

**ASC Alignment Project**  
**Terms of Reference (ToR) – Ad Hoc Advisory Group for Water Use**

This document is publicly available on the ASC website.

**Document history**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Effective date</b>	<b>Description of amendment</b>	<b>Affected section / page</b>
0.1	08/31/2021	ToR Drafted	n/a

**1. Water Use Criterion**

**1.1. Problem Statement**

The Aligned Farm Standard, currently under development, will bring all of ASC’s 11 species-specific standards into one standard that will be applicable to all ASC-certified farms. Draft indicators have been developed through a combination of reviewing current species standards and through technical working group recommendation. Initial water use indicators were developed internally by ASC staff based on existing requirements. Based on feedback received through the first public consultation period, the technical advisory group (TAG) has recommended further revision by an ad-hoc advisory group (AAG) to ensure appropriate elements and metrics are included for the next round of consultation.

**1.1. Project Approach**

**Objective**

To review draft indicators under the Water Use criterion and determine where adjustments are necessary in either content or metrics requirements.

**Expected Outcome:**

The outcome of the review will result in:

- 1) Incorporation of expert views on water use requirements and indicators for aquaculture farms
- 2) Publication of environmentally relevant indicators within the Aligned Standard.

**2. Advisory Group – Water Use**

ASC certifies farms across the globe and significant variation occurs in water stress and environmental risks related to freshwater use across regions. To create a standard relevant

across all species and production regions, expert feedback is sought. Expert advice will help ensure that metrics are meaningful and relevant.

## **2.1. Objective of the Advisory Group**

To provide ASC with technical support on revision of water use indicators.

## **2.2. Role and Responsibilities of the Advisory Group**

- a) Review the current water use indicators and feedback received via public consultation
- b) Recommend when the final draft is ready to be submitted to the TAG
- c) Attend the Advisory Group meetings or other relevant meetings as required by the Project Leader
- d) Review and address comments received during the second round of public consultation (if necessary)

## **3. Selection of the Advisory Group**

Members of the Advisory Group will be selected according to the following criteria:

### **3.1. Academic qualifications**

Advanced degree or recognised professional experience in Natural Resource Management, Environmental Monitoring, Biology, Sustainable Management, Fisheries/Agriculture, Aquaculture, or a related subject.

### **3.2. Experience**

- Qualified background regarding water use in the context of resource use
- Knowledge of freshwater resource use, ecology, aquaculture production, or other relevant impact areas
- Successful track record on making policy and implementation recommendations
- Strong analytical and strategic thinking skills and demonstrated research skills
- Ability to review and comment on documents submitted by the internal working group in the working language agreed for the Advisory Group
- Preferably with experience in the aquaculture industry (work or research experience), or other relevant industries

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### **3.3. Competencies**

- Effective communication and interpersonal skills
- Strong analytical ability and report writing skills
- Good understanding of transparency and governance issues
- Good understanding of the environmental issues around aquaculture farms
- Demonstrated cultural sensitivity and sound judgment
- Fluency in spoken and written English

#### 4. Timelines, including expected time from Advisory Group

The ASC strives to work in a cost and time-efficient manner. Meeting schedules will be set to allow participation at convenient times and will aim for full participation. Work will be conducted by email or teleconference with no requirement for in-person meetings.

##### 4.1. Hours of Dedications

It is not expected that the Advisory Group will need to dedicate more than an hour per week on average to this work.

##### 4.2. Start Date

The expected start-date for the Advisory Group is the beginning of September 2021, with targeted completion of the first revision by October 10, 2021.

##### 4.3. Project timeline

Step	Description	Timing
1 – Review draft indicators, including metrics	Review current indicators and determine if coverage is sufficient to ensure environmental impacts are evaluated. Determine if current metrics are reasonable and environmentally relevant	Sept 2021
2 – Draft updated indicators for TAG review	Make changes as necessary to draft indicators for review by TAG	Oct 2021
3 – Review consultation feedback (if necessary)	Review comments received during 2022 consultation period and make determine if further changes are needed to the draft indicators	May, June 2022
4 – Draft final indicators for TAG approval (if necessary)	Based on feedback received, adjust indicators, and create a final version for TAG review.	June 2022

5 – Final standard (if necessary)	Review results of consultation and pilot project and determine if changes are required	Q4 2022
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## 5. Others

### 5.1 Expenses and Remuneration of the Advisory Group

Participation in the Advisory Group takes place on a voluntary non-paid basis. ASC covers reasonable travel and accommodation expenses related to the work of the Advisory Group upon submission of the respective invoices and receipts, and if expenses are agreed upon in advance.

### 5.2 Language

The working language of the Advisory Group is English.

### 5.3 Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

- All documents prepared by or presented to the Advisory Group are assumed to be public unless identified otherwise by ASC and agreed by the Advisory Group.
- The Advisory Group operates according to Chatham House Rules so, members of the AAG are free to use the non-confidential information received but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the individual(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.
- The default approach of the Advisory Group is that the non-attributable content of discussions and papers is not confidential unless so specified.
- Members are expected to declare any conflicts of interest, where they arise.
- Participation from a wide range of stakeholders, including producers, is valuable to the development process. Involvement in AAGs does not preclude other aspects of ASC participation, for example undergoing certification or conducting work on behalf of a certified company, given confidentiality is respected.

## 6. Terms and Definitions

For consistency and convenience, some of the terms in this procedure are adopted and/ or adapted from the ISEAL Standard Setting Code as well as the ISO/ IEC Guide 2:2004.

Consensus: General agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important stakeholder group.

NOTE: Consensus should be the result of a process seeking to consider the views of interested parties, particularly those directly affected, and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. It need not imply unanimity.

## 7. Contact Information

- Key contact person: Katherine Dolmage – Senior Research Coordinator
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