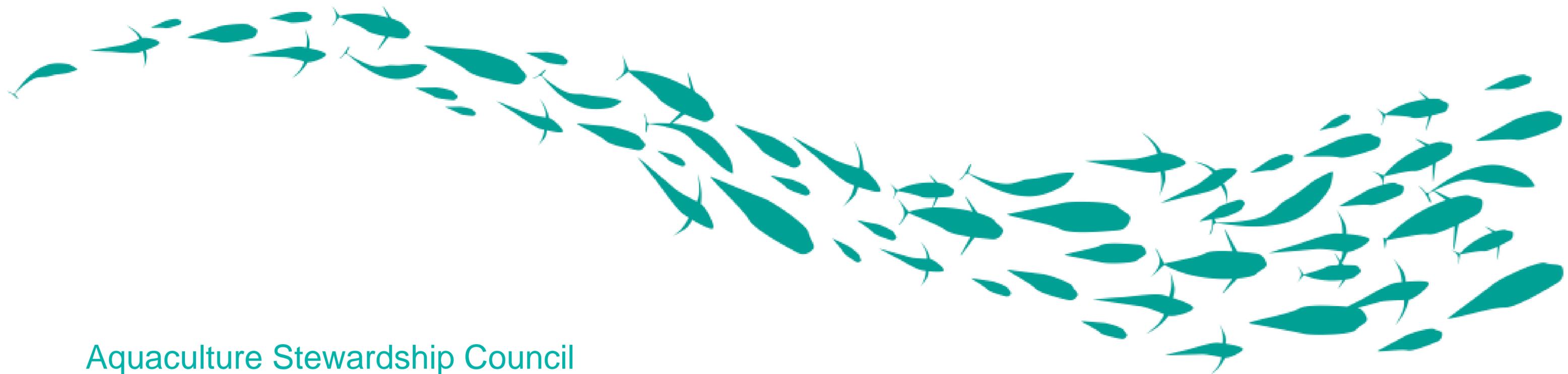


Aquaculture and Protected Habitats



Advisory Panel – Meeting 1
20 September 2021



Aquaculture Stewardship Council
www.asc-aqua.org

Agenda



1. Welcome & Introductions, review of TOR & desired outcomes
2. Management types & Hierarchy of designations
3. Application of 75% rule
4. Review of ASC proposed indicators
5. Initial discussion on Aquaculture Derogation
6. Next Steps

Why is ASC doing this?



- 11 Standards developed over 10 years with different habitat related requirements -> merging to a single Farm Standard
- Reduce subjectivity
- Clearly define conservation intent and role of responsible aquaculture
- Build credibility for ASC's requirements

TOR & Desired Outcomes



- Review current status of PA and other habitat designations
- Understand challenges with siting aquaculture operations
- Review draft indicators for aligned Farm Standard
- Collaborative process
- Develop external guidelines that define the compatibilities of aquaculture activities with Protected Areas and other ecologically important habitats

Management Types and Designations



IUCN defines a protected area as: *“A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values”*.

The **Convention on Biological Diversity** has its own definition: *“a geographically defined area which is designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives”*.

There is tacit agreement between IUCN and the Secretariat of the CBD that the two are **equivalent**.

IUCN’s guidance includes some associated principles.

*“...for IUCN, only those areas where the main objective is conserving nature can be considered protected areas; this can include many areas with other goals as well, at the same level, but **in the case of conflict, nature conservation will be the priority**”*

Protected areas are listed on the World Database on Protected Areas and the UN List of Protected Areas – except not all of them are and not all the things on the list meet the definitions above...

Management categories



No	Name	Description
Ia	Strict nature reserve	Strictly protected areas set aside to protect biodiversity and possibly geological/geomorphological features, where human visitation, use and impacts are strictly controlled and limited to ensure conservation values.
Ib	Wilderness area	Usually large unmodified or slightly modified areas, retaining their natural character and influence, without permanent or significant human habitation, protected and managed to preserve their natural condition.
II	National park	Large natural or near natural areas set aside to protect large-scale ecological processes, along with characteristic species and ecosystems, which also provide environmentally and culturally compatible spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities.
	Natural monument	Areas set aside to protect a natural monument, e.g., a landform, sea mount, cavern, geological feature or even a living feature such as an ancient grove.
IV	Habitat/ species management area	Areas that protect particular species or habitats. Many need regular, active interventions to address the requirements of particular species.
V	Protected landscape or seascape	Areas where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced a distinct character with significant ecological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding this interaction is vital to sustaining conservation values.
VI	Protected areas with sustainable use of natural resources	Areas, generally large and in mostly natural condition, which conserve ecosystems and habitats, together with associated cultural values and where a proportion are under traditional natural resource management systems.

Governance types



Type	Description
A	A government body (such as a Ministry or Park Agency reporting directly to the government) manages the protected area and determines its management aims and objectives.
B	Complex institutional mechanisms and processes are employed to share management authority and responsibility among a plurality of (formally and informally) entitled governmental and non-governmental actors.
C	Protected areas under individual, cooperative, NGO or corporate control and/or ownership set up and managed under not-for-profit or for-profit schemes.
D	Includes two main subsets: (1) indigenous peoples' areas and territories established and run by indigenous peoples and (2) community conserved areas established and run by local communities.

Other “groups” of protected areas or priority conservation sites



- **UNESCO World Heritage Site**
- **UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Reserve**
- **Ramsar sites**
- **Indigenous protected areas**
- **ICCAs – territories of life**
- **Ecological corridors**
- **Key Biodiversity Areas**
- **AZE sites**
- **HCV sites**

75% Conservation Rule



IUCN recommends that **up to 25 percent** of land or water within a protected area can be managed for other purposes *so long as these are compatible with the primary management objective of the protected area.*

Note that this is 25 percent of the total area, not 25 percent for each aquaculture project; it is a cumulative total. For instance:

- Tourist lodges and camps in category II national parks
- Villages remaining within otherwise strictly protected areas
- Small strictly protected core areas in what is otherwise a cultural landscape
- Areas where fishing is permitted within what is otherwise a strictly protected area

ASC Proposed Indicators



Scope: Every Unit of Certification

Intent - Farm sites maintain coastal and riparian habitats adjacent to or within farm perimeters to preserve essential ecosystem functions and respect the management objectives of Protected Areas and ecologically important habitats on which threatened and/or protected species and other wildlife depend.

ASC Proposed indicators



Indicators	
Indicator 2.2.1	The UoC shall be located at a distance from an open coastline, lagoon or lake, or confined natural watercourses that provides protection to the adjacent ecosystem from farm operations as defined through environmental assessment (<i>see Annex 3 – under development</i>) or maintain natural buffer zones from those waterbodies.
Indicator 2.2.2	The UoC shall demonstrate through environmental assessment (<i>see Annex 3 – under development</i>) that existing buffer zones maintain essential ecosystem functions when the buffer zones are shorter/narrower than the ones prescribed in 2.2.1
Indicator 2.2.3	The UoC shall demonstrate through environmental assessment (<i>see Annex 3 – under development</i>) that the farm’s structures do not impede animal habitats on which threatened and/or protected species depend.

ASC Proposed indicators



Indicators	
Indicator 2.2.4	The UoC shall not be sited (partially, or fully) in a Protected Area (PA), unless the farm, or aquaculture activity, is in compliance with the management plan and objectives of the PA, and the farm was built legally prior to the designation of the PA or the designation permits aquaculture activities.
Indicator 2.2.5	The UoC shall not construct or expand facilities in sensitive, critical habitats or High Conservation Value Areas (HCVA) unless the UoC can demonstrate that its impacts are compatible with the environmental and social values identified for the HCVA.
Indicator 2.2.6	The UoC shall, if built or permitted before May 1999, successfully rehabilitate mangrove or other wetland loss at a surface area as is determined by the environmental assessment (2.2.1), or the national/state/local authority plans/list, or 50% of the lost surface area (whichever is greater).

ASC Proposed indicators



Indicators	
Indicator 2.2.7	The UoC shall not have constructed or expanded its facilities in mangrove and other wetland habitats, after May 1999.
Indicator 2.2.8	The UoC may construct pumping stations, water pipes or canals in mangrove or other wetland habitats after May 1999, if permitted by the relevant authorities and provided that an equivalent surface area is successfully rehabilitated.

Aquaculture Derogations

FARMED RESPONSIBLY



By management category	Freshwater	Coastal	Offshore	Mangrove
Category Ia	Aquaculture would not generally be expected to take place; some derogations by use may apply in rare cases			
Category Ib	Such areas explicitly recognise the active management role) of Indigenous peoples and local communities, so in cases where traditional aquaculture is in place, this fits within the philosophy. If new small-scale aquaculture projects were critical to maintaining communities, these might be acceptable. Permissible if: (1) not undermining nature conservation values, (2) taking part in existing locations where small-scale settlement is in place and (3) it maintains the 75% rule			
Category II	Aquaculture will generally not be expected, possible exceptions might be small-scale operations to service tourist lodges. Permissible in these rare cases if: (1) not undermining nature conservation values and (2) it maintains the 75% rule.			
Category III	Most category III protected areas are small, protecting a particular feature, and therefore unlikely to contain or be suitable for aquaculture. Therefore while some of the derogations by use may apply here, this will be unusual			
Category IV	Will often require ongoing active management. Permissible if: (1) traditional aquaculture practices are so integrated into the ecology that they have important associated biodiversity values; (2) the method is traditional to the area (i.e. not a “tradition” imported from elsewhere).			
Category V	Permissible if: (1) not undermining nature conservation values, (2) the method is traditional to the area (i.e. not a “tradition” imported from elsewhere) and (3) it maintains the 75% rule.			Never permissible if involves clearing mangroves
Category VI	Permissible if: (1) not undermining nature conservation values and (2) it maintains the 75% rule.			Never permissible if involves clearing mangroves
HCV	Permissible if: (1) the area does not have other designations (i.e. is not also a protected area, in which case refer to the relevant PA category), (2) aquaculture is not undermining nature conservation values, (3) monitoring is in place to ensure that (2) is adhered to.			
By use	Freshwater	Coastal	Offshore	Mangrove
Traditional use	Permissible in most protected areas (although only rarely in categories Ia and II) if: (1) it is not undermining nature conservation values, (2) it is traditional to the area itself (i.e. not a “tradition” imported from elsewhere) and (3) it maintains the 75% rule.			
Pre-existing use	Permissible if: (1) aquaculture is not undermining nature conservation values, (2) monitoring is in place to ensure that (1) is adhered to and (3) it maintains the 75% rule			
As a conservation strategy	Permissible in most PAs if it is reducing pressure on other species	?	?	?

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Next Steps



- Feedback incorporated into revised indicators and development of guidelines
- Clear identification of sticking points
- Draft / discussion points for review shared
- Second meeting to be convened late October



THANK YOU!

