

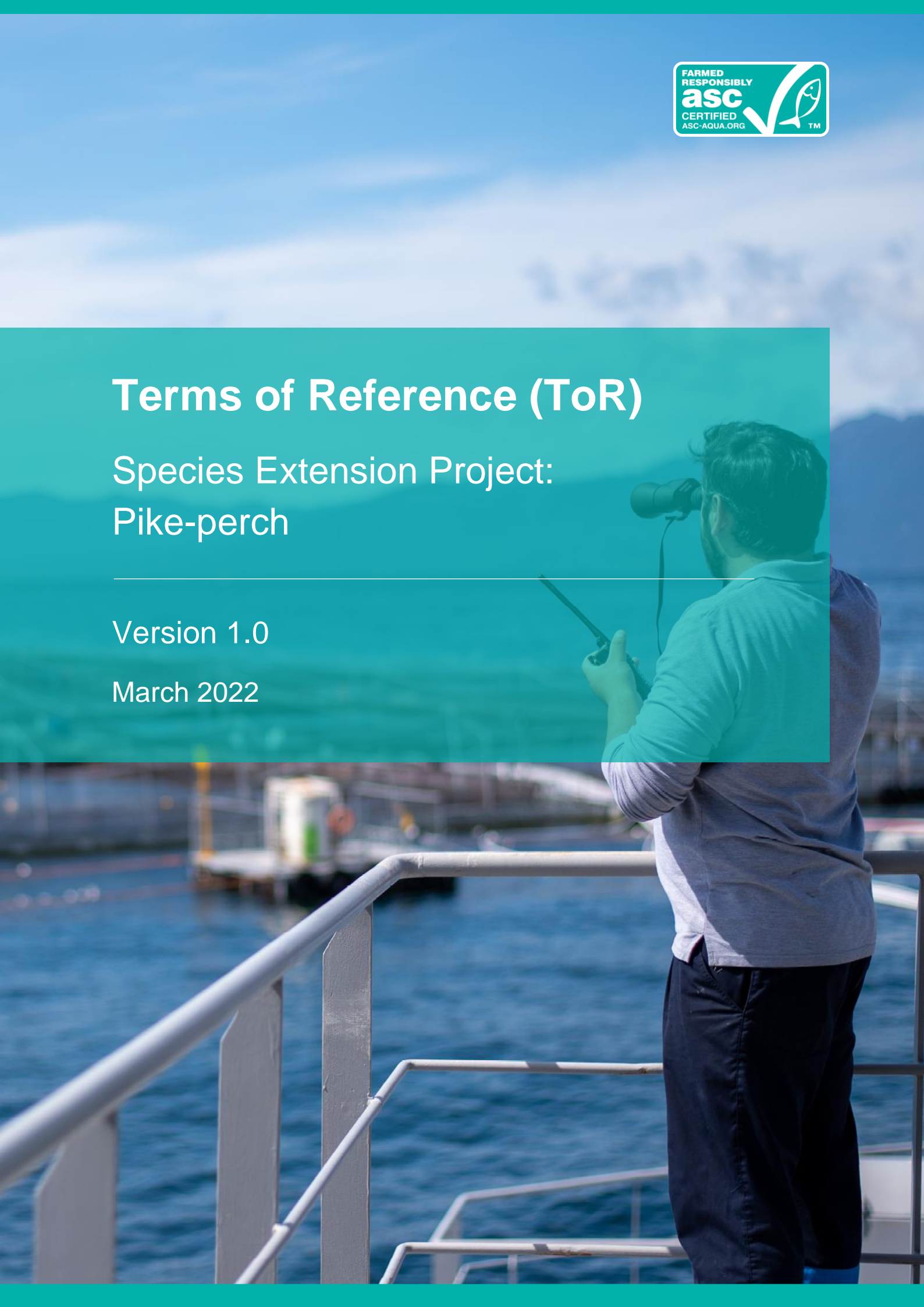


Terms of Reference (ToR)

Species Extension Project: Pike-perch

Version 1.0

March 2022



This ToR is publicly available on the [ASC website](#). Comments are welcome and appreciated.

Version:	Date:	Description of amendment	Affected section
1.0	March 2022	N/A	N/A

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Introduction

The Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that operates a voluntary, independent third-party certification and labelling programme based on scientifically robust standards.

The standards define criteria that help to transform the aquaculture sector towards environmental sustainability and social responsibility, as per the ASC Mission.

ASC Vision

A world where aquaculture plays a major role in supplying food and social benefits for humanity whilst minimising negative impacts on the environment.

ASC Mission

To transform aquaculture towards environmental sustainability and social responsibility using efficient market mechanisms that create value across the chain.

ASC Theory of Change

A Theory of Change (ToC) is an articulation, description and mapping out of the building blocks required to achieve the organisation's vision. ASC has defined a ToC which explains how the ASC certification and labelling programme promotes and rewards responsible aquaculture practices through incentivising the choices people make when buying seafood.

ASC's Theory of Change can be found on the [ASC website](#).

Intended change: ASC standards are developed to deliver on the ASC Theory of Change by addressing key sustainability issues identified in the seafood sector and at the farm. Increased global demand for fish combined with rapidly growing and unregulated aquaculture practices will result in disruption of local ecosystems, negative impacts to biodiversity, wastewater, conflicts over resource use and poor working conditions. Certification against ASC standards addresses these sustainability issues through market demand and recognition of responsible practices.

1. About this ToR Document

This document describes the objectives and scope of the ASC Species Extension Project: Pike-perch. The output of this project will be a scope expansion of the ASC programme to include pike-perch (*Sander lucioperca*) through the development of a Pike-perch Module. The Pike-perch Module will be an interim measure to allow the certification of this species, until the release of the aligned ASC Farm Standard. Producers will eventually need to conform to the aligned ASC Farm Standard.

2. Objectives of the Species Extension Project: Pike-perch

ASC currently has eleven standards covering seventeen species groups. These standards were developed through stakeholder dialogues over several years. The process involved is time-consuming and has resulted in inconsistencies across standards in certain areas. In view of this, ASC is developing a Species Scope Extension Procedure. This aims to streamline the process of adding new species to the ASC portfolio. Using a Species Selection Framework - Risk Matrix¹, an initial number of species² were identified and approved by the ASC Board for addition to the ASC portfolio of certifiable species. From those, pike-perch has been identified as a priority species for ASC and was chosen to trial the Species Scope Extension Procedure. The aim of the Species Extension Project: Pike-perch, is to develop a normative Pike-perch Module. Based on the results of the whitepaper, the main impacts of Pike-perch aquaculture will be assessed and existing ASC standards will be used to identify suitable indicators.

Learnings from the project will be used to improve the Species Scope Extension Procedure. The procedure will be formalised at the end of the development of the Pike-perch Module. The project runs concurrently with the ASC Farm Standard development. It is expected that once launched, the process for adding new species to that standard will be clear and efficient.

¹ The risk matrix allows scoring species against criteria related to those addressed by current species-specific standards (i.e. production system, environmental, social and feed) as well as criteria related to compatibility with those standards and market demand.

² *Clarridae spp.*, *Ictalurus spp.*, *Scortum barcoo*, *Percoidea spp.*, *Sander spp.*, and *Silurus glanis*.

3. Scope and Structure of the Pike-perch Module

The Species Extension Project: Pike-perch aims to develop a module using existing requirements from current ASC standards that cover the impacts relevant to this species. The development of the module will follow the [ASC Standard Setting Procedure](#). The final module will sit alongside the current ASC standards.

The Pike-perch Module will be applicable globally to land-based culture of pike-perch. An existing species-specific standard will be identified and used as a baseline for the module. Additional indicators might be added from other standards. There will be no development of new indicators or standard language.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

During the development process, ASC will engage with pike-perch producers and other stakeholder groups. Key targets will be:

- Academia and research
- NGOs
- Retailers and brands
- Feed traders and suppliers

Engagement with pike-perch producers will include a questionnaire to provide insights on farming processes and data availability. Site visits might be conducted for verification; otherwise, interviews with producers will be conducted online.

Identified proposed indicators and metrics will be presented for public consultation. The consultation aims to ensure that stakeholders have been provided with the opportunity to review the proposed indicators and metrics and provide additional information to ASC to confirm or revise those proposed indicators and/or metrics. One 60-day consultation starting in March 2023 (see Table 1) is planned as the requirements are not new, just their application culture of pike-perch. ASC will evaluate the need for further consultation before recommending the final module for approval.

ASC monitors the participation of stakeholders aiming for effective and balanced representation during the standard-setting process. Should stakeholders be dissatisfied with this process, they should [contact ASC](#). Where discussions with ASC do not result in resolution, a complaint may be filed using the [ASC Complaints Procedure](#).

5. Guiding Principles

The development of the Pike-perch Module follows the [ASC's Standard Setting Procedure](#) and the guiding principles therein described.

6. Process of Standard Development (Pike-perch Module)

The process and the timeline for developing the Pike-perch Module are described below.

Table 1 Project milestones and timeline

Date	Activity
June 2021	Board approves standard development for pike-perch
January-August 2022	Research and development including data gathering from producers
January 2023	Present proposal to ASC Technical Advisory Group
January 2023	Stakeholder consultation on Species Extension Project: Pike-perch
March – April 2023	Stakeholder consultation on proposed indicators and metrics
May 2023	Revised Pike-perch Module
July 2023	TAG approval of final Pike-perch Module
September 2023	ASC Board approval of final Pike-perch Module
October 2023	Launch new Pike-perch Module

7. Governance and Decision Making

ASC staff will develop proposed indicators and metrics for the Pike-perch Module based on existing indicators from the current ASC standards (no development of new indicators). The development follows the [ASC Standard Setting Procedure](#) and includes producer and expert engagement and the development of a whitepaper. The ASC Technical Advisory Group (TAG) then review and endorse the proposal for public consultation.

The TAGs role is to provide advice and recommendations on the use of ASC's standards and other technical issues, including (but not limited to) further development, modification and the technical and operational interpretation of the ASC standards and the application of these interpretations.

Following public consultation, TAG reviews stakeholder feedback and provides advice for next steps or recommendations to the ASC Board who take the final decision to adopt revised standards.

Where stakeholder feedback or internal review has identified areas where technical development was needed as opposed to simply aligning existing indicators, Technical Working Groups (TWGs) are formed to provide additional technical expertise and recommendations to the TAG. TWGs are not needed for this project.

TAG recommendations are preferably made by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, agreement on advice by the TAG is made by simple majority of members. In this case, a summary of the minority and majority positions will be reported to the Board along with the TAG recommendation.

More information on ASC governance is available [here](#).

8. Assessment of Risks

ASC has identified the following aspects to be considered for the evaluation of risk and impacts on farms:

Risk Aspect	Evaluation of risk	Mitigation and residual risk
Use of a streamlined process to add new species to the ASC programme.	Quicker addition of new species should benefit producers allowing quicker certification with associated benefits. Expedited process may reduce opportunities for stakeholders to engage and provide feedback.	Use of existing ASC standards' content reduces risk of stakeholders raising concerns over content. Careful stakeholder mapping and targeted outreach to key stakeholders should ensure engagement is maximised and reduce risk of stakeholders missing opportunities to comment.
Transition for producers from Pike-perch Module to ASC Farm Standard.	Additional cost/complexity for producers in applying Pike-perch Module and then having to transition to the Farm Standard.	Transition requirements for Pike-perch Module to consider potential burden and allow appropriate timeline. Good communication with producers will be necessary.
Metrics for pike-perch not appropriate.	There is a risk that metrics developed for assessing pike-perch production are not appropriate for the species.	Comprehensive research and engagement with pike-perch producers should mitigate this risk. Public consultation allows a further opportunity to gather information to refine metrics. ASC has a procedure for reviewing and updating metrics should they be proven to not be appropriate.

9. Contact Information

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10. Comments

ASC welcomes feedback on this ToR by the 18th of February 2023. Please see the [ASC website](#) for more information about the latest opportunities to get involved.