

19 November 2025

Bolton Group

"Paving the Way Towards Water Stewardship"

Bolton is an Italian family-owned consumer goods company that is one of the world's largest tuna suppliers, trading over 500,000 metric tonnes of tuna each year. Founded in 1949 and operating in more than 150 countries worldwide, Bolton uses a portion of its tuna for their own brands and sells the rest to diverse customers via their company, Tri Marine. The company sources over 90% of the tuna for its Rio Mare, Isabel, Saupiquet, Cuca and Palmera products directly, ensuring a continuous integrated supply chain.

Why Digital Seafood Traceability Matters

Digital seafood traceability is crucial for Bolton Food as it ensures the integrity, safety, and sustainability of its tuna products in an increasingly complex and global supply chain. By adopting standards like those developed by the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST), Bolton Food can accurately track the journey of its seafood from catch to consumer. This transparency not only helps meet regulatory requirements but also builds consumer trust by verifying the sustainability and ethical sourcing of its products. Moreover, implementing interoperable digital traceability systems helps mitigate risks associated with illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, thereby supporting the long-term viability of tuna stocks and marine ecosystems.

How GDST helps to Address Challenges

Bolton Food's traceability challenges mainly revolve around ensuring the sustainability and food safety of tuna across a complex global supply chain. The "Supplier Work Place" platform addresses these challenges by verifying the compliance of each fish lot with predefined criteria at the point of transaction, ensuring that only compliant products are purchased and shipped. However, this process is transaction-focused, assessing compliance just before a purchase is finalized to give green light to actual shipment of tuna to Bolton's facilities.

By implementing the GDST standards, Bolton Food can enhance its traceability system to capture and document critical data at multiple stages of the supply chain, not just at the point of transaction. This helps to ensure that traceability is maintained continuously and consistently across all operations, reducing the risk of gaps in data and enabling more robust verification of sustainability and food safety standards.

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Moreover, GDST's emphasis on interoperability allows for better data sharing between different systems, ensuring that all partners in the supply chain are aligned and can access the necessary information to maintain compliance.

Impact of GDST on the Business

In the wider industrial sector, GDST's impact has been transformative. It has facilitated better collaboration between different stakeholders in the seafood supply chain by promoting the use of interoperable systems and common data formats. This has helped reduce the risks associated with illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, which is a significant concern in the tuna industry. The adoption of GDST standards enables companies like Bolton Food to respond more effectively to consumer demands for sustainable and ethically sourced seafood, thereby strengthening brand reputation and market competitiveness.

Overall, GDST plays a crucial role in driving the seafood industry toward more sustainable and transparent practices, which directly benefits companies like Bolton Food by enhancing their ability to track and verify the origin and handling of their products throughout the supply chain.

Long-Term Goals

By adopting GDST standards, Bolton should be able to ensure that its traceability efforts are not only aligned with global best practices but also more integrated, allowing for more comprehensive monitoring of key data elements throughout the supply chain.

Advice for Potential GDST Partners

Bolton would like to stress a couple of critical aspects when considering and also when starting the journey to becoming a GDST partner. So, among other important questions to leverage GDST resources or engage with the GDST community, two fundamental key points are:

1. **Understand the Benefits of Interoperability:** The GDST standards are designed to ensure that data can be easily shared and understood across different systems and stakeholders. This is crucial in a global supply chain where multiple players are involved. By adopting GDST, your business can improve data flow, reduce errors, and enhance collaboration with suppliers, customers, and regulators.

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2. **Start with the Basics:** Begin by familiarizing yourself with the key components of the GDST standards, such as the Key Data Elements (KDEs) and Critical Tracking Events (CTEs). These are the foundational elements that will guide your traceability efforts. Understanding and implementing these standards early will set a strong foundation for your digital traceability journey.

For Bolton Food, which has already implemented a transaction-focused traceability system, transitioning to the GDST's KDEs and CTEs matrix poses a greater challenge. Achieving interoperability requires significant adjustments to incorporate the broader, event-based data capture approach advocated by GDST, rather than the transaction-specific focus currently in place. This transition involves reconfiguring systems to ensure that data is consistently tracked and shared across the entire supply chain, which can be more complex and resource-intensive.

You can learn more about Bolton Group at: [Bolton Website](#)
Explore the benefits of GDST partnership at: [GDST Get Involved](#)

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