

Fish Welfare Technical Working Group Terms of Reference

Established 2020

Introduction

The TAG Terms of Reference make provision for the formation of Technical Working Groups (TWGs) to support the technical and scientific work of the TAG. Typically, a TWG will be comprised of technical experts external to ASC's governance bodies with a member of the TAG acting as sponsor to facilitate communication and understanding between the TAG and the TWG and support the ASC technical lead. ASC's Secretariat will provide logistical support to the group and a technical coordinator from ASC will be appointed to provide the group with the technical resources. This may include a white paper to initiate discussion and a draft Standard following TWG deliberations. An external facilitator may be appointed for complex topics.

References

[ASC Standard Setting Procedure](#)

[ASC Metrics Methodology](#)

[ASC Complaints Procedure](#)

[TAG Terms of Reference](#)

1. Terms of Reference

1.1 Statement of purpose

The purpose of the Fish Welfare Technical Working group is to review existing ASC Standard Indicators and develop new indicators related to animal welfare for the current ASC certified species.

1.2 Terms of Reference

Specific tasks for the TWG are outlined below:

- To review animal welfare assessment methodologies/frameworks to identify an applicable method, assuring the intended impact, to apply to fish welfare within ASC certification;
- Identify relevant issues to be addressed to improve fish welfare within ASC certification;
- Develop indicators on the relevant welfare issues and consider potential impact on fish welfare;
- Identify and evaluate potential impact of possible indicators on aquaculture producers;
- To check potential indicators for auditability (supported by relevant ASC teams);
- Review scientific literature on topic to determine if there is sufficient information available to base indicators on;
- Identify knowledge gaps and advise ASC if and how to address these.

2. Membership

TWG membership shall aim to balance interests from the standard's key interest groups and geographical representation. All members should support the aims of the ASC, its Vision and Mission, and commit to engage constructively.

2.1 Technical competencies required:

TWG members are expected to have an understanding of or relevant experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Fish welfare science;
- Animal welfare science;
- Fish biology/fish behaviour;
- Aquaculture production;
- Veterinarian/fish health issues;

TWG members are expected to:

- Actively participate in TWG meetings;
- Review the meeting materials provided by ASC.
- Provide relevant expertise on related topics.
- [...]

2.2 TWG Members

The ASC Fish Welfare project differs from most ASC projects or revisions as it requires the development of a set of new indicators across all the different ASC species. Fish Welfare indicators require a species-specific approach to be meaningful and it entails a number of topics which all require a different, specific background or expertise. Therefore, the choice was made to have a fairly large TWG, to make sure the required fields of expertise are represented by scientists. This approach results in some trade-offs as ASC needs to keep the group at a workable size as well.

The ASC secretariat is aware of the following issues:

- Producer representation is low in the TWG. Although many of the TWG members have practical aquaculture experience, ASC recognises that the current representation of producers within the TWG is limited. ASC has taken several steps to resolve this:
 - 1) Producers will be approached to review TWG outcomes in separate meetings;
 - 2) There will be a targeted producer consultation workshop during public consultation;
 - 3) ASC will reflect on the TWG process after the first TAG deadlines for public consultation. Most likely, the upcoming TWG meetings will be held with smaller subgroups with representatives with the specific expertise required for the meeting topic. External stakeholders and experts will be invited to contribute and participate to these meetings. The content developed will frequently be reviewed by the full TWG.
 - 4) ASC will look for additional producer representatives during this TWG reflection process.
- The TWG currently lacks representation from the Asian region. ASC will actively seek input from Asian stakeholders during public consultation and ASC is project partner in a study investigating fish welfare issues in Pangasius,

together with Vietnamese producers amongst others. Findings from this partnership are taken back to the TWG.

- Not all the ASC species are equally represented in the Fish Welfare TWG. Fish welfare science is highly developed on Salmon production and much less on other species which is reflected in the TWG composition. For every potential issue and indicator, applicability and appropriate species-specific requirements are carefully considered. Evidently, ASC will actively look for feedback on these species during public consultation.

Table 1: TWG Members

Name	Role	Organisation	Stakeholder sector	Primary region represented
Claudia Venegas	TAG Sponsor		TAG sponsor	Chile
Pablo Almazan Rueda	Senior researcher	CIAD Mazatlán Unit	Academia	Mexico
Culum Brown	Professor of Fish Biology	Macquarie University Sydney	Academia	Australia
Victoria Camilieri-Asch	Postdoctoral Research Fellow	QUT Centre for Transformative Biomimetics in Bioengineering	Academia	Australia
Paul Hardy-Smith	Principal Veterinarian/Managing Director	Panaquatic Health Solutions Pty Ltd	Veterinarian	Australia
Sunil Kadri	CEO Honorary Senior Lecture Honorary Adjunct Professor Chairman Director of International Business Development	Aquaculture Innovation Institute of Aquaculture Stirling Universidad Austral de Chile STIM Scotland Bluegrove/CageEye	Industry/academia	Chile
Dennis Lohmann	Head of Product Management Fish	Baader	Industry	Germany
Catarina Martins	Chief Technology and Sustainability Officer	Mowi	Industry	Norway
Priya Motupalli	Sustainable Agriculture Lead	IKEA	Retail	Sweden
Arve Nilsen	Researcher, Aquaculture, Wild Fish and Fish Welfare	Norwegian Veterinary Institute	Veterinarian	Norway
Michail Pavlidis	Professor	University of Crete	Academia	Greece

Tommaso Petochi	Researcher	ISPRA – Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research	Academia	Italy
Rohana Subasingue	Independent Consultant			UK
Hans Van de Vis	Senior Scientist Fish Welfare	Wageningen UR	Academia	Netherlands
Douglas Waley	Fish Welfare Programme Leader	Eurogroup for Animals	NGO	Belgium
Morris Villarroel	Professor of Animal Welfare	Technical University of Madrid	Academia	Spain
Ruth Hoban	Sustainability Manager	New England Seafood International	Industry	UK
Susanna Lybæk	Scientific advisor	Dyrevernalliansen	NGO	Norway

3. Reporting requirements

The TWG will report to the TAG annually. Materials made available for review will include:

- TWG recommendations;
- Public consultation questions;
- Meeting minutes (if desired).

4. Duration and review times

4.1 The overview below described the timeline and the milestones for the TWG activities related to the Fish Welfare Project.

Table 2: TWG timeline

Date	Activity	Outcome/Deliverable
Sept 2020 – May 2021	TWG meetings	Recommended approaches + targeted questions for public consultation
July 2021	TAG sponsor report progress to TAG	Approval to proceed
September – October 2021	PUBLIC CONSULTATION	
July 2021 – May 2022	TWG meetings	Full draft fish welfare indicators
July 2022	TAG meeting	TAG draft approval for public consultation
Sept 2022 – Oct 2022	PUBLIC CONSULTATION	

Sept 2022 – May 2023	Processing feedback + piloting	Final indicator list
July 2023	TAG meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final approval