

Comprehensive action needed on fisheries, says BRC

The British Retail Consortium has called for “comprehensive action” to encourage the use of responsibly sourced fishmeal in aquaculture feed after concerns were raised about where the wild fish in the feed are sourced from.

Farmed prawns and shrimp, like other farmed fish species, are raised on feedmeal containing a variety of fish, animal and vegetable ingredients. Fishmeal content is a key component of the feed and may contain ingredients derived from the by-products of fish processing or from wild fish sources. The BRC said concerns about sourcing arise where wild fish are sourced from regions where local fisheries may be poorly managed or data deficient.

In a bid to tackle this, Catherine Pazderka, head of sustainability at the BRC, said: “The BRC supports the significant role played by our members in addressing the challenges of sourcing fish feed derived from responsibly managed sources. We also recognise the contributions made by others working on feedmeal and fisheries, which include some of the leading seafood brands in the UK, certification schemes and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). To facilitate collaboration across these groups, the BRC set up the Fishmeal Working Group as a platform for these stakeholders to share information and to identify opportunities for partnership.”

She added that many retailers and suppliers are helping to improve the management of these fisheries by engaging with international projects and initiatives, but more needs to be done.

“Although these are important steps towards better fisheries management, more comprehensive action is needed worldwide to effectively drive change. We therefore encourage key players in the prawn and fishmeal supply chain—such as fishermen (including those catching fish sold into the fishmeal market), producers of farmed prawns/shrimp and fishmeal, processors, importers, and exporters—to communicate the need for responsibly sourced fishmeal in aquaculture feed and help drive change towards a more sustainable aquaculture industry.”

