

Driving environmental and social responsibility

Increased consumer demand for certified seafood influences more farms to undergo the rigorous assessment against the ASC standards, improve their farming practices and reduce negative environmental and social impacts.

“When done responsibly, aquaculture presents a viable solution to meeting the increasing demand for seafood from a growing global population. ASC certification helps ensure that aquaculture’s impact on wild fish populations, marine habitats, water quality and society can be significantly and measurably reduced.”

Jason Clay, SVP of Market Transformation, World Wildlife Fund

ASC’s seven principles

The ASC standards address the following seven principles:

- Legal compliance (obeying the law, the legal right to operate)
- Preservation of the natural environment and biodiversity
- Preservation of water resources
- Preservation of diversity of species and wild populations (e.g. preventing escapes which could pose a threat to wild fish)
- Responsible use of animal feed and other resources
- Ensuring good animal health (e.g. no unnecessary use of antibiotics and chemicals)
- Ensuring social responsibility (e.g. no child labour, health and safety of workers, freedom of assembly, community relations)

The ASC is an independent not for profit global organisation that was established in 2010.

The ASC works with aquaculture producers, seafood processors, retail and foodservice companies, scientists, conservation groups and the public to promote the best environmental and social aquaculture performance.

Our vision

A world where aquaculture plays a major role in supplying food and social benefits for mankind whilst minimising negative impacts on the environment.

Our mission

To transform aquaculture towards environmental sustainability and social responsibility using efficient market mechanisms that create value across the chain.

Find out more at www.asc-aqua.org

Aquaculture Stewardship Council
Transforming aquaculture

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Participation in ASC’s certification programme changes over time. All details within this document are accurate at the time of publication. This document is designed to provide a summary of ASC’s programme. The text of ASC’s official standard documents will prevail in all instances.





Assessing farm performance

The ASC's primary role is to manage the global standards for responsible aquaculture. In doing so, ASC adheres to the most rigorous international processes for certification programmes, including the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) guidelines and the ISEAL Code of Good Practice.

Independent third party certifiers audit farms against ASC's standards to assess whether they are operating responsibly.

"One benefit is the additional assurance and trust that this kind of certification provides to shareholders. It sends a positive message to sustainably-minded investors that they are in a business with a long term outlook and that their management team is doing things correctly."

Alejandro Tola Alvarez, Chief Technical Officer, GenoMar AS

Rewarding responsible aquaculture

Through ASC's certification and labelling programme responsible aquaculture is recognised and ASC certified farms are rewarded for their good practice when shoppers buy their ASC labelled seafood.

"We are proud to have a salmon farm ASC certified. Achieving this certification matches our values and aim to produce an excellent product in clean waters and a healthy environment. The certification process needed great focus throughout our organisation and has been a positive and challenging process that has been good for us."

Sven Amund Fjeldvær, Chief Executive, Lerøy Seafood Group



Traceability from farm to fork

Each company in the supply chain must be audited by an independent certifier to become chain of custody certified. Chain of custody ensures that ASC certified seafood is traceable through each step in the chain back to the certified farm.

"With the logo on the packaging, ASC recognises that our products were farmed responsibly and rewards us for this. This offers clarity for our suppliers and the customers in the shop: they receive confirmation that they are purchasing a responsibly produced product."

Harry Hoogendoorn, Managing Director, Queens