# **VEGA SEA**SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2022-23

# VEGA SEA SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

As one of Europe's largest salmon processing companies, Vega Sea plays a central role in bringing seafood to the global markets. As millions of consumers enjoy Vega's products, we wish to help set the direction of the salmon processing industry. This implies that we must take social and environmental responsibility to fulfill our ambition.

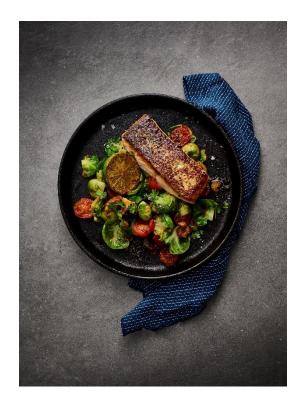
Vega Sea's point of view is that our social and environmental ambitions should be measured by our actions.

To emphasize our commitment to a sustainable future, we joined the UN Global Compact initiative back in 2014. As part of our commitment, Vega Sea has implemented the UN Global Compact Principles for Human Rights, Labor Rights & Working Conditions, Anti-corruption & Environment as part of our daily operation.

In addition, as a member of the UN Global Compact, Vega Sea is committed to fulfilling the Communication on Progress (CoP) submission requirement by communicating our progress and ESG activities on a yearly basis through our sustainability report.

In prior years we have introduced many new initiatives within the areas covered by our sustainability report. Overall, we are satisfied with the results, but we are also aware that further improvements can be made to continuously preserve our resources and run a sustainable business.

This is our 2022-23 sustainability report\* where both our successes and challenges will be covered, and we hope you will enjoy learning about our progress and future ambitions. The report constitutes Vega Sea A/S' statutory reporting on corporate responsibility cf. \$99a and \$99d in the Danish Financial Statements Act.



### **ABOUT VEGA SEA**

Vega Sea was established in 2010 as a merger between two Danish companies. Vega Sea's main activity is processing fresh and smoked salmon products. The company has grown from a small Danish producer to an international player with an annual turnover of €170 million from sales to more than 30 different countries in Europe, North America. Oceania and Asia.

Vega Sea employs 472 people across our Head Quarters in Kolding, Denmark, Sales Offices in Spoleto, Italy & Bangkok, Thailand, and our Production Facility in Handewitt, Germany.

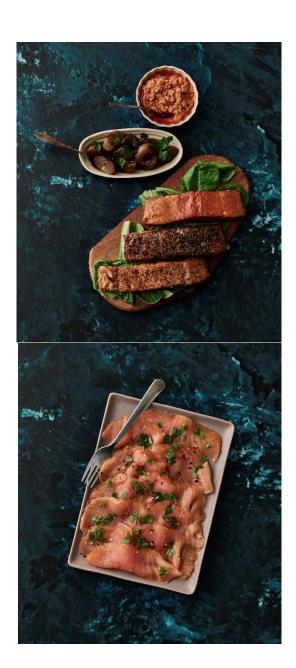
Our ESG efforts are centered around five core values integrated as part of our daily operations:

1. We support and respect the protection of the international bill of human rights.

- 2. We strive to minimize our environmental & climate impact and reduce our global footprint.
- 3. We do not accept corruption in any form.
- 4. We respect labor rights and support healthy working conditions.
- 5. We strive to provide the highest grade of quality and food safety for all our products.

Our efforts and progress within each area are led by internal teams of appointed employees – with each their specialization – from various parts of our organization who report and follow up with our executive management.

The executive management has the overall responsibility for leading and anchoring Vega Sea's sustainability and ESG efforts in the organization whilst our organizational departments are responsible for incorporating them into our daily operations.



#### **ENVIRONMENT**

Climate change, biodiversity loss along with many other challenges are posing a threat to our environment and all societies across the globe. Vega Sea wants to be part of solving these challenges while delivering quality products with the highest level of food safety and respect to our planet.

At Vega Sea, we use three main types of input to produce our salmon products which each presents a risk to the climate and environment:

- Raw material
- Packaging material
- Utilities

To ensure that Vega Sea's effect on the environment is reduced as much as possible, we strive to be innovative and efficient in our usage of resources by utilizing as much of the raw material as possible to reduce waste while limiting our use of packaging materials and utilities by adopting new technologies and methods.

#### Policies we work with

Vega ESG policy

# **Approach & Progress**

Raw material: To optimize the use of resources, it is a continuous focus in Vega Sea to utilize as much as possible of the raw material we process. In 2022 and 2023, we have continued our close monitoring of raw material utilization at our processing site in Handewitt. This has included testing and adopting new technologies and methods and the development of new, innovative products with the goal of a continued reduction in raw material waste. In 2022 and 2023, the utilization of our raw material for human consumption reached levels of 87% and 86%\*. Remaining raw material not used for human consumption is sold for pet food production. As part of our efforts, we are further participating in a LIFE CONQUER project collaborating with Biomega on seeking for

alternative usage of our rest raw materials for human consumption.

Packaging material: Recognizing the impact of packaging waste on our societies and our environment, we have placed new solutions for packaging material at the center of our innovation processes in recent years. The results of our tests and novel solutions include a reduction in cardboard and plastic as well as a reduction in the overall amount of packaging material per product. During 2022 and 2023, we have managed to offer solutions for smoked products reducing the amount of plastic in the packaging for our cold smoked products with 70%\*\*. As a testament to our efforts. Vega Sea won the Retail Packaging Award for our innovative and sustainable packaging at the Seafood Excellence Global Exhibition 2023.

<sup>\*</sup>Percentage levels for utilization of raw material for human consumption are based on data (amount of raw material produced for human consumption divided by the total amount of produced raw material) extracted from Vega's internal ERP-system. Calculations show the percentage levels for the full calendar years 2022 and 2023. \*\*Reduction in plastic is calculated using the 100-kilogram industry standard packaging for cold smoked salmon products (18,5 cm x 24 cm) as baseline.

*Utilities:* In the past years, Vega Sea has invested in various projects within resource handling and optimization.

In 2020, we invested in our own wastewater treatment plant to ensure an increase in the cleanliness of the wastewater we discharge to the local treatment plant, and to ensure that our production facility is optimized for the future.

A focus area during 2022 and 2023 has been the optimization of the way we prepare our goods for transportation. Our continued goal is to increase the kilo of products shipped by decreasing our overall amount of packaging material and utilizing the space in our trucks/containers to reduce our carbon footprint per kilo gram.

Lastly, we have continued implementing several energy management actions to comply with our ISO 50001 certification and continue our pursuit of optimizing our overall energy profile and

efficiency.

#### **Going forward**

Raw material utilization and the innovation of new products continue to be a focus point in the years to come. This includes our continued efforts to monitor market trends and consumer demand as well as partnering with customers, experts and advisors within and outside the salmon processing industry to increase our insights in new product development and optimize the usage of resources.

Additionally, we will continue testing and developing new solutions within the category of sustainable packaging material. Our continued efforts so far have already meant a further decrease in plastic for our packaging solutions for hot smoked products as well

Lastly, we continue our efforts with reducing our footprint through energy, water and waste analyses and handling. This includes, among other projects, optimization initiatives within ESG data management, and recycling- and waste management. Further projects include our planned ISO 50001 recertification, and investments in new systems and machines for lowering the usage of water and energy at our production facility in Handewitt.



#### SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Our employees at Vega Sea are our greatest asset as their creativity, craftsmanship and commitment drive our development and help us in realizing our ambition of bringing the highest grade of quality food to end consumers around the world.

Thus, our social environment including our health and safety is one of our focus areas and a vital part of our DNA and values. At Vega Sea, people always come first. With our initiatives, we strive to maintain and improve the wellbeing of our employees through actions targeted at both mental and physical health and safety.

Physically, working in food processing at a production facility is a job associated with the risk of work accidents occurring. To mitigate the risk of accidents happening, Vega Sea works with sound and effective health and safety procedures which comply with industry and national standards. Further, we make sure that our employees receive training

that lives up to the mandatory requirements and is relevant to our specific industry. Additionally, we continuously strive to secure a working environment were mental health and safety is high on the agenda. We want our people to thrive and to help fight and minimize the risk of mental fatigueand illness, which is a growing concern across nations worldwide.

#### Policies we work with

Vega Company Policy Vega ESG Policy Vega Employee Handbook Vega Mobile Workplace Policy Vega Whistleblower Platform Policy Vega Sickness Policy

#### **Approach & Progress**

Health & Safety organization: To ensure we take correct measures when it comes to the health and safety of our employees, Vega works with appointed Health & Safety organizations (H&S organizations). The function of our H&S organizations is to oversee and evaluate Vega Sea's overall health & safety framework and progress. In Germany, our H&S organization is comprised of six members from various departments internally at Vega and two external members from our German health & safety consultancy provider. In Denmark, our H&S organization is comprised of two members from each their department internally at Vega Sea. The H&S organizations review the overall health & safety status in Vega Sea quarterly in scheduled H&S meetings.

Further, Vega Sea engages in regular meetings with internal and external representatives, consultants and authorities to make sure we take correct actions that secure compliance with national health & safety regulation and comply with industry standards. Lastly, we work with appointed H&S representatives at each of our sites

to oversee health and safety and the general working environment.

Each day, health & safety is on the agenda in our production, as well as cases of nearby accidents, for us to learn and correct our approach going forward.

We have a good cooperation with the authorities in our local area with whom we perform regular evacuation drills. To make sure we participate in securing high safety standards for the employees at our factory, and the nearby community, Vega Sea takes part in funding new equipment to the local fire department.

Procedures, training and collaboration: When onboarding new employees at Vega Sea, part of the onboarding includes training in H&S, hygiene, food defense and our company culture. Each year, all our employees go through a brush-up course in the training to ensure continued focus and abilities within each area.



At our production plant in Handewitt, where the risk of accidents occurring is highest, many of our employees are trained as first aiders every two years and undergo yearly training in using our onsite defibrillators.

In addition to our extensive training within health & safety, Vega Sea works to support the general development of skills and capabilities for our employees. We want to be a sustainable company built on strong human capital and welcome training and education within various areas enabling our employees to strengthen their skill set and realize their full potential. As part of this, we have intensified the training of our operational leaders during 2023.

Accident reporting & mitigation: Our accidents and nearby accidents are recorded and reported as part of a regular and structured procedure.

Reported accidents and actions for mitigation are reviewed and discussed in the concerned department every time a case is reported. Further, our accident reporting is reviewed and discussed on a continuous basis by our H&S organizations and Board of Directors. In 2023, 17 accidents were reported, and in 2022, 23 accidents were reported\*.

Employee wellbeing: The wellbeing of our employees is a top priority at Vega Sea.

End of 2023, we carried out a survey on mental health asking questions in all areas of psychological wellbeing. We want to make sure we capture the insights and feedback from our employee base to plan initiatives and act where it matters. Additionally, ongoing dialogues between HR and groups of employee representatives take place to ensure we continuously debate the topic of 'how to become an even better place to work.'

On the trailing edge of a long period of Covid-19 shutdowns, and limitations to social gatherings, 2023 was the first year we were able to resume some of the good initiatives of gathering our employees across countries for social events. With each initiative it is clear, that by bringing people together, and promoting good social relations, we make our everyday work life better and easier.

Onboarding: For new employees coming to Vega Sea, we take several actions to get them onboarded in the best way possible. This includes, among others, offering support to integrate foreign employees moving to Germany in the local area by providing housing, language training, transport to and from work, translation and personal assistance to help with the handling of administrative affairs. For each job function, Vega Sea works with specific and individual onboarding programs and mentors to help our

employees settle into their new role in the best way possible.

#### **Going forward**

Going forward we continue to explore and develop what it takes to be a sustainable, safe and motivating place to work. In 2024, we are identifying areas within which we can improve, based on our latest mental health survey. By the end of 2024, we are planning to publish a new mental health survey making it possible to evaluate our progress and continue our efforts.

<sup>\*</sup>Reporting of accidents for the calendar years 2022 and 2023 are obtained from Vega Sea's accident log. The accident reporting follows a structured process, where all accidents are recorded in an internal log, which is reviewed and evaluated for corrective actions on an ongoing basis by Vega Sea's H&S organizations.

#### **DIVERSITY**

At Vega Sea, we believe that a diverse workforce creates value. We work to support diversity by creating structures and processes, which do not limit our employees based on gender, nationality, sexuality or religious beliefs, as we believe diversity and equal opportunity to be essential principles in our work to promote human rights. It is our goal to create an environment of parity among employees rewarding inclusion and minimizing the risk of discrimination.

#### Policies we work with

Vega ESG Policy

#### **Approach & Progress**

Training & internal communication: As an integrated part of our internal training and communication, we work to promote equity, diversity and inclusion (*EDI*). EDI is an integrated part of our culture and included as a fundamental topic in





our manager training program during 2023.

#### **Going forward**

To further support diversity and equality, Vega Sea will continue the following initiatives:

- Onsite English language education for employees in key positions to strengthen communication.
- Create a culture that supports teamwork, fairness and empowers the individual to reach their full potential.
- Continuously strengthen our outlook to ensure diversity in recruitment and to educate our management with the right tools to lead a diverse workforce.

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS**

At Vega Sea, we recognize that businesses play a vital role in the development of social progress in societies around the globe. As part of this, we must commit our efforts to reducing the risk of violations on human and labor rights in our value chain and continue our support and commitment to the cross-national bodies and authorities that work to create and promote worthy and safe social conditions for all.

#### Policies we work with

Vega ESG Policy

## **Approach & Progress**

Human rights framework: Vega Sea is committed to respecting all human rights as defined in the International Bill of Human Rights, the United Nation's Guiding Principles on Human Rights and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational



Enterprises. These serve as the authoritative frameworks in our work to promote human and labor rights in our operations and activities.

Audits: Vega Sea continuously undergoes various audits to comply with the required standards from the authorities, our partners and our customers. The audits contain several topics of investigation of which some explore and evaluate Vega's social environment and efforts to protect and respect human and labor rights. During 2022 and 2023, we did not identify any breaches concerning human and labor rights through our established processes.

# **Going forward**

Avoiding and mitigating breaches relating to human rights is an ongoing focus with the continuation of exercising structures, policies and procedures that uphold high social and ethical standards for all employees at Vega Sea.

# ANTI-CORRUPTION & BRIBERY

Corruption and bribery are key barriers to economic and social development and a risk to companies working with global value chains. Failing to secure preventive measures in the global value chain can lead to the involuntary involvement in furthering conditions such as decreased political accountability and ultimately increased inequality and hardship for citizens worldwide. As a global company, it is crucial that we have adequate measures in place to mitigate corruption and bribery and run our business ethically and honestly. This is fundamental for our ambition of being a responsible company.

#### Policies we work with

Vega ESG Policy Vega Whistleblower Platform Policy

#### **Approach & Progress**

Our ESG policy clearly states our view on corruption and bribery:

"We maintain a high level of integrity and accountability in all our external relationships, and we do not participate in corruption or bribery. We do not offer, promise or give any kind of bribes to improperly influence public officials, judges or business associates. We will also refrain from receiving or accepting any bribes ourselves. Our agents, intermediaries and other persons acting on our behalf are subject to the same obligation to not participate in corruption or bribery."

Whistleblower platform: To ensure a safe environment and mitigate the risk of corruption cases, abuses of power, harassment or discrimination, Vega Sea has a whistleblower platform in place. The platform enables our employees to report any cases of misconduct (anonymous reporting is possible). In case an incident is

reported, we work with a structured process to perform the correct investigation into the issue at hand and take correct action. As part of our training programs, we introduce employees to the whistleblower platform and teach them how to make use of it.

In 2022 and 2023, we have not received any sanctions for failure to comply with anti-corruption and bribery laws.

## **Going forward**

We intend to continue with our anticorruption efforts and ensure that our risk assessment tools, policies and processes are updated continuously to reflect the world around us. Specifically, Vega Sea is working on a new Supply Chain Code of Conduct, which will take effect in 2024.

## **DATA ETHICS**

Vega Sea works with data ethics to make sure that we collect, share, and use data in a responsible, respectful and sustainable way. With the ongoing technological development, and the inherent risk of data privacy breaches, we do our outmost to protect the rights and security of our stakeholders and our broader society.

#### Policies we work with

Vega IT Policy

#### **Approach & Progress**

IT & data at Vega Sea: IT is an essential prerequisite for Vega Sea to carry out and implement the necessary processes to produce and sell our products. We provide IT hardware and software in various forms to our employees, and further have an IT policy in place to clearly guide our organization on how IT and data must be handled.

Our IT policy further outlines for which purposes Vega Sea collects data and how it is treated and used, which is always with the sole purpose of protecting and securing the organization from harmful behavior or misconduct. One keyword that repeats itself in all areas of how we treat data and IT safety at Vega Sea is 'respect' – to our employees, stakeholders and broader societal environment.

Additionally, to protect our organization from data breaches, Vega Sea sets high standards for the software we purchase and implement. We have a software protocol for monitoring the software regularly on an ongoing basis to make sure it is correctly updated to protect against outside attacks or other malicious activity targeting our IT systems.

Al: As of today, Vega Sea works only with the form of Al that operates under a limited set of constraints, and which is purely designed for task specific accounting purposes.

We do not use any form of AI on personal data, nor do we engage in the training of algorithms. At present, Vega Sea is in the process of performing a risk assessment with the aim of evaluating procedures and formulating policies for how to mitigate the current and future exposures from use of internal and external AI programs and tools.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Vega has selected a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) related to three UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The KPIs serve as a contributor to the development of Vega Sea's ESG profile and contribute to the efforts and goals set out by the UN in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

| 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY             | Energy consumption (in KWh, energy used per kg fish produced) – level*         | Level 2022 0,55  Actual energy consumption: 12.493.085 KWh                | Level 2023 0,69 Actual energy consumption: 11.618.959 KWh |
|---|--|---|---|
| 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY             | Water consumption (in m³, water used per kg fish produced) – level*            | Level 2022<br>0,01<br>Actual water consumption:<br>321.353 m <sup>3</sup> | Level 2023  O,O2  Actual water consumption: 287.593 m³    |
| 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION | Utilization of raw material for human consumption (in % of kg fish produced)** | <b>Level 2022</b><br>87%  | <b>Level 2023</b><br>86%                                  |
| 14 LIFE BELOW WATER                       | Production of fish with certification (in % of total fish sourced)***          | <b>Level 2022</b><br>94%  | <b>Level 2023</b><br>90%                                  |

\*Levels for energy and water consumption per kg fish produced are based on data (amount of energy and water used divided by the total amount of produced raw material) extracted from Vega Sea's internal ERP-system. Calculations show levels for the full calendar years 2022 and 2023. \*\*For calculation of percentage levels for utilization of raw material for human consumption, please see page 3. \*\*\*Percentage levels for production of fish with certification are based on data (amount of certified raw material divided by the total amount of produced raw material) extracted from Vega Sea's internal ERP-system. Please note that calculations show levels for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 (level 2022) and the full calendar year 2023 (level 2023) due to an alteration of the reporting year. Going forward, all KPIs will be reported in the period following the full calendar year.