Aquaculture Stewardship Council
Project Coordinator (aligned ASC Farm Standard)

Responsible to: Head of Standards Team
Salary and benefits: TBD
Contract: 1 FTE
Location Flexible, terms to be agreed
Date written: September 2020

About ASC
ASC is an independent, not-for-profit organisation established in 2010 to set and operate global standards for responsible aquaculture. Certified farmed products are promoted to consumers through the use of its logo.

The aquaculture industry is growing strongly and is already supplying more than half of all seafood consumed worldwide, but this growing demand increases the environmental and social footprint associated with this expansion. The ASC certification and labelling programme incentivise improved farming practices by promoting the benefits of responsibly farmed seafood and encourages an industry towards achieving environmental sustainability and social responsibility.

We work with aquaculture producers, seafood processors, retail and foodservice companies, scientists, conservation groups and the public globally to promote the best environmental and social choice in farmed seafood. For more information go to www.asc-aqua.org.

The ASC is a growing organisation. We have around 75 people working from various countries, including the Netherlands, UK, Germany, Spain, Australia, Japan, China, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, Brazil and the US. There are five functional Departments covering: Standards and Science, Programme Assurance, Market development, Marketing and Communication, Administration/Governance. We operate an office in Utrecht (NL) and in London (UK) for staff based in these countries.

The Standards and Science (SaS) Department is made up of (currently) three Teams: 1) Standards Team, 2) Research Team and 3) Impacts Team. Collectively, these teams cover workstreams that deal with standard development and implementation, conducting research and assimilating data to serve multiple purposes both within and external to the organisation. The Department currently consists of 10 staff, each responsible for a number of specific projects as well as operational workflows.

Job summary
The purpose of the position is to ensure the development of the aligned ASC Farm Standard. The Alignment Project (see section below) aims at aligning all species-specific standards into one ASC Farm Standard, consisting of 3 Principle (Legal, Environmental, Social). Principle 1 and 3 are in a near-final state of development. Principle 2 of the ASC Farm Standard is currently under development. The ASC Project Coordinator will oversee the continued development of this Principle (2) and the completion and implementation of the overall Standard.

The role provides an opportunity to play a crucial part in ensuring the successful delivery of the most strategically important product for ASC over the next three years. The development is comprised of a significant programme of work that needs to be managed in a robust, transparent
and inclusive manner, and which requires coordination of tasks across all ASC Departments (e.g. Programme Assurance, Marketing Communications, Market Development).

**The Alignment Project**

ASC has 11 species-specific farm Standards that cover a wide range of species groups. Although these Standards are comparable in terms of higher-level issues that are addressed (legal, environmental and social), actual requirements for the farm differ to an extent between the Standards. This not only poses a reputational concern, but it also hinders the inclusion of new species into the programme as there is insufficient consistency amongst current Standards dealing with similar production system – especially on environmental-related topics. Unnecessarily different standard content also further complicates auditor training, CAB internal administration of ASC standards and certification oversight.

It is for these reasons that ASC is aligning its species-specific Farm Standards into a single ASC Farm Standard, which addresses four overarching areas:

1. Legal compliance (Principle 1)
2. Environmental responsibility, including Fish Welfare (Principle 2)
3. Social Responsibility (Principle 3)

Principle 1 (legal) and 3 (social) are already completed in terms of standard content development and approved by the ASC Board. They are currently being piloted on a number of entities globally.

It is intended that, for Principle 2, the aligned Farm Standard will have generalised requirements where possible for all farms, yet applying specificity where needed for certain culture-systems, or for the species being cultured. Once completed, the ASC Farm Standard will replace the current species-specific Standards, which will be gradually phased-out in accordance with a transition plan.

To the extent possible existing standard content will be used within the alignment. For some key impact areas, new content will be developed to reconcile differences between the existing approaches used within the standards or to develop content not previously considered within the existing standards (e.g. enhanced fish welfare considerations). This technical work is anchored within a number of Technical Working Groups (TWGs), all of which are anchored within the Technical Advisory Group (TAG), one of ASC’s governance bodies. The TWGs bring together expert stakeholders from for-profit and non-profit backgrounds, technical specialists and academics. Each TWG also has a member of the TAG assigned to it, who provides liaison between the TWG and the TAG and ‘sponsors’ the passage of the new content through the ASC’s governance process.

The outcome of the aligned Principle 2 will be subject to two rounds of public consultation where stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on its content. Broad support for the new standard will, to the extent possible, be sought - this ‘endorsement’ forms a key pillar of the ASC Programme’s credibility into the future.

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Role and responsibilities

The role of the position is to map, plan and coordinate the delivery of the various workstreams that are part of the alignment project. The project coordinator will be primarily responsible for progressing project activities and ensuring feedback and decisions are tracked and incorporated as needed. The role is expected to coordinate technical inputs from across the SaS department, as well as acting as a central role in coordinating inputs and cross-cutting activities with other Departments within ASC. The position will work within a small internal steering group for the overall development and routing of the project.

Strong project management skills will be needed to ensure content development adheres to the ASC Standard Setting Procedure combined with the ASC’s governance cycle (which are coordinated by ASC’s Senior Policy Development Manager), along with cross-department coordination of linking the outputs of the various TWGs into the wider alignment project, and associated guidelines and requirements.

Project management requires the ability to both see the big picture and make connections at a larger scale while being able to adhere to the details necessary to track activity and stay on timeline to produce expected deliverables. There is flexibility for the Project Coordinator to introduce procedures and solutions that are appropriate for the Farm Standard and other projects.

The successful candidate must be able to quickly gain a clear oversight of the development process and needed technical inputs from the SaS-teams, ASC Departments and ASC Governance bodies (e.g. TAG) and ensure coordination with relevant colleagues on this.

Once Principle 2 has been approved by the ASC’s Supervisory Board, the implementation process starts. During this process, implementation of preplanned and completed tasks need will be launched (e.g.: release of standard documents, guidance documents, transition planning for farms and internal and external training conducted etc.). The position will act as a coordinating role in this task.

The role of the Project Coordinator will not be solely focused on the Alignment project, though this is anticipated to consume the majority of the position. There will be an opportunity to learn and engage in other SaS projects and contribute as capacity permits, with the goal to become engaged in the Department as a critical team member to assume roles that fall within project coordination and related expertise as needed.

Main tasks include

- Overall project coordination of 1) the development, and 2) the implementation, of the aligned ASC Farm Standard and associated controlled documents, including but not limited to:
  - Coordinating an internal steering group for the project;
  - Mapping of the process-steps and activities needed for the various milestones in the standard-setting process (draft documents, consultation rounds, pilots) of the environmental component (Principle 2) and the completion of Principle 1 and 3 (legal and social component) following the pilots;
  - Coordination of, and contribution to, technical inputs across the various ASC Departments for the various process-steps and activities;
  - Liaison with other ASC Departments on internal communication on status, updates and input-needs;
  - Act as central coordinating point for stakeholder inquiries on the project & progress throughout the duration of the project;
- Document management and record keeping to facilitate compliance process;
- Working with Governance team to ensure successful governance process; and
- Ultimate coordination of implementation and release of approved Farm Standard
  - Additional tasks include participation in ASC calls and communications across teams as needed

**Key relationships**

In order to be successful in this role, you will need to work effectively with various colleagues from various Departments (SaS, PAT, Governance, MarComms, MDT) in ASC.

**Key qualifications**

- Proven project management skills – preferably of multi-disciplined projects;
- Comfortable with change and working in an evolving and dynamic environment;
- Comprehensive understanding of certification schemes;
- Understanding of issues in seafood sustainability;
- Preferably scientific and/or industry expertise within the field of aquaculture and/or seafood;
- Attention to detail and experience working with and developing quality management systems.
- Fluent in spoken and written English;
- Excellent presentation, communication and reporting skills;
- Able to think and work independently, systematically and to make pragmatic decisions;
- A personality that strives to be pro-active and result-oriented;
- A personality that operates with diplomacy and the ability to garner support and cooperation amongst colleagues;
- And not unimportant …. be an enthusiastic and fun colleague to work with!