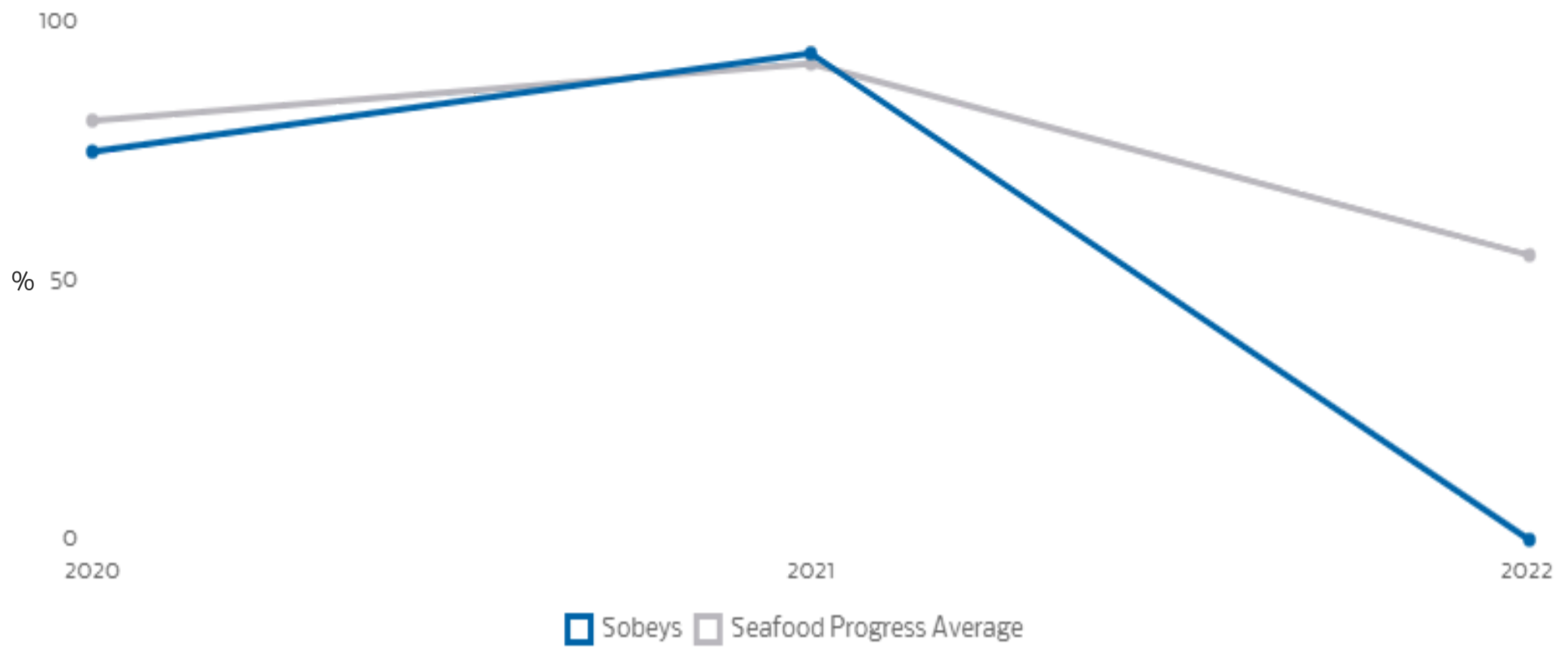
75% Publishes a clear hierarchy of sustainability standards used for sourcing some commodities, and identifies a general list of sustainability standards that it uses to inform its purchasing decisions for other commodities.

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

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



Sobeys has not reported on the overall percentage of private label seafood sold - including shelf stable - that was in line with its commitment in 2021, but it intends to report on this percentage in 2022 (personal communication, 20/04/2022).

#### Scoring

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

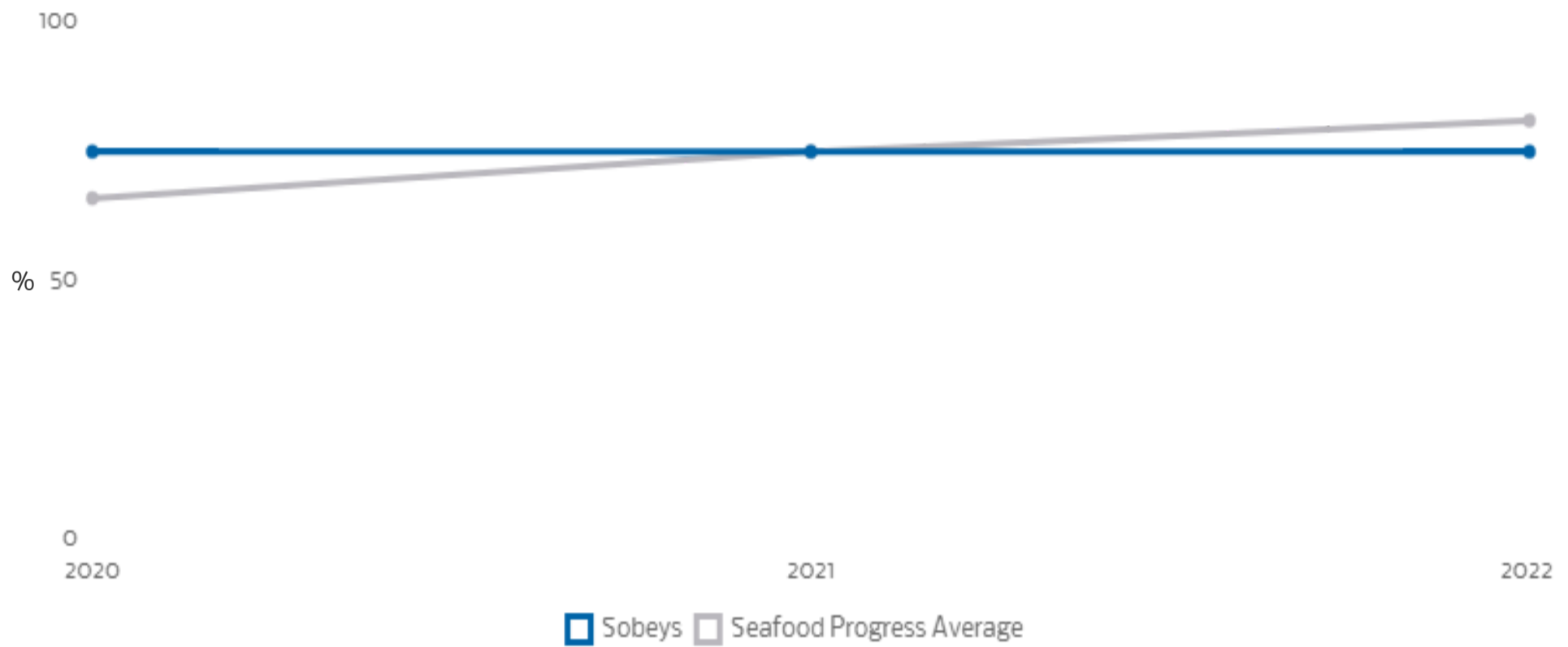
75% Grocery store has reported that 75% or more of its seafood sold meets its sustainability commitment.

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

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

0% Grocery store has not reported on the percentage of its seafood sold that meets its sustainability commitment (or no information available).

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



All suppliers to Sobeys are required to sign Ocean Wise's code of conduct. All suppliers of private label products for Sobeys must additionally pass a risk assessment and sign a supplier agreement (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

#### Scoring

100% All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers all of the retailer's environmental sustainability commitment and the retailer actively verifies that this commitment is being upheld on at least an annual basis.

75% Rubric for retailers Feb 17 2022 Rubric for retailers Feb 17 2022 .XLSX 100% 10 B84 All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers all of the retailer's environmental sustainability commitment. Screen reader support enabled. All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers all of the retailer's environmental sustainability commitment. Turn on screen reader support

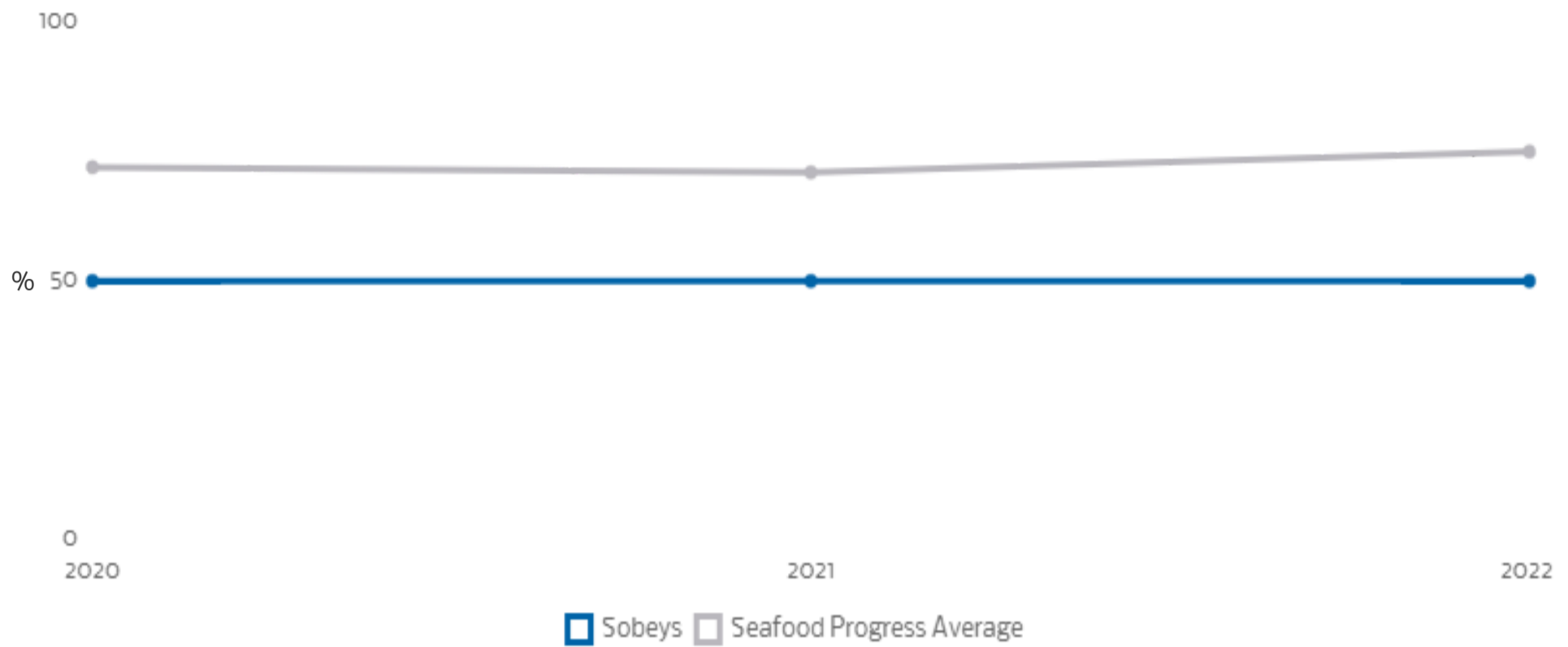
50% Rubric for retailers Feb 17 2022 Rubric for retailers Feb 17 2022 .XLSX 100% 10 B83 All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers some of the retailer's environmental sustainability commitment. Screen reader support enabled. All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers some of the retailer's environmental sustainability commitment. Turn on screen reader support

25% Some suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers some of the retailer's environmental sustainability commitment.

0% Suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct to uphold the grocery store's environmental sustainability commitment.



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



All suppliers of Sobeys' private label products must pass a risk assessment by facility and sign a supplier agreement (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

#### Scoring

100% All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers all of the retailer's social responsibility commitment and the retailer actively verifies that this commitment is being upheld on at least an annual basis.

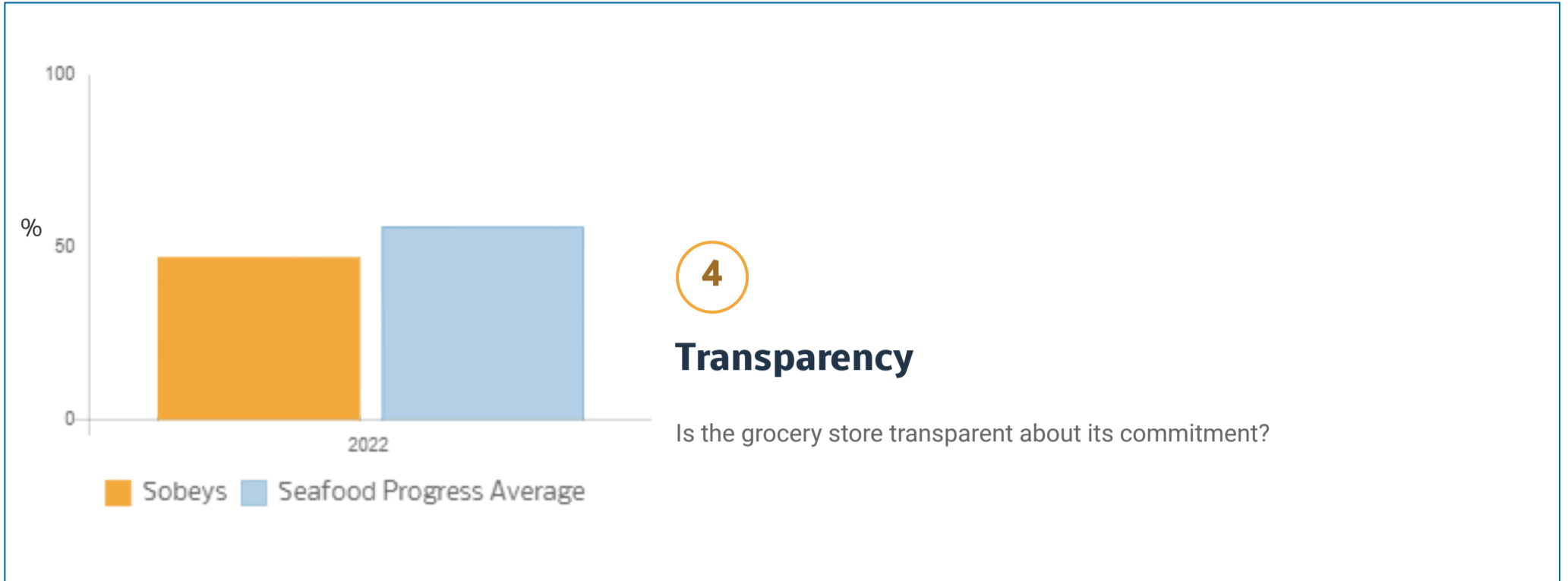
75% Rubric for retailers Feb 17 2022 Rubric for retailers Feb 17 2022 .XLSX 100% 10 B92 All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers all of the retailer's social responsibility commitment. Screen reader support enabled. All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers all of the retailer's social responsibility commitment. Turn on screen reader support

50% All suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers some of the grocery store's social responsibility commitment.

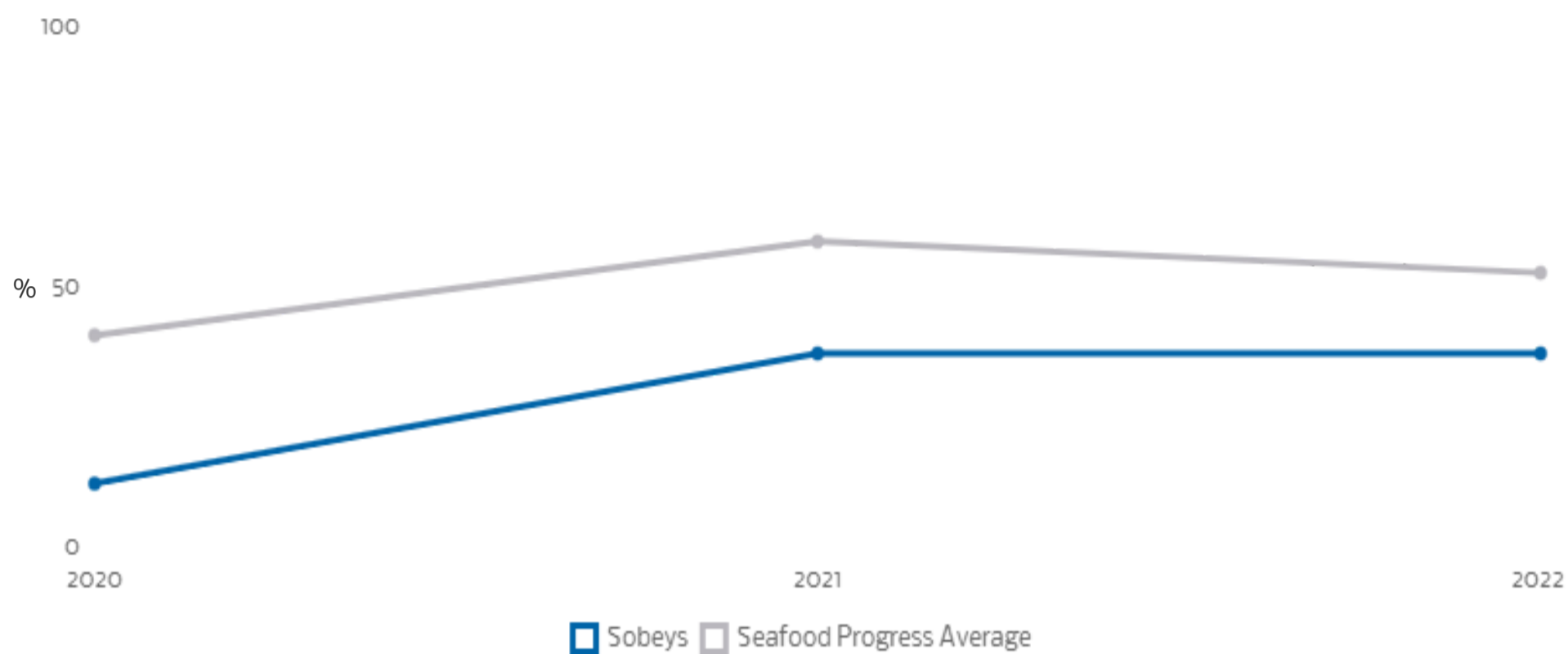
25% Some suppliers are required to sign a code of conduct that covers some of the grocery store's social responsibility commitment.

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

# STEP 4: TRANSPARENCY



## 4.1 Grocery store labels products with the information that allows consumers to make informed decisions.



Sobeys labels some products with geographic origin, scientific name and whether it is wild or farmed, but does not label any products with gear type or farming method (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

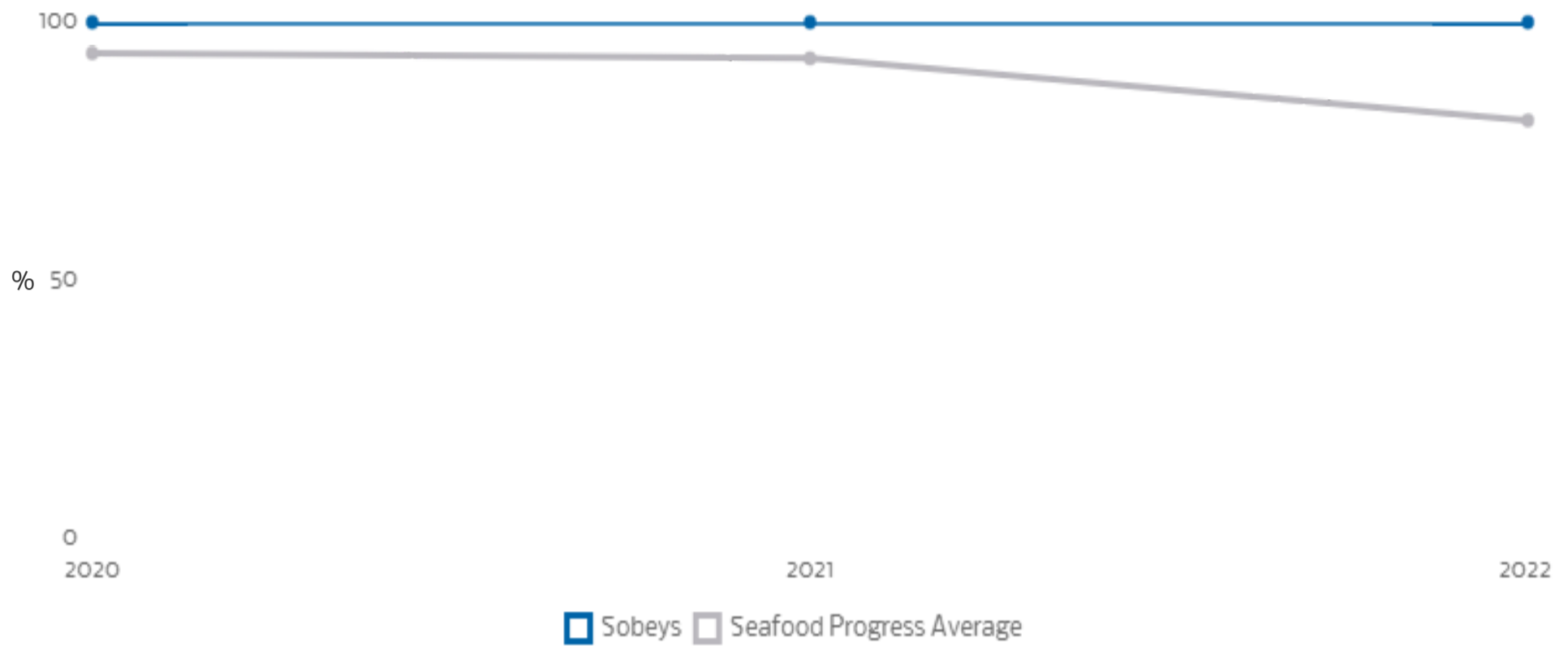
### Scoring

100% Grocery store labels all products with the information.

50% Grocery store labels some products with the information.

0% Grocery store does not label products with the information (or no information available).

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



Sobeys labels its products with Ocean Wise, MSC, ASC and BAP ecolabels as applicable (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

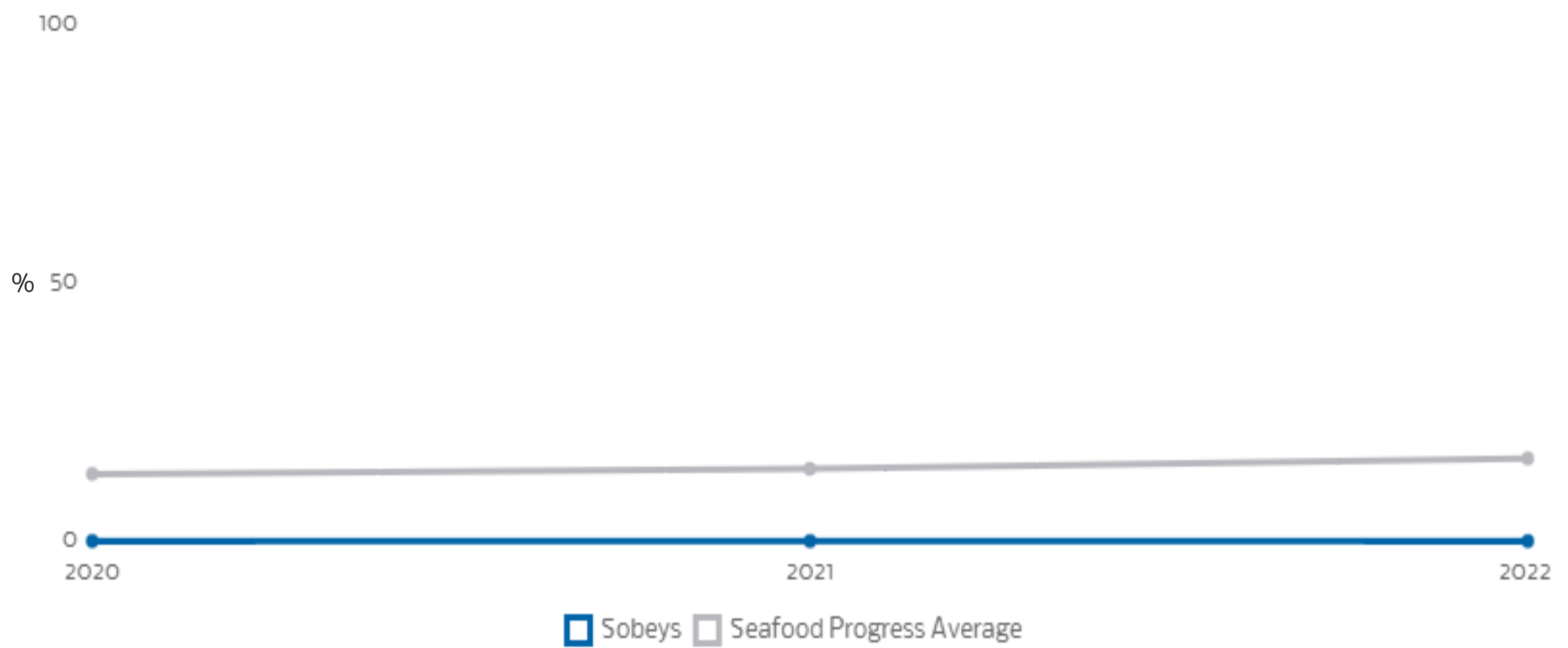
### Scoring

100% Grocery store labels all products with an ecolabel as appropriate.

50% Grocery store labels some products with an ecolabel as appropriate.

0% Grocery store does not label products with an ecolabel as appropriate (or no information available).

### 4.3 Scientific name, geographic origin and harvest method of the brand's products is publicly available.

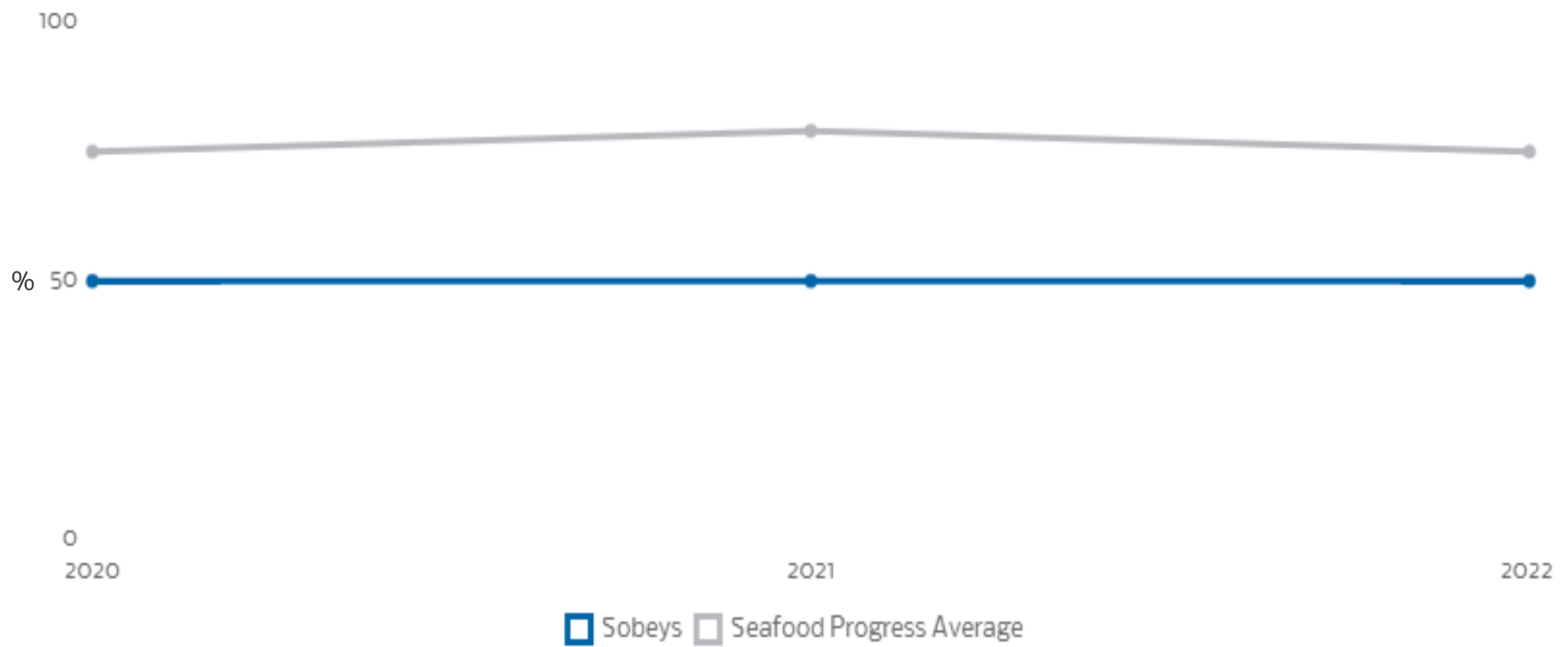


Sobeys is not currently disclosing this information, but are planning to do so once its new data collection program has been fully implemented (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

#### Scoring

- 100% All seafood products with region and gear type has been made available.
- 50% Some seafood products with region and gear type has been made available.
- 0% No list of products procured with region and gear type has been made available.

#### 4.4 Grocery store publicly reports how much of its seafood meets its sustainability criteria by volume or value of sales.



Sobeys reported on the percentage of private label fresh and frozen seafood that was in line with its commitment in 2020. In 2021, Sobeys reported again on the private label fresh and frozen seafood that was in line with its commitment, but excluded shelf stable products from this metric. Sobeys intends to report on the percentage of all products covered by its commitment in 2022 (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 20/04/2022).

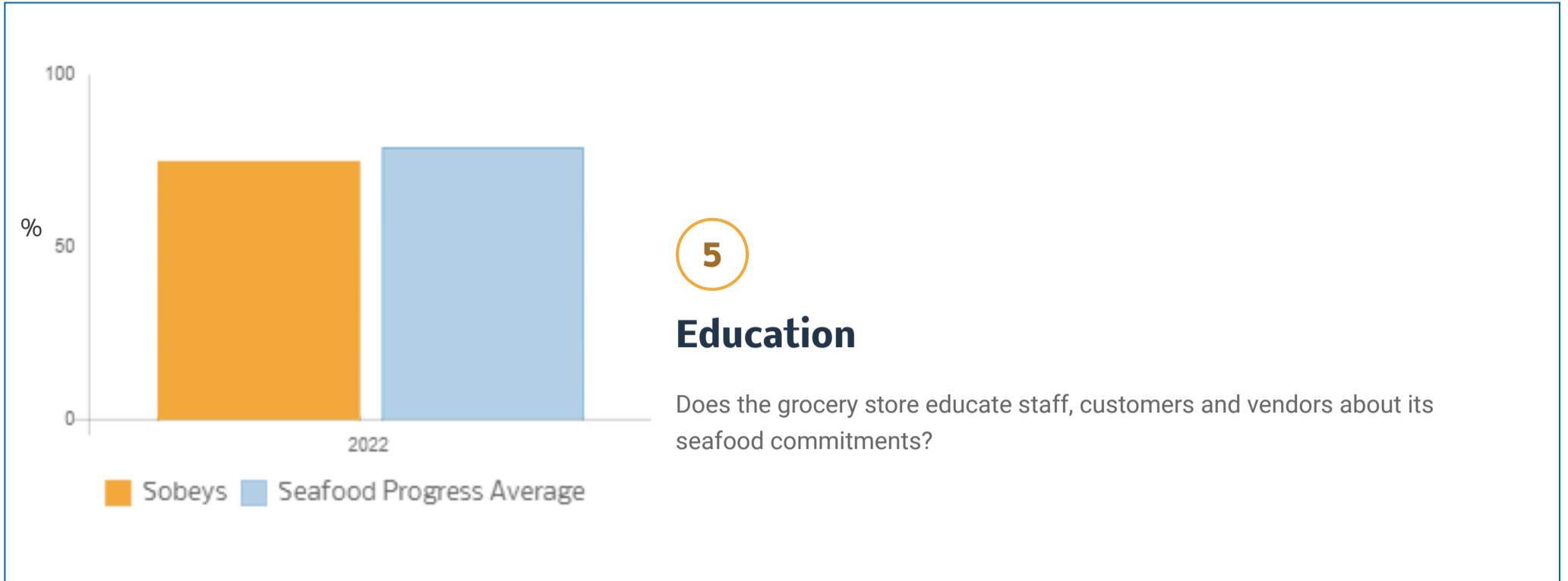
##### Scoring

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

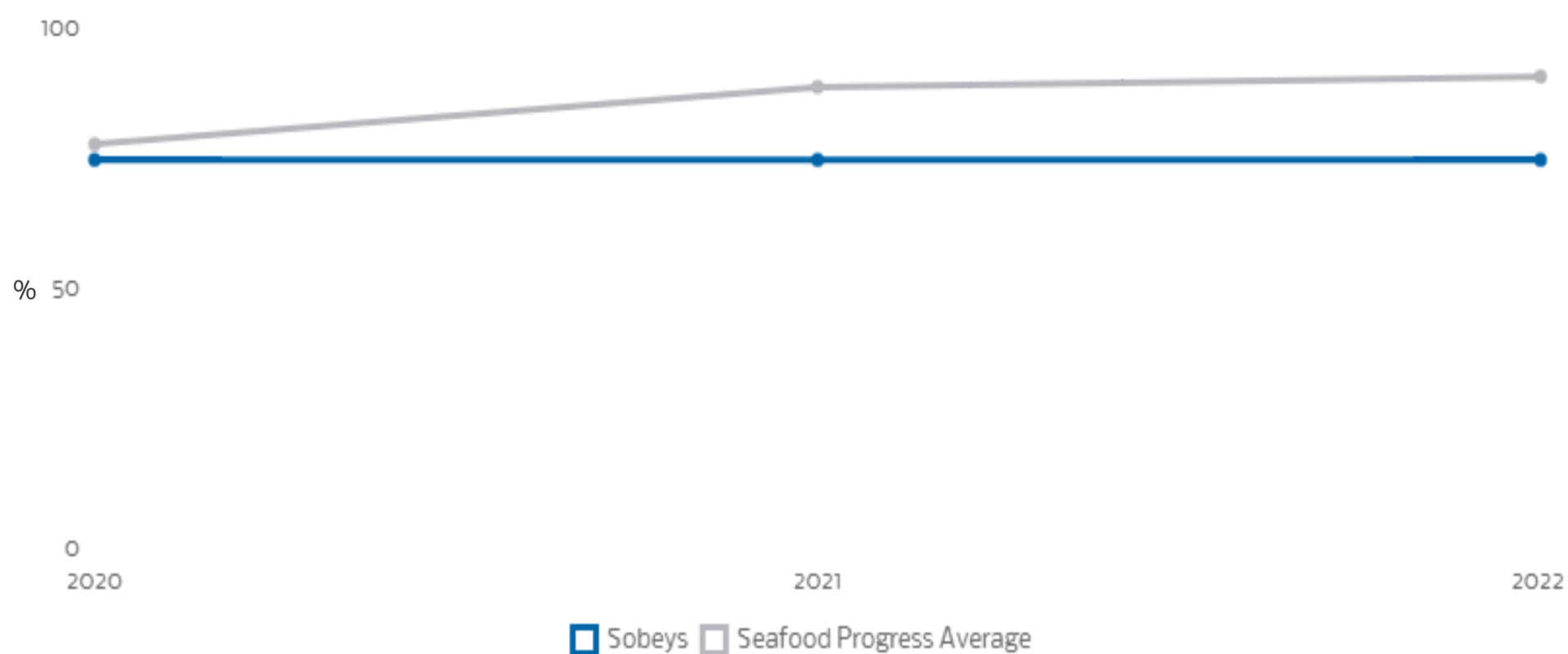
50% Rubric for retailers Feb 17 2022 Rubric for retailers Feb 17 2022 .XLSX 100% 10 B123 Retailer has at one point reported publicly how much of its seafood sold meets its commitment. Screen reader support enabled. Retailer has at one point reported publicly how much of its seafood sold meets its commitment. Turn on screen reader support

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

# STEP 5: EDUCATION



## 5.1 Training programs are conducted for seafood staff.



Sobeys requires all seafood staff to complete an online training program as part of their onboarding training. Sobeys also educates employees on the qualifications of Ocean Wise products and species-specific information around special annual events such as World Oceans Day and the Ocean Wise Festival (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

### Scoring

100% Training programs regularly conducted for all seafood staff.

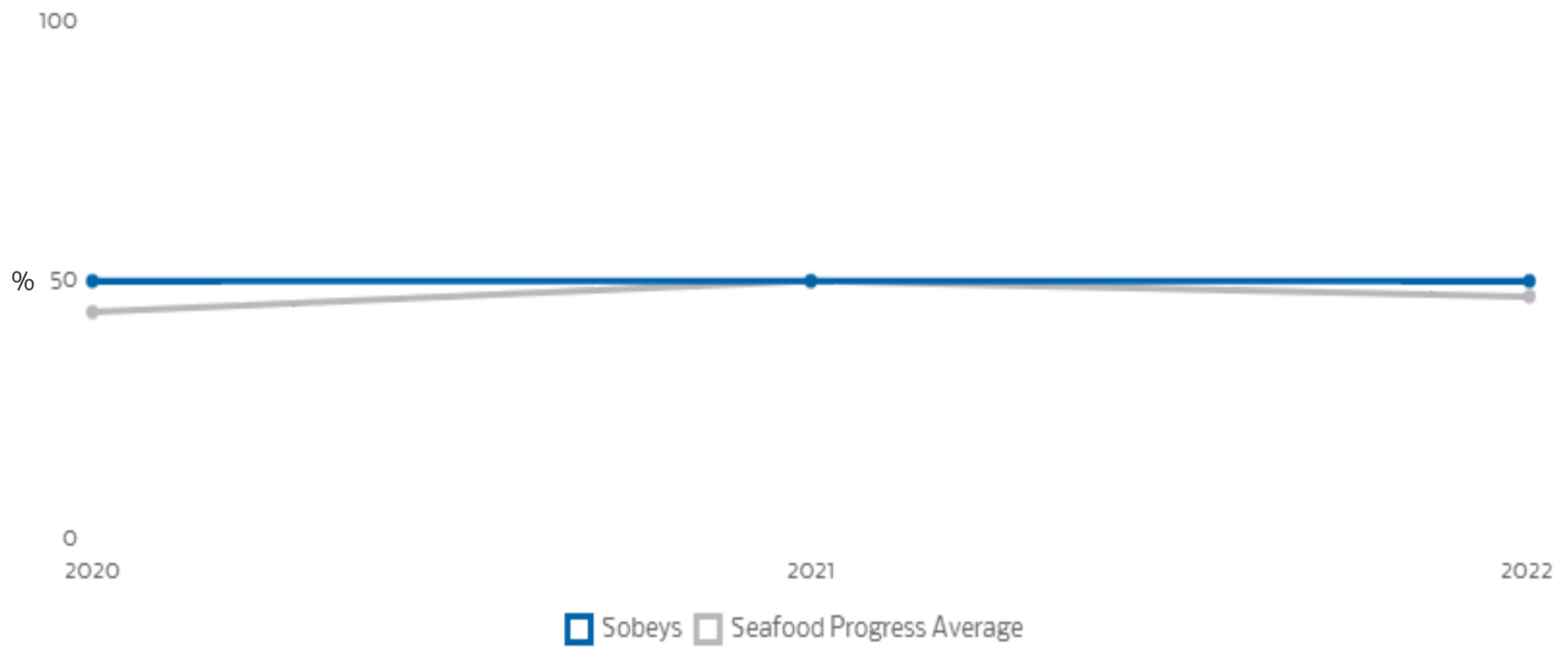
75% Training programs conducted for all seafood staff, but only once.

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 grocery store's commitments to sustainable and socially responsible seafood in store.



Some of Sobeys store banners in Western Canada and Quebec include information on its partnership with Ocean Wise (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

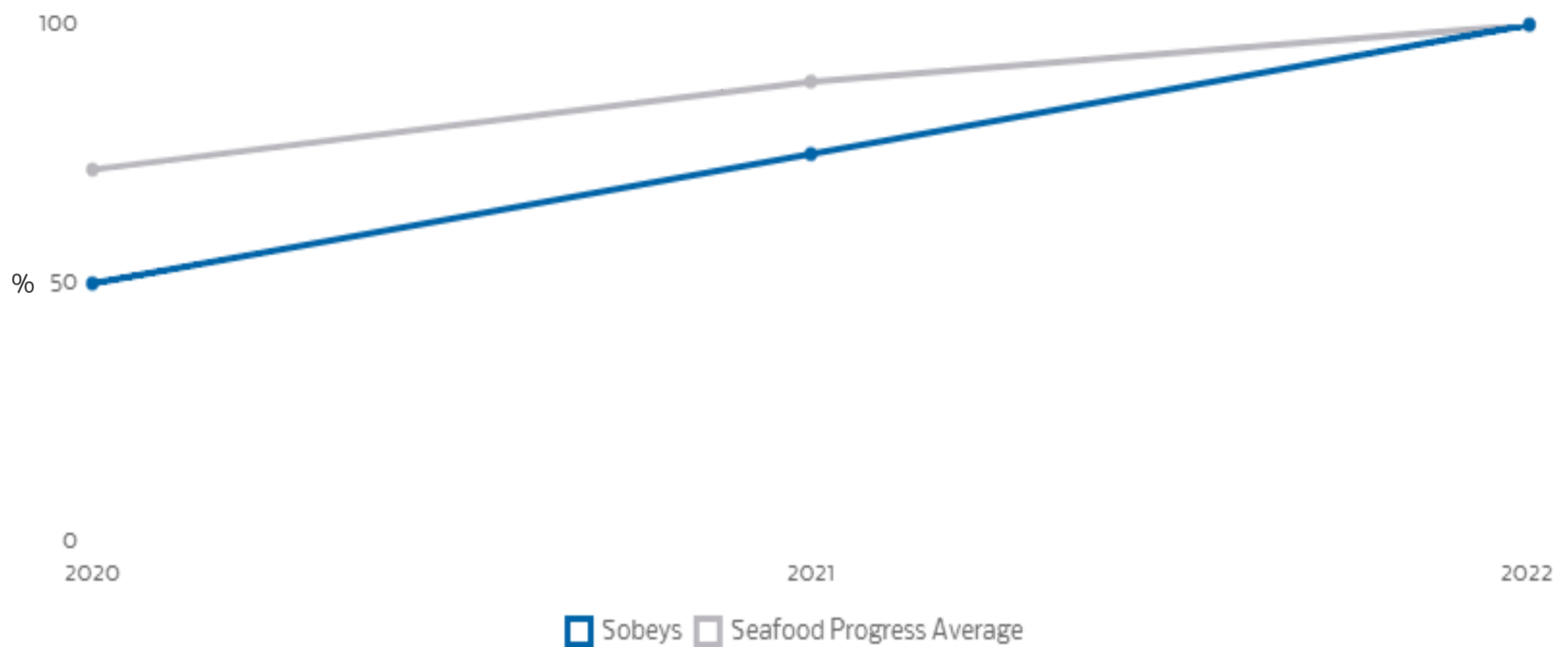
### Scoring

100% There is a comprehensive description of the grocery store's commitments to sustainable and socially responsible seafood in store.

50% There is some description of the grocery store's commitment to sustainable seafood and/or socially responsible seafood in store.

0% There is no description of the grocery store's commitments to sustainable and socially responsible seafood in store.

### 5.3 The grocery store has taken actions to ensure its suppliers or vendors are aware of its sustainable seafood commitment or policy.



Sobeys sends its suppliers and vendors a copy of its sustainable seafood policy after every revision. Sobeys also engages with its suppliers occasionally and will do so more regularly and provide direct support to suppliers over the next year as it begins using the Seafood Metrics platform to collect verified data from all its suppliers. This will include co-hosting webinars with the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) for suppliers and conducting meetings to engage suppliers on Sobeys sustainability commitment and to help assist them in using the Seafood Metrics platform (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

#### Scoring

100% The grocery store 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.

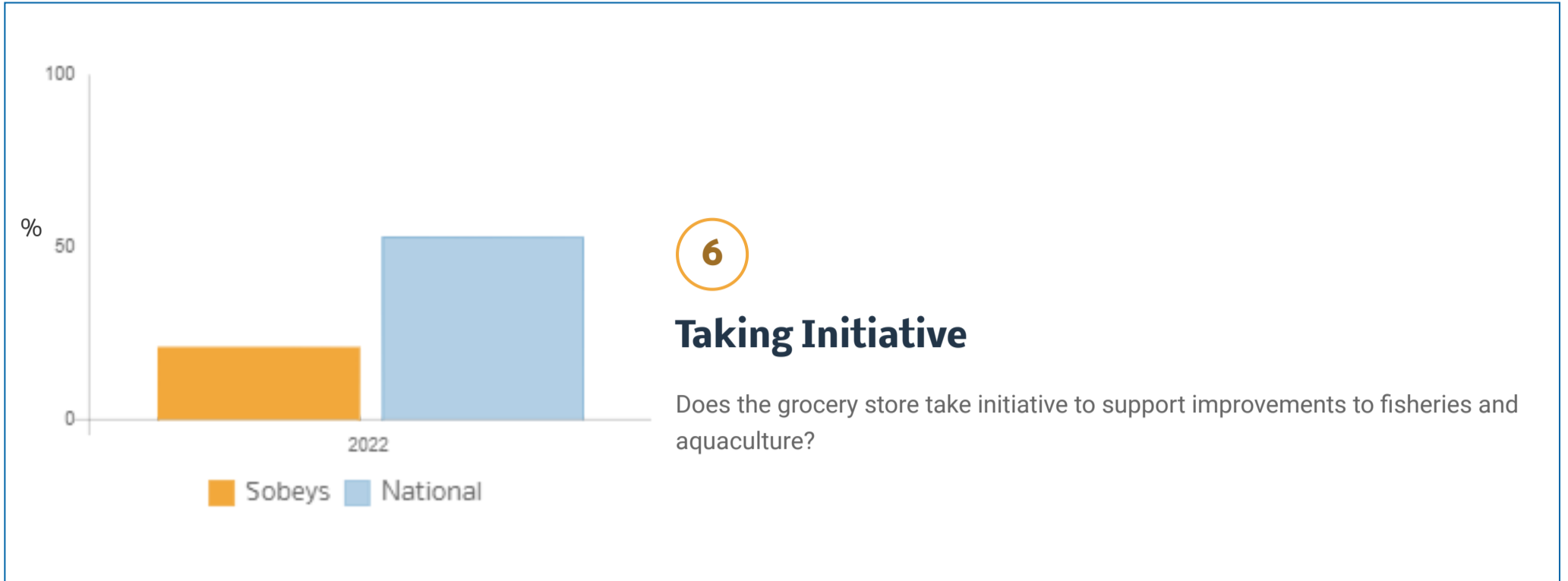
75% The grocery store shares its sustainable seafood commitment and any updates made to its commitment and regularly engages with its suppliers to help ensure the products they supply meet the grocery store's expectations.

50% The grocery store 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 the grocery store's expectations.

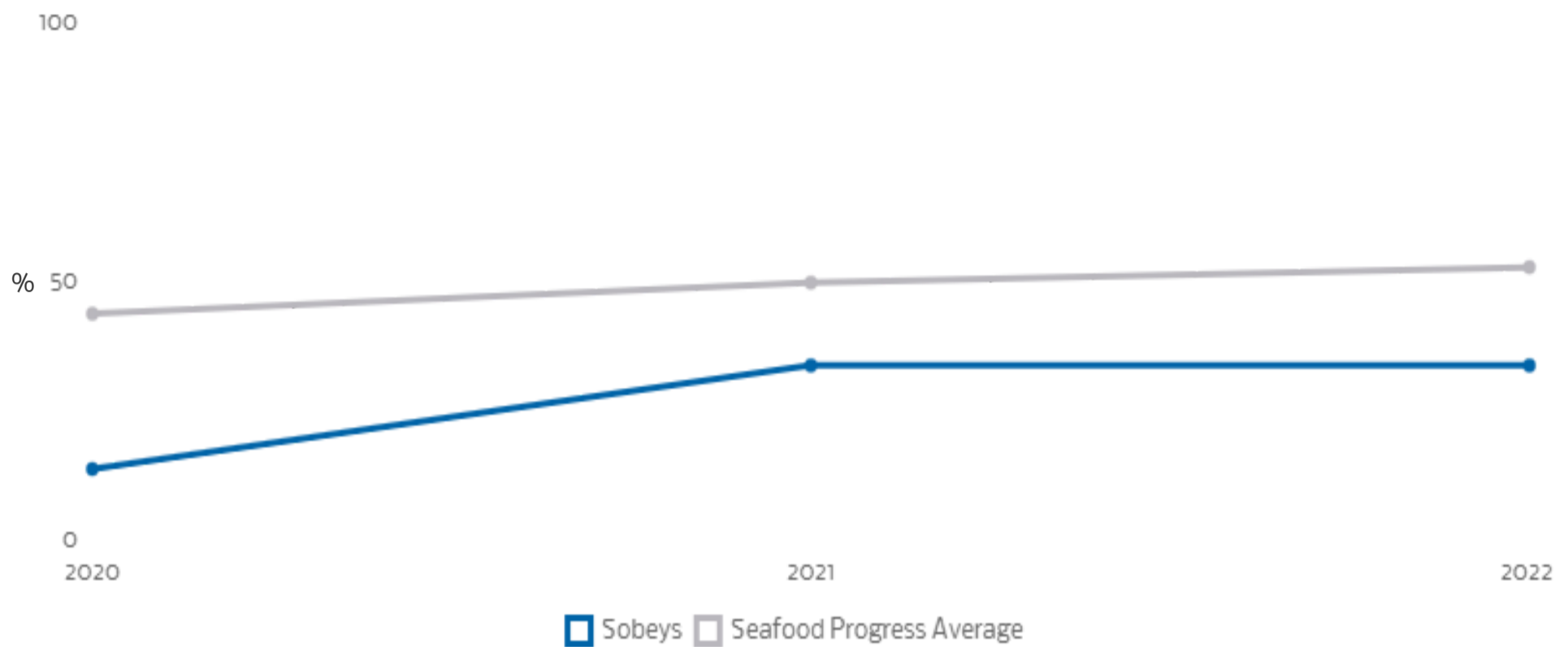
25% The grocery store sends its suppliers or vendors a copy of its sustainable seafood commitment.

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

# STEP 6: TAKING INITIATIVE



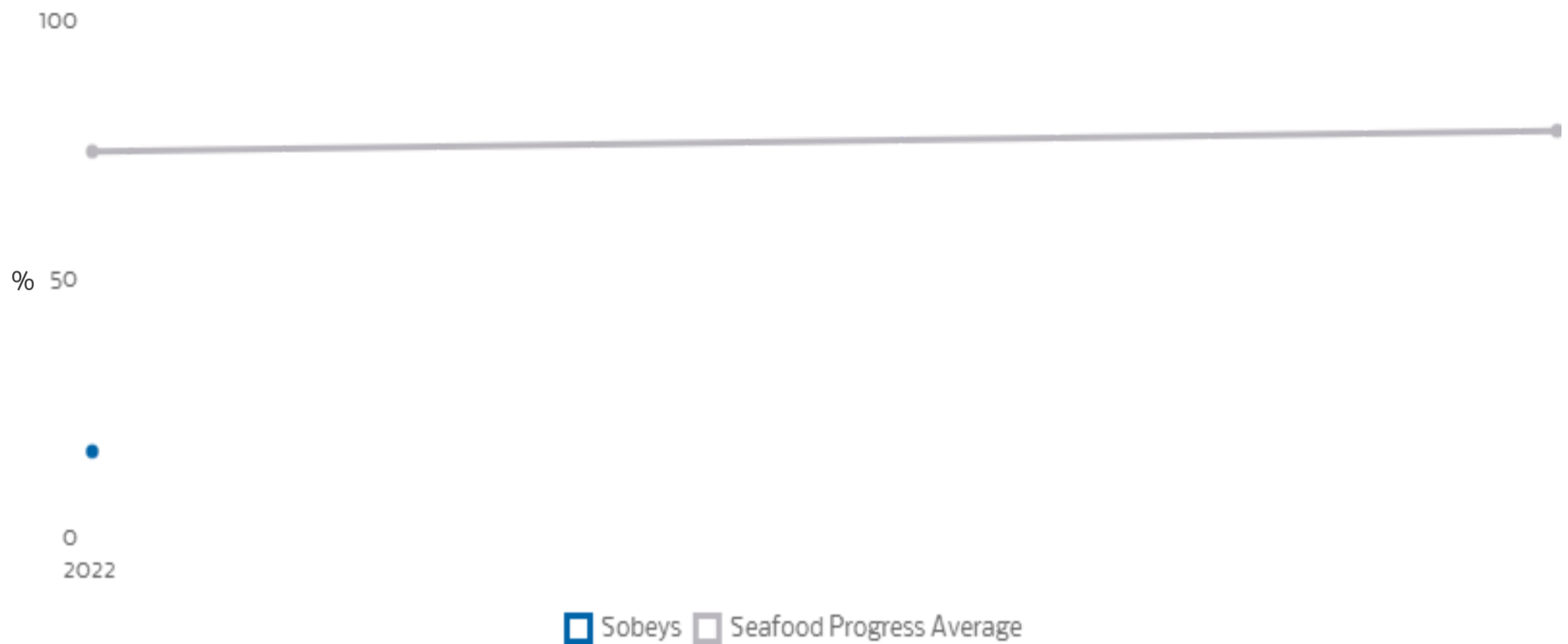
## 6.1 Farmed Atlantic salmon (either Canadian produced or imported)



Sobeys' private label farmed salmon products are sourced from Atlantic Canada and are Best Aquaculture Product (BAP) 4 star certified. Sobeys also offers alternative product options, including salmon farmed in closed containment facilities, organic and antibiotic-free salmon, and similar species such as farmed Arctic char or trout. Sobeys preferentially sources Ocean Wise for all commodities where possible, and is committed to not selling any genetically modified or engineered farmed salmon products (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

- ✘ Only sells farmed salmon products that meet the highest bars for sustainability, i.e. are produced in a closed containment facility, certified by 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 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 ASC certified, Not Recommended by Ocean Wise and/or rated Avoid by Seafood Watch (17 pts).
- ✔ Preferentially procures farmed salmon from closed containment producers and sources that are ASC certified, 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).

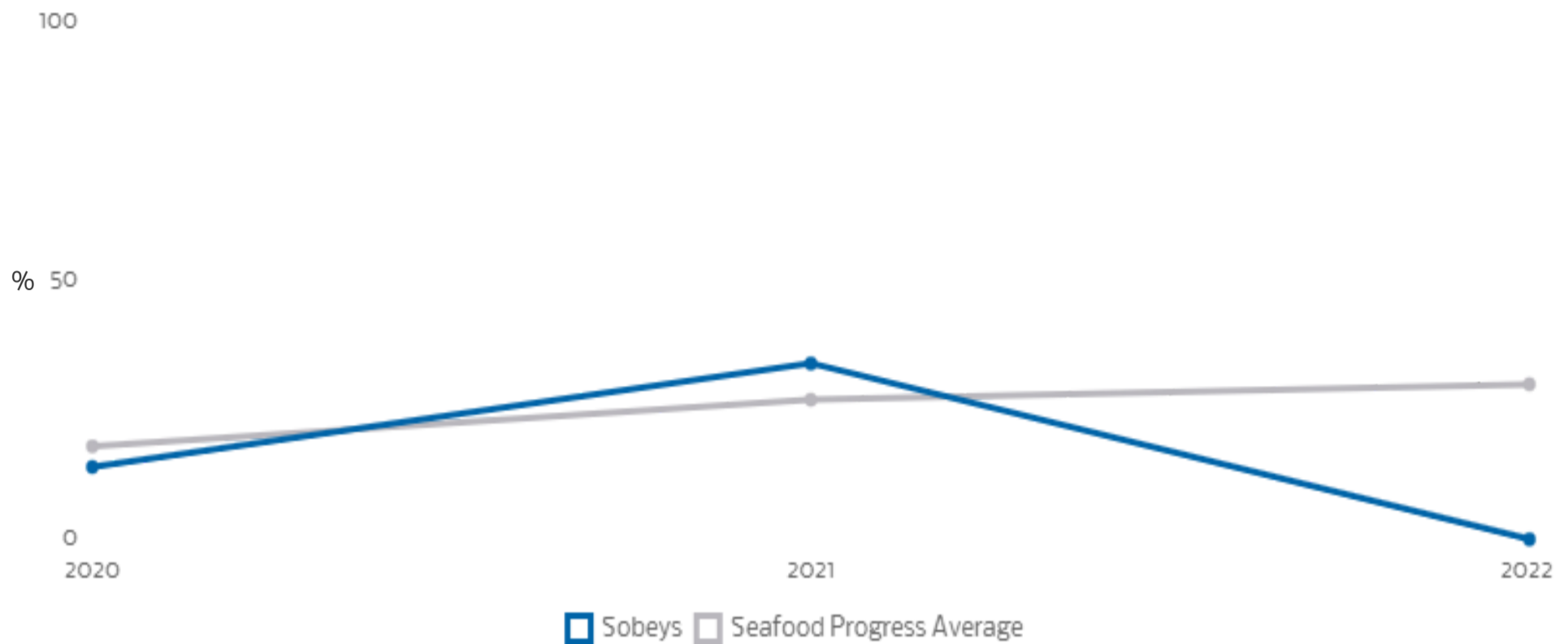
## 6.2 Farmed shrimps and prawns, Imported - multiple spp.



Sobeys' preferentially sources BAP 2 star certified farmed shrimp and prawns (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

- ✘ 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 products with high levels of social responsibility and/or traceability (17 pts).

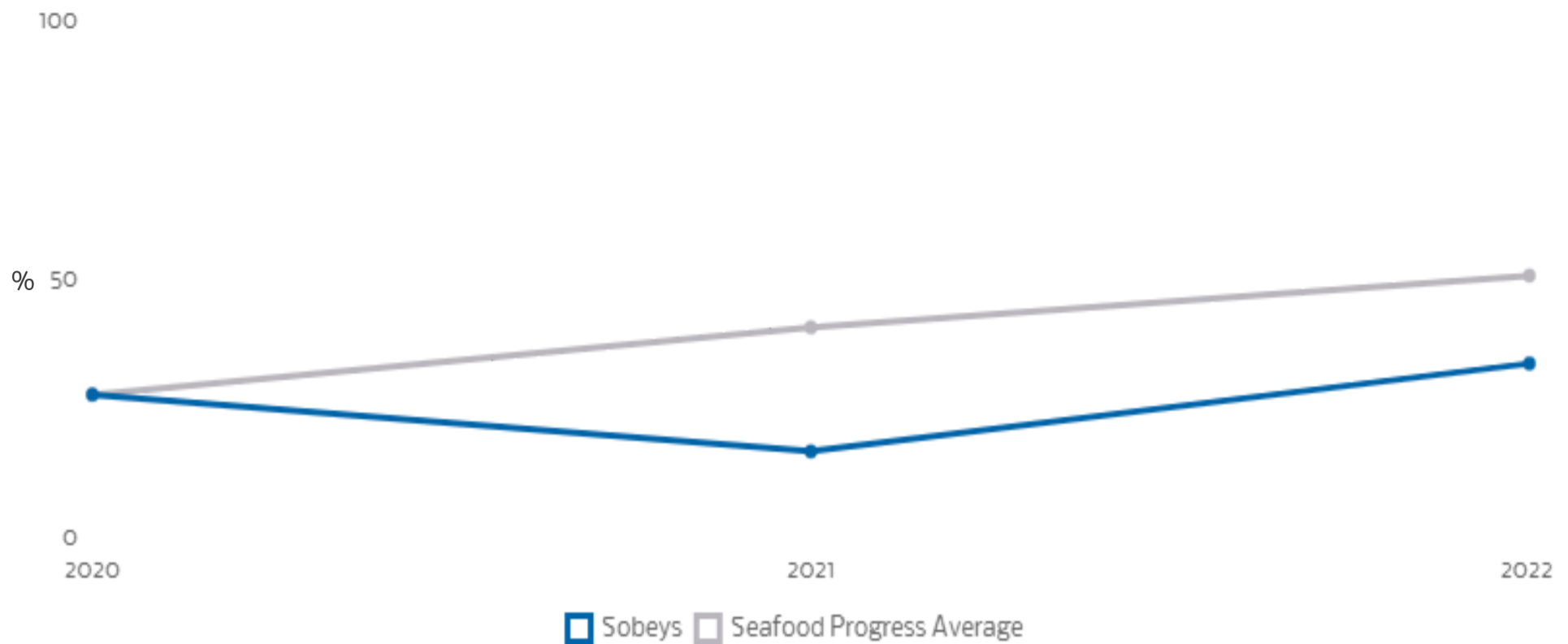
### 6.3 Skipjack tuna (bonito) - Katsuwonus pelamis.



Sobeys has not taken any actions to support improvements to skipjack tuna in the past year (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

- ✘ 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 products with high levels of social responsibility and/or traceability (17 pts).

## 6.4 Other seafood products.



In February 2022, Sobeys signed on to a letter coordinated by SeaChoice and Ocean Canada to the CFIA in support of a robust and interoperable boat-to-plate traceability system in Canada. Sobeys also supports improvements to seafood commodities by preferentially sourcing Ocean Wise Recommended products and sourcing from fisheries and farms that are certified by the MSC and ASC. Whenever possible, Sobeys preferentially purchases locally produced seafood (personal communication, R. Stolberg, 31/03/2022).

- ✘ 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 (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 this product 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 products with high levels of social responsibility and/or traceability (17 pts).

*SeaChoice is a sustainable seafood partnership of the following three conservation groups:*



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