

## The Aquaculture Newsflash

### In this issue

- Introduction by the CEO

#### *Planning and Updates*

- Planning
- ASC Logo, Chain of Custody and accreditation
- Salmon standard handed over to ASC
- ASC's certification programme is moving forward: first farms audited

#### *Certification*

- Farm pilots will start
- New technical working group on Group Certification

#### *Organisation*

- ASC Supervisory Board and Technical Advisory Group meets in Hong Kong and London
- New hires

#### *Meet us at...*

- Global ASC launch in Amsterdam

#### *The ASC at Work*

- Transparency

### **Introduction** by ASC's CEO

Dear ASC Friends and Colleagues,



I am excited to present the latest edition of ASC's Aquaculture Newsflash. Since the last issue there has been many positive achievements that I want to share with you. Since our last update we have again taken important steps towards becoming the leading global certification programme for responsible aquaculture. The first farm audits against the ASC Tilapia and Pangasius Standards have been concluded, many companies are seeking Chain of Custody certification and even more are seeking approval for the use of the logo on Tilapia and Pangasius products that will be available in 7 markets shortly: Germany, Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, France, Denmark and Spain. There has been a fantastic response to ASC's call for farm audit pilot partners, with over 80 farms coming forward. These pilots will give participants an understand of how well they meet the standards and will provide an opportunity to timely align their production to meet the growing market demand. In June ASC received the salmon standards from the Salmon Aquaculture Dialogues.in time for the pilot audits and farms from Norway, Chile, Scotland, British Columbia and New Zealand are all participating. We will start the accreditation process for salmon, bivalves and abalone in the coming days although this will not be concluded until certifier training has been undertaken in October. These timelines will allow for the launch of these this year. Last but not least, I am delighted to announce our plans to celebrate the

launch of the first Tilapia products into global markets. We will host an international press event in Amsterdam, the Netherlands on the 20<sup>th</sup> August with key partners, and supporters that have collectively ensured that the ASC reached this milestone. It will be an excellent chance for us collectively highlight the importance of responsibly produced farmed seafood and to share this message with the international media. I very much look forward to seeing some of you there and on sharing our next update shortly!

Best regards,  
Chris Nannes, Chief Executive Officer ASC

---

## **Planning update**

### **ASC farm certification**

ASC has already successfully launched its first two standards for Tilapia and Pangasius and the first audits have been undertaken in Malaysia, Indonesia and Honduras. With the recent handover of the salmon standard from the Salmon Aquaculture Dialogue, ASC has now received five out of the eight dialogue standards. Over the coming two months we will be conducting pilot audits at salmon, oyster, mussel, scallop and abalone farms globally. The pilots will test the certification documents that guide the work of the farms and certifiers as they undertake the audit. Once this work is finalized we aim to launch the bivalves, abalone and salmon standards before the year end.

### **ASC certified product launch**

The launch of the first ASC certified responsibly farmed products into the market is drawing closer. Certified Tilapia products are expected to be available in stores by the end of the summer. Certified Pangasius is anticipated to reach the market a couple of weeks later. Product will initially be available in seven European markets but this will be quickly followed with product launches in Canada. Further uptake in markets in Europe, in the USA and in the Asia Pacific is expected in 2013.

### **Transition of the remaining Aquaculture Dialogues to ASC Standards**

Three standards remain to be handed over from the Aquaculture Dialogues to the ASC. The Dialogue process for the trout and shrimp standards has concluded and handover awaits the finalization of their guidance documents. There is a commitment to deliver these standards by the end of 2012.

The development of the Seriola and Cobia standard is still in progress and an initial draft is expected before the end of 2012.

For the latest status of the standards, please check the Aquaculture Dialogues' [website](#).

---

## **ASC logo, Chain of Custody and accreditation update**



The ASC logo licence programme has got off to a flying start. The programme, which was officially launched in April this year, has already gained major interest from companies all over the globe. So far over 40 companies have either received approval to handle ASC products or are in the final stages of concluding this. Nineteen of these companies have also signed a logo licence agreement, and more are in the pipeline. And over 30 products have been approved

to use the logo and their release to market is pending the supply of certified Tilapia and Pangasius.

For companies that already hold either a MSC chain of custody or a logo licence, the ASC process has been designed to be as similar as possible. For existing chain of custody holders to be able to handle ASC certified seafood they should apply for a scope extension through their existing certifier. This is an administrative process only. The logo licensing scheme is almost identical, providing a simple access to the ASC logo for companies already familiar with the MSC scheme. For those not familiar they will benefit from being able to access a proven and tested system. An updated version of the [ASC Logo User Guide](#) can be downloaded from our website. The guide clearly set out the rules for the various use of the ASC logo. To use the ASC logo on-product, please contact Chris Bolwig on [ecolabel@msc.org](mailto:ecolabel@msc.org). For media interest in using the logo please contact [sun.brage@asc-aqua.org](mailto:sun.brage@asc-aqua.org).



To learn more about the ASC Chain of Custody certification process read the FAQ's on our [website](#).

To date, 13 certifiers have been accredited to conduct ASC Chain of Custody audits. And three certifiers have entered the accreditation process and are eligible to carry out assessments against the ASC Tilapia and Pangasius standards. An additional six certification companies are in earlier stages of their accreditation process. For the latest status, please check the ASI [website](#).

---

## Salmon Standards handed over to ASC

On June 13, the [Salmon Aquaculture Dialogue](#) handed over the [salmon standard](#) to the ASC and we would like to thank the hundreds of individuals, companies, NGOs and other organisations, who worked for over seven years for their invaluable commitment. "Farmed salmon has a great market reputation, but minimising its environmental and social footprint will be crucial in maintaining this important position into the future. Through meeting the ASC standard for responsible farming and communicating this to the market through ASC's on-product logo, farms can clearly show consumers that their seafood has been produced in a responsible manner" said Chris Ninnes, CEO of ASC.

Salmon farms from all corners of the world, from Norway to Scotland and from Chile to Australia and New Zealand, have shown great interest in joining the ASC program. Many of these farms are taking part in pilot audits that will start shortly. The first assessments maybe undertaken before the year end, but this timeline is dependent on satisfactory results from the pilot audits and certifiers successfully completing their accreditation process..

---

## ASC's certification programme moves forward: first farms audited

Tilapia farms in Malaysia, Indonesia and Honduras and Vietnamese Pangasius farms have all concluded their first audits. Further Tilapia audits are scheduled for Ecuador and Taiwan and in Vietnam for Pangasius. For more details see [here](#) and [here](#).

The first tilapia farm audit took place in May in Indonesia at the lake Toba farm of Regal Springs. In June, the Tan Hoa farm of Vinh Hoan corporation in Vietnam hosted the first farm audit against the ASC Pangasius Standard.

The outcomes of the first audits are currently being processed. Draft audit reports have been posted on the ASC website and final audit reports will also be publicly available. This

approach to transparency is a key tenet of the ASC and will both encourage and validate stakeholder input into the certification processes. This transparency is a unique feature of the ASC's aquaculture certification process.

The conclusion of these initial assessments has taken longer than usual because the first reports are scrutinized as part of the certifier's accreditation process. This process and the check ensure that the certifier has adequately justified the certification conclusion. As the ASC operates a third party certification scheme it neither undertakes the audits nor is engaged in the accreditation process. Audits are conducted by independent certification companies, which are contracted to undertake the audits by the farm. A further independent company ensures that the certifiers are qualified to undertake their work

This division of roles ensures that the ASC (the standard setter) does not become involved in certification decisions or in validating the work of the certifiers. The adherence to third party principles, that are consistent with both FAO and ISEAL, is another unique feature of the ASC certification scheme.

---

## **Farm pilots Bivalves, Abalone and Salmon ready to start**

Pilot audits will commence in the next few days. We have had a fantastic response to our call for farm audit pilot partners. Over 80 farms and more than 15 certifiers have asked to be involved. The initial work against the bivalve, abalone and salmon standards will be followed with pilots against the trout, shrimp and Seriola and Cobia standards when they are available to the ASC.

The results of the pilots will be used to further improve and finalise the Audit Manuals to ensure a smooth launch of the certification programmes. The final drafts of the Audit manuals will be presented for approval to the ASC Technical Advisory Group and then to ASC's Supervisory Board. for final sign off.

---

## **Technical Working on Group Certification formed**

Group certification will be an essential part of the ASC certification programme. It will allow small-holders such as family-owned farms to also benefit from becoming ASC certified. The participation of smaller sized operations will ensure that the ASC will fulfill its goal of operating an inclusive certification scheme with a wide range farms from all over the globe.

A first draft of the requirements is now ready to be reviewed by the Technical Working Group for Group Certification (TWG-GC). This group will consist of individuals representing NGOs, retailers and a range of experts from the field of certification and aquaculture. Their first meeting will take place shortly and the members list will be published on ASC's website. On conclusion of the review, the revised requirements will be posted at the ASC website for a period to invite public comment. This will be followed by a period of field testing. The project is expected to take about a year to conclude.

---

## **New ASC hires**

The ASC has recently added two new recruits to the standards team. Please join us in welcoming our two new staff!

Michiel Fransen is ASC's new Standards and Certification coordinator. He will be working closely with ASC's Standards director on different projects related to developing and maintaining all certification and accreditation related activities Michiel holds a BSc in Animal Biology and a MSc in Aquaculture & Fisheries from Wageningen University. He has previously worked as an Export Manager in the aquaculture feed sector and brings his

valuable aquaculture and commercial experience to the team. This experience will be very useful for ASC's future work on harmonizing the feed requirements used within the ASC standards.

Peter ter Heide, will join the ASC as an intern between July and December. He studies for his masters in aquaculture at Wageningen University and will be supporting ASC on various projects for the certification programme. Peter's passion for responsible aquaculture started during his time working on a fish farm in Cambodia. There he experienced the importance of aquaculture for people's livelihoods, as well as the adverse impacts it can bring to the environment and local communities. This was a trigger for him to start working towards a more responsible way of using natural resources. With his work at ASC, Peter hopes to contribute to furthering the responsible aquaculture sector for the future.

Job opportunities are posted at the ASC [website](#), when available.

---

## **ASC Supervisory Board and Technical Advisory Group meetings ahead**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> September, the ASC Supervisory Board will meet in Hong Kong. The key deliberations for this meeting will be around the development of a new strategic plan to chart the organization's development over the next three years.

ASC's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) next meeting will take place in London on 26-27 September. During this meeting, the group will select its official chair, vice-chair and two members who will represent the TAG on the ASC's Supervisory Board. Other topics to be discussed include ASC's ISEAL membership application, future work on harmonization, group certification and ASC's feed project.

---

## **Global ASC launch in Amsterdam!**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of August the ASC will hold an international event to celebrate the arrival of the first Tilapia products in the market. The event will feature producers, suppliers and retailers involved in farming and supply of certified and labeled Tilapia products into European markets. Key note presentations will be delivered outlining the importance of this key milestone to a large audience of media professionals that serve the trade and broad stream media covering national, regional and international channels. The event will be held in Amsterdam in the morning.

---

## **Call for Tender: the development of the ASC's auditor training programme**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of August the ASC launched a call for tenders from suitably qualified companies to develop the ASC auditor training programme. Further details can be found on the ASC's website.

---