

ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements

Version 2.1

August 2017

Multi-site Certification Requirements are added and become
effective from 1 December 2017

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RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE REQUIREMENTS

Aquaculture Stewardship Council holds responsibility for this document.

Versions Issued

Version No.	Date	Description Of Amendment
1.0	13 March 2012	Approved by the ASC's Supervisory Board
2.0	1 December 2015	Document revised to conform to ISO 17-65:2012, ISO 19011:2011, changes to the requirements for social auditors, changes to sections on chain of custody to conform to MSC requirements, preparation of an ASC feed standard, and other changes in response to variation requests by CABs, recommendations for improvements by stakeholders, and minor editorial changes.
2.1	1 August 2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Adding new requirements for multi-site certification, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1.1.1: Added clarification requirements regarding the list of documents and records 17.1: Added requirements for multi-site unit of certification to replace current provisions 17.1.5 and 17.1.7 Annex A: Added new definitions related to Multi-site certification (denoted with *) Annex B: Added Table D – Requirements for internal auditors; added new requirements for Lead auditors in Table B – B18 and B21 Annex E: New annex containing requirements for CABs to audit multi-site clients. Updating ASC office address on pages (i) and (17).

This version 2.1 includes a new methodology for multi-site certification and certified entities are not affected, therefore there is no transition period is required.

The next version is envisaged to be released when the (new) Group certification methodology is launched.

ABOUT THE ASC

ASC is the acronym for Aquaculture Stewardship Council, an independent not for profit organisation. The ASC was founded in 2010 by the [WWF](#) (World Wildlife Fund) and [IDH](#) (The Sustainable Trade Initiative) to manage the global standards for responsible aquaculture. The ASC standards were first developed by the Aquaculture Dialogues, a series of roundtables initiated and coordinated by the WWF.

What the ASC is

The ASC's certification programme and logo recognise and reward responsible aquaculture.

The ASC is a global organisation working internationally with aquaculture producers, seafood processors, feed producers, retail and foodservice companies, scientists, conservation groups, social NGO's and the public to promote the best environmental and social choice practices in aquaculture.

What the ASC does

Working with partners, the ASC runs a programme to transform the world's aquaculture markets by promoting the best environmental and social aquaculture performance. The ASC seeks to increase the availability of aquaculture products certified as sustainably and responsibly produced. The ASC's consumer logo provides third party assurance of conformity with production and chain of custody standards and makes it easy for everyone to choose ASC certified products.

What the ASC will achieve

The ASC is transforming aquaculture practices globally through:

- Credibility:** Standards developed according to [ISEAL](#) Alliance and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) guidelines, multi-stakeholder, open and transparent, science-based performance metrics.
- Effectiveness:** Minimising the environmental and social footprint of commercial aquaculture by addressing key impacts while increasing farm efficiency.
- Added value:** Connecting the farm to the marketplace by promoting responsible practices through a consumer logo.

OVERVIEW OF THE ASC SYSTEM

The ASC system is made up of 3 components:

1. ASC Standards

The ASC works with independent third-party certification organisations that provide certification services for operations that grow one or more of the species or produce products for which the standards have been approved by ASC.

The species groups were chosen because of their potential impact on the environment and society, their market value and the extent to which they are traded internationally or their potential for such trade. The species covered at this time include: abalone, bivalves (clams, oysters, mussels and scallops), cobia, freshwater trout, pangasius, salmon, seriola, shrimp, and tilapia.

Through the Aquaculture Dialogues more than 2,000 people have participated in the development of the ASC Standards including fish farmers, seafood processors, retailers, foodservice operators, NGOs, government agencies and research institutes. Universal, open and transparent, the Aquaculture Dialogues focused on minimising the key environmental and social impacts of aquaculture. Each Dialogue produced requirements for one or a range of major aquaculture species groups. The standard creation process followed guidelines of the ISEAL Alliance the *ISEAL Code of Good Practices for Setting Social and Environmental Standard* and *FAO Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification*. The standards are science-based, performance-based and metrics-based and will apply globally to various production systems, covering many types, locations and scales of operations.

The standards are owned and managed by the ASC as an independent standard setting organisation. Review and revision of existing standards as well as development of new standards follow strict guidelines, as set out above.

The ASC is developing standards for feed, which will complement the species standards and support the recognition of responsible aquaculture.

2. Independent 3rd Party Audits Conducted by accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies (CAB)

Applicants that seek ASC certification hire a CAB (Conformity Assessment Body). Only clients that are certified by a CAB accredited by the ASC appointed accreditation body are eligible to sell certified product into a recognized chain of custody and have that product eligible to carry the ASC logo.

Accreditation is the process by which CABs are evaluated to determine their competency to provide certification to the ASC standards. The accreditation process includes annual evaluations of each accredited CAB and the ASC audits they perform. The ASC works with an exclusively appointed accreditation body to provide accreditation services for the ASC.

The ASC appointed accreditation body (AAB) is responsible for evaluations of CABs against the requirements in this document. All accreditation decisions are taken independently by the AAB in accordance with ISO 17011. The independence of the ASC, AAB and the CAB ensures that high quality, objective audits and certification decisions are performed without bias for all clients around the world.

3. MSC Chain of Custody (CoC) Certification and the ASC logo

The ASC logo has been developed for use by certified and licenced farms, processors and distributors so that all parts of the value chain and especially consumers can easily identify ASC certified product(s). The use of the ASC logo can be applied only to products that are sold through a consecutive, certified chain of custody that ensures traceability of certified products from production to final point of sale. For the ASC, chain of custody is certified through application of the MSC chain of custody system. Only products that originate in ASC certified operations and are sold through an MSC certified chain of custody, are eligible to carry the ASC logo. Companies that are already certified to the MSC Chain of Custody standard and wish to also handle ASC certified products, may request a scope extension from their CAB in order to add ASC products onto the scope of their existing CoC certificate.

Just as with the ASC standards, the ASC logo is owned by the ASC which regulates all aspects of its use.

INTRODUCTION TO THIS DOCUMENT

The purposes of the ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements [this document] are:

1. To establish requirements for certification to enable all Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) to operate in a consistent and controlled manner.
2. To establish requirements for accreditation of CABs by the ASC appointed accreditation body.
3. To provide the transparency that is required of an international certification scheme for it to have credibility with potential stakeholders, including governments, international governmental bodies (e.g. regulatory bodies, managers), CABs, suppliers of aquaculture products, non-governmental organisations and consumers.
4. To provide documentation to assure long-term continuity and consistency of the delivery of ASC certification.

The ASC's appointed accreditation body will set the scope of accreditation for CABs with reference to the ASC certification requirements described in this document.

The ASC certification and accreditation requirements have been developed to be in full compliance with the FAO *Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification*.

ASC is a member of the ISEAL Alliance and its operations are managed to be in conformity with ISEAL codes of good practice including the Standard Setting Code, the Assurance Code and the Impacts Code. More information is available on the [ISEAL Alliance website](#).

The major headings in this document are designed to parallel the major sections of the ISO 17065 (International Organisation for Standardization). This structure is repeated in parts A and B of this document.

The ASC's certification and accreditation requirements are set out in two parts, which apply to all CABs conducting ASC audits:

- Part A – General certification requirements
- Part B –Operational certification requirements

Chain of custody for ASC certified products is assured through MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) chain of custody certification, to which the ASC CoC requirements have been added. Organisations that wish to trade in ASC certified products and make claims that these products are certified (including use of the ASC trademarks) must first be certified against the MSC chain of custody standard.

Primary producers that are certified to an ASC standard may sell products within the scope of their certificate as certified without being certified to the MSC chain of custody system. The requirements that apply to these sales are described in this document.

This document has been developed to address the specific needs of the certification to ASC Standards. The ASC gratefully acknowledges the support of MSC, FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and SAAS (Social Accountability Accreditation Services) in lending their experience and permitting elements of their systems to be incorporated into this document.

The CAR is subject to periodic review to incorporate revisions based on developing accreditation and certification practices. As with the ASC standards, the review and revision interval is every three to five years. During this period, the ASC collects and analyses comments submitted by stakeholders and interested parties. Feedback that is critical may lead to an earlier and revision of the document.

All planned review and revision of the CAR will be announced to invite public feedback with relevant documents published on the ASC website.

NOTE: This document has been developed for technical use by accredited and applicant Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs), therefore casual readers may find that it is not easy to read. For general readers it is recommended that the ASC website be reviewed prior to this document.

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PART A – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. SCOPE

Part A of the ASC's Certification and Accreditation Requirements sets out the activities that all CABs shall undertake in carrying out certification audits of operations that wish to make a claim that the product(s) they are selling are certified to the ASC's Standards, and/or to use the ASC logo to promote a product.

2. NORMATIVE REFERENCES

The documents listed below are part of the ASC Certification Requirements.

For references which have a specific date or version number, later amendments or revisions do not apply. CABs are encouraged to review the most recent editions and any guidance documents available to gain further insight.

For references without dates or version numbers, the latest edition of the document referred to applies.

- a) Endorsed ASC Standards; See www.asc-aqua.org
- b) ISO 17065 Conformity Assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services
- c) ISO 19011 Guidelines for auditing management systems

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 All definitions are in Annex A.

4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Requirement of accreditation

- 4.1.1 A CAB shall have had its application to the ASC appointed accreditation body for accreditation to the scope of the certification it wishes to provide, accepted before starting to sell certification services.
- 4.1.2 A CAB shall only award certificates once it is accredited and only within the scope of its accreditation.
- 4.1.3 A CAB shall recognise that certificate holders that have been certified by other accredited CABs conform to relevant ASC standards.
- 4.1.4 A CAB shall authorize the ASC appointed accreditation body to publish the CAB's company name, full address and contact persons' details.
- 4.1.5 A CAB shall authorize the ASC appointed accreditation body to publish, including on its website, witness assessment reports, surveillance reports, and final assessment reports.

4.2 Conformity to ISO 17065 and the ASC requirements

- 4.2.1 All CABs shall conform to the requirements of ISO 17065 and all other ASC requirements relevant to the scope of accreditation applied for or held.
- 4.2.2 CABs shall conform to the ASC requirements in the case of a conflict with ISO 17065.

4.3 Normative annexes

- 4.3.1 CABs shall follow in full all normative annexes to the ASC Certification Requirements if they are used.

4.4 ISO 19011

- 4.4.1 CAB audit personnel should follow guidance on auditing provided in ISO 19011.

4.5 Compliance with legal requirements

- 4.5.1 CABs shall comply with the legal requirements in the countries in which they operate.
- 4.5.2 Key personnel shall show understanding of applicable legislation and regulations.

4.6 Certification Decision-Making Entity

- 4.6.1 The CAB's decision-making entity shall authorise any changes to the terms of certification.

4.7 Communication with the ASC

- 4.7.1 CABs shall follow the communication requirements in Annex D.

4.8 The ASC CAB calibration workshops

- 4.8.1 CABs shall participate in calibration workshops organised by the ASC and annual CAB calibration sessions.

4.9 Contract

- 4.9.1 The CAB shall have a written contract with the farm, company or other entity seeking certification.
- 4.9.2 Prior to signing a contract, the CAB shall verify:
 - 4.9.2.1 That the applicant is not already certified.
 - a) If the applicant is currently certified the CAB shall follow the certificate transfer requirements in Section 4.11 below.

- 4.9.2.2 That the applicant has not had an ASC certificate withdrawn or has failed an ASC certification audit within the previous twelve (12) months.
- 4.9.3 The contract shall be signed prior to the commencement of the audit.
- 4.9.4 The contract shall specify:
 - 4.9.4.1 The deliverables that the CAB will produce.
 - 4.9.4.2 The certification timeline, including reporting timeline as specified in the Annex C, that the CAB will meet.
 - 4.9.4.3 That ASC retains the right to change the ASC standards and certification requirements and that certification is conditional on conforming to new or revised standards and new or revised certification requirements within the timeframes established by the ASC.
 - 4.9.4.4 That the ASC shall have full access to all audit products including audit evidence, audit findings and audit reports.
 - a) This shall include confidential information.
 - 4.9.4.5 That ASC, MSC and the ASC appointed accreditation body shall have the right to observe audits conducted by the CAB.
 - 4.9.4.6 That the ASC appointed accreditation body shall have the right to conduct audits of the certificate holder, including unannounced audits, for the purpose of monitoring CAB conformity.
 - 4.9.4.7 That the CAB be informed of any previous ASC audits conducted within the previous 12 months.
 - a) The CAB shall be provided with audit reports.
 - 4.9.4.8 The complaint procedures of the CAB by including a copy or by reference to publically available documents.
 - 4.9.4.9 An explanation of when and how the ASC appointed accreditation body and the ASC may be engaged in case the complaint process escalates beyond the CAB authority
 - 4.9.4.10 That the applicant has the right to raise their concerns or object to any of the proposed audit team members.
 - 4.9.4.11 The applicant's responsibility to make known to the public of any upcoming ASC audit at their premises (e.g. initial, surveillance, extension or

recertification) to allow for interested parties and stakeholders to provide their input to and comment during the audit process.

4.9.4.12 That the client has the responsibility to inform the CAB if any changes are made in the operation that may require oversight from the CAB. This can include but is not limited to:

- a) Changes in species farmed.
- b) Changes in the number of sites.
- c) Administration of medication to some or all sites.
- d) Changes that may impact the start of the chain of custody.

4.10 Use of the ASC and CAB trademarks

4.10.1 All uses of the ASC trademark(s) by a CAB shall be subject to an ASC logo licence agreement.

4.10.2 The CAB shall have documented procedures for the issue and use of any logo or trademark of the CAB (ISO 17065 4.1.3.1) for the ASC program, including procedures for pre-publication review and authorisation by the CAB of all uses of the CAB's logo by ASC certificate holders.

4.11 Transfer of Certificates

4.11.1 A decision to transfer a certificate shall be voluntary by the certificate holder.

4.11.2 Issuing of a certificate to a former certificate holder after expiry or termination of the certificate

4.11.2.1 An ASC-accredited CAB may issue an ASC certificate to a new client at any time after the expiry or termination of the client's existing certificate with another CAB, based on a full assessment according to ASC certification requirements.

4.11.2.2 If the audit for this client is conducted within a period of twelve (12) months from the expiry or termination of the former certificate, the succeeding CAB shall consider any major or minor non-conformity(s) which have not been closed at the time of expiry / termination.

- a) The CAB that issued the existing certificate shall send these non-conformities to the succeeding CAB within ten (10) days of the transfer upon request made using FORM 2.

4.11.3 Principles for a transfer of certificates

4.11.3.1 ASC certificates shall only be transferred once within the period of validity of a certificate.

- a) If a certificate holder wishes to change CAB more than once within the period of validity, the second and all other succeeding CABs shall conduct full ASC audits.

4.11.3.2 ASC certificates shall not be transferred in any of the following situations:

- a) The certificate is suspended.
- b) Major non-conformities have not been closed.
 - i. All major non-conformities shall be closed to the satisfaction of the preceding CAB before the certificate may be transferred.
- c) The parties involved in the transfer cannot agree on the transfer date.
- d) Relevant documentation about the certificate holder (all records, including reports and history of non-conformities) is not being made available to the succeeding CAB by the preceding CAB.
 - i. In cases where the succeeding CAB is able to receive all relevant documentation from the certificate holder directly, a transfer of documentation according to 4.11.3.2 d) is not required.

4.11.4 Certificate Transfer procedure

4.11.4.1 Once the holder of an active valid certificate has informed the current CAB that they are applying for a certificate transfer with another CAB; the transfer of the certificate shall be conducted as follows:

- a) The expiry date of the succeeding certificate shall be the same as the expiry date of the preceding certificate.
- b) The scope of the succeeding certificate shall be the same as the scope of the preceding certificate. If the certificate holder is requesting a change in scope, the succeeding CAB shall evaluate this request in line with relevant ASC requirements.
- c) All minor non-conformities and associated actions together with timelines that are applicable to the preceding certificate shall remain applicable to the succeeding certificate.

- d) The results of any accreditation body assessment regarding the compliance of the certificate holder to certification requirements shall be applicable to the succeeding CAB.
- e) The succeeding CAB shall propose a transfer date to the preceding CAB and the certificate holder on which all rights and obligations for maintaining the certificate shall be passed from the preceding to the succeeding CAB.
 - i. Both CABs shall keep a record of the agreed date.
- f) The succeeding CAB shall carry out an on-site transfer audit within three (3) months of the agreed transfer date according to the requirements for a surveillance evaluation.
 - i. This audit shall include a review of all pending minor non-conformities which were issued by the preceding CAB.
 - ii. If the audit is conducted in a way that satisfies all the formal requirements for a main evaluation, a new certificate may be issued.
- g) The preceding and succeeding CABs shall update the ASC database according to the instructions issued by the ASC.

4.11.5 Certificate Transfer when the issuing CAB is losing or terminating its accreditation

4.11.5.1 The procedure in 4.11.4 above shall be followed with the following changes:

- a) Suspended certificates may be transferred.
- b) Certificates with open major non-conformities may be transferred, and non-conformities shall be closed in accordance with requirements as set out in this document.
- c) Section 4.11.4 f shall be conducted as a desk audit unless it is determined by the succeeding CAB that results will not deliver the required level of confidence for the succeeding CAB to issue their certificate.
- d) Section 4.11.4.f.i shall include major non-conformities.
- e) Section 4.11.4 f ii shall not apply unless an on-site audit is conducted.

5. STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Mechanism for safeguarding impartiality

- 5.1.1 The CAB shall have a documented impartiality structure which safeguards impartiality within the CAB and its operations.
- 5.1.2 The structure shall be described in the documents that establish the CABs legal status or by some other means that prevents change which could compromise the function of the structure to safeguard impartiality.
- 5.1.3 This may be through vesting authority to the impartiality structure for approval of policies and some significant procedures such as the rules of procedure for the operation of the impartiality structure itself.
- 5.1.4 The impartiality structure may be an impartiality committee or equivalent structure.
- 5.1.5 The structure may be independent of management or combined with management function.
- 5.1.6 The CAB shall be responsible for:
 - 5.1.6.1 The adequacy of the process for identifying and involving the relevant interested parties and
 - 5.1.6.2 The impartiality structure itself to demonstrate the adequacy of their participation.
 - 5.1.6.3 Providing all the information required for the impartiality structure to perform their job, including, but not limited to, the reasons for:
 - a) all significant decisions and actions, and
 - b) the selection of persons responsible for particular activities in respect to certification.
- 5.1.7 The impartiality structure shall involve all parties concerned with the development of principles and policies for the functioning of the CABs certification system.
 - 5.1.7.1 This shall include interested and affected parties throughout the supply chain.

- a) These may include, but not limited to, the CAB itself, regulatory authorities, NGOs, consultants, academics, primary producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers, food service providers, restaurants and consumers.
- 5.1.7.2 This should be a high-level group with the responsibility for ensuring impartiality and not predominantly a technical or sector based group.
- 5.1.7.3 The membership shall not be selected to reflect the technical expertise of the CAB.
 - a) When necessary it can be supported by technical experts as required.
 - b) No single interest shall predominate.
- 5.1.8 Documentation for the mechanism for safeguarding impartiality shall include:
 - 5.1.8.1 Rules of procedure that establish the duties and rights of members (e.g. rule for attendance, quorum and voting)
 - a) Members shall sign declarations of confidentiality.
 - b) Members shall sign annual declarations of the absence of conflicts of interest.
 - 5.1.8.2 The principle that impartiality shall be established at three levels within the CAB:
 - a) Strategies and policies;
 - b) Decisions on certification; and
 - c) Auditing.
- 5.1.9 The impartiality structure shall conduct annual reviews that include:
 - 5.1.9.1 The current and intended activities of the CAB;
 - 5.1.9.2 The competence of key personnel; and,
 - 5.1.9.3 The potential risks associated to the CAB's operation.
- 5.1.10 The function of the structure shall ensure that:
 - 5.1.10.1 Commercial and other considerations do not prevent the objective provision of certification services.

- 5.1.10.2 The period of time specified by the CAB for which personnel shall not be used to review or make a certification decision for a product for which they have provided consultancy time shall be no less than 2 years.
- 5.1.10.3 No audit or certification services shall be provided to clients if any of the products or services provided by the CAB, related bodies or the CAB's personnel are still in use by the client.

5.2 Confidentiality

- 5.2.1 The CAB shall document arrangements to safeguard confidentiality (ISO 17065 4.5).

6. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 CAB Personnel

6.1.1 All personnel involved in delivering conformity assessment services shall be knowledgeable about the aims and objectives of the ASC.

6.1.1.1 This shall include knowledge of international agreements, conventions and treaties relevant to the assessment of applicants for ASC certification as appropriate to the role and responsibilities of each individual.

6.1.2 All auditors and technical experts including subcontracted staff and the staff of subcontracted companies, the CAB shall:

6.1.2.1 Register all auditors working with the ASC scheme with the ASC and the appointed accreditation body.

6.1.2.2 Ensure that all CAB personnel shall not participate in ASC conformity assessment services until they have the required experience, completed the required training and demonstrated the required competencies for their role as described in Annex B.

6.1.2.3 Pay the relevant training fee.

6.1.3 Maintenance of Competency

6.1.3.1 The CAB shall have a written procedure to confirm annually that every auditor and all CAB personnel involved with conformity assessment services are qualified and competent as described in Annex B and registered with the ASC as required.

a) This procedure shall include:

- i. Regular performance evaluation of CAB personnel involved in the ASC conformity assessment activities
- ii. Regular calibration sessions to ensure consistent practice among auditors and other CAB personnel.

b) The CAB shall keep records of all training and calibration sessions including a record of the individuals that participated.

7. PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

7.1 Information for Applicants

7.1.1 The CAB shall send the following to applicants:

7.1.1.1 The current versions of all ASC standards and other requirements relevant to the scope of certification sought.

a) That shall include

i. A list of all those elements specified in the applicable standard(s) requiring records to be kept by the client and the length of time to be covered by those records; and

ii. All other prerequisites for certification

b) The CAB shall maintain a record identifying the document(s), including the version(s), sent to each applicant and certificate holder.

7.1.1.2 The CAB shall send the following to applicants in a language appropriate to the applicant:

a) A copy of the CAB's standard assessment and certification contract.

b) Information about the use of the ASC logo, including:

i. The website where the rules for the ASC logo may be found.

ii. An explanation that an ASC logo licence agreement will be required to be entered into with the ASC prior to the use of the logo.

c) Information about the ASC's right to change the ASC standards and certification requirements and that certification is conditional on conforming to new or revised standards and new or revised certification requirements within the timeframes established by the ASC.

d) A brief explanation of the responsibility of the auditor, how audits are conducted, how often and the rules that govern the CAB

e) A copy of the CAB complaints procedure that includes information on when and how the ASC appointed accreditation body and the ASC may be engaged and reference to their dispute and complaints mechanism.

- 7.1.1.3 In cases where documents are translated for the convenience of the client, any differences between original documents and translated versions the original version will prevail.

7.2 Audit Planning

- 7.2.1 CAB shall ensure that before the end of the audit planning phase the applicant receives the following written information:

- 7.2.1.1 Expected scope of audit

- 7.2.1.2 Whether or not the expected scope of the audit will require the applicant to obtain a chain of custody certificate in addition to a primary production certificate.

- 7.2.1.3 Draft work schedule

- 7.2.1.4 Names and affiliations of proposed team members

- 7.2.1.5 Sufficient information about the audit process so that the applicant can make proper preparations for the audit. This shall include:

- a) A summary list of the objective evidence, including actual performance data that may be required by the team
- b) An explanation of the requirement(s) for and process of stakeholder consultation.

- 7.2.2 The CAB shall have a documented procedure for dealing with an applicant's concern about a member of the team proposed to carry out the audit; this procedure shall include the following elements:

- 7.2.2.1 Consider the merits of each concern raised by an applicant

- 7.2.2.2 Take appropriate action(s), which may include leaving the team unchanged if warranted

- 7.2.3 Maintain records of the justification for its action(s)

7.3 Decision on Certification

- 7.3.1 A certificate shall only be issued after a positive certification decision has been taken by the CAB's certification decision-making entity.

- 7.3.2 The CAB shall not issue or re-issue a certificate if there are outstanding major non-conformities.
- 7.3.3 Audit evidence shall be no more than six (6) months old.
- 7.3.4 The final audit report shall indicate if any or all of the client's operation has been re-audited.
- 7.3.5 The CAB shall retain the right to delay or postpone its decision on certification in order to take proper account of new or additional information, which has become available to the CAB and which has not already been considered in its evaluation report and which, in the opinion of the CAB, could affect the outcome of its evaluation.
 - 7.3.5.1 Additional information includes but not limited to inputs provided by stakeholders and interested parties.
 - 7.3.5.2 Any delays in the proposed timeline for the decision on certification due to the consideration of new or additional information shall be explained in the final report.
 - 7.3.5.3 Delays of more than seven (7) days shall be publicly communicated no later than the planned date of determination.
- 7.3.6 The CAB shall register a certificate in the ASC database before it is issued or re-issued.
 - 7.3.6.1 Registration shall include the entry of all specified data.
 - 7.3.6.2 In the case of a malfunction of the on-line registration service, the ASC shall be informed that a certificate has been issued or re-issued within ten (10) days of its issue or re-issue.
 - 7.3.6.3 Certificates, which are not registered with the ASC, shall not be valid.

7.4 Certification Information on the ASC database

- 7.4.1 CABs shall be responsible for keeping their data entries on the ASC database up to date.
- 7.4.2 Until the ASC database is live, CABs shall submit all required information in pdf format until otherwise instructed.

7.5 Changes in Scope

7.5.1 On-site audits shall be conducted for any major changes in scope that include:

7.5.1.1 Addition of a new standard

- a) A single certificate may only include one species standard
- b) Audits may be combined to cover more than one species standard.

7.5.1.2 Change to impacts on receiving water bodies including the addition of new receiving water bodies.

7.5.1.3 Any other change to the certified operation determined by the CAB as requiring an onsite audit.

7.5.2 The CAB shall be responsible for determining whether or not a proposed change in scope requires an on-site audit.

7.5.3 All on-site audits for changes of scope shall conform to Part B of this document.

7.5.4 If no on-site audit is required, the updated certificate shall be accompanied with an annex explaining the scope changes and justification for not conducting an on-site audit.

7.5.5 The CAB shall register any changes in scope to an existing certificate in the ASC database before the change in scope is issued.

7.6 Suspension, Cancellation or Withdrawal of Certification

7.6.1 A CAB may suspend or withdraw a certificate for a contractual or administrative reason.

7.6.2 The CAB shall inform the ASC of any suspensions or withdrawals of certificates within five (5) days of the decision using FORM 5.

7.6.3 Suspended/ withdrawn cancelled certificates and related information will be updated on the ASC website.

7.6.4 The date of the suspension or withdrawal shall be the date the decision was taken by the CAB, whereas the date of cancellation shall be the date that the certificate holder informs the CAB and/or the ASC of its decision on cancellation.

- 7.6.4.1 If a certificate is suspended or withdrawn or cancelled, the CAB shall immediately instruct the certificate holder:
- a) Not to sell any product harvested from the date of suspension or withdrawal or cancelled as ASC certified or with the ASC logo
 - b) To advise existing or potential customers in writing of the suspension/withdrawal/ cancellation within four (4) calendar days of the suspension or withdrawal or cancellation date

7.7 Complaints and Appeals

- 7.7.1 The CAB shall have a documented procedure for handling complaints and appeals that includes:
- 7.7.1.1 A requirement that all formal and informal complaints, appeals, concerns or objections related to the activities of the CAB, a certificate holder or a certification applicant be kept on file and logged (ISO 17065 section 7.13.1).
 - 7.7.1.2 A description of involvement of the ASC appointed accreditation body and the ASC in case of appeals.
 - 7.7.1.3 Reference to the ASC appointed accreditation body's dispute mechanism, including incidents, complaints and appeals handling processes.
 - 7.7.1.4 CABs shall report all logged issues using FORM 4 submitted annually no less than thirty (30) days prior to the annual surveillance by the ASC appointed accreditation body's visit with copies sent to the ASC and the ASC appointed accreditation body.
 - 7.7.1.5 In case of suspension or withdrawal of the ASC accreditation of the CAB, all logged issues shall be sent to the ASC appointed accreditation body and ASC as part of the suspension or withdrawal process using FORM 4 no later than the final date of accreditation.
 - 7.7.1.6 Determining whether the complaint or appeal relates to certification activities for which the CAB is responsible.
 - 7.7.1.7 The appointment of an independent member of the CAB management who shall:
 - a) Report to top management

- b) Be responsible for ensuring that procedures (ISO 17065 7.13) are followed.
- 7.7.1.8 A procedure for reviewing all complaints and forwarding them to the responsible body as appropriate.
- 7.7.1.9 Encouragement for the complainants to submit copies of their complaints to directly to the ASC at:
- a) Email: certification@asc-aqua.org
 - b) Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 19107
3501 DC Utrecht
The Netherlands
 - c) Office Address:

HNK Utrecht Centraal, Arthur van Schendelstraat 650
3511 MJ Utrecht
The Netherlands

8. MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS FOR CABs

8.1 Internal Audits

- 8.1.1 Internal audits shall be performed at least once every twelve (12) months or completed within a twelve (12) month time frame for segmented (or rolling) internal audits.
- 8.1.2 Internal audits shall cover all ASC requirements in a planned and systemic manner.

9. HEADING NOT USED AT THIS TIME

10. HEADING NOT USED AT THIS TIME

PART B – OPERATIONAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

11. SCOPE

- 11.1 Part B of the ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements is for CAB use when auditing operations against ASC Standards.**

12. NORMATIVE REFERENCES

- 12.1 The normative documents in Section 2 also apply to Part B**

13. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- 13.1 No additional requirements**

14. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 14.1 No additional requirements**

15. STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS

- 15.1 No additional requirements**

16. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

16.1 Audit teams

16.1.1 Audit teams shall include an ASC lead auditor.

16.1.2 Audit teams shall include member(s) that have the following experience and expertise:

16.1.2.1 Relevant knowledge of national and local laws that apply to the organisation being audited that includes but is not limited to:

- a) Environmental laws
- b) Workplace safety laws
- c) Labour laws
- d) Health and safety laws
- e) Laws governing ownership and use of land and water
- f) Licenses and permits

16.1.2.2 Environmental science and technology, environmental management methods and aspects of operations that includes but is not limited to:

- a) Knowledge and experience in the species or other subject of the standard being audited
- b) Environmental issues in the area of the operation
- c) The management of natural resources
- d) Environmental protection
- e) Environmental monitoring tools and technologies
- f) The interaction of the activities, products, services, and operations with the environment.
- g) Sector specific terminology
- h) Environmental aspects and impacts
- i) Methods for evaluating the significance of environmental aspects
- j) Critical aspects of operational processes, products and services
- k) Monitoring and measurement techniques
- l) Technologies and methods for the prevention of pollution

m) Social aspects of applicant operations and their surrounding communities

16.1.2.3 Translators

- a) When translation services are needed to conduct the audit, the CAB shall retain translators that are independent of the client and skilled in translation from the national or local language into the operating language of the audit team.

17. PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

17.1 Unit of Certification

17.1.1 The unit of certification shall be limited to a single ASC species standard.

17.1.1.1 A client may hold multiple certificates, each for a different ASC species standard.

- a) No farm or site may have more than one valid certificate at the same time for the same ASC standard.

17.1.1.2 The CAB may combine audits for more than one ASC species standard.

- a) The CAB may combine initial certification audit(s) with surveillance or re-certification audits(s).

17.1.2 Organisations seeking certification shall have been in operation for no less than eighteen months (18) or one harvest cycle as defined in the standard(s), whichever is less.

17.1.2.1 All clients seeking certification shall have available records of performance data covering the periods of time specified in the standard(s) against which the audit(s) is to be conducted.

17.1.3 The CAB shall determine the unit of certification as either:

17.1.3.1 A single site operation that has all of the following elements:

- a) The applicant is capable of signing a binding contract that is legally enforceable
- b) A single site may include multiple pens, cages, ponds, raceway systems or beds.

17.1.3.2 A multi-site client shall have all of the following elements:

- a) The applicant is a legal entity
- b) The applicant has a central office that:
 - i. Is designated as the central office by the client
 - ii. Is responsible for the management of and conformity to ASC requirements for the unit of certification
 - iii. Is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the organisation's internal management system which shall include written procedures that ensure conformity to ASC requirements including:
 - A. Document control procedure
 - B. Record keeping and retention procedure;
 - C. Procedure for managing changes to ASC requirements;
 - D. Procedure for conducting annual management reviews;
 - E. Procedure for managing complaints submitted to Management by stakeholders and staff members as per specified in the applicable (farm) standard;
 - F. Procedure for the evaluation and implementation of corrective and preventive actions;
 - G. Procedure for conducting root cause analyses for non-conformities, and for addressing identified root causes;
 - H. Procedures to ensure compliance with legal requirements;
 - I. Procedures for conducting an annual internal audit, covering ASC requirements;
 - J. Procedures for planning for and evaluation of the results of internal audits;
 - K. Procedures for the scheduled reporting of performance of management systems and sites;

L. Procedures for identifying and segregating all products within each site, among sites within the unit of certification, and products that are not included in the unit of certification.

1. The procedures shall describe how certified products are identified and segregated to prevent mixing with non-certified before the start of the MSC/ASC certified chain of custody.
2. The procedures shall describe the conditions under which products must be segregated, and measure to prevent mixing directly or indirectly.
3. The procedures and associate records shall allow products to be traced back from the start of the MSC/ASC certified chain of custody back to the production unit (i.e. cage/net/pen/pond/tank/raceway).
4. If the unit of certification has a separate MSC/ASC Chain of Custody (CoC) certificate¹, these requirements (17.1.3.2.b.iii.L and 17.1.3.2.b.iii.L.2-3) shall not apply.

M. Procedures for traceability of inputs used for each site as specified in the standard being audited to.

iv. Is subject to an annual management review

v. Is subject to and included in an annual internal audit.

A. A full internal audit shall have been completed before an external ASC onsite audit may begin.

1. The internal audit shall include all relevant ASC requirements at all sites and the central office.

1) Some social requirements may be excluded from internal audits to maintain worker confidentiality.

¹ Separate MSC/ASC CoC certificate for products within the unit of certification. This is different from the CoC certificate for the processing facility that may belong to the same legal entity and may process the raw materials coming from the unit of certification.

- 2) The exclusions shall be accepted by the CAB and documented in the audit report.
 2. Classification and treatment of internal audit findings may follow the rules for external audit findings (see 17.10).
 3. Internal auditors shall be competent in ASC requirements as described in Annex B.
- vi. Has the authority to require compliance of all sites and operations included in the unit of certification.
- A. All sites shall have a legally binding link (i.e. direct ownership, or contract) with the multi-site certificate holder or multi-site applicant.
 - B. Subcontracted farms may be included in the unit of certification if all the following apply:
 1. All of the operations of the farm are subject to the same procedures as the rest of the unit of certification;
 2. The product produced by the subcontractor is owned by the certificate holder; and,
 3. The central office has the same oversight and right to control over the operations of subcontractors as it has for the client's own operations.
 4. All of the operations of the subcontracted farms shall be included in the multi-site certificate.
 5. The contract shall be transparent, mutually accepted by both parties and include the above provisions (17.1.3.2.b.vi.B.1-4).
 - 1) Contract farming arrangements with subcontracted farms should follow the FAO "Guiding principles for responsible contract farming operations"².
 - 2) If the (farm) standard being audited to contains indicator(s) for contract farming, this requirement (17.1.3.2.b.vi.B.5) shall not apply.

² Guiding principles for responsible contract farming operations, Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division (AGS) Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), Rome, Italy, 2012

- vii. Can demonstrate its ability to collect and analyse data from all sites, operations and the central office included, in the unit of certification including:
 - A. Data required to demonstrate conformity with ASC requirements, and
 - B. Implementation of corrective and preventive actions.
 - viii. Can demonstrate its ability to implement organisational change if required.
 - ix. Monitors compliance to all relevant ASC requirements of all sites within the unit of certification.
 - x. Notifies the CAB of any non-conformities against applicable local regulations that are relevant to the ASC scope of certification within three (3) days of detection.
- c) All sites in the unit of certification shall operate within the same jurisdiction or within neighbouring jurisdictions that share the same relevant regulations.
- d) All sites shall:
- i. Be subject to the same (farm) standard;
 - ii. Comply with the (farm) standard individually; and
 - iii. Have the same or similar production system³.
 - A. If different production systems are used, each production system shall be evaluated separately using the sampling methods described in Annex E.
- e) All conformity assessment services shall conform to the requirements in this document as specified in Annex E.
- 17.1.3.3 A multi-site client may opt to have all sites in the unit of certification audited in each initial, surveillance and re-certification audit.
- a) This decision shall be documented in the audit report.
 - b) The following provisions under 17.1.3.2 shall not apply:

³ See Funge-Smith, S. Phillips, M.J. 2001. Aquaculture systems and species. In R.P. Subasinghe, P. Bueno, M.J. Phillips, C. Hough, S.E. McGladdery & J.R. Arthur, eds. Aquaculture in the Third Millennium. Technical Proceedings of the Conference on Aquaculture in the Third Millennium, Bangkok, Thailand, 20-25 February 2000. pp. 129-135. NACA, Bangkok and FAO, Rome. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/AB412E/ab412e07.htm>

- i. 17.1.3.2.b.iii.A-D
- ii. 17.1.3.2.b.iii.F-K
- iii. 17.1.3.2.b.iv-v
- iv. 17.1.3.2.b.vii-ix

17.2 Notice of audit

- 17.2.1 The CAB shall use FORM 3 to inform the ASC and the ASC appointed accreditation body of planned audit dates no less than thirty (30) days prior to the audit.
 - 17.2.1.1 For unannounced audits FORM 3 may be submitted to the ASC fewer than thirty (30) days prior to the audit.
- 17.2.2 The CAB shall publish the information contained in FORM 3 on its website within three (3) days of submitting it to ASC.
 - 17.2.2.1 ASC shall not publish FORM 3 prior to an unannounced audit.
- 17.2.3 The CAB shall provide updates to FORM 3 within 5 days of any changes to the information
 - 17.2.3.1 If the changes are to occur before a planned audit, the changes shall be no less than 10 days before the audit is scheduled to begin
 - 17.2.3.2 All changes will be clearly identified on the revised FORM 3.
 - 17.2.3.3 The ASC should publish a public notice of the planned audit within three (3) days of receiving FORM 3.
 - 17.2.3.4 This requirement shall apply for all on-site audits
- 17.2.4 The CAB shall notify potential stakeholders and interested parties of the planned audit and invite their participation.
 - 17.2.4.1 The CAB may choose to notify none, some or all potential stakeholders and interested parties prior to an unannounced audit.
 - 17.2.4.2 The notice shall be in the local language(s) and English.

17.3 Audit methodology

- 17.3.1 The ASC audit shall use the *ASC Audit Manual* as guidance for the standard(s) for which the client is being audited.

- 17.3.2 ASC reserves the right to develop, and implement and require CABs to use their own audit tools and methodology for the ASC aquaculture audits covering areas not specified in this document.

17.4 Audit Timing

- 17.4.1 The CAB shall not conduct an audit until the client has completed and the CAB accepted the client's application for certification.
- 17.4.2 The CAB's initial audit should include harvesting activities of the principle product to be audited.
- 17.4.3 If other products are included but not harvested at the same time, the CAB shall collect evidence of compliance for all products to be added to the certificate.
- 17.4.4 If product handling or processing is included, the audit should be conducted to occur at the time that the handling or processing facilities are operating.
- 17.4.5 Audits shall not be conducted until sufficient records/evidence are available for all applicable standard requirements as the minimum.
- 17.4.6 If the CAB determines that it is not possible to conduct the initial audit as specified in 17.4.2, the CAB shall:
- 17.4.6.1 Record this determination in the audit report.
- 17.4.6.2 Provide a justification for the alternative timing.
- 17.4.7 An audit conducted during the harvesting of the principle product included for certification shall occur at least once during the validity of each certificate.

17.5 Audit duration

- 17.5.1 The CAB shall determine the minimum planned duration of the audit, taking into account, when applicable, evaluation of traceability risks and eligibility to enter further chain of custody.
- 17.5.2 The CAB shall record this determination and the justification for it in the audit report.

17.6 Determining the start of the chain of custody

- 17.6.1 For the following risk factors, the CAB shall document whether each risk is currently or potentially applicable. This shall include:
 - 17.6.1.1 The possibility of mixing or substitution of certified and non-certified product, including product of the same or similar appearance or species, produced within the same operation.
 - 17.6.1.2 The possibility of mixing or substitution of certified and non-certified product, including product of the same or similar appearance or species, present during production, harvest, transport, storage, or processing activities.
 - 17.6.1.3 The possibility of subcontractors being used to handle, transport, store, or process certified products.
 - 17.6.1.4 Any other opportunities where certified product could potentially be mixed, substituted, or mislabelled with non-certified product before the point where product enters the chain of custody.
- 17.6.2 For each applicable risk, the CAB shall:
 - 17.6.2.1 Clearly document the risk, and
 - 17.6.2.2 Describe any traceability, segregation, or other systems in place to manage the risk.
- 17.6.3 The CAB shall review and document, in detail, the flow of certified product within the operation and the associated traceability system which allows product to be traced from final sale back to the unit of certification.
- 17.6.4 This shall include the traceability documentation at each stage of handling certified product and how product can be linked from each document (e.g. through batch codes, lot codes, etc.).
- 17.6.5 This shall also include a detailed description of the systems used to segregate and identify certified product at each stage of handling.
- 17.6.6 Based on the results found from 17.6.1 -17.6.5 above, the CAB shall determine whether:
 - 17.6.6.1 The traceability and segregation systems in the operation are sufficient to ensure all products identified and sold as certified by the operation originate from the unit of certification, or
 - 17.6.6.2 The traceability and segregation systems are not sufficient and a separate chain of custody certification is required for the operation before products can be sold as ASC-certified or can be eligible to carry the ASC logo.

- 17.6.7 This determination shall remain in force until revised by the CAB in a subsequent audit or until a valid CoC certification is in place.
- 17.6.7.1 The CAB shall inform the client if any separate CoC certification for the operation required in 17.6.6.2, client shall be subject to an audit by the same CAB that carried out the farm certification.
- 17.6.8 If the CAB has determined that any risk factors in 17.6.1.1 or 17.6.1.2 or 17.6.1.4 are applicable, a separate chain of custody certification shall be required.
- 17.6.8.1 A separate chain of custody may be determined to be unnecessary if the CAB determines that the traceability and segregations systems in place are sufficient to address the risks, and
- 17.6.8.2 The reason for a determination that a separate chain of custody certification is unnecessary shall be clearly documented in the audit report.
- 17.6.9 The CAB shall clearly document in the Audit Report the determination under 17.6.6, including a statement confirming whether products are eligible to enter further chains of custody.
- 17.6.10 If the CAB has determines under 17.6.6.1 that the traceability systems are sufficient to allow products to enter chain of custody, the CAB shall document:
- 17.6.10.1 The intended point of first sale.
- 17.6.10.2 The point from which chain of custody is required to begin.

17.7 Setting the Eligibility Date for under-assessment product

- 17.7.1 During the farm audit the CAB shall determine the specific date (Eligibility Date) from which product from the operation is eligible to be sold as ASC-certified or with the ASC logo.
- 17.7.2 The Eligibility Date can be set as either:
 - 17.7.2.1 The date from which all major non-conformities have been verified as closed and a corrective action plan to address all minor non-conformities has been approved, or
 - 17.7.2.2 The date of farm certification as specified on the certificate.
- 17.7.3 The Eligibility Date shall be set as the date of farm certification for applicants where under 17.6.6.2 a determination has been made that the operation requires a separate Chain of Custody certification. The CAB shall:

- 17.7.3.1 Record this Eligibility Date clearly in the audit report.
- 17.7.3.2 Communicate this date to the client and the ASC within five (5) days.
- 17.7.4 If the Eligibility Date is set before the certification date, the CAB shall inform the applicant that:
 - 17.7.4.1 All under-assessment product harvested after the Eligibility Date must be fully traceable back to the unit of certification and harvest date.
 - 17.7.4.2 All under-assessment product(s) must be clearly identified and segregated from certified and non-certified product.
 - 17.7.4.3 The certificate holder shall not sell or apply the logo to under-assessment product as certified or with ASC trademarks until:
 - a) The farm has been certified and the certificate issued by the CAB, and
 - b) There is a signed logo licence agreement between the client and ASC if the ASC logo is to be used.

17.8 Stakeholder engagement

- 17.8.1 The CAB shall maintain an up-to-date list of all stakeholders that are relevant to be contacted for their input per species.
- 17.8.2 The CAB shall keep a list of all stakeholders and interested parties that indicate an interest in making a submission to the audit team.
- 17.8.3 The CAB shall acknowledge receipt of all written submissions.
 - 17.8.3.1 Verbal submissions and how they have been addressed shall be clearly explained in the audit reports.
- 17.8.4 Prior to the publication of the draft audit report, the CAB shall respond in writing to each stakeholder and interested party to explain how their comments were addressed by the audit team.
- 17.8.5 The CAB shall have a mechanism that allows comments to be submitted at any time during the validity of the certificate, and that specifies how those comments are to be taken into consideration for the next coming audit.
 - 17.8.5.1 The CAB shall make sure that the mechanism is known to the public.

17.9 Audit Evidence

- 17.9.1 Audit evidence relevant to the audit objectives, scope and criteria, including information relating to interfaces between functions, activities and processes shall be collected by appropriate sampling and shall be verified.
- 17.9.2 Only information that is verifiable may be audit evidence.
- 17.9.3 The CAB shall record all audit evidence in the audit report.

17.10 Audit Findings

- 17.10.1 CABs shall classify non-conformities as minor or major as follows:
 - 17.10.1.1 A minor non-conformity
 - a) For initial certification, the CAB may recommend the applicant for certification once an action plan to address minor non-conformity(ies)
 - i. Has been agreed to by both the client and the CAB.
 - A. The action plan shall include a brief description of:
 - 1. The root cause(s) of the non-conformity
 - 2. The corrective action(s) to be taken is intended to satisfactorily address the non-conformity
 - ii. Has been implemented.
 - iii. Within (3) three months the CAB shall:
 - A. Confirm receipt of objective evidence that demonstrates that a satisfactory corrective action plan has been finalized.
 - B. Confirm receipt of objective evidence that demonstrates that the corrective action plan has been implemented.
 - C. Close the minor non conformity once it can confirm receipt of objective evidence that demonstrates conformity.
 - 1. Minor non-conformities may be extended once for a maximum period of one (1) year if on-site verification is necessary to confirm conformity.
 - 2. If an extension is granted, the CAB shall have confirmed receipt of sufficient objective evidence that demonstrates conformity such that it is satisfied

that all efforts have been made or are being made by the client to demonstrate conformity.

3. If an extension is approved by the CAB, it shall be justified in the next audit report.

- b) The CAB should raise a major non-conformity where minor non-conformities are repeatedly raised against a particular requirement.
- c) The CAB shall raise the minor non-conformity to a major non-conformity if any of the above deadlines are not met.

17.10.1.2 Major non-conformities

- a) The CAB shall require that major non-conformities shall be satisfactorily addressed by an applicant:
 - i. Prior to certification being granted.
 - ii. Within three months of the date of the audit or a full re-audit shall be required.
 - iii. That the root cause of the non-conformity is identified and addressed.
- b) The CAB shall determine whether or not an on-site visit is needed to close the major non-conformity.
- c) The decision, justification and conclusion shall be made clear in the final audit report.
- d) In the case of a major non-conformity raised during the period of validity of a certificate, the CAB shall require:
 - i. That the certificate holder satisfactorily addresses the non-conformity within a maximum of three (3) months
 - ii. Major non-conformities may be extended once for a maximum period of three months if the CAB has confirmed receipt of sufficient objective evidence that demonstrates conformity was not possible due to circumstances beyond the control of the client.
 - A. Extensions of major non-conformities shall be clearly documented along with a clear justification in the audit report.
 - iii. That objective evidence is confirmed by the CAB that:
 - A. The root cause of the non-conformity is identified,

- B. An action plan is agreed with the CAB,
- C. That the action plan is implemented and
- D. That conformity can be demonstrated.

- e) The CAB shall decide if an on-site audit is required to close out the major non-conformity(ies).
- f) The CAB shall suspend the certificate if a major non-conformity remains open after six (6) months and follow requirement in Section 7.6 of this document.

- 17.10.2 All non-conformities shall reference the relevant section of the ASC standard or other ASC requirement as relevant to the audit.
- 17.10.3 The CAB shall not include evidence of more than one non-conformity into a single documented non-conformity report unless they apply to the same ASC requirement.
- 17.10.4 Major non-conformities shall not be downgraded to minor non-conformities.
- 17.10.5 The CAB shall assess the effectiveness of the corrective and/or preventive actions in addressing the root cause of the non-conformity taken before closing out a major or minor non-conformity.

17.11 Certification Decisions

- 17.11.1 The CAB shall only make certification decisions based on the evaluation of the audit evidence as to whether or not the applicant is in conformity with the requirements of the applicable ASC Standard(s) and these Certification Requirements.
 - 17.11.1.1 Audit evidence shall be no more than six (6) months old.
- 17.11.2 The CAB shall consider all audit evidence when taking certification decisions.
 - 17.11.2.1 This shall include audit evidence gathered prior to, during and after an on-site audit.
 - 17.11.2.2 This shall include audit evidence gathered as the result of information submitted by stakeholders and interested parties.
- 17.11.3 The CAB shall post all certification decisions, including changes in scope, suspensions, cancellation and withdrawals on the ASC database.
- 17.11.4 If the ASC database is offline, the CAB shall inform the ASC within ten (10) days of the decision.

- 17.11.5 The CAB shall issue certificates with a maximum validity period of three (3) years from the date of issue.

17.12 Audit Report Requirements

- 17.12.1 ASC audit reports shall follow the format and requirements presented in Annex C

17.13 Content of Certificates

- 17.13.1 The CAB shall issue an English language certificate, which as well as the requirements in ISO 17065 7.7 shall contain:

- 17.13.1.1 The ASC logo, which shall be no smaller than the logo of the CAB.

- 17.13.1.2 A unique certificate number

- a) An issue number (for re-issued or renewed certificates)

- 17.13.1.3. The point at which certified products may enter a Chain of Custody.

- 17.13.1.4. The date of issue of the certificate

- a) The date of issue shall be the date the certificate was registered on the ASC database.

- b) Registration shall not be complete until all information specified on the ASC database has been posted on the ASC database.

- 17.13.1.5. The date of expiry

- 17.13.1.6. The name and address of the CAB

- 17.13.1.7. The legal name and registered address of the certificate holder plus

- 17.13.1.8. Any trade names and other addresses that will be used for sales invoices

- 17.13.1.9. The name and physical address of any additional sites included in the unit of certification

- 17.13.1.10. A description of the scope of the certificate, including a general description of the type of products covered by the certificate, a reference to the specific standard(s) against which the certificate holder has been evaluated, and confirmation of full or partial certification.

- 17.13.1.11. A reference to the ASC database of registered certificates (specific URL to be announced) for the full list of product groups covered by the certificate

- 17.13.1.12. A clear statement to the effect that the certificate shall remain the property of the CAB that issued it, and that the certificate and all copies or reproductions of the certificate shall be returned or destroyed if requested by the CAB
- 17.13.1.13. The date of expiry of the certificate together with the disclaimer “The validity of this certificate shall be verified on [specific URL to be announced]”.
- 17.13.1.14. The signature of the individual(s) that the CAB assigned this responsibility.
- 17.13.1.15. A disclaimer stating: "This certificate itself does not constitute evidence that a particular product supplied by the certificate holder is ASC-certified. Products offered, shipped or sold by the certificate holder can only be considered covered by the scope of this certificate when the required ASC claim is clearly stated on invoices and shipping documents".
- 17.13.2. The CAB may issue certificates in other languages as well as the English version providing they bear a disclaimer in at least 10 point font that the certificate is an unverified translation of the English certificate, and in case of differences the English version shall take precedence.

17.14 Information for Certificate Holders

- 17.14.1. The CAB shall inform the certificate holder that it has the right to claim that, subject to the scope of its certificate, its operation is certified in accordance with the specific ASC standard covered.
- 17.14.2. The CAB shall inform the certificate holder that:
 - 17.14.2.1. It may claim that its aquaculture products are the result of “Responsible Aquaculture Farming”.
 - 17.14.2.2. It is eligible to apply for an ASC logo licensing agreement.
 - 17.14.2.3. It shall not make any claim about ASC certification on consumer facing products without a valid ASC logo licence.

17.15 Surveillance

- 17.15.1. The CAB shall carry out a surveillance audit to monitor the certificate holder’s continued conformity with applicable ASC standards and other certification requirements at least annually.
- 17.15.2. Public notice of surveillance audits shall use Form 3.

- 17.15.3. Surveillance reports shall conform to Annex C.
- 17.15.4. During the three-year term of the certificate the CAB shall plan and conduct surveillance audits in such a way that all aspects of the production cycle are audited
 - 17.15.4.1. Unless the life-history of the cultured species does not allow for this.
- 17.15.5. Stakeholder consultation may be undertaken during surveillance audits.
- 17.15.6. The CAB shall conduct no fewer than 2 surveillance audits for any valid certificate.
- 17.15.7 The CAB shall appoint an audit team with expertise that is comparable to the original audit team when conducting surveillance audits.
 - 17.15.7.1 If team members are different to the original team, the selection of individuals to conduct audits shall be justified in writing in the surveillance audit report and their relevant skills and/or expertise documented.
- 17.15.8 The CAB shall document and implement clear procedures for the conduct of surveillance audits that conforms to these requirements.
- 17.15.9 The CAB shall assess:
 - 17.15.9.1 Progress and performance against outstanding non-conformities.
 - 17.15.9.2 The CAB shall document conformity with, and progress and performance against, outstanding non-conformities using the form of the original non-conformity.
 - 17.15.9.3 In the event that an outstanding non-conformity is changed, the CAB shall provide written justification for the change in the surveillance report.
- 17.15.10 The management system including:
 - 17.15.10.1 Changes to the management system.
 - 17.15.10.2 The capacity of the management system to manage any change in scope, size or complexity within the certified unit.
 - 17.15.10.3 Legal and regulatory compliance.
 - 17.15.10.4 This shall include any changes that have occurred in legislation or regulations.
 - 17.15.10.5 Any complaints or allegations of non-conformity with ASC requirements.
 - 17.15.10.6 A sample of sites and records to verify that the management systems are effective and consistent such as high risk areas or personnel changes.

17.15.10.7 Operational plans.

17.15.11 Any changes affecting the operation's traceability, chain of custody, or the ability to trace certified products back to the unit of certification.

17.15.12 If the CAB identifies an issue requiring further investigation it shall:

17.15.12.1 Record the existence of the issue and document any evidence found.

17.15.12.2 Raise a non-conformity if one is found.

17.15.13 The CAB may conduct additional surveillance audits of certificate holders for one or more of the following reasons:

17.15.13.1 The number and nature of non-conformities.

17.15.13.2 The number and nature of complaints from the ASC, another CAB, a stakeholder or an interested party.

17.15.13.3 The number and nature of other issues that the CAB determines must be investigated.

17.15.14 The CAB shall specify criteria and conditions for unannounced surveillance audits in their documented procedures.

17.16 Recertification Audits

17.16.1 The CAB shall start the recertification audit before the expiry of the existing certificate.

17.16.2 Exact timing and planning of the audit shall remain the responsibility of the CAB, in consultation with the client.

17.16.3 The CAB, when conducting an audit of a certified operation, shall:

17.16.3.1 Apply all of the steps of the ASC Certification Requirements in force at the time of the audit.

17.16.3.2 Apply interpretations of the relevant standard that are current at the time of the audit.

17.16.3.3 Take into account all surveillance reports, outcomes, progress on non-conformities, and inputs from stakeholders and interested parties.

17.16.3.4 The CAB shall verify that corrective and preventive actions taken allows for the closure of open major non-conformities.

- a) If progress has not been adequate to close the open major non-conformities the CAB shall not re-issue the certificate.

17.16.3.5 Consider the relevance of the original unit of certification and if necessary, shall create modified or a new unit of certification.

17.16.3.6 Maintain records of its consideration of the issues above, as well as any rationale for decisions made relating to these issues.

17.17 Extension of Certificate Validity

17.17.1 The CAB may extend the validity of a certificate by up to three (3) months in cases where:

17.17.1.1 The certificate holder has applied to the CAB for recertification and the application has been accepted by the CAB at or before the end of the period of validity of the certificate.

17.17.1.2 There is no product present at the time when the recertification audit is due.

17.17.1.3 The CAB issued the previous certificate.

17.17.1.4 CAB extends the certificate validity in the ASC database before the expiry of the existing certificate.

- a) If the ASC database is offline, the CAB shall inform the ASC within ten (10) days of the decision.

18 MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS FOR CABS

18.1 No Additional Requirements

19 ANNEX A – THE ASC VOCABULARY

Normative

Term	Definition
Appeal	Request by a client or a CAB for reconsideration of any decision made by the CAB or the ASC appointed accreditation body or the ASC related to the client's desired certification or accreditation status where a response is expected.
ASC Database	[specify URL when available]
ASC Requirements*	Requirements applicable for ASC certification. These include all ASC documents that apply to any specific unit of certification such as ASC Standard(s), ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements (CAR), ASC Requirements for the certification of Producer Groups, requirements for traceability within the group (MSC/ASC Chain of Custody) and requirements for the use of the ASC trademark(s) and logo.
The ASC appointed accreditation body	The accreditation body that is named and referred to on the ASC website.
Audit	A methodical evaluation against a specific set of requirements. An audit begins with the first step in the execution of an audit plan and concludes with a decision on certification.
Audit Evidence	Records, statements of fact or other information which are relevant to the audit criteria and verifiable. NOTE: Audit evidence can be qualitative or quantitative. <i>Source: ISO 19011:2011</i>
Audit Team	One or more auditors conducting an audit, supported if needed by technical experts. NOTE 1 One auditor of the audit team is appointed as the audit team leader. NOTE 2 The audit team may include auditors-in-training.

Term	Definition
Auditor	A person with the competency to perform an audit. NOTE: Auditor competencies are described in Annex B.
Cancellation of Certification	Voluntary cancellation of a certification contract by any party to it according to the contractual arrangements.
Child	Any person less than 15 years of age, unless local minimum age law stipulates a higher age for work or mandatory schooling, in which case the higher age would apply. If, however, local minimum age law is set at 14 years of age in accordance with developing-country exceptions under ILO Convention 138, the lower age will apply.
Child Labour	Any work by a child younger than the age(s) specified in the above definition of a child, except as provided for by ILO Recommendation 146.
Cluster	A number of cages, pens or beds used for aquaculture production that meet one or more of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are located within one (1) kilometre of each other. • Discharge into the same receiving water or into waters that demonstrate hydrographic connectivity. • Are maintained using the same equipment.
Company	The entirety of any organisation or business entity responsible for implementing the requirements of this standard, including all personnel (i.e. directors, executives, management, supervisors, and non-management staff, whether directly employed, contracted or otherwise representing the company).
Competence	The demonstrated ability to effectively apply appropriate knowledge, skills and technical understanding to undertake roles and activities in a manner which meets defined levels of achievement.
Complaint	Any expression of dissatisfaction, by any person or organisation, relating to the activities or lack of activities of an accreditation body, a CAB, a Certificate Holder, where a response is expected.
CAB	See Conformity Assessment Body

Term	Definition
Conformity Assessment Body	<p>Body that performs conformity assessment services and that can be the object of accreditation.</p> <p>NOTE: Whenever the word CAB is used in the text, it applies to both the “applicant and accredited CABs” unless otherwise specified.</p>
Conformity Assessment	<p>Demonstration that specified requirements relating to a product, process, system, person or body are fulfilled.</p> <p><i>Source: ISO 17000:2004, 2.1</i></p>
Corrective Action	The implementation of a systemic change or solution to ensure an immediate and on-going remedy to a non-conformity.
Days	Working days in the country where the main office of the CAB is located.
Eligibility Date	The specific date from which product harvested from an applicant operation may be eligible to be sold as ASC certified, or apply the ASC logo once the farm is certified. The Eligibility Date is determined by the CAB during the farm audit.
Endorsed	Documents including standards and audit manuals that have been formally approved by ASC and are posted on the ASC website.
Expired Certificate	A certificate that reached the expiry date without having been renewed by the issuing CAB. This certificate is no longer valid.
Forced Labour	All work or service that is extracted from any person under the menace of any penalty for which said person has not offered him/herself voluntarily or for which such work or service is demanded as a means of repayment of debt.
Homeworker	A person who carries out work for a company under direct or indirect contract, other than on a company’s premises, for remuneration, which results in the provision of a product or service as specified by the employer, irrespective of who supplies the equipment, materials or other inputs used.

Term	Definition
Initial Audit	The first audit conducted on a site. If certification has not been awarded to a site for more than three (3) years then the next audit shall be considered as the initial audit.
Internal audit*	An audit against the ASC requirements carried out by personnel directly employed by or contracted by a multi-site client.
Interested Party	Individual or group concerned with or affected by the social or environmental performance of the applicant or certificate holder.
Invalid Certificate	A certificate that is withdrawn, terminated or expired. NOTE: A certificate that has been suspended is still a valid certificate, however it may not be used to sell product as ASC certified. A certificate may also become invalid if the CAB loses its accreditation.
Jurisdiction*	The lowest administrative division having regulations relevant to implementation of ASC standard(s) at sites to be included in the unit of certification.
Lead Auditor	Auditor who is given the overall responsibility for a specified audit.

Term	Definition
Major Non-conformity	<p>Any non-conformity with an ASC requirement that has one or more of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absence or total breakdown of a system that is likely to result in a failure to achieve the objective of the relevant ASC Standard Criteria or another applicable certification requirement • Would result in the probable shipment of product that does not conform to ASC requirements • Is likely to result in a failure of the system or materially reduce the ability of the client to assure the integrity of the certified product • Is shown to continue over a long period of time • Is repeated • Is systematic or is the result of the absence or a total breakdown of a system • Affects a wide area and/or causes significant damage • Is not corrected or adequately responded to by the client once identified • Where two (2) or more minor non-conformities may together meet any of the above criteria
Minor Non-conformity	<p>Any non-conformity with an ASC requirement that does not jeopardise the integrity of the certified product. This includes one or more of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where failure to comply with a requirement which is not likely to result in the breakdown of a system to meet an ASC requirement • Where the failure is a single observed lapse or isolated incident • Where there is no systemic failure to conform to ASC requirements • Where the impacts are limited in their temporal and spatial scale • Where there is minimal risk of the shipment of a product that does not conform to ASC requirements • Where the failure does not meet the definition of a Major Non-conformity • Where the failure will not produce a non-conforming product

Term	Definition
Multi-site organisation	<p>An organisation having an identified central function at which certain activities are planned, controlled or managed and a network of local offices or branches (sites) at which such activities are fully or partially carried out.</p> <p><i>Source: IAF Mandatory Document for the Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling, Issue 1 Version 3 (IAF MD1:2007)</i></p>
Non-conformity	Not conforming to an ASC indicator in the standard or another ASC requirement for certification and against which the audit is conducted.
Operations*	Any part of an organisation or organisations responsible for the oversight, management, or performance of functions that are included in a unit of certification. This can include: head office(s), production site(s), processing facilities, storage facilities, etc.
Permanent Worker	Worker whose main job is a permanent job or with a work contract of unlimited duration.
Preceding CAB	The CAB that first issued a certificate and that was contract partner until the certification contract was taken over and terminated.
Processing Facility	Facilities that process aquaculture products into other semi-finished or finished products. This includes facilities which blend or repackage products containing ASC certified materials.
Production System	<p>Concept identified by what is being cultured, giving also hints on how this is done, and possibly the aquaculture milieu in which it takes place, such as for example land-based trout culture, suspended rope culture of mussel, intensive eel culture, pond culture of Nile tilapia and intensive catfish raceway culture.</p> <p>A production system may include a number of distinct processes.</p>
Qualification	Specific accomplishment
Receiving Water Body	All distinct bodies of water that receive runoff or waste discharges, such as streams, rivers, ponds, lakes and estuaries (adapted from World Health Organisation). This does not include farm-constructed water courses, impoundments or treatment facilities (settling ponds, oxidation lagoons, compost pits, etc.).

Term	Definition
Remedial Action	Action taken to make amends to a worker or former employee for a previous violation of a worker's rights as covered by SA8000.
Remediation of Children	All necessary support and actions to ensure the safety, health, education, and development of children who have been subjected to child labour, as defined above, and are dismissed.
Risk^{4*}	The combination of the likelihood of a threat and its potential impact.
Site*	<p>Production facility owned or operated by an individual, company, or partnership that is included in the unit of certification.</p> <p>NOTE: A site which has been in production and is planned to return to production shall remain within the scope of a multi-site audit or certificate even if it is not in production at the time of any individual audit.</p> <p>NOTE: Subcontracted farms that are included within the scope of an audit or within the scope of a certificate are sites.</p>
Stakeholder	Any individual, group or organisation, which may affect or may be affected by the entity seeking certification.
Subcontractor / Sub-supplier	A business entity in the supply chain which, directly or indirectly, provides the supplier with goods and/or services integral to, and utilized in/for, the production of the supplier's and/or company's goods and/or services.
Succeeding CAB	The CAB that takes over a certificate from a preceding CAB. Prior to the transfer process, the succeeding CAB must establish a new contract and becomes the new contract partner of the certificate holder.
Suspension of Certificate	The temporary removal by the CAB of all or part of a certificate holder's scope of certification pending corrective action by the certificate holder. A suspended certificate cannot be transferred.
Suspension of Certification	Process of temporarily making ASC certification invalid, in full or for part of the scope of certification.

⁴ This definition is adapted from the paper "Risk Management for ISEAL members: Research and Recommendations" by Mike Read and James Sullivan, ISEAL Alliance 14 March 2014, p 13.

Term	Definition
Technical Expert	Person who provides specific knowledge or expertise to the audit team. NOTE: A technical expert is not required to be an auditor.
Temporary Worker	Worker engaged for a limited period only.
Termination of Certificate	Cancellation of the certification contract by either party according to contractual arrangements. Also referred to as voluntary withdrawal or cancellation.
Threat⁵*	A source of risk to the client's conformity with ASC requirements.
Transfer of Certificate	Moving the responsibility for maintaining an active ASC certificate from one CAB to another.
Unit of Certification	The operation that is covered by a certificate. It includes all production and processing sites including the receiving water bodies, any harvest sites such as production ponds, and all storage or processing operations (including subcontracted operations) up to the point where the product enters further chain of custody.
Under-assessment product	Products harvested from an applicant farm, before the farm certification is complete, which may eventually be eligible to be sold as certified or apply the logo. Under-assessment product shall be harvested on or after the Eligibility Date specified in the farm report, and must originate from the farm's unit of certification. After the farm is certified, under-assessment product may be sold as certified or apply the ASC logo, subject to specific requirements.
Valid Certificate	A certificate that is not suspended, withdrawn, terminated or expired. Only active valid certificates can be transferred.
Withdrawal of Certificate	The irrevocable removal by the CAB of all or part of a certificate holder's certification as a result of noncompliance with certification requirements or contractual commitments.
Withdrawal of Certification	See Withdrawal of Certificate

⁵ The definition of Threat is adapted from the definition of 'hazard' from ISO Guide 73 2009 Risk management vocabulary

Term	Definition
Worker	A person employed in a non-supervisory job.
Young Worker	Any worker over the age of a child as defined above and under the age of 18.
Shall	Denotes a requirement.
Should	Denotes a recommendation.
May	Denotes a permitted course of action.

20 ANNEX B – AUDITOR QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

Normative

Table A – All Auditor and Technical Expert qualifications and competencies

All auditors and technical experts shall possess the following qualifications and competencies.

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B1. Analytical skills	The individual shall effectively and systematically assess situations and information to make informed decisions on objective and verifiable evidence
B2. Audit Training	<p>The individual shall have knowledge of the purpose and procedure of conducting audits.</p> <p>The individual shall be trained and competent in accordance with the CAB procedures as needed for the role that is to be undertaken by the technical expert.</p>
B3. Diplomatic	The individual shall be tactful in dealings with people, as appropriate to achieve the audit objectives.
B4. Education	<p>The individual shall have at least a post-high school diploma or equivalent (minimum course duration of two (2) years) must have been obtained in a discipline related to the scope of certification.</p> <p>In exceptional cases practical experience can be regarded as equivalent. These cases shall be documented.</p>

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B5. Ethical	The individual shall be fair, truthful, unbiased, sincere, discreet, trustworthy and honest. The individual shall possess a high level of integrity, particularly in relation to bribery and corrupt practices.
B6. Listening	The individual shall understand and interpret verbal material. The individual shall understand and interpret non-verbal communication, such as gestures, and personal expression.
B7. Numeracy	The individual shall understand and interpret number systems and their significance.
B8. Observant	The individual shall be fully aware of physical surroundings and activities throughout the entire audit process.
B9. Open-minded	The individual shall be open-minded, reasonable and shall be willing to consider alternative ideas or points of view.
B10. Perceptive	The individual shall instinctively be aware of and be able to understand situations.
B11. Professional	The individual shall be courteous, conscientious, discreet and business like in their approach to auditing. The individual shall have the ability to deal sensitively with people from different backgrounds and to make them feel at ease, in order to resolve conflict without losing composure. The individual shall be empathetic, respectful to others and shall help to build trust during and after the audit. The individual shall keep relevant information confidential in accordance with non-disclosure or confidentiality agreements. The individual shall communicate confidently and with authority to secure agreement with the client's management. The individual shall maintain strict independence from self-interest or personal bias.
B12. Reading	The individual shall understand and interpret written material.
B13. Respectful	The individual shall act respectfully, show politeness and good manners.

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B14. Tenacious	The individual shall be persistent and focussed in their approach to achieve audit objectives.
B15. Versatile	The individual shall be able to adjust readily to different situations and to effectively resolve conflict and arrive at consensus agreement as far as possible.
B16. Work experience	The individual shall have at least two (2) years of experience relevant to the operation and, if relevant, the processing facility being audited.
B17. Writing	<p>The individual shall have good written communication skills.</p> <p>The individual shall produce written documents that can be understood by the intended audience.</p> <p>The individual shall produce clear and accurate reports on audit findings and clearly articulate these in relation to legal requirements and relevant codes.</p>

Table B – Lead Auditor qualifications and competencies

In addition to the requirements of tables A, **lead auditors** conducting ASC farm audits shall possess the following qualifications and competencies.

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B18. Audit Experience	<p>The individual shall initially have completed a minimum of 25 days of onsite audit experience in conducting audits (either for social or environmental compliance).</p> <p>The individual shall have undertaken at least two satisfactory audits as an acting audit team leader, shadowed by and under the supervision of a competent lead auditor.</p> <p>The individual shall have conducted at least three (3) ASC audits or have been a member of an audit team for ten (10) audit days, for equivalent aquaculture audits at more than one (1) production facility.</p> <p>The individual shall have conducted at least three (3) management system audits (for multi-site and group certification).</p>
B19. Audit principles and techniques	<p>The individual shall be able to apply audit principles, procedures and techniques associated with management systems and possess a detailed knowledge of compliance issues commonly experienced with aquaculture and associated processing operations.</p> <p>The individual shall be able to prioritize and focus on matters of significance and understand the appropriateness and consequences of using sampling techniques for auditing.</p> <p>The individual shall be able to verify the accuracy of collected information and be aware of the significance and appropriateness of audit evidence to support audit findings and conclusions.</p> <p>The individual shall understand and assess those factors that can affect the reliability of the audit findings and conclusions.</p> <p>The individual shall be able to apply audit principles in the conduct of a social audit.</p>

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B20. Audit Training	<p>The individual shall have successfully completed of a Lead Assessor training course based on ISO 19011 principles that have a minimum duration of thirty-seven (37) hours. The certificate must specify the course content and duration. Successful completion must be indicated on the certificate. The Lead Assessor training course must cover: applicable standards on quality auditing, auditing techniques, focus of the audits (psychological aspects and communication) and reporting, and it must also include a practical case study.</p>
B21. Auditor training	<p>The individual shall have undertaken and successfully completed an ASC approved auditor training course or courses in relation to specific standards, as required by the ASC.</p> <p>The individual shall have undertaken and successfully passed the 'ASC Farm Traceability' or CoC training at the MSC online training platform⁶.</p> <p>The individual shall complete the ASC training for new requirements as specified by the ASC within the deadlines set by ASC.</p> <p>The individual shall have successfully completed an IRCA management system lead auditor course (for multi-site or group certification).</p> <p>The individual shall undertake additional training on changes to legislation, specific standards, codes or conventions as appropriate.</p> <p>The individual has had an audit peer witnessed by a qualified ASC lead auditor no less than once in each two (2) year period.</p> <p>The individual shall lead no less than two (2) ASC audits per year to maintain ASC lead auditor qualification.</p>

⁶ <http://byglearning.co.uk/MAR-3612-LMS/Content/Login.aspx>

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B22. Decisive	The individual shall be able to reach timely conclusions based on logical reasoning and analysis, and in the case of possible conflict, be confident to manage and control discussions. The individual shall assume the leadership role during discussions and other situations in order to resolve issues.
B23. Detection skills	The individual shall have knowledge and investigative skills to detect and document evidence of non-conformities. The individual shall have the investigative skills to determine the authenticity of information and to evaluate allegations made by other sources.
B24. Ethically and morally courageous	The individual shall act professionally and ethically and make decisions even though these actions and decisions may result in disagreement, confrontation or appeal proceedings.
B25. Facilitating meetings	The individual shall effectively control and manage meetings during the audit.
B26. Fraud detection	The individual shall understand and has the skills to detect commonly used methods of document manipulation, fraudulent actions and fraudulent practices.
B27. Interpersonal skills	The individual shall have skills to ensure effective communication between themselves and other people. The individual shall have good people management skills. The individual shall have good communication skills in relation to a situation which warrants careful information gathering such as issues relating to gender, race, culture, discrimination and worker/management dispute.

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B28. Interviewing	<p>The individual shall be experienced in different types of interviewing techniques.</p> <p>The individual shall understand the principles of sampling techniques with respect to group or individual interviews and cultural considerations.</p> <p>The individual shall have the ability to interview personnel without compromising the source of information.</p> <p>The individual shall deal discreetly with personnel who may feel compromised or feel uncomfortable being interviewed.</p>
B29. Language	<p>Unless accompanied by an independent interpreter, the individual shall be a fluent speaker and reader of the language(s) used by managers, administrators and workers of the organisation being audited.</p> <p>The individual shall communicate effectively through an interpreter.</p>
B30. Logical judgement	<p>The individual shall make correct decisions based on objective and verifiable evidence.</p>
B31. Management systems and reference documents	<p>The individual shall have a general knowledge of management systems standards (such as ISO 9001), applicable procedures or other management systems documents used as audit criteria.</p>
B32. Oral presentation	<p>The individual shall have good oral communication skills, which makes him/her understood by the intended audience.</p> <p>The individual shall provide clear and accurate oral representation on audit findings at closing meetings and clearly articulate these in relation to legal requirements and relevant codes.</p>
B33. Organisational situations	<p>The individual shall have knowledge of general business processes and shall understand the workings of organisations in relation to size, structure, function and relationships.</p> <p>The individual shall understand the social, economic and cultural relationships in worker communities.</p>

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B34. Organisational skills	The individual shall effectively plan, prioritise and adjust the activities to auditee needs as far as possible, without adversely affecting the audit. The individual shall have good organisational and time management skills.
B35. Self-reliant	The individual shall be able to act effectively and function independently during audits
B36. Technical language	The individual shall have knowledge of the technical language employed in aquaculture and processing of aquaculture products.
B37. Work experience	The individual shall have industrial experience relevant to the business being audited.

Table C – Social auditor qualifications and competencies

In addition to the requirements of table A, **social auditors** conducting audits of social requirements in ASC farm audits shall possess the following qualifications and competencies.

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B38. Social auditing qualification	<p>The individual shall have one or more of the following qualifications or equivalent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has completed an SA8000 four or five day auditor course that is formally approved by SAAS plus continuing professional development courses as required by SAAS and has successfully completed a 3-day SAAS approved course within 2 years of having taken the four or five day basic course. • Has completed the Verité five day “EICC Labor & Ethics Lead Auditor Course” or the “Lead Auditor Accreditation Training: Investigative Skills Workshop”. • Is recognized as a lead auditor for FI (Fairtrade International) audits for Trade and Hired Labour Standards by FLOCERT. • Has completed the Worldwide Responsible Apparel Producers (WRAP) five day “Auditor/Lead Auditor Social System Training Course”.

<p>B39. Social auditing experience</p>	<p>The individual shall have participated in at least two (2) audits in agriculture or aquaculture. The individual has participated in at least two audits for one or more of the following schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) • Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition (EICC) Electronic Industry Code of Conduct • Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) Base Code • Fair Trade USA • Fairtrade International (FI) • Goodweave (Rugmark) • International Council of Toy Industries (ICTI) – Code of Business Practice • Social Accountability International (SAI) SA 8000 • Worldwide Responsible Apparel Producers (WRAP) – Code of Conduct
<p>B40. ASC Auditor Training</p>	<p>The individual shall have undertaken and successfully completed an ASC approved social auditor training course or courses in relation to specific standards, as required by the ASC. The individual shall undertake additional training on changes to legislation, specific standards, codes or conventions as appropriate.</p>
<p>B41. Competencies</p>	<p>The individual shall have knowledge of local labour and human rights legislation The individual shall have familiarity with local customs The individual shall speak and read the primary local language The individual shall be able to manage relationships with workers and managers</p>

Table D – Internal Auditor qualifications and competencies

In addition to the requirements of tables A, **internal auditors and internal inspectors** conducting ASC farm/site audits and inspections shall possess the following qualifications and competencies.

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B42. Audit/inspection Experience	The individual shall have undertaken at least two satisfactory witness audits as an acting audit (team) leader, shadowed by and under the supervision of a competent internal auditor.
B43. Audit/inspection principles and techniques	<p>The individual shall be able to apply audit principles, procedures and techniques associated with management systems and possess a detailed knowledge of compliance issues commonly experienced with aquaculture and associated processing operations.</p> <p>The individual shall be able to prioritize and focus on matters of significance and understand the appropriateness and consequences of using sampling techniques for auditing.</p> <p>The individual shall be able to verify the accuracy of collected information and be aware of the significance and appropriateness of audit evidence to support audit findings and conclusions.</p> <p>The individual shall understand and assess those factors that can affect the reliability of the audit findings and conclusions.</p> <p>The individual shall be able to apply audit principles in the conduct of a social audit.</p>
B44. Audit/inspection training	The individual shall have successfully completed of an Internal Assessor training course based on ISO 19011 principles that have a minimum duration of sixteen (16) hours. The certificate must specify the course content and duration. Successful completion must be indicated on the certificate. The course provider shall be accredited by the International Register of Certified Auditors (IRCA).

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B45. Auditor training	<p>The individual shall have undertaken and successfully passed the 'ASC Farm Traceability' online training module.</p> <p>The individual shall complete the ASC training for new requirements as specified by the ASC within the deadlines set by ASC.</p> <p>The individual shall have successfully completed either an ISO management system internal auditor course (ISO 9001/14001/22000/27000/OHSAS/etc.) provided by a certification body or a professional auditor training institution; or equivalent as designated or approved by ASC.</p> <p>The individual shall have successfully completed a training course for auditing social requirements provided by a certification body or professional training institution specialised in social auditing (only applicable to internal auditors auditing social requirements of ASC standards).</p> <p>The individual shall undertake additional training on changes to legislation, specific standards, codes or conventions as appropriate.</p> <p>The individual has had an audit peer witnessed by a qualified ASC internal auditor no less than once in each two (2) year period.</p>
B46. Decisive	<p>The individual shall be able to reach timely conclusions based on logical reasoning and analysis, and in the case of possible conflict, be confident to manage and control discussions.</p> <p>The individual shall assume the leadership role during discussions and other situations in order to resolve issues.</p>

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B47. Detection skills	<p>The individual shall have knowledge and investigative skills to detect and document evidence of non-conformities.</p> <p>The individual shall have the investigative skills to determine the authenticity of information and to evaluate allegations made by other sources.</p>
B48. Ethically and morally courageous	<p>The individual shall act professionally and ethically and make decisions even though these actions and decisions may result in disagreement, confrontation or appeal proceedings.</p>
B49. Facilitating meetings	<p>The individual shall effectively control and manage meetings during the audit.</p>
B50. Interpersonal skills	<p>The individual shall have skills to ensure effective communication between themselves and other people.</p> <p>The individual shall have good people management skills.</p> <p>The individual shall have good communication skills in relation to a situation which warrants careful information gathering such as issues relating to gender, race, culture, discrimination and worker/management dispute.</p>
B51. Interviewing	<p>The individual shall be experienced in different types of interviewing techniques.</p> <p>The individual shall understand the principles of sampling techniques with respect to group or individual interviews and cultural considerations.</p>
B52. Language	<p>Unless accompanied by an independent interpreter, the individual shall be a fluent speaker and reader of the language(s) used by managers, administrators and workers of the organisation being audited.</p> <p>The individual shall communicate effectively through an interpreter.</p>

Qualification/Competency	Requirement
B53. Logical judgement	The individual shall make correct decisions based on objective and verifiable evidence.
B54. Management systems and reference documents	The individual shall have a general knowledge of management systems standards (such as ISO 9001), applicable procedures or other management systems documents used as audit criteria.
B55. Oral presentation	<p>The individual shall have good oral communication skills, which makes him/her understood by the intended audience.</p> <p>The individual shall provide clear and accurate oral representation on audit findings at closing meetings and clearly articulate these in relation to legal requirements and relevant codes.</p>
B56. Organisational situations	<p>The individual shall have knowledge of general business processes and shall understand the workings of organisations in relation to size, structure, function and relationships.</p> <p>The individual shall understand the social, economic and cultural relationships in worker communities.</p>
B57. Organisational skills	The individual shall have good organisational and time management skills.
B58. Self-reliant	The individual shall be able to act effectively and function independently during audits
B59. Technical language	The individual shall have knowledge of the technical language employed in aquaculture and processing of aquaculture products.
B60. Work experience	The individual shall have experience relevant to the business being audited.

21 ANNEX C –AUDIT REPORT REQUIREMENTS

Normative

(For the audit report template, see the Excel file “Annex C - ASC Report Template”)

General Requirements

C1. Audit reports shall be written in English and in the most common language spoken in the areas where the operation is located.

C2. Audit reports may contain confidential annexes for commercially sensitive information.

C2.1 The CAB shall agree the content of any commercially sensitive information with the applicant, which can still be accessible by the ASC and the appointed accreditation body upon request as stipulated in the certification contract.

C2.2 The public report shall contain a clear overview of the items which are in the confidential annexes.

C2.3 Except for the annexes that contain commercially sensitive information all audit reports will be public.

C3. The CAB is solely responsible for the content of all reports, including the content of any confidential annexes.

C4. Reporting Deadlines* for certification and re-certification audit reports

C4.1 Within thirty (30) days of the completing of the audit the CAB shall submit a draft report in English and the national or most common language spoken in the area where the operation is located.

C4.2 Within five (5) days the ASC should post the draft report to the ASC website.

C4.3 The CAB shall allow stakeholders and interested parties to comment on the report for fifteen (15) days.

C4.4 Within twenty (20) days of the close of comments, the CAB shall submit the final report to the ASC in English and the national or most common language spoken in the area where the operation is located.

C4.5 Within five (5) days the ASC should post the final report to the ASC website.

C4.6 Audit reports shall contain accurate and reproducible results.

C5. Reporting Deadlines* for surveillance audit reports

C5.1 Within ninety (90) days of the completing of the audit the CAB shall submit a final report in English and the national or most common language spoken in the area where the operation is located.

C5.2 Within five (5) days the ASC should post the final report to the ASC website.

C5.3 Audit reports shall contain accurate and reproducible results.

* Refers to working days

22 ANNEX D – COMMUNICATION WITH THE ASC

Normative

D1 **Language**

D1.1 All CAB communication with the ASC shall be in English.

D2 **Forms**

D2.1 CABs shall communicate with the ASC using forms supplied in this document or using online forms on the ASC database.

D2.2 Requests for interpretation of the ASC Standards or Certification and Accreditation Requirements and requests for variance to these normative requirements shall be made by CABs using FORM 1.

D3 **Public Information**

D3.1 The CAB is responsible for control of all confidential information submitted to the ASC on forms that specify public disclosure.

D4 **Format**

D4.1 Information shall be submitted in the formats specified by the ASC

23 ANNEX E – ASC CERTIFICATION FOR MULTI-SITE ORGANISATIONS

Normative

E1 Scope

E1.1 This annex shall be used for all conformity assessment services for multi-site clients.

E2 Initial Audit

E2.1 All initial audits of multi-site clients shall:

- i. Include onsite visits of all sites in the unit of certification.
- ii. Include all applicable requirements for certification as stated in the relevant standard and in the *ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements* (this document).
- iii. Ensure that staff interviews shall be no less than the square root of the largest number of staff working at the central office and all locations included in the unit of certification at any point in the last year.
 - a. The number of staff and staff interviews shall include all permanent, part-time, and contract staff, including personnel of subcontractors.
 - b. The staff included in the total shall not include personnel that are working on capital projects.
- iv. Files and records shall be sampled at a rate to be established by the CAB taking into account that threats and risk level of the unit of certification are yet to be identified and assessed at the end of the initial audit.

GUIDANCE

The term '*capital projects*' describes work at the farm that is not related to the aquaculture operations. This can include construction, replacement of major equipment or the installation

E3 Surveillance audits

E3.1 All audits conducted after the initial audit, including surveillance and re-certification audits, shall use the risk weighted sampling procedure below.

- i. If the client chooses to change to a different CAB, the succeeding CAB shall use the risk weighted sampling procedure below.

- a. Data gathered by the preceding CAB in its first audit shall be applied.
 - b. The succeeding CAB may use additional information for its risk weighted sampling procedure.
- ii. If a client had a certificate that has expired for any period of time, any new certification audits shall be treated as an initial certification (E2).
- i. The CAB shall make or revise its risk analysis of the client using the same risk- based method described in this Annex E to determine the rate and selection of samples.
- ii. The grading of threats as a low, medium or high risk may be revised based on audit evidence and other information gathered in previous audits and stakeholder input received by the CAB.
- iii. Grading of risks and sampling levels may change from audit to audit, based on the information gathered in previous audits and new information gathered.
- iv. All ASC certification requirements relevant to threats that are determined to be high and medium risks shall be audited in every surveillance audit.

E4 Re-certification audits

- E4.1 All re-certification audits shall include all requirements for certification as stated in the relevant standard and in the ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements (this document).
- E4.2 The CAB shall review and revise the risk analysis for the client using the same risk-based method described in this Annex E to determine the rate of sampling for the re-certification audit.
 - i. The revision of the risk analysis for re-certification audits shall consider all risk information gathered in previous audits.

E5 Sites

- E5.1 Only sites that are in production shall be included in the unit of certification of a multi-site applicant.
 - i. Sites that are certified under an existing certificate(s) may be exempted from the initial audit if:
 - a. The site has been subject of an audit within the last 6 months, and
 - b. No open major non-conformities have been identified at the site.
 - ii. The CAB may decide to audit any site that conforms to these conditions if it determines that it is necessary to demonstrate conformity with ASC requirements.

E5.1.1 Sites may be removed from the scope of an initial audit by the CAB at the request of the client.

- i. Removed sites and reason(s) of removal shall be included in the audit report.
- ii. Audit findings of sites removed after the initial onsite audit shall be documented in the audit report.

E5.1.2 Sites that are removed from the scope of an initial audit may only be added to the scope of the certificate as new sites at the next re-certification audit.

E5.2 Sites may be removed from the scope of an existing certificate by the CAB

- i. if requested by the client; or
- ii. due to a major non-conformity that is not closed out in due time; or
- iii. due to not complying with applicable local regulations as notified by the client (see 17.1.3.2.b.x)

E5.2.1 The CAB shall follow requirements in section 7.6 of this document (7.6.2-7.6.4.1) when removing sites from a certificate.

E5.2.2 Reason(s) of site removal from a certificate shall be documented in the next audit report.

E5.2.3 Sites removed from a certificate shall continue to be monitored by the CAB to confirm that:

- a. all outstanding non-conformities are closed following an agreed timeframe between the multi-site client and the CAB;
- b. the site complies with applicable regulations; and,
- c. product produced in the removed site(s) is not at risk of being included as certified production and in further certified chain of custody.

E5.3 New sites may be added to an existing certificate only after an onsite audit has been conducted by the CAB without any open major non-conformities.

E5.3.1 Sites that are fallowed at the time of the initial audit shall be treated as new sites if they are to be added to the scope of a certificate.

E5.3.2 All site(s) removed from the initial audit and from a valid certificate as described in E5.1 and E5.2 above shall be treated as new sites at the next re-certification audit.

- i. These sites shall be added to the scope of a certificate at the next re-certification audit.

E5.4 The CAB shall prepare a map of the location and boundaries of each site that are included in the unit of certification.

- i. The map of all sites within the unit of certification shall be included in the audit report.
- ii. The location and name or ID of each site in the unit of certification shall be appended to the certificate.

E5.4.1 If the sites included in the scope of a certificate are different from the sites in a subsequent audit (due to removed or newly (re-)included sites), the CAB shall update the map of the unit of certification.

- i. The map shall
 - a. be included in the audit report;
 - b. include all sites within the unit of certification, including those that are not in production and those from which product may be quarantined or segregated;
 - c. clearly indicate all sites that were removed from and newly added to the scope of the audit or certificate.
- ii. The CAB shall update the certificate with an up-to-date list of all sites within the unit of certification and their locations each time a site is added or removed.

E5.5 The CAB shall include in audit samples following site(s) that is in the scope of an existing certificate.

E6 Risk-Weighted Sampling Procedure

E6.1 The CAB procedures shall document its risk-weighted sampling procedure that shall conform to this Annex E.

- i. This procedure shall include:
 - 1. Audit planning procedures including:
 - a. Initial audits
 - b. Surveillance audits
 - c. Re-certification audits
 - 2. Risk assessment procedures for threats not covered in this annex including:
 - a. Threat identification
 - b. Risk assessment

- c. Assignment of risk categories
- 3. Sample selection procedures including:
 - a. Sample size
 - b. Sample selection
- 4. Reporting procedures:
 - a. Reporting on audit planning, risk assessment and sample selection

E7 Risk-Weighted Sampling

E7.1 Threat identification and classification of risk threshold

E7.1.1 The CAB shall evaluate the operations of the client against the ASC standard to be audited and identify any material environmental, operational, social or economic threats to its conformity to ASC requirements that are not included in Table E1.

- i. These additional threats and associated risk assessment shall be included in the audit report.

E7.2 Risk Assessment

E7.2.1 For the threats listed in Table E1, the CAB shall apply the thresholds in the Table to determine if the risk is low, medium or high.

E7.2.2 For threats identified by the CAB that are not listed in Table E1, the CAB shall develop thresholds for determining whether the threat is a low, medium or high risk and shall include this information in Table E1 in the audit report.

- i. This determination shall be based on the likelihood of the occurrence and the likely impact of each threat during the term of certification.
- ii. The audit plan shall include provision for evaluating threats that are identified by the CAB and are not listed in Table E1

E7.2.3 All threats assessed and their risk classification shall be described and justified in the audit report.

Table E1 - Threat Evaluation Matrix

Threat	Threshold		
	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
1. Management system weakness	The client is certified to a management system standard such as ISO 9001 or 14001, or GAA/BAP group certification or GlobalG.A.P. multi-site option 2 or group certification.	The client is not certified to a management system standard such as ISO 9001 or 14001, or GAA/BAP group certification, or GlobalG.A.P. multi-site option 2 or group certification.	The client is not certified to management system standard such as ISO 9001 or 14001, or GAA/BAP group certification, or GlobalG.A.P. multi-site option 2 or group certification; and is known to have a weak management system.
2. Weakness of client's internal site checklist	All internal site checklists are complete and up to date.	Internal site checklists are not complete and up to date but performance is not being affected.	Internal site checklists are not complete and up- to-date; and performance is at risk.
3. Internal audit weakness	Complete internal audit at all sites is conducted by qualified internal auditors. Audit and audit report include a review of all ASC requirements and internal site checklists. All audit findings are reported and acted upon.	Complete internal audit at all sites is regularly conducted by qualified internal auditors. Internal audit includes a review of all ASC requirements and internal site checklists. Audit report is incomplete.	Either 1) Internal audit does not include a review of all sites and all ASC requirements and internal site checklists; Or 2) Internal audit is conducted by unqualified internal auditors.

Threat	Threshold		
	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
4. Staff training weakness	All responsible personnel at all sites are trained in relevant the procedures and are competent to accomplish their responsibilities. A staff training procedure is implemented.	No staff training procedure is available. All responsible staff are trained to do their job to ensure conformity with ASC requirements.	Staff training is deficient, or not occurring.
5. Multiple management systems	The client has a single management system implemented for all its operations.	The client has more than one management system but only one is used by the central office and for all sites included in the unit of certification.	The client has more than one management system for operations managed by the central office including for sites that are part of the unit of certification.
6. Records management weakness	All required records are retained and organised as per legal requirements, applicable ASC standard and own regulations.	Not all required records are found due to missing records or they are not organized for retrieval.	Required records are not retained or found.
7. Subcontractors including subcontracted farms and subcontracted services (related to the operations of the unit of certification)	Either: 1) No subcontracted farms or services are used in the unit of certification; or, 2) Performance requirements for subcontracted farms and services are defined. The performance of all subcontracted farms and services meet the defined ASC requirements and are monitored by the client. All records are retained by the client.	Records of the client monitoring the performance of subcontracted farms and services are not complete. The performance of subcontracted farms is found to be in compliance with relevant ASC requirements.	Records of monitoring the performance of subcontracted farms and services are incomplete.

Threat	Threshold		
	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
8. Use of resources	Purchasing of supplies and services is centralised. Records are complete.	All purchasing of supplies and services is centralised but records are not centralised.	Supplies and services are purchased as needed and approved by more than one individual.
9. Record of NCs raised by the ASC CAB and response	No open NC(s)	Open minor NC(s)	Any site was once suspended or removed from the scope of a certificate within the past 3 years due to not complying with ASC requirement(s).
10. Complaints resolution weakness	All complaints regarding the UoC to the client have been responded to and resolved within timelines in client's complaint procedure.	Complaints regarding the UoC are addressed but not in a timely fashion as specified in the client's complaint procedure.	Evidence is found that complaint responses and resolution related to the UoC is intentionally delayed or avoided; OR A complaint related to the UoC has escalated to legal actions.

Threat	Threshold		
	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
11. Traceability weakness	Either: 1) The UoC has a separate MSC/ASC CoC certification ⁷ for farming operations; or 2) All production of the UoC can be sold as ASC certified AND there is no non-conformity raised (by either internal or external auditor) against 17.1.3.2.b.iii.L in this document (CAR v.2.1)	Not all production of the UoC can be sold as ASC certified but there is an effective tracking system implemented AND products are clearly identified, segregated and traceable as required in 17.1.3.2.b.iii.L in this document (CAR v.2.1).	Either 1) Not all production of the UoC can be sold as ASC certified and there is a non-conformity raised (either by internal or external auditors) against the requirement 17.1.3.2.b.iii.5 in this document (CAR v.2.1); or 2) Owner(s) of any subcontracted farms has other farms/sites producing the same species but not being part of the UoC.
12. Country risk assessment score	Operations located in a country that is above 62 on Transparency International's latest list ⁸ and has not been designated as medium or high risk by ASC.	Operations located in a country that is between 32 and 62 on Transparency International's latest list and has not been designated as high or low risk by ASC.	Operations located in a country that is 31 or less on Transparency International's latest list and has not been designated as medium or low risk by ASC.

E8 Sample Size for surveillance and re-certification audits

E8.1 The minimum sampling size for sites and staff interviews shall be determined by using the “ASC multi-site sample size combined calculator”.

E8.1.1 Audit approaches and any additional samples selected for risks identified by the CAB that are not listed in Table E1 shall be determined by the CAB.

- i. These shall be documented in the audit report.

⁷ See footnote 1 on page 23 of this document CAR v.2.

⁸ Country risk assessment score found on Transparency International's latest corruption perception index on the latest year's CPI for the country in which the operations are sited. (For the latest scores see <http://cpi.transparency.org>).

E.8.2. Sample size for files and other records shall be determined by the CAB, considering the risk profile of the client.

- i. Sample size for records should be greater for sites with elevated risks in areas where there are elevated risks.

E8.2.1 These shall be documented in the audit report.

E9 Sample selection

E9.1 The allocation of the sample size determined in E8 shall include:

E9.1.1 If the sample size is less than the total number of sites or staff to be interviewed:

- i. No less than 20% (rounded up) shall be selected randomly
- ii. No less than 50% (rounded up) of any balance shall be selected based on medium and high risk identified for any of threats number 2, 3, 7 or 9 in table E1.

E9.2 Where the client's operations, sites, locations or staff have been stratified, the sample selection for each stratum will conform to E9.1

E9.3 For samples selected where there are only low risks identified under E7, E9.1.1 shall not apply.

E9.3.1 Samples for all low risk multi-site clients shall be representative and shall be clearly explained and documented in the audit report.

E10 Traceability

E10.1 In addition to the assessment as per 17.6.1 – 17.6.5 in this document (CAR v.2.1), the CAB shall determine if the product from any site(s) are to be excluded from entering the chain of custody. This may be due to factors such as:

- i. If the site is not actively being used for production;
- ii. If the site has any production units (cages/pens/ponds/tanks/raceways/beds) or fish cultured in them remediated or treated; or
- iii. If the site is suspended or removed from the unit of certification due to (open) major non-conformity, or cancelled for any other reasons.

E10.2 The CAB may determine that product from one or more site(s) shall be excluded from the chain of custody.

- i. The CAB shall determine the conditions under which product from the site may be sold as certified.

- ii. The CAB may determine that product from the site is to be quarantined or otherwise segregated from certified product.

E10.3 The CAB shall document its review of the risks to traceability that may arise due to any decisions taken relative to E10.1 and E10.2

- i. Based on the results found from 17.6.1 – 17.6.5 and E10.1 and E.10.2, the CAB shall determine if 17.6.6.1 or 17.6.6.2 applies.
- ii. The CAB shall further implement requirements 17.6.7 through 17.7.4.3 of this document (CAR v.2.1).

23 FORM 1 – REQUEST FOR INTERPRETATION OR VARIANCE

This form shall be used for the submission of requests by CABs to the ASC to request interpretations of the ASC normative requirements and/or requests for variance from specific normative requirements.

Before submitting a request using this form:

- 1. CABs shall check the 'ASC Variation and Interpretation Log File' to identify if similar requests have been processed.*
- 2. CABs shall not submit a request which has already been processed unless there is a material change in the new request that was not present in an earlier request.*
- 3. Variations that have been approved may be applied when similar circumstances are present.*

NOTE: ASC publishes the 'ASC Variation and Interpretation Log File' as an excel file that contains all processed applications for variations and interpretations. This file includes links to download the full text of variation and interpretation requests that have been processed. This file contains requests that have been approved and those that have been denied.

PROCESS

Communication between CAB's and ASC on the status of the request will occur through the ASC Secretariat (certification@asc-aqua.org).

Type 2 request will be under scrutiny of the VR-committee. This committee consists, at a minimum, of two members of the ASC Technical Advisory Group as well as the CEO and Standards Director of the ASC.

Depending on the nature of the request additional technical experts may be consulted. These can be, but are not limited to, members of the ASC Technical Advisory Group, former WWF Aquaculture Dialogue Members, or other technical experts.

The ASC will normally process requests Type 1 Requests within 5 days and Type 2 Requests within 15 days. CABs will be informed if additional time is needed.

I CAB Request

1.1 NAME OF CAB	1.2 DATE OF SUBMISSION	1.3 CAB CONTACT PERSON	1.4 EMAIL ADDRESS OF CAB CONTACT PERSON
1.5 SOURCE OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR WHICH THE VARIATION OR INTERPRETATION IS REQUESTED			
<input type="checkbox"/> TYPE 1 – REQUIREMENT FOUND IN THE CAR			
<input type="checkbox"/> TYPE 2 – REQUIREMENT FOUND IN AN ASC STANDARD			
1.6 LIST OF SITES FOR WHICH THE VARIATION IS REQUESTED			
1.7 ASC DOCUMENT REFERENCE			
1.8 BACKGROUND (PROVIDE FULL EXPLANATION OF THE ISSUE)			
1.9 RECOMMENDED ACTION/DECISION			

II ASC Determination

2.1 STATUS	2.2 DATE OF THE ASC DETERMINATION	2.3 ASC VR LOG REFERENCE
2.4 ASC DETERMINATION ON VARIANCE REQUEST		
2.5 ASC INTERPRETATION		

24 FORM 2 –REQUEST FOR DOCUMENTATION OF NON-CONFORMITIES FOR AUDITS TO BE CONDUCTED WITHIN TWELVE (12) MONTHS OF THE TERMINATION OF A VALID CERTIFICATE

This form is for the submission of requests by succeeding CABs to a preceding CAB to request information non-conformities for audits to be conducted within twelve (12) months of the termination of a valid certificate.

I To be completed by Succeeding CAB

1.1 NAME OF PRECEDING CAB	1.2 PRECEDING CAB CONTACT PERSON (NAME, AND CONTACT INFORMATION)	1.3 DATE OF REQUEST
1.4 NAME OF SUCCEEDING CAB	1.5 SUCCEEDING CAB CONTACT PERSON (NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION)	
1.6 NAME, ADDRESS AND CERTIFICATE NUMBER OF CLIENT		

II To be completed by Preceding CAB

2.1 TYPE OF INFORMATION PROVIDED	2.2 DATE OF RESPONSE
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Audit Report <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Conformity Report (s) <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of Information	
2.3 FULL TITLE AND DATE OF REPORT(S) SENT	

25 FORM 3 – PUBLIC DISCLOSURE FORM

Normative

See the Excel file “Annex C - ASC Report Template”

26 FORM 4 – LOG OF COMPLAINTS, CONCERNS AND OBJECTIONS

This form is to be submitted annually, no less than thirty (30) days prior to the annual surveillance visit to be performed by the ASC appointed accreditation body (AAB) with copies sent to the ASC and the AAB.

Add additional rows as need.

1.1 NAME OF CAB			1.2 DATE OF SUBMISSION		1.3 CAB CONTACT PERSON		1.4 EMAIL ADDRESS OF CAB CONTACT PERSON	
1.5 NAME OF CLIENT	1.6 CERTIFICATE NUMBER IF ISSUED	1.7 DATE RECEIVED	1.8 CAB FILE REFERENCE	1.9 FORMAL COMPLAINT (YES OR NO)	1.10 DATE OF RESPONSE	1.11 NATURE OF THE ISSUE	1.12 HOW IT WAS ADDRESSED	1.13 WAS THE COMPLAINANT SATISFIED

27 FORM 5 – REPORT OF CANCELLATION OF AN AUDIT FOR A NEW APPLICANT OR SUSPENSION, OR WITHDRAWAL OF AN EXISTING CERTIFICATE

This form is to be submitted no less than five (5) days of the action taken by the CAB.

Add additional rows as need.

1.1 NAME OF CAB	1.2 NAME OF CAB CONTACT PERSON (NAME, AND CONTACT INFORMATION)	1.3 DATE OF ACTION
1.4 ACTION TAKEN	1.5 DESCRIPTION OF OTHER ACTION	
<input type="checkbox"/> Audit of new client cancelled before completion <input type="checkbox"/> Existing certificate suspended <input type="checkbox"/> Existing certificate withdrawn <input type="checkbox"/> Other Action (describe in 1.5)		
1.6 NAME AND ADDRESS OF CLIENT		
1.7 CERTIFICATE NUMBER (IF APPLICABLE)		
1.8 DESCRIPTION OF REASONS FOR ACTION		