

Benchmarking seafood standards

Challenges and opportunities for Southeast Asia

Simon Bush

Workshop on aquaculture certification in Asia: Status, challenges, opportunities
& ways forward June 26, 2013, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam



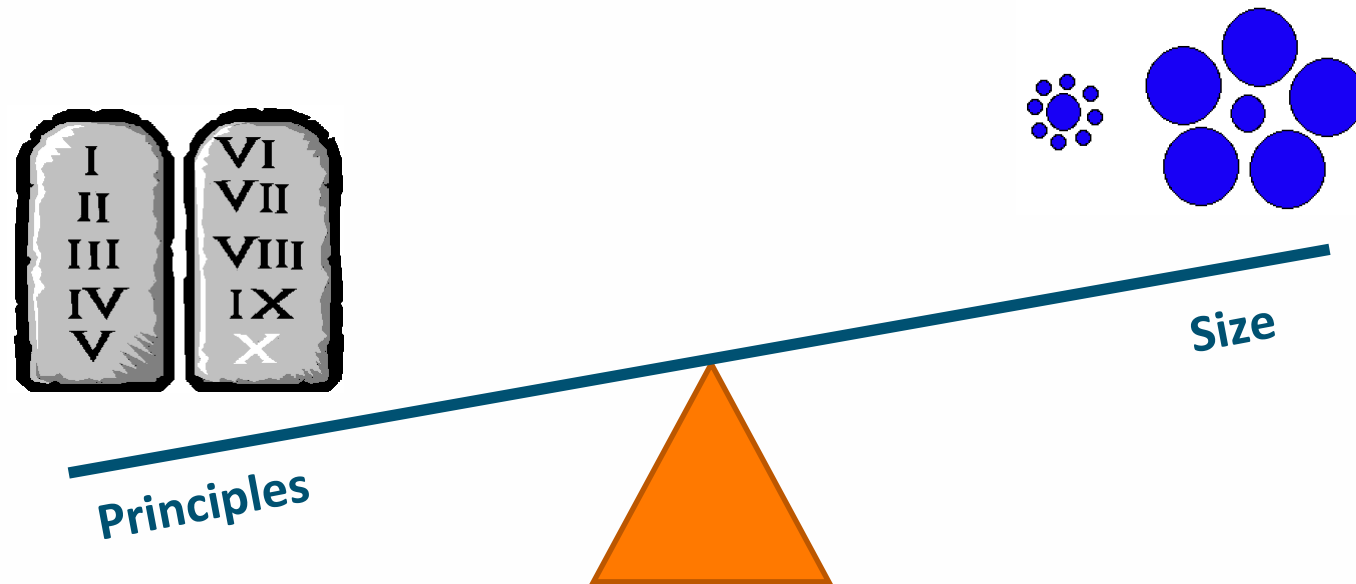
Swimming in seafood standards?



GLOBALG.A.P.

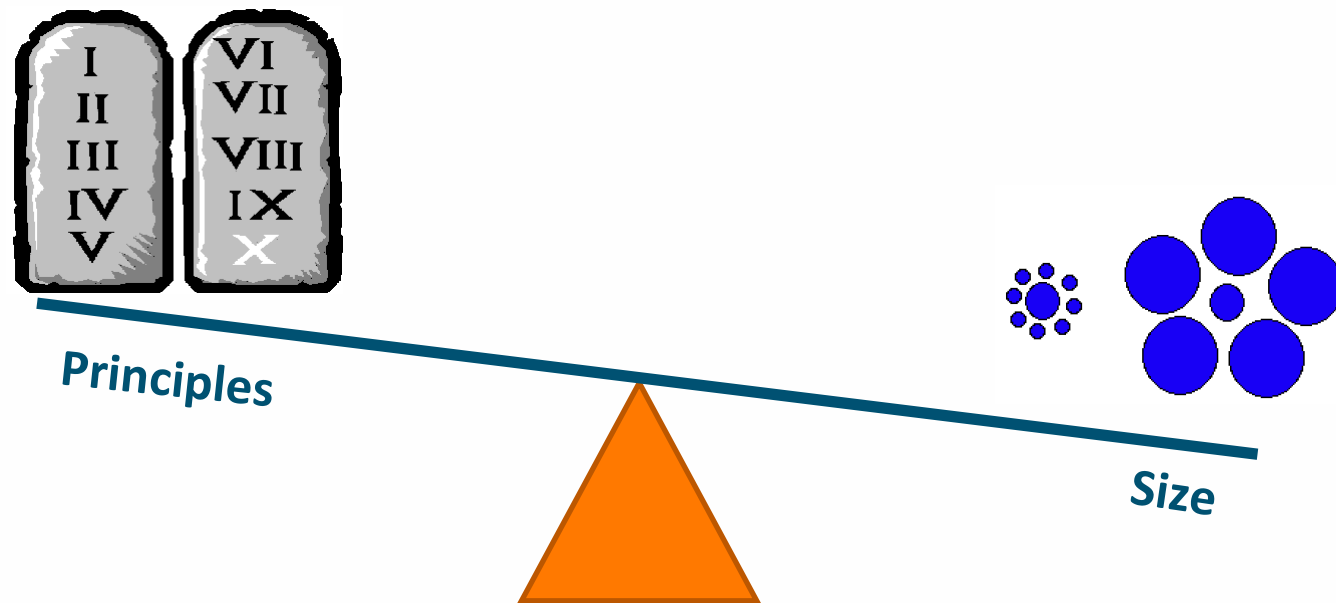


Weighing principle over size



Producers differentiated on the basis of investment in sustainability and communication to niche consumer

Weighing size over principle



Lower sustainability requirements and therefore investment by producers. Mainstream market, but threat of 'greenwashing'

Benchmarking

"the systematic process of searching for best practices, innovative ideas and highly effective operating procedures that lead to superior performance"

(Hammer and Stranton 1995)

Best performers:

Establish legitimacy and credibility that grant authority

Weaker performers:

Identifies ways to emulate what others do to improve performance

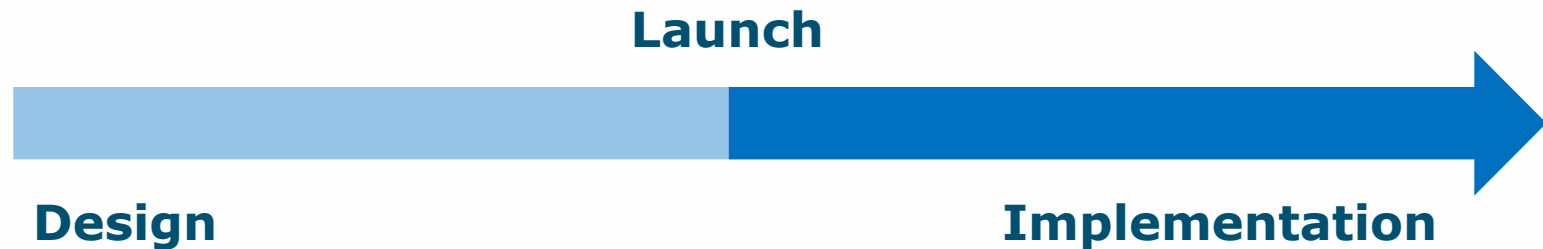
Harmonization

“The process of standardizing laws, regulations and practices to facilitate the expansion, fairness and efficiencies of competing in a globalized economy”

- *Mutual recognition* – remove trade impediments and focus on narrower and better defined standards
- *Equivalence* – technical translation of measures and standards
- *Reference standards* – set of mutually agreed baselines (floors or ceilings) for standards based on process or content

Deshpande and Nazemetz 1995

When applied?



Establishing reference standards and principles for standard design, governance and implementation and impact using reference standards – **mainly process**

Assessment of standards for comparative assessment, learning, improvement and/or selection of both **process and content**

Benchmarking - State

- FAO Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification
 - Approved by the 29th session of the COFI in Feb 2011
 - Advice on developing, organizing and implementing credible aquaculture certification schemes – **not a standard**
 - December 2012 - evaluation framework to assess conformity of public and private certification schemes with the Aquaculture Certification Guidelines



Benchmarking – Civil society

- ISEAL Alliance

Focus on Credibility Principles and Codes of conduct for overall governance of standards



Assurance Code



Standard-Setting Code



Impacts Code

Benchmarking – Private (led)



Code of Conduct to “ ... ensure that voluntary labelling, including self-declared environmental claims have a consistent meaning in the market, which will help to avoid misleading consumers.”

Global
Sustainable
Seafood
Initiative

“Create **level playing field** for sustainable seafood certification programs, **Recognition** of credible certification programs through benchmarking equivalence .**Consistent communication** on sustainable seafood certification programs”

Benchmarking – Index approaches

- **Global Aquaculture Performance Index (GAPI)**

Comparison of 20 standards for Absolute Performance and Value-Added Performance

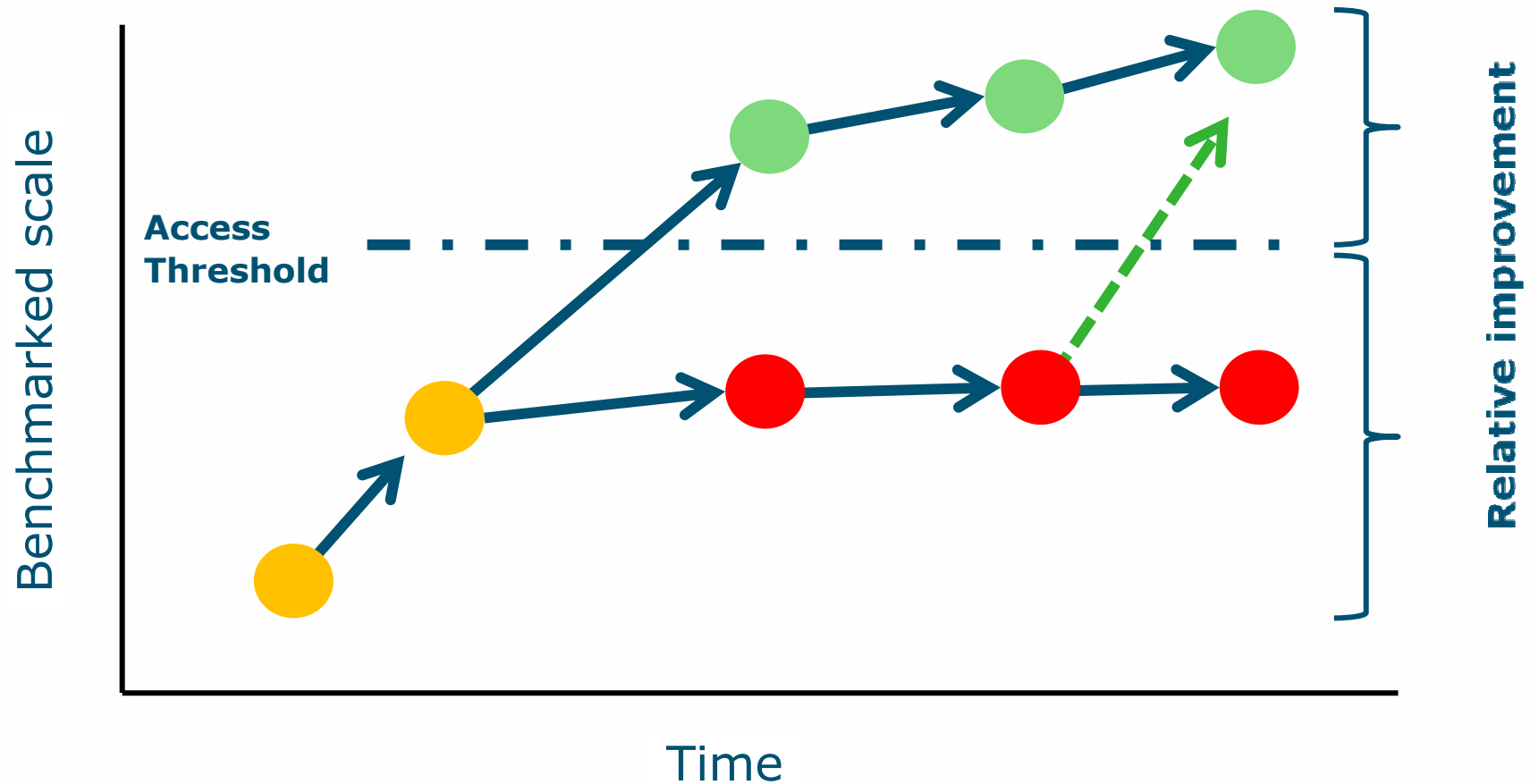


- **Ethical Aquatic Food Index**

Tiered tool to assist choice editors based on ethics and sustainability.



Continuous improvement and accessibility



Key questions

- Which kinds of 'benchmarking' are most effective in fostering improvement in national and international standards? Is there a difference?
- What impacts come from benchmarking the governance of standards and the content of standards?
- Can benchmarking create meaningful learning for standards (and producers)?
- What does benchmarking mean for market accessibility for producers?

Discussion panel

- **Valeska Weymann,**
Standard Manager Aquaculture, GlobalG.A.P.
- **Dr. Mark Prein**
Advisor Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture GIZ
Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI)
- **Douglas Waley**
Technical Administrator
FP7 Sustaining Ethical Aquaculture Trade (SEAT) project