



The Aquaculture Newsflash

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Introduction by ASC CEO Chris Ninnes

Dear ASC Friends and Colleagues,



As the new CEO of the Aquaculture Stewardship Council, I am proud to present our latest Newsflash. As I think you will agree, this update contains much exciting information about the work underway to establish the ASC as a credible and robust certification and eco-labeling program. A program that can clearly identify and reward farms operating in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. This work involves establishing many of the certification and accreditation processes that will underpin the program's consistency into the future. One important current task is to finalize the operational requirements for the Tilapia and Pangasius standards in 2011 and this work will continue into early next year for the bivalve and abalone standards. The all important endeavors of the Aquaculture Dialogues for salmon, shrimp, trout, seriola and cobia are also drawing to conclusion and early next year development will begin on the auditor guidance manuals, undertaking pilot assessments and running auditor training for these standards. We are also testing consumer and trade response to the ASC's ecolabel and we will also be launching our new logo before the year end. I am confident that this phase in the ASC's development while being busy will be a highly productive period for the organisation. These crucial steps towards fulfilling our mission of transforming aquaculture towards social and environmental sustainability, a mission shared with our many stakeholders, will shortly be a tangible reality. I am thrilled to be part of steering this phase of ASC's development and I am looking forward to realizing our shared mission and establishing the ASC as the leading provider of certification services to the aquaculture sector. I hope that you will enjoy this update.

Best regards,

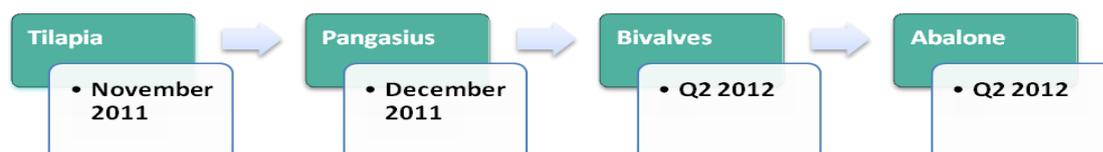
Chris Ninnes, Chief Executive Officer ASC

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Planning 2011: Quarter Four

During the summer period, ASC staff focused on the critical steps required to credibly undertake assessments against the ASC Standards. This included the completion of accreditation and certification requirements, testing and revision of the ASC Auditor Guidance Manuals, training of Certifying Bodies and developing Chain of Custody and group certification requirements. Good progress was also made with the logo development and testing of the ASC label, and you can read more about this below.

The planned date for opening the ASC Tilapia Standards for accreditation is November 2011 and for Pangasius in December 2011. The two remaining completed Standards – for bivalves and abalone – will be open for accreditation in quarter two, 2012. For the latest planning, please also check the [ASC website](#) regularly.



ASC label logo update



ASC is fast approaching the launch of its much anticipated consumer facing label in November, 2011. Several logo options, designed by our dedicated design bureau [jkr](#), are being tested with consumers in Europe. In parallel, ASC is also busy conducting B2B testing with leading European and North American seafood retailers and manufacturers. The ASC label will simply 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 a licence fee similar to the arrangements developed for the MSC. Documentation outlining how the logo should be used will be available when the logo is launched.

If you have questions about the use of the ASC label, please contact ASC Communication Manager Sun Brage sun.brage@ascworldwide.org

ASC Technical Advisory Group meets in London

On 1 - 2 September, the ASC Technical Advisory Group (TAG) met in London. This was the group's first face-to-face meeting, following two previous teleconferences. The meeting was kindly hosted by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). On the agenda were topics related to the ASC Standards and the accreditation and certification processes related to them. For an update on the certification and accreditation requirements also see below item. The TAG is an advisory body to the ASC Supervisory Board. Focusing on technical matters of the ASC certification program such as the Standards, Chain of Custody, certification and accreditation, its members are selected on grounds of their technical expertise. At present the group is made up of 15 persons. It will eventually consist of a maximum of 25 members, and is currently composed of two representatives from each of the Aquaculture Dialogues. Additional members may be added over time. Meeting notes with Chatham House rules applied will be publicly available once approved by the TAG.

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Certification and accreditation requirements

The 'ASC Farm Certification Requirements and Accreditations Requirements' document is a key documents of the ASC certification program. The certification requirements outline how the ASC Standards should be audited by the independent, third party Certification Bodies. The accreditation part focuses on the requirements these Certification Bodies must meet with regards to experience, education, skills and administrative set up etc. A dedicated working group that reports to ASC's Technical Advisory Group (TAG), the Technical Working Group on Certification and Accreditation (TWG-CA), has been formed to prepare an advise to the ASC Supervisory Board. Their advice will allow ASC to open accreditation later this year.

If you have questions or would like more information about the document, please contact ASC Standards Director Bas Geerts bas.geerts@ascworldwide.org

Moving forward with ASC group certification

Group certification is an important aspect of all sustainability programs, and will also 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 but credible assessment. The requirements will be based on best practices derived from existing certification systems. An experienced external consultant is currently working on a first proposal, which will be reviewed by ASC's expert group(s), revised, field tested and fine-tuned before it will be officially released. ASC aims to launch its Group Certification methodology in 2012.

If you have any questions about group certification requirements, please contact ASC Standards Director Bas Geerts bas.geerts@ascworldwide.org

Successful first ASC Pangasius auditor training



In September, ASC delivered its first ASC Certification Body training for Pangasius. This successful 3-days training was held in the heart of the global Pangasius farming district, the Mekong Delta in Southern Vietnam. In total, 22 auditors representing 12 certification bodies participated. The workshop provided training on two of the most important ASC documents; the ASC Pangasius Standard and the Pangasius Auditor Guidance Manual.

Successful participation in this training by passing the course exam is mandatory for all certification bodies that wish to become accredited to the ASC scheme.

For more information about accreditation, please contact ASC Standards Director Bas Geerts bas.geerts@ascworldwide.org

ASC meets European retail

On 23rd September, the ASC hosted its first outreach meeting for European led by its new, CEO Chris Ninnes. Twelve retailers from Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands attended the meeting. "Retail commitments are important for ASC to realise our goals. The ASC is my new mission. I want to use this meeting as a starting point for engaging with you as retailers" was the message from Chris Ninnes. Other speakers included Jose Villalon from WWF and Joost Oorthuizen

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director of IDH The Sustainable Trade Initiative, co-funders of the ASC. A number of well-informed and relevant questions were posed by those present and it was quickly established that European retailers are eagerly awaiting ASC's operational phase and the launch of its consumer facing label. During the valuable discussion the need for practical tools and for clear and simple communication to help the retail sector work with their supply chain was clearly articulated. Also stressed was the importance for realistic planning and solid information rather than promises. This meeting was a first positive step towards building trust between ASC and this key sector and created confidence that ASC can deliver on its objectives and provide value-add to the seafood industry. A number of concrete follow-up actions were proposed by the audience, as was the interest to maintain on-going engagement with the ASC. A follow-up session will be organised to build on the momentum that was created during the meeting.

If you have questions related to ASC's retail outreach, please contact chris.ninnes@ascworldwide.org

ASC meets North American retail

On October 5th, ASC and eight North American retailers came together in a well-received and informative conference call. This call was initiated by the Food Marketing Institute's seafood working group to update North American retailers on the status and progress of the ASC Certification Programme. The session was highly appreciated with plenty of valuable discussions on the social principles of the ASC standards, the challenges for implementation, further development of the standards, and the role of the Technical Advisory Group and the communication challenge to inform consumers. Building on this successful first session, a follow-up is already planned for 2012.

ASC at Global G.A.P. meeting

On September 19th, GlobalG.A.P. hosted a meeting with European retailers and seafood suppliers. Major companies such as Heiploeg, El Corte Ingles, Scottish Sea Farms, and Skretting/Nutreco attended the meeting. ASC Standards Director Bas Geerts was invited to give a presentation on the ASC organization and its vision, the upcoming implementation of its certification process and its planning. Taking part in this workshop underlined ASC's strong commitment to the retail sector. Likewise, it was encouraging to meet the companies participating in this workshop. It clearly shows their commitment in transforming the world's seafood sector towards more responsible practices by means of certification at farm-level.

ASC at Value Added Seafood 2011 conference

In late September, the Value Added Seafood Conference took place in London. The ASC was there and Esther Luiten, former interim Director, presented the ASC certification program in a one-day focused workshop on 'Responsible Sourcing in a Global Market' that preceded the conference. The workshop covered sustainability of both fisheries and aquaculture. It provided plenty of opportunity for in-depth discussions on the responsible sourcing strategies of retail and the future role of certification programs. All participants agreed that responsible sourcing is a trend that is here to stay. This workshop gave a state-of-the-art overview of the issues linked to responsible sourcing and effectively captured the challenges and opportunities ahead.



A word cloud of terms associated with ASC's values and goals. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with varying font sizes and colors (shades of blue and green). The most prominent words are 'responsible', 'independent', 'education', and 'partnership'. Other visible words include 'credible', 'environmental', 'robust', 'multi-stakeholder', 'transparent', 'worldwide', 'open', 'social', 'effective', 'efficient', 'solutions', 'change', 'impactful', and 'worldwide'.