Mapping Barriers to Responsible Seafood Consumption in Europe through *Collective Intelligence*

Scan and visit the SEA2SEE project website:
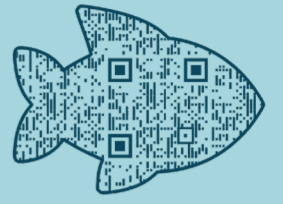
SEA2SEE project in a "clamshell"
Improve traceability of the seafood value chain through blockchain technology and foster stakeholders' engagement to promote **seafood literacy** and **responsible consumption**.

Research has suggested that consumers have the potential to make a paradigm shift towards sustainable purchasing and consumption practices, when resources and tools are available to them. For this reason, it was crucial to explore and analyse the knowledge gaps and respective challenges faced by consumers in identifying and consuming sustainable seafood. By doing so, we were able to develop effective strategies to overcome these barriers, thereby fostering greater acceptance and involvement in sustainable seafood practices.

1 Barrier generation

We developed a **survey** to identify and explore general barriers to responsible seafood consumption and product acceptance in Europe. The information gathered with this survey was used as a baseline for the 1-day multi-stakeholder participative workshops in France, Greece, Portugal, and Spain as part of the Collective.

363 answers submitted

Two main questions:

1. As a consumer, what do you think is lacking for achieving sustainable seafood consumption (both wild captured and farmed)?

2. Based on your experience, what factors are limiting your purchasing of sustainable seafood products?

84
89
109
81
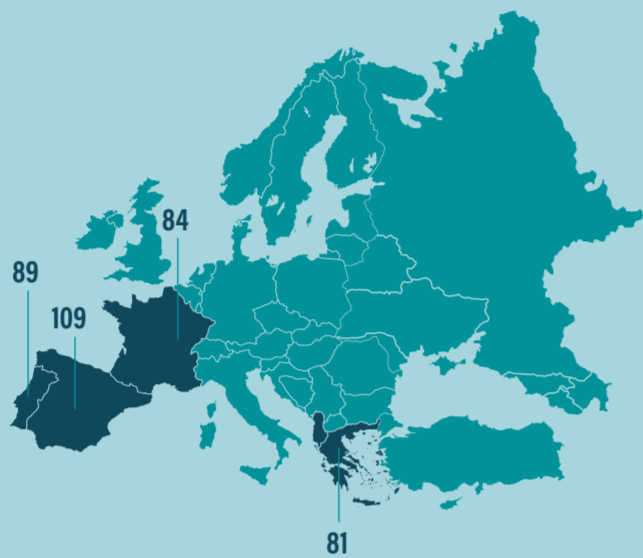
2 Barrier categorisation

The barrier categorisation was first done by an **internal working group** and then completed by participants during the one-day consultation workshops organised in Portugal, France, Spain and Greece.

Main barriers per country:

Lack of education.

Lack of comprehensive controls in fisheries and aquaculture value chain.

Consumer budget constraint.
Inadequate national and European legislation.
Unclear labels.
Lack of information.
Lack of seafood Literacy.

Lack of transparency on seafood product origin.

The process unveiled **nine critical critical areas of concern** which seem to hamper responsible seafood consumption and product acceptance, and were common in the different countries. These range from lack of seafood literacy and rooted consumption patterns to affordability of products, ethics and lack of traceability along the value chain. The barriers reflect the complicated environment the project seeks to navigate and offer priceless insights into the complexities of sustainable seafood practices.
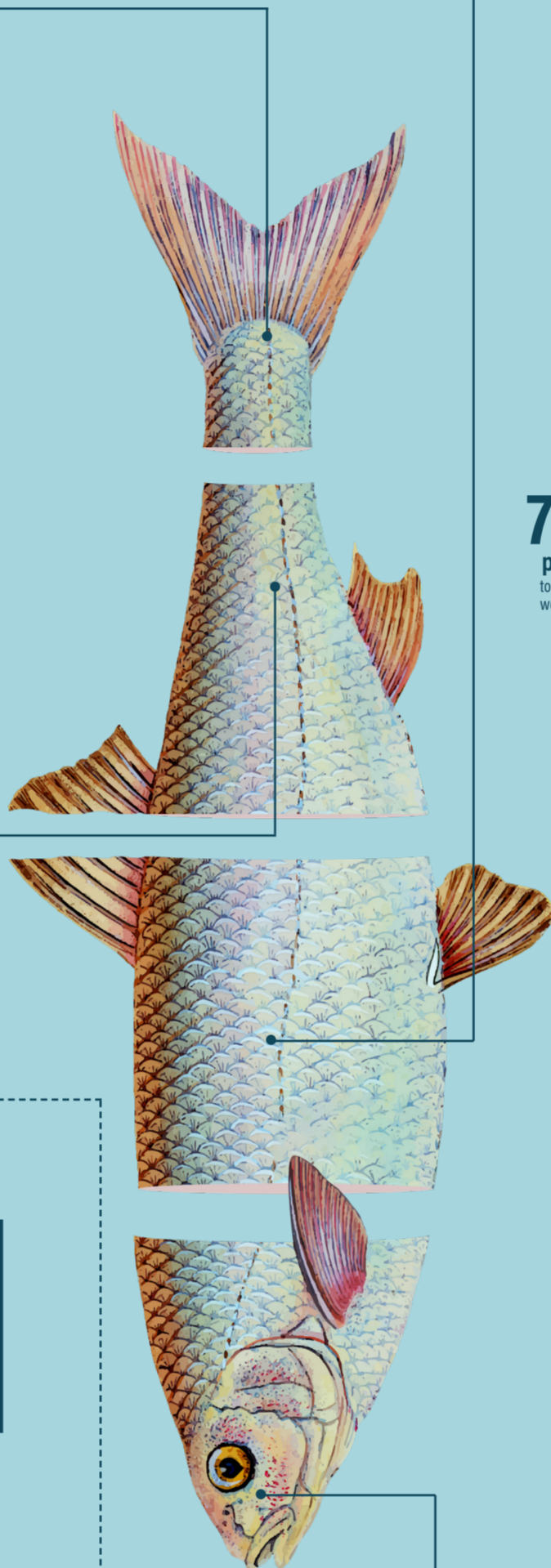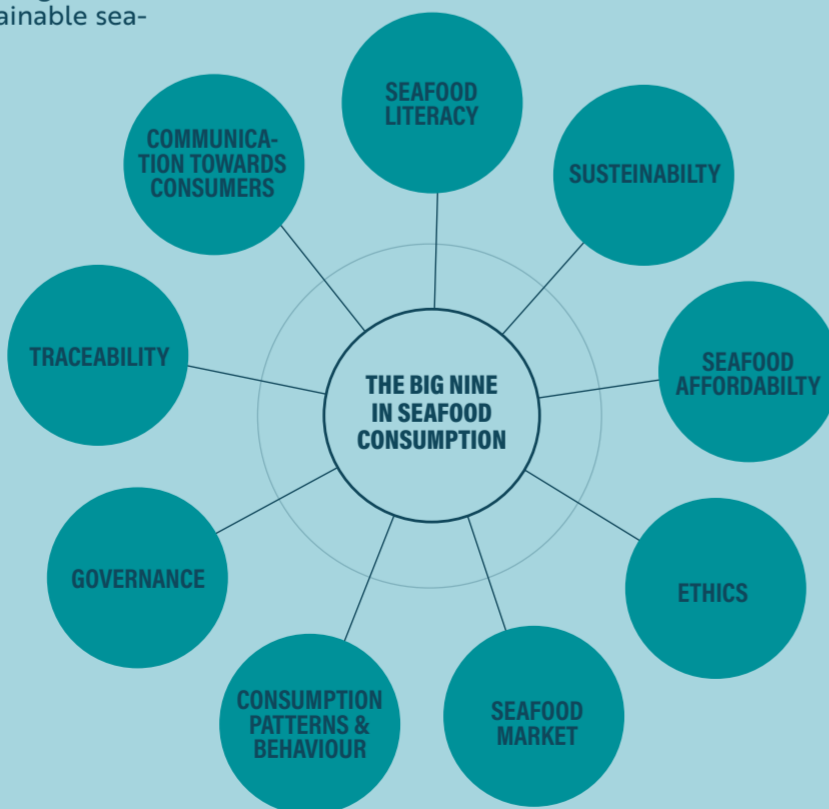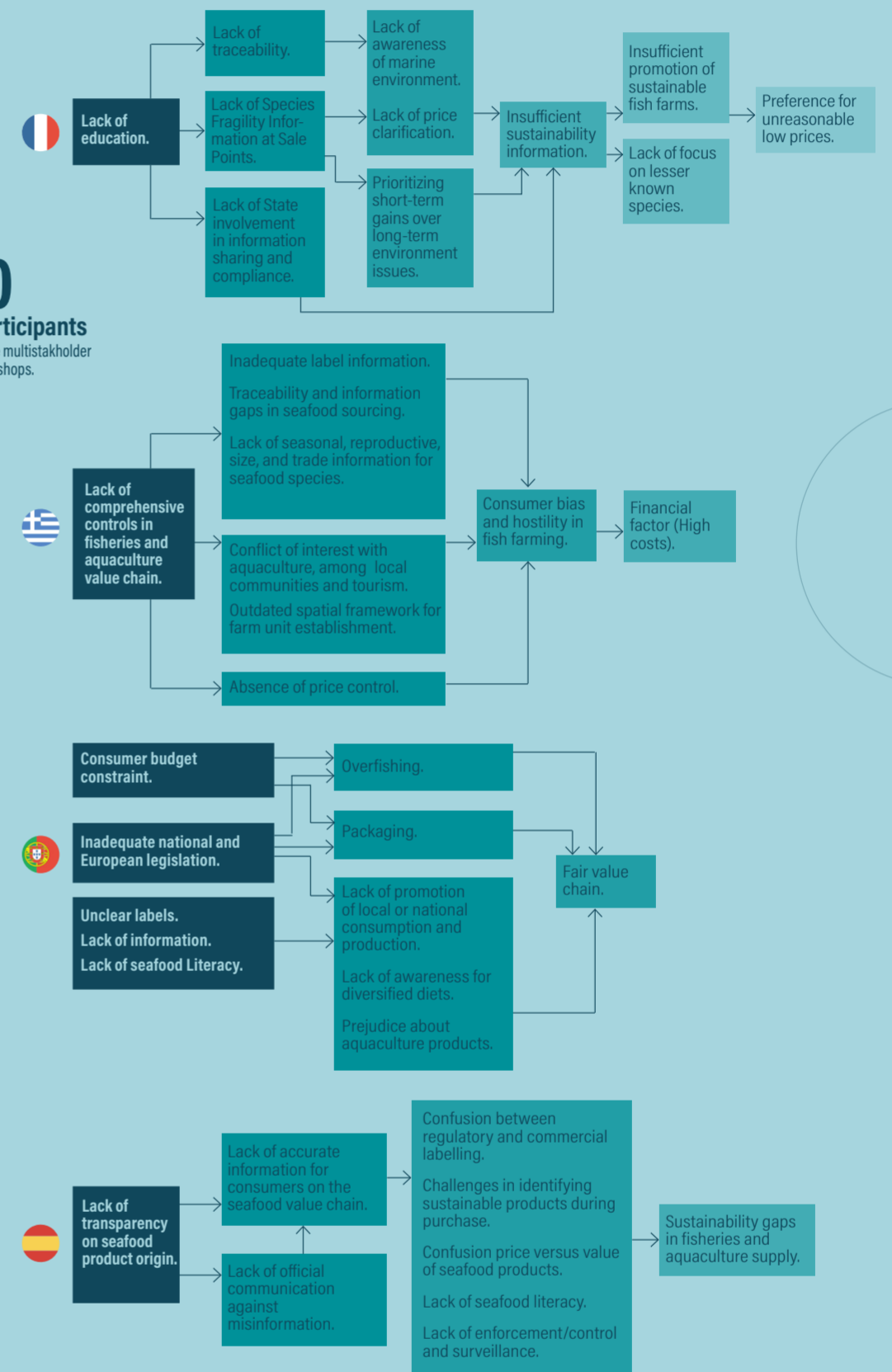
3 Barrier structuring

This stage was completed by participants during the one day consultation workshop, with the support of the ISM software package. They collectively responded to a series of relational questions aimed at identifying the most significant barriers. The result was the creation of a **structural map**.

During the workshop, participants were first presented with a complete list of the barriers generated by all online participants, they could also add new barriers. After the review of the barriers and their categorisation, the completed list of barriers was then inputted into the ISM software.

70 participants to the multistakeholder workshops.

Lack of education.
Lack of traceability.
Lack of awareness of marine environment.
Lack of Species Fragility Information at Sale Points.
Lack of price clarification.
Insufficient sustainability information.
Insufficient promotion of sustainable fish farms.
Lack of focus on lesser known species.
Preference for unreasonable low prices.
Lack of State involvement in information sharing and compliance.
Prioritizing short-term gains over long-term environment issues.

Lack of comprehensive controls in fisheries and aquaculture value chain.
Inadequate label information.
Traceability and information gaps in seafood sourcing.
Lack of seasonal, reproductive, size, and trade information for seafood species.
Conflict of interest with aquaculture, among local communities and tourism.
Outdated spatial framework for farm unit establishment.
Absence of price control.
Consumer bias and hostility in fish farming.
Financial factor (High costs).

Consumer budget constraint.
Inadequate national and European legislation.
Unclear labels.
Lack of information.
Lack of seafood Literacy.
Overfishing.
Packaging.
Lack of promotion of local or national consumption and production.
Lack of awareness for diversified diets.
Prejudice about aquaculture products.
Fair value chain.

Lack of transparency on seafood product origin.
Lack of accurate information for consumers on the seafood value chain.
Lack of official communication against misinformation.
Confusion between regulatory and commercial labelling.
Challenges in identifying sustainable products during purchase.
Confusion price versus value of seafood products.
Lack of seafood literacy.
Lack of enforcement/control and surveillance.
Sustainability gaps in fisheries and aquaculture supply.

4 Generating options

This stage was also completed during the workshop. Participants worked in smaller groups. Each group was assigned a category(ies) and worked together to generate options to overcome the barriers in their assigned category(ies).

THE BIG NINE IN SEAFOOD CONSUMPTION

- SEAFOOD LITERACY
- SUSTEINABILTY
- SEAFOOD AFFORDABILTY
- ETHICS
- SEAFOOD MARKET
- CONSUMPTION PATTERNS & BEHAVIOUR
- GOVERNANCE
- TRACEABILITY
- COMMUNICATION TOWARDS CONSUMERS

The engagement strategy and future initiatives of SEA2SEE

The results obtained with the Collective Intelligence process outlined above were used to craft an Engagement Strategy. The document outlines the approach for engaging consumers in the SEA2SEE project. The document outlines strategies for engaging consumers in the SEA2SEE project. It aims to boost seafood awareness and responsible consumption in Europe by promoting sustainable choices.

It details the use of Collective Intelligence in France, Greece, Portugal, and Spain to identify barriers to responsible seafood consumption. It comprehensively summarises the most relevant ones to develop engagement actions according to each country's status.

Based on these results, the final section highlights planned actions for **raising awareness**, **educational tools**, and **communication strategies**. Ultimately, the document emphasises empowering European consumers to make **responsible seafood choices** and promote trust in traceability tools to protect marine ecosystems and the seafood industry's future.

Main actions developed:

SEA2SEE Hackathon:
Development of a complementary tool based on blockchain technology and designed to help consumers make informed and responsible decisions when buying seafood.

SEA2SEE MOOC:
Design of a Massive Open Online Course to educate consumers and stakeholders on responsible consumption and sustainable production practices in the seafood industry.

Scan the QR code and find more info about the MOOC!

Co-funded by the European Union

SEA2SEE