

## The Aquaculture Newsflash

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### Introduction by ASC's CEO Chris Ninnnes

Dear ASC Friends and Colleagues,



Firstly let me wish you all the very best for an auspicious 2012; the year in which the ASC will be introduced to the market! And a big thank you to all who have supported the ASC in different ways in the past years in preparation for this point in time. It has been long and important work and I feel privileged to be able to outline so many imminent milestones that signal the countdown to our market launch. As such, this issue of the Aquaculture Newsflash is packed with valuable information and updates on our organisation's rapid progress towards becoming fully operational. Over the last few months the ASC has worked extremely hard to realise our ambition of becoming the world's leading certification and ecolabelling programme. We have seen important developments in the areas of Chain of Custody certification, the requirements and guidance for farm certification, accreditation and label development. The ASC Chain of Custody requirements have been pilot tested at farm level and in processing plants, revised, approved by the Supervisory Board and will be published in January. The ASC Certification and Accreditation requirements will be approved and published shortly. ASC's accreditation procedure has been

prepared in collaboration with our partner Accreditation Service International (ASI), and the first auditors have been trained on ASC's Tilapia and Pangasius standards. Audit Manuals for both Tilapia and Pangasius have been field tested and are undergoing a final round of revisions before also being published in January. We have also made tremendous progress with the ASC ecolabel – the logo was approved after undergoing rigorous consumer testing and consultancy sessions within our business framework. With these critical blocks completed the ASC is ready to go live with a robust and credible certification programme early in February, starting with Tilapia and , closely followed by Pangasius. We expect the Abalone and Bivalves programmes to follow later in 2012. For those farmers and supply chain companies who wish to be ASC certified, now is the time to start preparing for the certification process. We look forward to welcoming you to our programme!

Best regards,  
Chris Ninnes, Chief Executive Officer ASC

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## **Planning**

During the last quarter of 2011 ASC has made tremendous progress. With this amount of important deliverables completed ASC is now rapidly approaching its operational phase. Below you can find ASC's planning for 2012.

### **ASC farm certification**

The accreditation (of certifiers) for the ASC Tilapia Standard will open in the beginning of 2012, followed by Pangasius a few weeks later. Certification Assessment Bodies (CABs) need to become accredited before they are allowed to perform farm audits against the ASC Standard. With accredited CABs available soon, the first ASC certified Tilapia farm is expected shortly after. Pangasius farm certification is anticipated a few weeks later. The accreditation of certification bodies for the Abalone and Bivalves Standards will open no later than the second half of 2012.

### **ASC certified product launch**

Based on feedback from companies interested in launching certified and labelled product we expect to see the first ASC certified Tilapia and Pangasius products in stores during the second quarter of 2012. This is anticipated to be initially available for consumers in the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, UK, and Scandinavia. And other European, North American and Asia Pacific countries are likely to shortly follow.

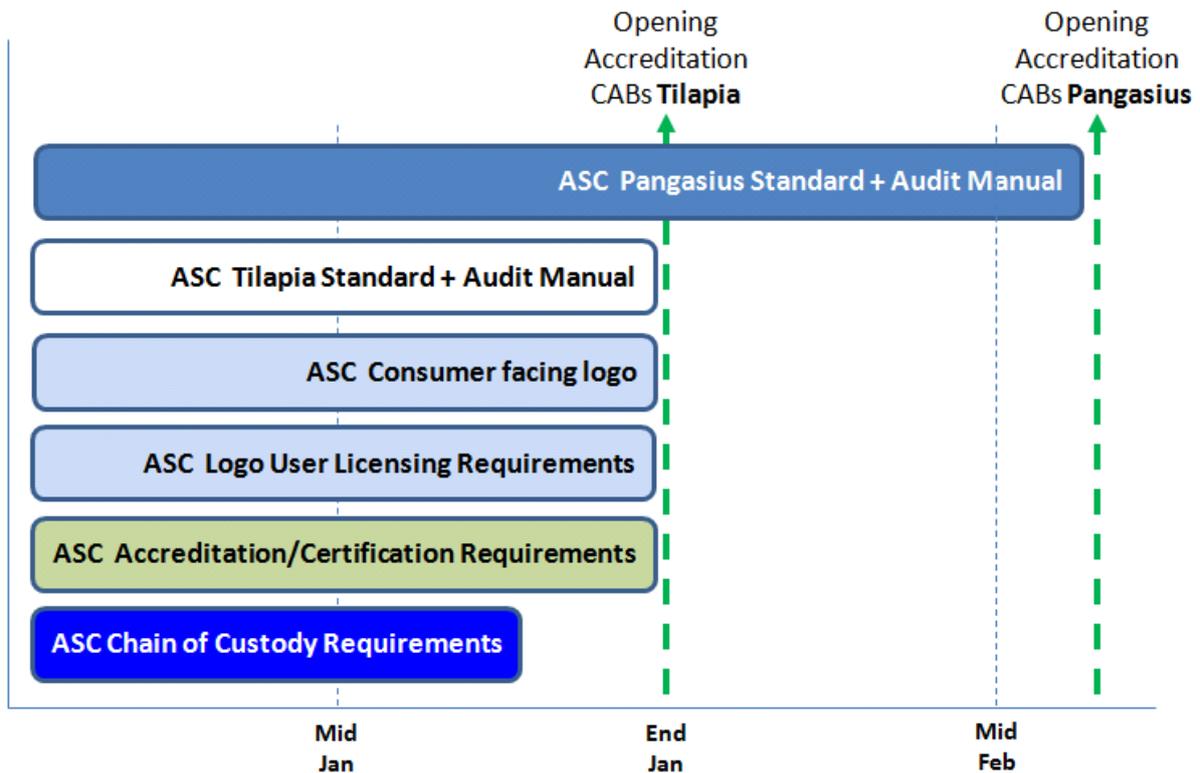
### **Transitioning the remaining Aquaculture Dialogues to ASC Standards**

Four Standards remain to be handed over from the Aquaculture Dialogues to the ASC:

- Shrimp - final draft standard published 21 December 2011
- Salmon - final standard is expected to be published in 31 January
- Trout - final standard expected to be published 16 January 2012
- Seriola/Cobia - still in progress by the Aquaculture Dialogues.

The Shrimp, Salmon and Trout Standards are expected be handed over by the Aquaculture Dialogues to the ASC in April during the European Seafood Exposition in Brussels. The date for the handover of the Seriola/Cobia Standard is still to be determined. Once ASC has received the Standards we will develop and provide auditor training and the accreditation and certification framework for these standards. This is expected to take between 3 and 6 months.

For the latest planning we kindly advise you to check the [ASC website](#) regularly.



## ASC Ecolabel Logo and Licensing Fee Structure approved



The ASC ecolabel logo design and the Logo licensing fee and payment structure have been approved by the ASC Supervisory Board. The logo design has been put through rigorous consumer testing in Germany in collaboration with Birdseye Iglo to gauge its commercial market impact. It has also been B-2-B tested with leading European and North American seafood retailers and manufacturers to collect business response. Based on the feedback from both consumers and the business the logo design underwent a final revision with the help of our dedicated design bureau [jkr](#) before its final approval.

The ASC ecolabel will in a simple way demonstrate to consumers that the seafood carrying the label are products sourced from farms operating in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. The use of the ASC label on packaging will be subject to permission and will be administered similar to the arrangements developed for the Marine Stewardship Council. For those familiar with the MSC process an efficient transition to accommodate ASC certified seafood will be possible. For those new to such arrangements, the benefit of working with a well tested certification and ecolabelling programme will be rapidly apparent. Documentation outlining how the logo should be used will be available when the logo is launched and can then be downloaded from our website under [Use the ASC Ecolabel](#).

If you have questions about the use of the ASC ecolabel, please contact ASC Communication Manager Sun Brage [sun.brage@ascworldwide.org](mailto:sun.brage@ascworldwide.org)

## 1st draft requirements for ASC group certification ready

Group certification will be a key element in the ASC program. ASC is developing a robust group certification model that will allow smaller operations such as family owned farms to enter the ASC certification program as a collective unit, thus providing for an efficient yet credible assessment. To achieve this the ASC has hired an experienced, external consultant who has prepared a first draft document. Requirements have been based on best practices derived from existing certification

systems. The current (1<sup>st</sup>) draft will be reviewed by ASC's expert group(s), will be made available for public consultation, revised, field tested and fine-tuned finally before it will be officially released as v1.0. ASC aims to add Group Certification methodology to its program in 2012.

If you have any questions about group certification requirements, please contact ASC Standards Director Bas Geerts [bas.geerts@ascworldwide.org](mailto:bas.geerts@ascworldwide.org)

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### **Shrimp Aquaculture Dialogue released final draft of standard**

The Shrimp Aquaculture Dialogue (ShAD) is on course towards being finalised. The final draft of the global Shrimp Aquaculture Dialogue standard version 3.0 was published on 21 December, 2011. The standard will now undergo field testing. Based on these field tests an Audit Manual for the standard will be created. The shrimp standard is expected to be handed over the ASC in April at the European Seafood Exposition in Brussels. The handover of the shrimp standard will mark an important milestone towards launching the ASC Shrimp certification programme. This is currently expected to go live by the end of 2012. The full version of the shrimp standard can be downloaded from WWF's Aquaculture Dialogues website [here](#).

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### **ASC Supervisory Board meets in Amsterdam**

On 14-15 December, the ASC Supervisory Board met in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Highlights of the meeting include the 'in principle' approval of a range of critical programme building blocks such as the Chain of Custody process, the Tilapia Audit Manual and the Certification and Accreditation requirements. Another important step towards becoming operational was the approval of the highly anticipated ASC ecolabel, the Logo licensing fee structure and payment model and approval that the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) will administer the services related to Chain of Custody and logo licence administration. Meeting minutes will be available on the ASC website shortly.

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### **ASC Technical Advisory Group meets in Amsterdam**

On 13-14 December, the ASC Technical Advisory Group (TAG) met in Amsterdam for the group's second in-person meeting. The TAG is an advisory body to the ASC Supervisory and Executive Board. The group focuses on technical matters related to the ASC certification program such as the farm standards, chain of custody and certification and accreditation requirements. Members are selected for their technical expertise and the group is currently composed of two representatives from each of the eight former and current Aquaculture Dialogues. For this meeting, 9 out of the 15 TAG members came from different regions of the world to be present at this important occasion. The main item on the agenda was the ASC Farm Certification and Accreditation requirements. These were discussed, and the TAG jointly composed its technical recommendation to the ASC Supervisory Board for its final approval. Other topics on the agenda included the Chain of Custody requirements, the revised Tilapia Audit Manual and finalisation of the Terms of Reference for the TAG,. The group also approved its procedure for electing a Chair and Vice-Chair during the meeting. ASC aims to welcome the TAG's Chair and Vice-Chair in the first quarter of 2012. This will be announced following planned elections.

Meeting notes with Chatham House rules applied will be publicly available on ASC's website once approved by the TAG. Meeting notes of previous meetings can already be found at: [www.acsworldwide.org](http://www.acsworldwide.org)

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### **Get Ready for ASC Accreditation (Certification Assessment Bodies)**

As the ASC Accreditation and Certification requirements are drawing closer to becoming finalised and approved, ASC wants to make all interested certifiers aware that they are advised to start preparing for accreditation.. The opening of accreditation for Tilapia, Pangasius, Abalone and Bivalves will be announced through ASC's website.

The application for accreditation process can be summarised in six steps:

1. Start by reading the species-specific ASC Standard & related Audit Manual for the respective species that you want to become accredited for. You can download these by [clicking here](#).
2. Apply to become accredited by contacting Accreditation Service International (ASI). You can find out more about how to apply on ASI's website by [clicking here](#).
3. Once your application has been received by ASI, they will conduct a desk study to verify that everything is in place to ensure that auditing can take place in line with ASC's requirements.
4. The ASI Assessment Team will then visit your office to review your processes and for staff interviews.
5. A witness-audit with ASI present will be conducted to demonstrate that auditors apply the procedures correctly.
6. Based on the witness audit and the final audit report, the ASI Assessment Team will seek an accreditation recommendation from the ASI Accreditation Committee. Upon a positive decision, ASC will be informed and you are ready to start auditing against the ASC Standards.

For more information about the accreditation process visit ASI's [website](#) or contact ASC's Standards Director Bas Geerts [bas.geerts@ascworldwide.org](mailto:bas.geerts@ascworldwide.org)

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### **Get Ready for ASC Farm Certification (Aquaculture Operations)**

ASC is quickly approaching the launch of its Farm Certification programme in early 2012. If you are a farmer and interested in becoming ASC certified, we strongly recommend that you start preparing for certification.

By following these steps you will be well-prepared for entering the ASC certification process:

1. **Read the ASC Standard and Auditor Manual** for your respective species. You can download the documents by [clicking here](#).
2. **Contract a certifier** that will assess your farm. Make sure the certifier has been accredited to certify against the ASC Standards by [Accreditation Service International](#) (ASI). We recommend that you ask multiple certifiers to submit quotes for the work. A list of accredited certifiers will be published on ASC's website [here](#) once accreditation has been opened. Apply for an audit by contacting the certifier directly. The certification process starts when a certifier has been appointed.
3. **Prepare for the audit** of your farm. During the audit, you must be able to demonstrate to the certifier that your farm uses methods and has processes in place that are compliant with the relevant [ASC Standard](#). If these cannot be fully demonstrated you may need to **implement improvements** to your farm or your processes in advance of the assessment being concluded. In other instances improvements may be required to be fulfilled over the period of certification.

Further information about the farm certification process can be found on ASC's website under [Get Certified! Farms](#).

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### **Get Ready for ASC Chain of Custody Certification**

The ASC Chain of Custody certification requirements have been approved and for companies interested in becoming ASC Chain of Custody certified they should start getting ready for their certification.

Have a look at the steps outlined below as to prepare for your Chain of Custody certification:

1. **Read the ASC Chain of Custody requirements** document that will shortly be available from MSC's website [here](#). The MSC has also developed the 'Get Certified! Chain of Custody'

guidance document to help prepare for Chain of Custody certification. This document can be downloaded by [clicking here](#).

2. **Appoint a certifier** that will assess your business. Make sure the certifier has been accredited to assess against ASC's Chain of Custody by [Accreditation Service International \(ASI\)](#). We recommend that you ask multiple certifiers to submit quotes for the work. A list of accredited certifiers will be published on ASC's website [here](#) once accreditation has been opened. You can apply for an audit by contacting the certifier directly and entering into an agreement with them. The certification process starts when a certifier has been appointed.
3. **Prepare for your Chain of Custody audit** of your traceability processes. In the audit, you must be able to show that ASC certified seafood does not get mixed with non-certified seafood at any stage of the production and handling process. ASC certified seafood should also be traceable to a certified source and relevant paperwork must be available to demonstrate this. There is a chance that you will have to **implement improvements** to your processes in advance of the assessment concluding as based on the requirements established.

Further information about the Chain of Custody process can be found on ASC's website under [Get Certified! Supply Chain](#).

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### **Get Ready the ASC ecolabel**

With the approval of the ASC ecolabel logo design and Logo licensing fee and payment structure, ASC is planning to launch its ecolabel shortly. Companies that are interested to feature the ASC ecolabel logo on their packaging can already take steps to prepare themselves. Below are the steps you can take to apply to use the ASC ecolabel:

1. **Read the ASC ecolabel guidelines** document that will be available from ASC's website shortly [here](#).
2. **Apply to use the ASC ecolabel** by contacting the Marine Stewardship Council (interim contact person Chris Bolwig [chris.bolwig@msc.org](mailto:chris.bolwig@msc.org)). They will send you the licence agreement to sign and return. You will then receive the ASC ecolabel to use.

For more information about the ASC ecolabel and its use visit ASC's website [Use the ASC ecolabel](#).

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### **ASC latest supporter: Pick 'n Pay**

Pick n Pay, one of Southern Africa's largest retailers, is the latest company to become a supporter of the ASC. Pick n Pay has made a commitment that it will only sell farmed seafood products that are certified by the ASC (or equivalent standards) by the end of 2015. The company is committed to minimising its environmental footprint and it actively promotes sustainable practices in every aspect of their business. Pick n Pay's Marketing and Sustainability Director, Bronwen Rohland said "We cannot ignore the fact that seafood is inextricably linked to food security and that it provides the primary source of food or income for millions of people globally. As a retailer and significant role player in the seafood industry, we will help to drive positive change by supporting and promoting seafood choices from legal and responsibly managed sources."

For more information about Pick n Pay and their commitment to sustainability visit their [website](#).

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### **ASC on RTL television show**

Last November the Dutch television channel RTL featured the ASC and one of its supporters, Regal Springs, in their current affairs news programme 'World Business' (Wereldzaken). The programme paid special attention to responsible farming of tilapia in Lake Toba, Indonesia and featured Regal Springs' operation and how they add value to their business by producing in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible way. The CEO of the ASC, Chris Nannes, and IDH program manager

Esther Luiten were also present for a studio discussion on promoting the availability of responsibly sourced seafood products in Dutch retail stores and the need for an independent and credible certification program for farmed seafood such as the ASC.

If you are interested to watch the full programme you can download by [clicking here](#).

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### **ASC attends MSC's retail meeting in Hamburg**

In response to an increasing number of questions from MSC's supporters in Germany about the ASC programme the ASC's CEO was asked to present about the ASC programme and respond to questions. A well attended event that featured most of Germany's top retailers and food service companies, suppliers and seafood brands and many from other markets provided an excellent opportunity to update the audience on the ASC's progress and timelines to market. Many questions were labelled, particularly about the need for synergy between ASC's and MSC's administration of chain of custody and arrangements for logo use.

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### **ASC at New Zealand Aquaculture**

The ASC's CEO was sponsored as a key note speaker by the New Zealand's Aquaculture Association to attend their annual meeting. This annual high profile event brings together all of New Zealand's farming and related services industries as well as many from Australia and further afield. Much interest was evident from all the key note speakers (including the Prime Minister and Minister responsible for aquaculture) about the need for New Zealand's industry being able to demonstrate to its markets the environmental performance of its products. Consequentially there was much related interest in ASC certification and the value that such certification will bring. Positive feedback regarding the intent to seek certification was evident from key players in all main sectors in New Zealand, along with interest to engage in the development and piloting of auditor guidance.

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### **Meet us in 2012!**

During 2012 ASC is planning to visit some of the most important and influential international seafood expositions and fish fairs worldwide. To give you a heads-up where you will be able to find us, we have put together a overview for the first half of 2012.

#### **Fish International Bremen | 12 – 14 February 2012**

On 12-14 February, the ASC will be present at our own stand at the Fish International 2012 Messe Bremen.; where the ASC intends to launch its ecolabel and certification programme in the German market. For more information visit Fish International 2012 [website](#).

Please visit us in **Hall 5** at stand **E-55**

#### **Boston International Seafood Show | 11 – 13 March 2012**

The ASC will attend the Boston International Seafood Show in March. At this show ASC will not have our own booth, but we will be present for personal consultations and for meetings to discuss our certification and labelling programme. For more information see Boston International Seafood Show [website](#).

If you are interested to set up a meeting with an ASC representative, please contact us on [info@ascworldwide.org](mailto:info@ascworldwide.org).

#### **European Seafood Exposition Brussels | 24 – 26 April 2012**

ASC will have our own booth at the European Seafood Exposition (ESE) in Brussels similar to previous years. This year WWF is expected to hand over three of the remaining global standards for responsible aquaculture – for shrimp, salmon and trout. ASC will also host a press event to celebrate the first ASC certified seafood in European stores. See also European Seafood Exposition [website](#).

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You are very welcome to visit ASC's booth in **Hall 7** stand **7-2053**

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