

Contact for more information

Our website will be continuously updated with news and information about our organisation, our activities, projects and programmes:

www.ascworldwide.org

The Aquaculture Stewardship Council
Certifying responsible aquaculture

For specific questions and comments you can contact us via the contact form on our website or directly by email or telephone:

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listening leading guide transformation **trust** market access credible performance support opportunities confidence **certification** standards progression **environmental** **robust** multi-stakeholder **responsible** ambitious transparent worldwide efficient service care impactful change **independent** open accreditation social **education** value effective **partnership** solutions inclusive science-based metrics



Transforming aquaculture

The mission of the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) is to transform aquaculture towards environmental and social sustainability. The ASC will work with stakeholders around the world and create an exciting and ambitious programme to improve aquaculture performance by adopting more responsible practices. In a few years' time, the ASC will become the world's leading certification and labeling programme for responsibly farmed seafood. A not-for-profit organisation, the ASC was co-founded by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Dutch Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) in 2009. Full operation is scheduled for mid-2011 when the ASC will launch a credible consumer label assuring responsible aquaculture production. Aquaculture companies will gain approval to use the label through compliance with the global standards for responsible

aquaculture being developed through the multi-stakeholder Aquaculture Dialogues. The ASC will build awareness of the values linked with the label by working with aquaculture producers, seafood processors, retail and foodservice companies, scientists, government agencies, conservation groups and the public.

Fastest-growing food production system

Aquaculture is the fastest-growing food production system in the world. It can produce large volumes of nutritious, high-quality seafood. However, as the industry expands so does its footprint on the environment and society. For a sustainable future, it is crucial to minimise potentially negative impacts: protecting mangroves and precious aquatic environments, reducing water pollution, eliminating inappropriate use of antibiotics and

using responsibly sourced fishmeal in feed, as well as to encourage the adoption of internationally acceptable social standards. These measures and more can be combined in a formally audited strategy for responsible aquaculture. That is why the ASC was established.

Credible and robust standards

The ASC's primary role is to manage and implement the standards that are being developed by the Aquaculture Dialogues initiated and coordinated by WWF. More than 2,000 people are participating — fish farmers, seafood processors, retailers and foodservice operators, NGOs, government agencies and knowledge institutes. Universal, open and transparent, the Dialogues focus on minimising the key environmental and social impacts of aquaculture. Each Dialogue will lead to robust and credible standards

for one of twelve major aquaculture species groups. The standard creation process is following the guidelines of ISEAL*. The standards will be science-, performance- and metrics-based and will apply globally to aquaculture production systems, covering many types, locations and scales of aquaculture operations. Implementing the standards will bring real change.

Twelve species groups

The twelve species groups were chosen because of their potential impact on the environment and society, their market value and the extent to which they are traded internationally or their potential for such trade. They are salmon, shrimp, tilapia, pangasius, freshwater trout, oysters, mussels, clams, scallops, abalone, *Seriola* (amberjack) and cobia.



1 © Unima Europe SAM 2 © Marine Harvest 3 © Regal Springs Tilapia 4 © British Trout Association 5 © Aquaculture New Zealand 6 © Island Scallops 7 © Anova Seafood 8 © Brian O'Hanlon, Open Blue Sea Farms 9 © France Haliotis 10 © Kona Blue Water Farms 11 © Penn Cove Shellfish, LLC

Third-party certification

When finalised, the Aquaculture Dialogue standards will be handed over to the ASC. Tilapia standards are already complete and final standards for the other species are expected before the end of 2010. To certify that aquaculture operations comply with these standards the ASC is engaging with independent third-party accreditation organisations and certification bodies. To avoid involving aquaculture companies in duplicating certification costs, and to cover the wider needs of the market, the ASC will seek partnerships with other certification initiatives where it makes strategic sense to do so.

Moving with the times

Standards are not carved in stone. As science and technology develop, so do management practices and techniques. The ASC will coordinate

periodic reviews, at least every five years, to keep the standards up to date — in line with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice. If the ASC receives a request for environmental and social responsibility standards for other species it will engage with the relevant stakeholders in order for them to create a standards development process which will involve a diverse group of stakeholders and will follow the ISEAL guidelines.

What the ASC can do for you

The ASC has much to offer to participants in the worldwide seafood production chain. **Fish farmers** – The ASC will offer a credible label that will bring added value and market access. It will enable you to create competitive advantage through responsibility that will open market opportunities. **Processors** – The ASC will give you the security that the fish you procure has been farmed with appropriate social and

environmental care. It offers a responsible, certified supply of seafood that suits your CSR profile. **Retailers and foodservice companies** – With ASC certified products you can address the growing demand from your customers for responsibly sourced products; creating customer loyalty and meeting CSR objectives. **Governments** – The ASC can help you achieve Millennium Goals, for example by creating market access for small-scale producers, helping to raise their incomes and living standards. **NGOs** – With the ASC you have a real partner to bring about change in the water.

How to support the ASC

The ASC works around the world with parties that have a stake in responsible aquaculture. Significant seafood buyers have expressed support for the ASC and committed to selling ASC certified product

when available. The ASC is engaging partners in capacity building programmes. For example, in a pilot programme on responsible pangasius production in Vietnam, Anova, IDH and GTZ will help (small-scale) pangasius farmers comply with the Pangasius Aquaculture Dialogue standards. The ASC is supported by Ogilvy. This highly-reputed international communication agency developed the ASC visual identity *pro bono*. You can help build the ASC by publicly supporting our goals and objectives or by participating in one of our projects. As the ASC develops, there will be opportunities to join ASC work groups or advisory groups. Your feedback on our development and activities is welcome and will help us achieve our objectives. In addition, there are opportunities to support the ASC financially by public and private funding.

* ISEAL: The International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling Alliance