



# ASC Certification Requirements for Unit Of Certification (RUoC)



**Contact Information:**  
**Aquaculture Stewardship Council**  
Daalseplein 101, 3511 SX Utrecht  
The Netherlands

 +31 30 239 31 10

 [www.asc-aqua.org](http://www.asc-aqua.org)

# DRAFT PUBLIC CONSULTATION VERSION 1.0

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August 2020

## NOTES on how to read this document

**Black text:** Text from CAR V2.2 without changes  
Some black text could be in a different section of the CAR but its content does not change (*i.e. not new requirements – not for comments*).

**Blue text:** Requirements from the ASC CAR with Social audit methodology SAM. These requirements went through public consultation in 2019. No intended for this public consultation (*i.e. not for comment*).

**Green text:** New requirements (as of August 2020 public consultation), rewording or clarification for the ASC Certification Requirements for Unit of Certification (RUoC) V1.0 (*i.e. comments are invited*).

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[info@asc-aqua.org](mailto:info@asc-aqua.org)

Postal address:

Aquaculture Stewardship Council  
P.O. Box 19107  
3501 DC Utrecht  
The Netherlands

Office address:

Aquaculture Stewardship Council  
Daalseplein 101,  
3511 SX Utrecht  
The Netherlands

**Trade register** number 34389683

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE REQUIREMENTS

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) of the Aquaculture Stewardship Council is responsible for this document.

### Versions Issued

Version No.	Date	Description of Amendment
1.0	June 2020	Endorsed by the ASC Technical Advisory Group
1.0	August 3, 2020	Released for Public Consultation

## ABOUT THE ASC

ASC is the acronym for Aquaculture Stewardship Council, an independent not for profit organisation. The ASC was founded in 2009 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, 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 responsibly produced. The ASC's 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 guidelines, multi-stakeholder, open and transparent, science-based performance metrics.
- Effectiveness:** Minimising the environmental and social footprint of commercial aquaculture by addressing key impacts.
- Added value:** Connecting the farm to the marketplace by promoting responsible practices through a consumer label.

## OVERVIEW OF ASC CERTIFICATION AND LABELLING

The ASC system is made up of 3 components:

### 1. Aquaculture Farm Standards

The ASC works with independent third-party certification organizations that provide certification services for aquaculture operations that grow one or more of the species for which the standards have been developed by the Aquaculture Dialogues.

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.

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*. This code of good practice complies with the ISO/IEC Guide 59 *Code of good practice for standardization*, and the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement Annex 3 *Code of good practice for the preparation, adoption and application of standards*. The standards are science-based, performance-based and metrics-based and shall apply globally to aquaculture production systems, covering many types, locations and scales of aquaculture 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.

### 2. Independent 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 recognised chain of custody and have that product eligible to carry the ASC logo, claims and other trademarks.

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 and other normative documents. 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 Certification (CoC) and the ASC trademarks**

The ASC logo and claims have 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, claims and trademarks 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. Only products that originate in ASC certified operations and are sold through a by ASC/MSC certified chain of custody, are eligible to carry the ASC logo, claims or trademarks.

Companies that are already certified to the MSC Chain of Custody standards 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. Further information can be found on the ASC website.

Just as with the ASC standards, the ASC logo, claims and trademarks are owned by the ASC which regulates all aspects of their use.

## INTRODUCTION TO THIS DOCUMENT

The purposes of the ASC Certification Requirements for Unit of Certification [RUoC - this document] are:

1. To provide applicants seeking for ASC certification with a description of the scheme certification requirements that apply to applicants and ASC certificate holders.
2. To describe the requirements for those certified entities who wish to make a claim about or use the ASC logo and trademarks for certified facilities or products.
3. To provide transparency so the ASC standard system has credibility with stakeholders.

This document contains administrative and process requirements that applicants and ASC certified farms need to conform to in addition to the performance requirements specified in ASC Standards.

Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) shall use this document in conjunction with ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements (CAR), which further details requirements for the CAB.

Chain of custody for ASC certified products is assured through the ASC/MSC Chain of Custody certification. Organisations that wish to trade in ASC certified products, make claims that these products are certified, and be eligible to apply to use the ASC trademarks on ASC certified products must first be certified against the ASC/MSC Chain of Custody Standard.

**NOTE:** This document has been developed for technical use by applicants and ASC certificate holders and 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.

## 1. SCOPE

This document comprises all administrative and process requirements applicants for certification and certificate holders shall conform to in addition to the requirements in the respective ASC Standards.

## 2. NORMATIVE REFERENCES

The documents and the Interpretation Platform 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 and clients are encouraged to review the most recent editions and any guidance documents available to gain further insight.

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

The following apply directly to the clients' units of certification:

- a) ASC Standards; See [www.asc-aqua.org](http://www.asc-aqua.org)
- b) The ASC data retention and data ownership policies; See [www.asc-aqua.org](http://www.asc-aqua.org)
- c) All applicable laws and regulations of governmental or other competent authorities.

## 3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

All definitions are in Annex A of this document and the Annex A of the ASC CAR

## 4. APPLICATION

- 4.1 The applicant shall contact accredited or applicant CABs to start an ASC certification process. Accredited and applicant CABs list is available on the ASC or ASC appointed accreditation body website.
- 4.2 The applicant shall complete CABs' application forms with truthful information and provide all the additional information the CAB may request in relation to the UoC

location, non-native species produced and violations to environmental or social compliance.

- 4.3 An applicant which had an ASC certificate withdrawn or suspended or failed an ASC audit may only apply for a new ASC certification 12 months after the date of the certificate withdrawal or failed audit.
  - 4.3.1 An applicant which failed an ASC audit may apply again for certification in less than 12 months only with the same CAB, with which it failed the audit.
- 4.4 The applicant should review all the information sent by the CAB related to the ASC standards and requirements, and the certification process.

## 5. UNIT OF CERTIFICATION (UoC)

- 5.1 The applicant shall provide the CAB all the required information to define the scope of the UoC including:
  - a) Production site(s) and facilities within the limits of the UoC
  - b) Activities under control of the UoC before the product changes ownership or is handled by further certified chains of custody. This includes but is not limited to: harvest, slaughtering, storage, transport, processing and packing.
- 5.2 If processing or packing activities are within the scope of the UoC, the client shall require a separate chain of custody certification unless:
  - a) Ownership does not change; AND
  - b) Only ASC certified products from the UoC are handled; AND
  - c) The transportation only occurs within the premises of the UoC, AND
  - d) Processing and/or packing facilities are at the same address where other activities of the UoC occur.
- 5.3 The UoC may be either:
  - 5.3.1 A single site UoC having all of the following elements:
    - a) The client is capable of signing a binding contract that is legally enforceable;
    - b) A single site which has clear limits and may include multiple pens, cages, ponds, raceway systems or beds.
  - 5.3.2 A multi-site UoC having all of the following elements:
    - a) The client is responsible for all sites and is capable of signing a binding contract that is legally enforceable;

- b) Consist of more than one site and all sites are clearly limited.
- c) The client is the only entity authorised to sell ASC certified products from all sites.

5.3.2.1 The client may choose to apply for a multisite UoC either:

- a) Without internal management system (option 1) if it decides that the CAB will audit all the sites in every audit.
- b) With internal management system (option 2) if it decides to be audited against the applicable requirements for the internal management system specified in the Annex B, and sampled sites according to the requirements in Annex E of the ASC CAR.

5.3.3 A group UoC having all of the following elements:

- a) The client representing all group members is capable of signing a binding contract that is legally enforceable;
- b) Each member in the group operates either a single site or a multisite.
- c) The client is the only entity authorised to commercialise ASC certified products.
- d) A group management body (GMB) in charge of implementing and monitoring compliance against the requirements for Groups in Annex C and ASC standard(s) at all sites.

## 6. CONTRACT

6.1 If the client and the CAB agree to start the certification process, both shall sign a contract including the following elements:

6.1.1 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.

- 6.1.2 That the ASC shall have full access to all audit products including audit evidence, audit findings and audit reports including confidential annexes.
- 6.1.3 That the client shall submit to ASC information related to its ASC certified production using the formats and tools provided by the ASC.
- 6.1.4 That the client shall allow ASC to process, publish UoC's data and information collected from the certification process for the purpose of transparency as an integral part of the ASC certification programme.
- 6.1.5 That ASC, MSC and the ASC appointed accreditation body shall have the right to observe audits conducted by the CAB.
- 6.1.6 That ASC shall have the right to visit the certificate holder site(s), including visits without prior notice for the purpose of integrity of ASC certification.
- 6.1.7 That the ASC appointed accreditation body shall have the right to conduct audits of the UoC, including unannounced audits, for the purpose of monitoring CAB conformity.
- 6.1.8 That ASC, MSC, ASC appointed accreditation body and the CAB shall have the right to collect seafood products samples or other supporting samples (e.g. water, feed, soil, sediment, sludge) to evaluate the UoC's compliance. This sampling may be conducted unannounced during ASC audits or at any other time. Costs incurred in testing shall be covered by the client for samples taken by the CAB.
- 6.1.9 That the client shall inform the CAB of any previous ASC audits conducted within the previous 12 months by another CAB, appointed accreditation body or ASC
- 6.1.10 That the CAB shall have access to all audit products of the latest third-party social audit, if any. This includes - but is not limited to audit reports - non-conformity reports, evidence of closing non-conformities, and relevant confidential information.
- 6.1.11 That the client shall have the right to raise their concerns or object to any of the proposed audit team members.
- 6.1.12 That the client shall be responsible to inform the CAB, within fifteen (15) days of any changes 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) Expansions or reduction of the production area;
  - c) Relocation of production areas;

- d) Changes in the number of sites;
- e) Changes that may impact the start of the chain of custody;
- f) Disease outbreaks.

6.1.13 That the client shall be responsible for informing the CAB within fifteen (15) days of the occurrence of any non-conformances against any effective ASC standards' critical indicators<sup>1</sup> and/or in the following situation(s) [a-e]:

- a) Fatal workplace accidents;
- b) Legal compliance violations;
- c) Administration of veterinary treatments to some or all production units (ponds, cages, pens, tanks, etc.) or sites (multisite and group) which affect the compliance against ASC standards;
- d) Escapes events which affect the compliance against ASC standards;
- e) Endangered species or marine mammal mortalities.

## 7. AUDIT TIMING

7.1 The client and the CAB shall plan to ensure that by the time the initial audit takes place:

- a) The UoC shall have completed one of the following periods, whichever is less:
- b) Been in operation for no less than **twelve (12)** months; OR
- c) Completed one harvest cycle; OR
- d) Reached **75%** of the peak biomass for long cycle sites.

7.1.1 Multisite UoC initial audits shall be conducted when at least a quarter of the sites have reached one of the periods described in 7.1

7.2 The UoC shall have had available records of performance data covering the periods of time specified in the ASC standard(s).

7.3 The species in the scope of the UoC shall be present on site:

- a) At least half of the production units shall be operative for single site UoCs;
- b) At initial audits for Multisite UoCs all sites included in the scope shall be

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<sup>1</sup> **Critical indicators** are currently being defined by ASC's Science and Standards Department. Requirements referring to critical indicators will apply as soon as they become effective.

operative and with product on site;

- c) At initial audits for Group UoCs all sites included in the scope shall be operative and with product on site.

7.3.1 Single site UoCs without product on site may receive surveillance and recertification audits only if:

- a) It grows a long cycle site; AND
- b) The site is following as required by local regulation; AND
- c) The previous audit was conducted with product on-site.

7.4 The client and the CAB shall plan for audits in a way that allows the evaluation of harvesting activities of the principle product to occur:

- a) During the initial and recertification audits for single site UoCs operating short cycle or continuous harvest sites; OR
- b) At least once during the certification cycle for single site UoCs operating long cycle sites; OR
- c) At least in one site for Multisite UoCs following the conditions in a) and b); OR
- d) At least in one site for Group UoCs in each initial, surveillance and recertification audit.

7.5 If harvesting activities are evaluated during the audit, the client shall:

- a) Ensure that only the harvest intended for commercialization (no trial or mock harvests) will be evaluated; AND
- b) Allow the CAB to evaluate other activities within the scope of the UoC such as transport and loading, even when they are implemented by subcontractors.

7.6 If product handling and/or processing is included in the scope of the UoC, the client shall arrange for the audit to occur at the time that the handling and/or processing facilities are operating.



## 8. AUDIT ANNOUNCEMENT

8.1 The client may request the CAB to change the audit date after the audit announcement is published.

8.1.1 If the change occurs within ten (10) days before the announced audit date, the client shall accept that the audit notice period will start anew for forty-five (45) days.

## 9. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

9.1 The client shall make known of the upcoming ASC audit at the site(s) of the UoC to seek for inputs from local stakeholders.

9.1.1 The client shall provide stakeholders with contact information of the CAB to allow stakeholders to submit their inputs to the CAB directly.

9.2 The client may provide the CAB with contact information of stakeholders relevant to be contacted in the region where the UoC is located.

## 10. AUDIT PREPARATION AND PLANNING

10.1 The client shall provide the information requested by the CAB to conduct a desk review before the audit.

10.2 The client should agree with the CAB on a detailed audit plan with the following information:

- a) Scope of the audit.
- b) Draft work schedule.
- c) Names and affiliation of proposed audit team members.
- d) Information about the audit process in order to make proper preparations for the audit.

10.3 The client may object any audit team members if there is good reason for that.

## 11. AUDIT

- 11.1 The client shall arrange relevant personnel of the UoC to attend different activities during the audit. This includes, but is not limited to:
- a) Invite management of the UoC and key relevant personnel, including workers and/or trade union representatives to the audit opening meeting;
  - b) Arrange transportation of the audit team members to the different premises;
  - c) Arrange interviews with management and technical staff;
  - d) Provide the CAB access to all premises and facilities within the scope of the UoC;
  - e) Provide in a timely manner all the documents and records requested by the auditors;
  - f) Allow auditors to interview workers in private without the presence of management representatives or those in supervisory roles;
  - g) Invite management of the UoC and key relevant personnel, including workers and/or trade union representatives to the closing meeting.
- 11.2 The client shall provide to the CAB during the audit, the UoC GIS polygon for validation of the production area on the ASC online mapping tool.

## 12. SAMPLING AND TESTING

- 12.1 The client shall allow the CAB to collect samples of seafood product or other substances (water, feed, additives, sediment, soil, sludge) during ASC audits to verify UOC's compliance against the ASC standards.
- 12.2 The client shall provide the CAB auditor with required gear (e.g. cast nets) and staff assistance to collect the samples.
- 12.3 The client shall be aware that the CAB may not provide details of the laboratory approved or listed by the ASC, which runs the analysis of the collected samples.
- 12.4 The client may request the CAB for a second test of the duplicate sample by the same laboratory to confirm results of the first test.
- 12.4.1 The second test shall only be run for parameters being disputed.
  - 12.4.2 In case the second test produces a different result the client shall accept results of the last (third) test.

### 13. REMOTE AUDITING

- 13.1 When (partial or full) remote audit is allowed, the client shall arrange with the CAB for audit activities that will occur remotely. Those activities may include but are not limited to:
- a) Witnessing harvest activities for long cycle sites,
  - b) Interviewing management staff,
  - c) Reviewing data, documents and records,
  - d) Conducting site tours,
  - e) Reviewing video recording or photographs (i.e. sampling activities).
- 13.2 The client may allow the CAB to collect and evaluate evidence remotely as part of any audit through data, documents and records reviews and management interviews.
- 13.3 The client may request the CAB to conduct fully remote audit for:
- a) Surveillance audits at single site UoCs located in countries categorised as LOW and MEDIUM risk in the ASC Country Social Index (published by ASC);  
OR
  - b) Surveillance audits at single site UoCs growing long cycle species when product is not present on-site; AND
  - c) In either case the UoC shall:
    - i. Possess a valid certificate (not suspended), AND
    - ii. Have closed all major non-conformities detected in the previous audit.
    - iii. Have received less than 5 major non-conformities in the previous audit.
- 13.4 The client shall agree with the CAB on the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and measures to address issues related to confidentiality, security and data protection.
- 13.5 The client shall participate in tests in using ICTs required by the CAB to safeguard effective and secured remote audits or remote evidence collection.

## 14. AUDIT FINDINGS

14.1 The client may request for an opportunity to provide additional evidence to refute a non-conformity (minor, major or critical) raised by the CAB during an audit.

14.2 Within a maximum of twenty (20) days from the date of detection/closing meeting, the client shall provide to the CAB for each non-conformity:

- a) A root cause analysis of why the non-conformity occurred;
- b) An expected action plan detailing correction(s) to solve the failure if possible and corrective actions to address the root cause and prevent reoccurrence.

14.3 When the action plan is approved, the client shall submit to CAB objective evidence of its effective implementation in the following timeframes from the detection date:

Non-conformity	Initial audit	During the validity of the certificate
Minor	3 months	3 months
Major	3 months	3 months
Critical	1 month	Maximum 1 month Certificate Suspension

14.4 Non-conformities may be extended once if the client submits to the CAB evidence demonstrating that:

- a) The time needed to execute the action plan requires a longer timeline due to circumstances related to the species production cycle; OR
- b) Conformity was not possible due to circumstances beyond the control of the client.

14.4.1 Non-conformities may be extended from the detection date for a maximum period of:

Non-conformity	Initial audit	During the validity of the certificate
Minor	12 months	12 months
Major	No extension	6 months
Critical	15 days	No extension

14.5 The client shall promptly submit the relevant information to allow the CAB to properly review the information.

14.5.1 The client should agree with the CAB on the timelines for non-conformities closure.

14.6 The client should accept additional evaluations (either on-site or remote) of the effective implementation of the action plan.

14.7 If non-conformities are not closed or extended in the timeframes above the client shall be aware that the following actions would be taken by the CAB.

Non-conformity	Initial audit	During the validity of the certificate
Minor	Failed audit	Upgrade to Major
Major	Failed audit	Certificate Suspension
Critical	Failed audit	Certificate Withdrawal

## 15. TRACEABILITY

15.1 The client shall establish the activities covered by the scope of the UoC until the ownership or physical possession of certified products is transferred. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a) Stocking,
- b) Nursing,
- c) Out-growing,
- d) Transferring,
- e) Harvest,
- f) Transportation,
- g) Storage,
- h) Processing,
- i) Packing.

15.2 Within the UoC the client shall implement a traceability system with the following elements:

- a) Evaluation of risks of product mixing and substitution at each stage of the production cycle;
- b) Measures to mitigate those risks;

- c) Effective implementation of procedures for the identification and segregation of certified and non-certified product at each stage of the production cycle and post-harvest activities, if included in the scope of the UoC;
- d) Records of at least six (6) months before the initial audit and thereafter to allow tracing every production batch at all stages from the stocking date until the product's ownership or physical possession is transferred, including any transference or movement within the UoC;
- e) Records of at least six (6) months before the initial audit and thereafter to determine inputs, outputs and conversion ratios during the production cycle and processing activities, if included in the scope of the UoC. This includes:
  - i. Stocked animals,
  - ii. Mortalities collection if applicable,
  - iii. Survival rate,
  - iv. Feed conversion ratio,
  - v. Escapes,
  - vi. Harvested biomass,
  - vii. Inputs – outputs and conversion ratios for processing and packing if applicable.
- f) Implementation of input-output reconciliation for each batch within 15 days after the harvest date.
- g) Training of key staff responsible for the UoC traceability system and related activities.
- h) Measures to take when the certified and non-certified products are mixed.

15.3 The client shall prepare annually a summary of production volumes and sales of ASC and non-ASC products originating from the UoC.

15.4 The client shall allow the CAB to report on production and sold volumes to ASC in the Confidential annex of the audit report.

15.5 The client shall comply with additional traceability requirements described in Annex B and C for Multisite and Group UoCs.

## 16. AUDIT REPORT

16.1 The client shall accept that all audit reports and related information, except Confidential annexes, are published on the ASC website. This includes reports of failed audits, reasons for suspension or withdrawal.

16.2 The client may agree with the CAB to keep sensitive commercial information in Confidential annexes, submitted separately to the ASC in confidence.

16.2.1 Confidential annexes will not be public, however the ASC and ASC appointed accreditation body shall have access to them.

16.3 The client shall submit the root cause analysis and corrective action plan in time as specified in 14.2 to be included in the draft audit report before its submission for publication.

16.4 The client may follow up the CAB to ensure compliance with the following timeframes:

Draft report submission	50 days after the end of the audit
Public consultation period	20 days after draft report publication on ASC website
Final report + Certification decision	30 days after end of public consultation
Surveillance audit reports	90 days after the end of the audit

## 17. CERTIFICATION DECISION

17.1 When well justified, the client shall be aware that the CAB may need more time to take the certification decision.

17.1.1 The client shall agree with the CAB on arrangements for a full (repeat) audit in case the certification decision is not taken within six (6) months.

17.2 If the certification decision is positive, the client shall confirm the certificate registration and publication on the ASC website before starting the commercialization of ASC products.

17.2.1 Certificates not registered nor published on the ASC website shall not be valid.

## 18. USE OF THE ASC LOGO, TRADEMARKS AND CLAIMS

18.1 The client holding a valid certificate (certificate holder) may claim that its operation is certified in accordance with the specific ASC standard covered, subject to the scope of its certificate.

18.2 A certificate holder may claim that its aquaculture products are the result of "Responsible Aquaculture Farming" or "Responsibly produced".

18.3 The certificate holder shall enter into an ASC Licensing Agreement to use the ASC logo, claims and other trademarks on certified products in accordance with the License Agreement<sup>2</sup>.

## 19. SURVEILLANCE AUDITS

19.1 The client and the CAB shall plan at least 2 surveillance audits during the certification cycle

19.1.1 Surveillance audits shall be conducted annually with a window of 3 months before or after the anniversary of the initial certification decision.

19.1.2 Two surveillance audits should not be carried out with less than 6 months between them.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: Obtaining certification does not automatically guarantee the granting of a License Agreement



## 20. UNANNOUNCED AUDITS

- 20.1 The client shall accept unannounced audits by the CAB with no less than 48 hours' notification.
- 20.2 The client's certificate shall be suspended where the client does not accept the unannounced audit by the CAB.
  - 20.2.1 The suspension shall only be lifted when another unannounced audit is accepted and completed with no major or critical non-conformities.

## 21. RECERTIFICATION AUDITS

- 21.1 The certificate holder should start applying for recertification six (6) months before the expiry date of the certificate to avoid a gap in certification validity.

## 22. EXTENSION OF CERTIFICATE VALIDITY

- 22.1 The certificate holder may request to the CAB an extension of the validity of the certificate once by up to three (3) months only in cases when:
  - a) There is no product on-site; OR
  - b) There are conditions outside the control of the CAB or the certificate holder that prevent the execution of the audit.
- 22.2 To request an extension, the certificate holder shall apply to the CAB for recertification and the application shall have been accepted by the CAB at or before the end of the period of validity of the certificate.

## 23. TRANSFER OF CERTIFICATES

- 23.1 A decision to transfer a certificate from one CAB (preceding CAB) to another CAB (succeeding CAB) shall be voluntary by the certificate holder.
- 23.2 The certificate holder may request a certificate transfer only once within the period of validity of a certificate.
- 23.2.1 If the certificate holder wishes to change CABs more than once within the period of the certificate validity, the certificate holder shall accept full ASC initial audits by the second and all other succeeding CABs.
- 23.3 The certificate holder may not request a transfer if:
- The certificate is suspended
  - Critical and major non-conformities have not been closed to the satisfaction of the current CAB.
- 23.4 The succeeding CAB may decide:
- To carry out a transfer audit within three (3) months after the agreed transfer date according to the requirements for a surveillance audit; OR
  - follow the certificate holder's surveillance audit planning.

## 24. CHANGES IN THE SCOPE

- 24.1 The client shall inform the CAB within fifteen (15) days about any change that might change the scope of the UoC. This includes:
- Addition of a new standard
  - Change to impacts on receiving water bodies including the addition of new receiving water bodies.
  - Physical change to working and living conditions, including but is not limited to new work floor, processing line, canteen, and living quarter.
  - Reporting conditions described in provision 6.1.12.
  - Any other change to the certified operation determined by the CAB as requiring an onsite audit.

## 25. SUSPENSION, WITHDRAWAL OR CANCELLATION OF CERTIFICATION

- 25.1 The client may decide to cancel its certificate at any time.
- 25.1.1 The client shall inform the CAB of its decision to cancel a certificate.
- 25.2 The certificate holder shall follow the actions requested by the CAB to lift the suspension in case its certificate is suspended.
- 25.3 If the certificate holder does not address the reasons of the suspension in the timeframe set by the CAB, its certificate shall be withdrawn.
- 25.4 The client shall accept that its cancellation/suspension/withdrawal status and reasons are published on the ASC website.
- 25.5 The client, whose certificate is suspended, withdrawn, or cancelled shall:
- a) Immediately stop selling and/or promoting any product harvested or produced from the date of suspension, withdrawal or cancellation as ASC certified or with the ASC Trademarks;
  - b) Inform existing and potential customers in writing of the suspension/withdrawal/cancellation within four (4) days of the suspension/withdrawal/cancellation date.
- 25.6 The client, whose certificate was withdrawn may only apply for ASC certification again after minimum 12 months from the date of withdrawal.

## 26. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

- 26.1 Clients are encouraged to submit to ASC in confidence, its feedback of each audit process within 30 days after the last day of the audit.
- 26.1.1 ASC shall keep clients' feedback confidential and only use in an aggregated manner for analysis and improvement of the programme.
- 26.2 The client may object to a certification decision by a CAB if it is evident that
- a) The CAB personnel have not taken all submitted evidence submitted into account when taking the certification decision, OR
  - b) The CAB personnel have not followed requirements laid out in the ASC CAR for the certification process, OR
  - c) The CAB have misinterpreted ASC standard indicators or other applicable requirements.

26.2.1 The client shall follow the CAB's appeal procedure for such objection.

26.3 Clients may file a complaint to the CAB, following their complaints procedure if dissatisfied with the performance of a CAB.

26.3.1 Clients are encouraged to send a copy of the complaint to ASC and the ASC appointed accreditation body (ASI).

26.3.2 A copy of the complaint can be sent to ASC at:

Email: [complaints@asc-aqua.org](mailto:complaints@asc-aqua.org)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 19107  
3501 DC Utrecht  
The Netherlands

Office Address: Aquaculture Stewardship Council  
Daalseplein 101,  
3511 SX Utrecht  
The Netherlands

26.4 If clients are dissatisfied with the CAB's complaint resolution mechanism, they may escalate to the ASC appointed accreditation body, following ASI's complaint procedure (<http://www.assurance-services.com/dispute-management/complaints>).

## 27. PUBLICITY AND DATA

27.1 The applicant and/or certificate holder shall allow its information such as, but not limited to, farm locations, outlines and audit reports be made publicly available on the ASC website.

27.2 Any data submitted by the client and the CAB during the certification process shall be held and processed in line with the ASC data retention and data ownership policies. The policies can be found on the ASC website.

## 28. REPORTING TO THE ASC

28.1 The certificate holder shall provide accurate and complete reports to the ASC at an interval specified by ASC Standards and other agreements maintained with the ASC.

## ANNEX A – THE ASC VOCABULARY

Term	Definition
<b>Appeal</b>	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.
<b>Applicant</b>	A <b>legal entity</b> that seeks to obtain an ASC certificate issued by a CAB that is accredited by the ASC appointed AB.
<b>ASC Database</b>	IT system implemented by the ASC to collect and publish certification information on the ASC website.
<b>ASC Representative</b>	Individual supported and appointed by Group Management Body to take responsibility for ensuring that the Group Management complies with ASC requirements. The ASC Representative is the contact point for the certification but not an employee of ASC.
<b>ASC Requirements</b>	Requirements applicable for ASC certification. These include all ASC documents that apply to any specific unit of certification such as ASC Standard(s), ASC Requirements for Unit of Certification (RUoC) and requirements for the use of the ASC trademark(s) and logo.
<b>Audit</b>	<p>Systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining objective evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which ASC standard indicators and other requirements are fulfilled.</p> <p>An audit begins with the first step in the execution of an audit plan and concludes when the audit plan is completed and a closing meeting is conducted. Audit activities can be desk review, on-site and off-site.</p>
<b>Audit Evidence</b>	<p>Records, statements of fact or other information, which are relevant to the audit criteria and verifiable.</p> <p>NOTE: Audit evidence can be qualitative or quantitative.</p> <p>Source: ISO 19011:2018</p>
<b>Audit Team</b>	<p>One or more auditors conducting an audit, supported if needed by technical experts and interpreters.</p> <p>NOTE 1 One auditor of the audit team is appointed as the lead auditor.</p>

Term	Definition
	NOTE 2 The audit team may include auditors-in-training.
<b>Auditor</b>	A person with the competency to perform an audit of a site as part of an audit team. NOTE: Auditor competencies are described in Annex B of the ASC CAR.
<b>Cancellation of Certification</b>	Voluntary cancellation of a certification contract by any party, <b>the CAB or the Client</b> , according to the contractual arrangements.
<b>Certificate holder</b>	Client granted with the ASC certification for a specific UoC.
<b>Certification cycle</b>	Period between the issue date and expiry date of an ASC certificate. The certification cycle includes an initial or recertification audit and two surveillance audits.
<b>Client</b>	Legal entity applying or certified for the ASC program who is responsible for implementing the ASC requirements in a specific UoC, including all personnel (i.e. directors, executives, management, supervisors, and non-management staff, whether directly employed, contracted or otherwise representing the client).
<b>Complaint</b>	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.
<b>Conformity Assessment</b>	Set of processes that show that a product, service or system meets the requirements of a standard.
<b>Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)</b>	Body that performs conformity assessment services and that can be the object of accreditation. NOTE: Whenever the word CAB is used in the text, it applies to both the “applicant and accredited CABs” unless otherwise specified.
<b>Continuous harvesting</b>	Aquaculture production that is continuously harvested for a long period of time (opposite to batch harvest).
<b>Contract farming</b>	An agreement between Group Members and the GMB for the production and supply of aquaculture products under forward agreements, frequently at predetermined prices. (Adapted from FAO).

Term	Definition
<b>Contributing family workers</b>	<p>Workers who hold a 'self-employment' job in a market-oriented establishment operated by a related person living in the same household, who cannot be regarded as partners, because their degree of commitment to the operation of the establishment, in terms of working time or other factors to be determined by national circumstances, is not at a level comparable to that of the head of the establishment.</p> <p>Where it is customary for young persons, in particular, to work without pay in an economic enterprise operated by a related person who does not live in the same household, the requirement of 'living in the same household' may be eliminated.</p> <p><i>Source: Resolution concerning the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE). ILO Jan 1993.</i></p>
<b>Correction</b>	A correction is any action that is taken to eliminate a nonconformity.
<b>Corrective Action</b>	Action to eliminate the cause of a nonconformity and to prevent recurrence.
<b>Critical Non-Conformity</b>	Any non-conformity referring to ASC standards' critical indicators when the latter become effective <sup>3</sup> and/or when workers' lives are evidently at risk.
<b>Days</b>	Calendar days
<b>Detection date</b>	The detection date is the date of the closing meeting when NCs is reported to the client.
<b>Endorsed</b>	Documents including standards and audit manuals that have been formally approved by ASC and are posted on the ASC website.
<b>Failed audit</b>	An initial audit for which the applicant has decided to not close or is unable to close non-conformities in the required timeframes.
<b>Farm</b>	See site definition.
<b>Group Certification</b>	Collective certification against an ASC standard by a group of two or more small-scale aquaculture producers. The group has a management body with the responsibility and authority to implement and

<sup>3</sup> **Critical indicators** are currently being defined by ASC's Science and Standards Department. Requirements referring to critical indicators will apply as soon as they become effective.

Term	Definition
	maintain an Internal Management System to ensure compliance with relevant ASC requirements by all Group Members.
<b>Group internal audit</b>	A review of the compliance of the Group Management Body and its Internal Management System with ASC requirements for Certification of Producer Groups.
<b>Group internal auditor</b>	A person appointed by the Group Management Body to undertake an objective Group internal audit of the GMB and its Internal Management System.
<b>Group Management Body (GMB)</b>	The person or group of people who manage and are responsible for the Group's compliance with ASC requirements.
<b>Group Management Body (GMB)</b>	The person or group of people who manage and are responsible for the Group's compliance with ASC requirements.
<b>Group Member</b>	Individual producer that participates formally in a group for the purpose of applying for, obtaining and maintaining ASC certification as a unit of certification. NOTE: A Group Member may own or control more than one site.
<b>Group UoC</b>	Collective certification against an ASC standard by a group of two or more small-scale aquaculture producers. The group has a management body with the responsibility and authority to implement and maintain an Internal Management System to ensure compliance with relevant ASC requirements by all Group Members.
<b>Harvest period</b>	The time between the first and the last actual harvest of the site before a prolonged dry-out period.
<b>Interested Party</b>	Individual or group concerned with or affected by the social or environmental performance of the applicant or certificate holder.
<b>Internal audit</b>	An audit against the ASC requirements carried out by personnel directly employed by or contracted by a multi-site or group UoC.
<b>Internal auditor</b>	A person with the competency to perform an internal audit of sites in a multisite or group UoC



Term	Definition
<b>Internal Inspection</b>	A review of the compliance of a Group Member and his/her site with ASC Standard and Group requirements.
<b>Internal Inspector</b>	A person appointed by Group Management body to undertake an objective internal inspection of individual group members.
<b>Internal lead auditor</b>	A person with the competency to perform an internal audit of the IMS or GMB systems in a multisite or group UoC according to the competencies in ASC Requirements for Units of Certification
<b>Internal Management System (IMS)</b>	A documented structure and set of procedures and processes that a Group develops and implements to manage its operations and those of Group Members in achieving and maintaining ASC certified status.
<b>Invalid Certificate</b>	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.
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	The lowest administrative division having regulations relevant to implementation of ASC standard(s) at sites to be included in the unit of certification.
<b>Lead Auditor</b>	Auditor who is given the overall responsibility for a specified audit managing auditors, technical experts and interpreters.
<b>Long cycle</b>	Aquaculture production that lasts longer than six (6) months from the stocking date to the harvest date.
<b>Major Non-conformity</b>	<p>Any non-conformity with an ASC requirement that has one or more of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Would result in the probable shipment of product that does not conform to ASC requirements</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Is shown to continue over a long period of time</li> <li>• Is repeated</li> <li>• Is systematic or is the result of the absence or a total breakdown of a system</li> </ul>

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affects a wide area and/or causes significant damage</li> <li>• Is not corrected or adequately responded to by the client once identified</li> <li>• Where two (2) or more minor non-conformities may together meet any of the above criteria</li> </ul>
<b>May</b>	Denotes a permitted course of action.
<b>Minor Non-conformity</b>	<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"> <li>• Where failure to comply with a requirement which is not likely to result in the breakdown of a system to meet an ASC requirement</li> <li>• Where the failure is a single observed lapse or isolated incident</li> <li>• Where there is no systemic failure to conform to ASC requirements</li> <li>• Where the impacts are limited in their temporal and spatial scale</li> <li>• Where there is minimal risk of the shipment of a product that does not conform to ASC requirements</li> <li>• Where the failure does not meet the definition of a Major Non-conformity</li> <li>• Where the failure will not produce a non-conforming product.</li> </ul>
<b>Multi-site UoC</b>	<p>An organization 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>
<b>Non-certified product</b>	Any product that does not meet an ASC requirement and therefore is not eligible to be considered as certified. That may include product coming from within or outside of the unit of certification (e.g. from a suspended site).
<b>Non-conforming product</b>	A product that comes from within the unit of certification but does not conform to specified product requirements. Product requirements may be specified in ASC standard(s) or by the unit of certification itself. Non-conforming product with ASC requirements is considered as non-certified and

Term	Definition
	therefore not eligible to enter to ASC certified chain of custody.
<b>Non-conformity</b>	Not conforming to an ASC indicator in the standard or another ASC requirement for certification and against which the audit is conducted.
<b>Partial certification</b>	A case in which certified and non-certified products are produced in an ASC certified UoC.
<b>Preceding CAB</b>	The CAB that first issued a certificate and that was contract partner until the certification contract was taken over and terminated.
<b>Processing Facility</b>	Facilities that process aquaculture products into other semi-finished or finished products. This includes facilities which blend or repackage products containing ASC certified materials.
<b>Production System</b>	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. A production system may include a number of distinct processes.
<b>Production unit</b>	A pond, cage, tank, group of suspended lines, bags or any other aquaculture containment unit within a site.
<b>Qualification</b>	Specific accomplishment
<b>Receiving Water Body</b>	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.).
<b>Risk</b>	The combination of the likelihood of a threat and its potential impact.
<b>Root cause analysis</b>	Analysis conducted to determine the reason or reasons of a non-conformity. A correct determination of the root cause should avoid the recurrence of the non-conformity.

Term	Definition
<b>Sanctions</b>	<p>Measures taken against Group members and their site(s) who have failed to comply with a standard or with other specified requirements.</p> <p>Internal sanctions can be taken by the Group against Group Members, while external sanctions can be taken by a CAB against the Group as a whole.</p>
<b>Shall</b>	Denotes a requirement.
<b>Short cycle</b>	Aquaculture production that lasts less than 6 months from the stocking date to the harvesting date.
<b>Should</b>	Denotes a recommendation.
<b>Site</b>	<p>Production facility owned or operated by the client that is included in the UoC.</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 sites that are included within the scope of an audit or within the scope of a certificate sites.</p>
<b>Small-scale aquaculture producers</b>	<p>Producers with all the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- small production volume</li> <li>- relatively small surface area</li> <li>- without hired workers all year round</li> <li>- most of the farm work is done by the producers and contributing family workers (even if the producers have more than one site)</li> <li>- lacking technical and financial capacity to support individual member certification.</li> </ul> <p>(Adapted from FAO 2011, Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification and Fairtrade International).</p>
<b>Stakeholder</b>	Any individual, group or organisation, which may affect or may be affected by the entity seeking certification.

Term	Definition
<b>Subcontractor / Sub-supplier</b>	A business entity in the supply chain which, directly or indirectly, provides the supplier with goods and/or services integral to, and utilised in/for, the production of the supplier's and/or company's goods and/or services.
<b>Succeeding CAB</b>	The CAB that takes over a certificate from a preceding CAB. Prior to the transfer process, the succeeding CAB shall establish a new contract and becomes the new contract partner of the certificate holder.
<b>Suspension of Certificate</b>	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.
<b>Technical Expert</b>	Person who provides specific knowledge or expertise to the audit team. NOTE: A technical expert shall not act as an auditor.
<b>Termination of Certificate</b>	Cancellation of the certification contract by either party according to contractual arrangements. Also referred as Cancellation.
<b>The ASC appointed accreditation body</b>	The accreditation body that is named and referred to on the ASC website.
<b>Threat<sup>4*</sup></b>	A source of risk to the client's conformity with ASC requirements.
<b>Transaction</b>	An instance of selling any ASC certified products whereby an invoice is created.
<b>Transfer of Certificate</b>	Moving the responsibility for maintaining an active ASC certificate from one CAB to another.
<b>Unannounced audit</b>	An audit by a CAB to a client and/or their members/sites without a public audit announcement or prior notice.
<b>Unannounced inspection</b>	An internal inspection of a Group Member and his/her site without any prior notice.
<b>Unit of Certification (UoC)</b>	<p>The operation(s) that is covered by a certificate up to the point where the product enters further chain of custody. It may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- production or harvest sites.</li> </ul>

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- storage, slaughter or processing operations (including subcontracted operations) within the limits of the UoC</li> <li>- Activities under responsibility of the UoC such as transport</li> </ul>
<b>Valid Certificate</b>	A certificate that is not suspended, withdrawn, cancelled or expired. Only active valid certificates can be transferred.
<b>Withdrawal of Certificate</b>	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.

## ANNEX B - ASC REQUIREMENTS FOR MULTI-SITE CERTIFICATION

These ASC Multi-Site Certification requirements seek to bring efficiency to the certification of single owners of aquaculture operations that operate on multiple sites against ASC standards for responsible aquaculture. These requirements are designed for large operations that centrally control all of the operations on all of the sites to ensure that the entire operation complies fully with all relevant requirements in the applicable ASC Standard.

The management of all the sites shall implement and maintain compliance with ASC requirements including those for the central office that oversees all operations.

All requirements in the ASC Farm Certification and Accreditation Requirements and this document also apply to multi-site clients unless specifically stated otherwise in this annex.

### 1. Multisite UoC without IMS (option 1)

A multi-site client may opt to have all sites in the unit of certification audited in each initial, surveillance and re-certification audit. In this case the following requirements shall apply.

1.1 All sites in the UoC shall operate within the same jurisdiction or within neighbouring jurisdictions that share relevant common regulations. All sites shall:

- a) Be subject to the same species standard;
- b) Comply with the standard individually; and
- c) Have the same or similar production system.

1.2 The client has a central office that is responsible for the management of and conformity to ASC requirements for the UoC.

1.3 The central office is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the organization's internal management system which shall include written procedures that ensure conformity to ASC requirements including:

- a) Procedure for managing complaints submitted to Management by stakeholders and staff members as per specified in the applicable (farm) standard
- b) 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 before the start of the ASC/ASC certified chain of custody.
  - i. The procedures shall describe the conditions under which products must be segregated, and measures to prevent mixing directly or indirectly.
  - ii. The procedures shall allow products to be traced back from the start of the by ASC/ASC certified chain of custody to cage/net/pond/tank in case of need.

- c) Procedures for traceability of inputs (e.g. feed) used for each site as specified in the standard being audited to.

1.4 The central office 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:
  - i. All of the operations of the farm are subject to the same procedures as the rest of the unit of certification;
  - ii. The product produced by the subcontractor is owned by the certificate holder;
  - iii. The central office has the same oversight and control over the operations of subcontractors as it has for the client's own operations;
  - iv. All of the operations of the subcontracted farms shall be included in the multi-site certificate;
  - v. The contract shall be transparent, mutually accepted by both parties and include the above requirements.
  - vi. Contract farming arrangements should follow the FAO "Guiding principles for responsible contract farming operations"

1.5 The central office shall notify 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.

## **2. Multisite UoC with IMS (option 2)**

Multisites clients who decide to be audited on a sample of sites on surveillance and recertification audits shall comply with requirements in section 1 above and additionally with the following requirements.

- 2.1. If different production systems are used, each production system shall be evaluated by the CAB separately using the sampling methods described in the ASC CAR Annex E.
- 2.2. The central office IMS shall have written procedures 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 the evaluation and implementation of corrective and preventive actions;
  - f) Procedure for conducting root cause analyses for non-conformities, and for addressing identified root causes;
  - g) Procedures to ensure compliance with legal requirements;



- h) Procedures for conducting an annual internal audit, covering ASC requirements;
  - i) Procedures for planning for and evaluation of the results of internal audits;
  - j) Procedures for the scheduled reporting of performance of the management systems and sites;
- 2.3. The central office is subject to an annual management review.
- 2.4. The IMS is subject to and included in an annual internal audit.
- 2.5. A full internal audit shall have been completed to all the sites before an external ASC onsite audit may begin.
- a) The internal audit shall include all relevant ASC requirements at all sites.
    - i. Some social requirements may be excluded from internal audits to maintain worker confidentiality.
    - ii. The exclusions shall be accepted by the CAB and documented in the audit report.
  - b) Classification and treatment of internal audit findings may follow the rules for external audit findings (Section 14).
  - c) Internal auditors shall be competent in ASC requirements as described in Annex C2.
- 2.6. The central office shall 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.
- 2.7. The Central Office shall demonstrate its ability to implement organizational change if required.
- 2.8. The Central Office monitors compliance to all relevant ASC requirements of all sites within the unit of certification.

## **ANNEX C - ASC REQUIREMENTS FOR PRODUCER GROUPS (ASC GROUP CERTIFICATION)**

The ASC Group Certification requirements seek to bring efficiency to the certification of organised groups of small producers against ASC standards for responsible aquaculture. These requirements are designed to ensure that all group members comply with all relevant requirements in the applicable ASC Standard.

This Annex C sets out the requirements for collective certification against an ASC standard by a group of two or more small-scale aquaculture operations. The group's management shall have the responsibility and authority to implement and maintain compliance with ASC requirements including those for the group management and group members.

Group certification requirements provide the overarching framework for a central, shared management system to coordinate the group's certification process to apply for, obtain, and maintain certification for a group.

ASC is committed to a regular review and revision cycle of 5 years for its scheme documents. However, due to the novelty of this Group certification methodology, ASC will collect feedback from practical experience of implementing and auditing against this methodology and may decide to initiate the review process earlier than 5 years.

All relevant requirements in the ASC Farm Certification and Accreditation Requirements (CAR) also apply to groups unless specifically stated otherwise in this document.

### **1. Scope**

1.1. This document contains the requirements for a Group Management Body (GMB)<sup>5</sup> to implement, apply for, obtain, and maintain certification to an ASC Standard.

### **2. Requirements for Group Management Body (GMB)**

2.1. Group Management Body (GMB) shall:

- 2.1.1. Be a legal entity or a statutory body within a larger legal entity, or another form of legally recognised (registered with a government office) organisation.
- 2.1.2. Have the authority to enter into legal agreements as well as make commitments on behalf of the group.
- 2.1.3. Contract with and serve as the principal contact for the Conformity Assessment Body (CAB), accreditation body (ASI), and the ASC and/or party on ASC's behalf.

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<sup>5</sup> See definition for GMB in Annex A.

- 2.1.4. Operate in a manner that is consistent with its written constitution and bylaws.
  - 2.1.4.1. This shall include member participation in governance and decision-making.
- 2.1.5. Assume responsibility for the overall management of Group Members as one operational unit.
- 2.1.6. Assume responsibility for Group Members' compliance with ASC applicable standard and certification requirements as described in this document. This includes:
  - 2.1.6.1. Overseeing internal inspections of individual sites' performance of Group Members.
- 2.1.7. Handle complaints and appeals from within the Group and from stakeholders external to the Group as a whole.
- 2.1.8. Lead Group internal audits of the Internal Management System (IMS) and management reviews of operations of the GMB against relevant requirements in this document.
- 2.1.9. Have adequate resources (competent personnel, time and finance) and structure to implement the IMS and assure compliance of members.
  - 2.1.9.1. A person shall be appointed to coordinate activities related to ASC certification within the Group.
  - 2.1.9.2. The appointed person shall be made known to all Group Members and to the CAB.
  - 2.1.9.3. A committee of one or more persons (depending on the Group's size and complexity) to take impartial decisions on Group Members' compliance and sanctions.
- 2.2. The GMB shall have a documented IMS. This shall include documentation of:
  - 2.2.1. Clearly defined scope and objectives of the IMS.
  - 2.2.2. Responsibilities of the GMB, defined positions within the Group, and Group Members.
  - 2.2.3. Administrative and operating procedures for consistent application by itself and Group Members to ensure conformance with the ASC requirements. These procedures shall include at least the following:
    - 2.2.3.1. Procedures for adding and removing individual sites<sup>6</sup> or Group Members.
      - i. The GMB shall maintain and update a Sites Register within the certification scope of the Group (Annex C1 – Template for Group Sites Register).
      - ii. The GMB shall only consider sites that meet all the following eligibility criteria to be included in the unit of certification:

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<sup>6</sup> See definition for "Site" in Annex A – Group Certification Definitions

- a) Sites shall be operating within the same or neighbouring jurisdictions that share relevant common regulations;
  - b) The entire site shall be included in the (applicant) unit of certification.
  - c) Each site shall have implemented relevant policies and procedures of the Group's IMS for at least one growing cycle or six (6) months (whichever is shorter) prior to being included into the Group.
  - d) Sites shall be complying individually with the ASC applicable requirements and standard unless otherwise specified in that standard.
  - e) Previously removed sites (for any reasons and from any other certified Groups) shall be treated as new and re-added no earlier than 12 months from the removal date.
- iii. Within 12 months from the date of certification and each subsequent surveillance audit, the GMB may add up to 5 new sites or a maximum of 10% of the total number of existing sites (whichever is smaller) to the scope of Group certification.
- a) If more than the above specified number of sites are added, an ad-hoc on-site audit by the CAB shall be required.
  - b) Only small-scale producers<sup>7</sup> shall be eligible to be added to the Group by the GMB.
  - c) The GMB shall conduct an internal inspection of each new applicant site:
    - 1. The applicant sites shall be inspected to witness harvesting activities for short growing species (<6 months);
    - 2. Only sites that are in compliance with all applicable ASC requirements shall be added to the Group;
    - 3. Any non-conformity detected during this internal inspection of the new applicant site shall be closed prior to the GMB's approval to add the site to the Group;
    - 4. These sites shall be recommended to the CAB for inclusion into the scope of Group Certification within three (3) months from the on-site inspection date.
  - d) The GMB shall have signed an agreement with any new Group Members who wish to register their sites to be included in the scope of Group certification.
  - e) The GMB shall provide the CAB with relevant documentation of the new sites for approval, including results of internal inspections, signed agreements with new

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<sup>7</sup> See definition for "Small-scale producer" in Annex A.

Group Members, updated Group's Sites Register with a clear indication of new sites to be added.

f) The new sites shall only be added to the scope of Group certification following the approval of the CAB.

iv. Upon removing (cancellation/withdrawal) or suspending a site from the Group for any reasons, the GMB shall:

- a) Remove the site from, and update the Group's Sites Register within two (2) days of the GMB's decision;
- b) Inform the site in writing that it is no longer part of the Group, or that it is being suspended, and therefore shall immediately stop using the ASC trademark and logos or claim any right to ASC-certified product or an ASC-certified supply chain from the date of the removal/suspension decision;
- c) Get the site owner's written acknowledgement of the decision and its implications within two (2) days of receiving written notice.
  - 1. Removed sites refusing to give written acknowledgement of the decision shall not be re-admitted to the Group for certification for the next three (3) years from the removal decision date.
- d) The GMB shall notify the CAB and ASC of the removal/suspension decision and its reason(s) within seven (7) days.

2.2.3.2. Procedures for Group internal audits (of the IMS) and internal inspections (of sites), including methods and conformity decisions; inspection plan and schedule, checklists and other inspection guidance tools.

- i. There shall be an annual plan for Group internal audit(s) and inspections, which, when necessary, shall be adjusted to reflect the results of the previous Group internal audits and inspections.
  - a) The GMB should use the ASC Audit manual or pre-audit checklist as the basis for internal inspections.
- ii. Schedules and results of Group internal audits and inspections shall be communicated to Group Members.
  - a) Unannounced inspections<sup>8</sup> shall not, by definition, require notice to Group Members.
- iii. Internal inspections of every individual site of Group Members shall take place at minimum once a year, and prior to the CAB external audits (initial, surveillance and re-certification).
  - a) Sites with any major non-conformity either detected in an internal inspection or external audit by the CAB shall be

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<sup>8</sup> See definition of "Unannounced inspection" in Annex A.

inspected more than once before the next Group internal audit.

- iv. Internal inspections of individual sites shall take place when the sites are in production (e.g. not during fallow period).
  - v. Within a certification cycle, every single site shall be internally inspected at least once during a harvesting period to allow for inspection of all requirements applicable to the site.
  - vi. At least 20% of the Group's yearly internal inspections of individual sites shall be unannounced.
  - vii. A Group internal audit of the GMB must be conducted on a yearly basis.
  - viii. Only trained and qualified Group internal auditors and inspectors shall conduct Group internal audits, internal inspections and evaluate the results of those.
  - ix. Group internal auditors and inspectors shall conform to the qualifications and competencies described in Group certification Annex C2.
  - x. All personnel carrying out or managing internal audits and inspections and site conformity decisions shall prove impartiality and declare all potential conflict of interest prior to involvement in those activities.
  - xi. The decision on the conformity of an individual site to the ASC Standard and Group requirements shall be taken by an individual or a committee who was not involved in the site inspection and shall be based on the objective evidence obtained during the site inspection.
  - xii. Classification and treatment of findings of Group internal audit and inspection should follow the rules for external audits findings (ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements – section 18).
  - xiii. The GMB shall inform the CAB within maximum seven (7) days of any critical or major non-conformity detected during the Group internal audits and internal inspections, and of any major events that have an effect on Group's compliance status with the ASC requirements (e.g. disease outbreak, natural disaster, serious incidents, changes to the Group's practices).
  - xiv. The consequences of non-conformities and sanctions shall be made clear to Group Members.
- 2.2.3.3. Procedures for identifying and segregating products at all stages within each site, among sites within the unit of certification, and products that are not included in the unit of certification.
- i. There shall be a full product flow and production records of each production unit (pond/cage/pen/tank/raceway/line) within individual sites and within the unit of certification.

- ii. Certified products shall be identified and segregated at all stages of production within the unit of certification to prevent mixing with non-certified before the start of the ASC/MSC certified chain of custody.
- iii. The GMB shall define conditions, under which products must be segregated, and measures to be taken to prevent from direct or indirect mixing.
- iv. There shall be a process in place to detect and handle non-conforming product<sup>9</sup> to prevent its unintended use and delivery.
- v. Engagement with intermediary traders in delivering certified product from Group Members' sites to the GMB shall be prohibited.
- vi. Delivery of certified product from individual sites to a central place of the GMB, if so arranged, shall be under strict supervision by GMB's (appointed) personnel. The following records shall be kept:
  - a) Transportation means;
  - b) Transportation number;
  - c) Time of harvest/dispatch/arrival;
  - d) Volumes (kg live weight, size);
  - e) Transportation route;
  - f) Seal number;
  - g) Responsible person for transportation.
- vii. All associate records shall be kept to allow products to be traced back from the start of the ASC/MSC certified chain of custody back to the production unit (i.e. cage / net/ pen / pond / tank / raceway / line). See Group certification Annex C3 – Delivery of ASC certified product by Group Members.
- viii. If the unit of certification has a separate ASC/MSC Chain of Custody (CoC) certificate, the above requirements (2.2.3.3.i-vii) shall not apply.
- ix. The GMB shall have a separate ASC/MSC CoC certification if it handles both certified and non-certified product.
  - a) The separate ASC/MSC CoC certification shall be carried out by the same CAB that certifies the Group.
    1. If the ASC/MSC CoC certification by another CAB was obtained before applying for Group certification, the GMB shall request transfer of the CoC certificate to the same CAB that will be certifying the Group.

**2.2.3.4. Procedures for application and enforcement of sanctions that include but are not limited to:**

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<sup>9</sup> See definition of "Non-conforming product" in Annex A – Group Certification Definitions.

- i. Types of events that may result in sanctions, where among others:
    - a) Critical and/or major non-conformity detected during an internal inspection or external audit;
    - b) Misuse or abuse of ASC logo;
    - c) Sales of non-certified product as ASC certified;
    - d) Breach of any other applicable requirements specified in this document and other documents of the Group (e.g. Contract/agreement).
  - ii. Sanction measures shall correspond to types of events and their severity. Those include but are not limited to:
    - a) Product segregation and/or blocking of product from entering the chain of custody as ASC certified.
    - b) Site suspension and/or withdrawal.
    - c) A critical or major non-conformity at a site, raised either by the CAB or internal inspectors, shall result in:
      - 1. Product harvested from the affected site between the date of detection and the date of closeout of the major non-conformity being considered as non-certified.
      - 2. A suspended site shall be withdrawn from the scope of certification if the suspension is not lifted at a given time.
  - iii. The GMB shall be responsible for monitoring the implementation of actions to close out non-conformities raised in Group internal audits/inspections and external audits by the CAB.
- 2.2.3.5. Procedures for complaints and appeals that include:
- i. Group Members shall have the right to complain and appeal against non-conformities raised during internal inspections and consequential sanctions by the GMB.
  - ii. All complaints and appeals (from within and outside the Group) brought to the attention of the Group shall be recorded, tracked and trends analysed by the GMB as well as reviewed during management reviews to utilise them for continual improvement.
- 2.2.3.6. Procedures for management review that include:
- i. A review of the Group's unit of certification as a whole on a regular basis but not less than once every 12 months from the date of the first review before the ASC initial group certification audit.



- ii. The management review shall cover as a minimum the following topics:
    - a) Results of Group internal audits, internal inspections, external audits and associated actions to close any raised nonconformities.
    - b) Collective issues faced by majority of Group Members within the unit of certification (e.g. disease, quality of production inputs, sales of certified product).
    - c) Received complaints and appeals and how resolution(s) was/were reached.
    - d) Effectiveness of sanctions implemented.
    - e) Improvements made and/or planned to be implemented.
  - iii. Conclusions and agreements reached during the management review shall be documented by the GMB and distributed to all Group Members.
- 2.2.3.7. Procedures for document management that include as a minimum:
- i. Documents shall be approved by a designated individual and contain an identifier signifying that it is the current approved version.
  - ii. Obsolete documents should be retrieved and disposed of, or marked accordingly to prevent confusion and mistakes.
  - iii. Documents for the Group shall be in a language common to all Members of individual sites and their workers.
    - a) In cases of translations, the GMB shall ensure that those are synchronised with the original language.
  - iv. A master list of all applicable internal and external documents (e.g. regulations, standards, procedures) shall be maintained and be up-to-date at all time.
  - v. Documents shall be reviewed regularly to enable continuous improvements of the IMS.
- 2.2.3.8. Procedures for records management that shall specify record type within the Group, associated retention time, location and access rights to retrieve the records.
- i. The GMB shall keep the following records as a minimum:
    - a) Group Sites Register;
    - b) Signed agreements with Group Members, all amendments and revisions;
    - c) Contracts with CABs, all amendments and revisions;
    - d) Training records;

- e) Group internal audit and inspection reports, including corrective actions and evidence of close out of non-conformities;
  - f) Management review reports;
  - g) Records of purchasing and distributing production inputs within the unit of certification, if applicable;
  - h) Delivery notes of certified product of each site and within the unit of certification for each delivery;
  - i) Records of all sales of ASC certified products (Group certification Annex C4 – Template for recording Group’s sales of ASC certified products)
  - j) Records received complaint(s) and appeal(s); and how their resolution(s) was/were reached (Annex C5 – Template for Complaints and Appeals Log).
- ii. The GMB shall ensure that all records required by the applicable ASC standard are kept.
    - a) The GMB shall assume responsibility for maintaining the records of individual Group Members who are not able to handle records (e.g. due to illiteracy).
- 2.2.3.9. Procedures for training on relevant topics, for relevant positions and Group Members.
- i. Qualifications and training requirements for all personnel involved at the GMB and at individual sites shall be defined.
  - ii. An annual training plan shall be developed and shall include training on requirements of the ASC Standard, requirements for obtaining and maintaining certification, IMS requirements, technical knowledge required for farm operations, emergency response and handling.
  - iii. Training shall be delivered by qualified competent trainers, who have been selected by the GMB based on documented procedures.
- 2.2.3.10. Procedures for communications with Group Members and external parties (CAB, ASC, Accreditation Body - ASI) that includes:
- i. Communications between the GMB and those operating individual sites within the unit of certification;
  - ii. Communications within the GMB, among Group internal auditors/inspectors, the ASC Representative, committee(s) and other members of the GMB; and
  - iii. Communications with and by GMB decision-makers;
  - iv. Failure by the GMB to provide the CAB with the information (e.g. addition and removal of sites, major non-

conformities, major events) in the time specified shall lead to suspension of the Certificate until such time that corrections are completed to the satisfaction of the CAB.

### **3. Agreement between the Group Management Body and Group Members**

3.1. There shall be a written agreement signed between the GMB and each Group Member.

- 3.1.1. There shall be one (1) legally binding agreement per Group Member covering the site(s) included in the scope of Group certification.
- 3.1.2. The agreement shall be written in a language common to the contracted party and Group Members shall understand what is required of them.
- 3.1.3. The agreement shall include but is not limited to the following provisions:
  - 3.1.3.1. Each individual Group Member shall commit to comply with applicable ASC standard and certification requirements.
  - 3.1.3.2. Location of the site(s) to be included in the scope of Group certification.
  - 3.1.3.3. When GMB applies sanctions to a Group Member's site, no claim of ASC certification or 'ASC certified product' shall be made (starting from the effective date of the sanctions) by the individual site/Group Member and/or by any buyers of raw material from the affected site.
  - 3.1.3.4. Authorisation for the GMB to initiate changes shall be defined.
  - 3.1.3.5. Group Members shall be subject to internal inspections and external audits by the CAB, accreditation body (ASI) and visits by ASC or its appointed person(s)/party(-ies).
    - i. Within two (2) hours, Group Members shall grant access to these parties in case of unannounced internal inspections and external audits/visits.
  - 3.1.3.6. Group Members shall report to the GMB any intentional or unintentional major non-conformities or major events.
  - 3.1.3.7. Sanctions shall apply in case of breach of the agreement.
  - 3.1.3.8. In addition to 3.1.3.1-3.1.3.7, arrangements between the GMB with contracted farms (if practiced) shall be transparent and fair as specified in Annex C6 – Contract farming arrangements between GMB and Group Members.

3.2. Each Group Member shall have a copy of the signed agreement.

#### **4. Requirements for Group Membership**

- 4.1. Group membership for ASC Group certification shall be voluntary while:
  - 4.1.1. Group Members may terminate their membership at any time.
  - 4.1.2. An outgoing Group Member with a pending sanction issued by the GMB or the CAB may request to be re-admitted to the Group or join another Group after 12 months from the date of leaving.
    - 4.1.2.1. The GMB shall only re-/admit the Member to the (new) Group if the root causes of the sanction have been addressed.
- 4.2. All Group Members shall have all the following characteristics:
  - 4.2.1. Be small-scale producers.
    - 4.2.1.1. Medium and large sized producers may join the Group and comply with all requirements as a Group Member but every site shall each be subject to external audits.
  - 4.2.2. Be inspected and audited against the same ASC standard.
- 4.3. Group Members may register one or more sites that they legally operate to be in the unit of certification of the Group.
- 4.4. Group Members shall only join one unit of certification at a time.
- 4.5. Upon request of the CAB, accreditation body, ASC or any party on ASC's behalf, Group Members shall provide access to documentation and records of sites that have been removed for any reasons (withdrawn, cancelled/expired) up to 12 months after the removal.

#### **5. Application for Group certification**

- 5.1 The GMB shall have records of implementing requirements for Group certification for at least one growing cycle of the species seeking for certification or six (6) months, whichever is shorter.
- 5.2 The GMB shall plan for the initial audit in a way that all sites to be included in the scope of certification, shall be in production at the time of the initial on-site audit by the CAB.
- 5.3 All sites to be included in the unit of certification shall have been internally inspected, and:
  - 5.3.1 There shall be no open critical or major non-conformity of any sites.
  - 5.3.2 All sites shall have production records as required by the applicable ASC standard.
- 5.4 The GMB shall inform the CAB if it (including any of its constituent Group Members/ individual sites) has had its/their ASC certification suspended or withdrawn by any other CAB within the past 12 months.

#### **6. Use of Certification Trademarks**

- 6.1. The use of ASC certification trademarks is regulated in the ASC Logo Licence Agreement.
- 6.2. The GMB shall be eligible to apply to use the ASC logo and trademark after it has been issued a certificate by an accredited CAB.
  - 6.2.1. Product from Group Members may be sold into a certified chain of custody by the GMB once it has signed a Logo License Agreement with ASC.
  - 6.2.2. Individual Group Members are not eligible to enter into a Logo License Agreement with ASC (See also 7.3).

## **7. Commercialisation of Group's product**

- 7.1. The GMB shall declare to the CAB in the certification application if it handles both ASC certified and non-certified products<sup>10</sup>.
  - 7.1.1. GMB shall notify the CAB within seven (7) days of the decision to handle non-certified product.
  - 7.1.2. The Group unit of certification shall have a separate ASC/MSC CoC certification, if it handles both ASC certified and non-certified products (See 2.2.3.3.ix).
- 7.2. All sales of ASC certified product of the unit of certification shall go through the GMB.
  - 7.2.1. Each sale shall be fully recorded in terms of date of sale, volumes, size, sites, production units, stocking and harvesting dates, transport/storage details, names of buyers.
  - 7.2.2. Those sales shall be made transparent with Group Members and CABs or ASC and ASC appointed accreditation body (ASI) and person(s).
  - 7.2.3. When selling ASC certified products, the GMB shall be responsible for product eligibility.
- 7.3. Group Members may sell their product individually but only as non-certified.
  - 7.3.1. Group Members shall report to the GMB on a monthly basis of any direct sales of their product that include date, volumes, product size, production units.
    - 7.3.1.1. Group Members shall keep all records of any direct sales of non-certified product (Annex C7 – Group Members' Direct Sales Log).
  - 7.3.2. Failure by a Group Member to inform the GMB in due time of the sales of the conventional product shall result, as a sanction, in the removal of

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<sup>10</sup> See definition of "Non-certified product" in Annex A– Group Certification Definitions.

the particular Group Member from the unit of certification for compliance reasons.

## ANNEX C1 – GROUP SITES REGISTER

(File downloadable from ASC website in database format until the online database is available)



### ASC Group Certification Annex 2 - Sites Register

Name of Group Certificate Holder \_\_\_\_\_  
 Certificate Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address of the Group Management \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of responsible person for sites registration and monitoring \_\_\_\_\_  
 Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of last update \_\_\_\_\_

Each site is entered separately (per row)

#	Full names of Group Member	Group Member address	Number of sites		Name of site(s) in scope of Group certification	Site GPS (longitude and latitude)	Site license number/ID of the site	Highest number of full-time workers in past 12 months	Highest number of seasonal workers in past 12 months	Production type (mono-/polyculture)	Non-certified species	Certified species (Latin/English name)	Production methods (extensive/semi-extensive/semi-intensive/super intensive)	Production system (cage/net/pond/raceway/lins)	Number of pens/cages/ponds/tanks/etc. of the site	Production area (ha)	Culture area (ha)	Site layout map available	Date being added to scope of Group certification	Date of removal/cancellation	Reasons of removal/leaving
			Owned by Group Member	Included in scope of Group certification																	

## ANNEX C2 – COMPETENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUP INTERNAL AUDITORS AND INSPECTORS

An **Group internal auditor** carries out audits of the Group IMS against the requirements in the Group Certification document and is required to produce internal audit reports.

An **internal inspector** carries out inspection of the Group Members' sites against the ASC standards and is required to produce internal inspection reports.

Requirements		Group internal auditor	Internal inspector	Note
<b>Knowledge and qualification</b>				
G1. Education	The individual shall have at least a post-high school diploma	x	x	
G2. Knowledge/ understanding of organisational situations	The individual shall have knowledge of general business processes and shall understand the workings of organisations in relation to size, structure, function and relationships.	x	x	
	The individual shall understand the social, economic and cultural relationships in worker communities.		x	
G3. Knowledge/ understanding of 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.	x		
G4. Audit/ Inspection training	<p>The individual shall have successfully completed of an Internal Auditor training course based on ISO 19011 principles that have a minimum duration of sixteen (16) hours.</p> <p>The certificate must specify the course content and duration. Successful completion must be indicated on the certificate.</p> <p>The course provider shall be accredited by the International Register of Certified Auditors (IRCA) or equivalent.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>The individual shall have successfully completed an Internal Auditor and Inspector training course that has been approved by ASC.</p>	x		



	<p>The individual shall have successfully completed an Internal Auditor and Inspector training course that has been approved by ASC.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>The individual shall successfully completed a training of at least 16 hours by a qualified (internal) auditor.</p>		X	
	The individual shall have been trained on the ASC applicable standard.	X	X	
	The individual shall have successfully completed a training course on ASC certification requirements for Group certification	X	X	When available
	The individual shall have undertaken and successfully completed the 'ASC Farm Traceability' online training module.	X		When available
	The individual shall be trained on farm traceability module by a qualified (internal) auditor.		X	
	The individual shall complete the ASC training for new requirements as specified by the ASC and on changes to legislation, codes, relevant labour conventions as appropriate.	X		
	The individual shall complete the ASC training for new requirements and on changes to legislation, codes, relevant labour conventions as appropriate by a qualified (internal) auditor.		X	
<b>Work and audit/inspection Experience</b>				
G5. Work experience	The individual shall have experience relevant to the business being audited or site being inspected.	X	X	
G6. Audit/ Inspection Experience	The individual shall have undertaken at least two audits or inspections in the last 2 years against any other aquaculture certification scheme as an acting auditor or inspector, shadowed and signed off by a competent internal auditor or inspector.	X	X	
	The individual shall have an internal audit/inspection witnessed by a qualified ASC internal auditor/inspector no less than once in each two (2) year period.	X	X	
<b>Skills and personal attributes</b>				
G7. Writing skills	The individual will produce clear and accurate reports on audit/inspection findings.	X	X	
G8. Oral presentation skills	The individual shall have good oral communication skills, which makes him/her understood by the intended audience.	X	X	

G9. Organisational skills	The individual shall have good organisational and time management skills.	x	x	
G10. Facilitation skills	The individual shall have skills to ensure effective communication between themselves and other people.	x	x	
G11. Interviewing skills	The individual shall be experienced in different types of interviewing techniques.	x	x	
G12. Language skills	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 or inspected.	x	x	
G13. Detection skills	The individual shall have knowledge and skills to detect and document evidence of non- conformities.	x	x	
G14. Listening	The individual shall understand and interpret verbal and non-verbal communication.	x	x	
G15. Numeracy	The individual shall understand and interpret number systems and their significance.	x	x	
G16. Reading	The individual shall understand and interpret written material related to the topics of audit/inspection.	x	x	
G17. Versatile	The individual will be able to adjust readily to different situations and to effectively resolve conflict and arrive at consensus agreement as far as possible.	x	x	
G18. Ethical	The individual will be fair, truthful, unbiased, sincere, discreet, trustworthy and honest.	x	x	
	The individual will possess a high level of integrity, particularly in relation to bribery and corrupt practices.	x	x	

## ANNEX C3 - DELIVERY OF ASC CERTIFIED PRODUCT BY GROUP MEMBERS

(File downloadable from ASC website in a database format until the online database is available)



### ASC Group Certification\_Annex 4 - Delivery of ASC certified product by Group Members

Name of Group Certificate Holder	_____
Certificate Number	_____
Address of the Group Management Body (GMB)	_____
Name of sales responsible person:	_____
Position in the GMB	_____
Email:	_____
Phone:	_____

Each entry denotes a delivery from a Member Group from a site

#	Transportation data				Site data			Harvest data					
	Date of receipt by GMB	Place of receipt/delivery	Transport type (N/A, lorry/cold truck, wellboat/boat, etc.)	Transport number	Party responsible for transportation (buyer, GMB, Group Member)	Received ASC certified product from site(s) name(s)	Site license number/ID of the site	Site GPS (longitude and latitude)	Date of harvest	Volume (live weight in kg)	Counts (if applicable)	Size	Production unit number(s)

## ANNEX C4 – GROUP’S SALES OF ASC CERTIFIED PRODUCTS

(File downloadable from ASC website until the online database is available)



### ASC Group Certification - Annex 5 - Group's sales of ASC certified products

Name of Group Certificate Holder:	
Certificate Number:	
Address of the Group Management Body	
Name of responsible person for selling Group's ASC certified products:	
Position within the UoC:	
Email:	Phone:

#	Date of delivery	Place of delivery	Name of buyer/ buying company	Type of product	Amount (in kg)	Size	Group Member's details			
							Product of (Group Member's name)	Product from (Name of Member's site)	Site longitude	Site latitude

## ANNEX C5 – GROUP COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS LOG

(File downloadable from ASC website)



### ASC Group Certification\_Annex 6 - Group Complaints and Appeals Log

Name of Group Certificate Holder:	
Certificate Number:	
Address of the Group Management Body	
Name of responsible person for handling complaints and appeals:	
Position within the UoC:	
Email:	Phone:

#	Complaint/Appeal received from (person's name/organisation)	Date of receipt	Complaint/appeal sent to	Complainant is thin UoC? (Y/N)	Summary of complaint/appeal	Proposed resolution	Date proposed to complainant	Accepted by complainant? (Y/N)	Date of accepted	Status of complaint/appeal (resolved/open)

## ANNEX C6 – CONTRACT FARMING<sup>11</sup> ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE GMB AND GROUP MEMBERS<sup>12</sup>

### Normative

The listed information below shall be followed and included in the contract documents.

- The contract shall be written in a language common to the contracted parties.
- The contract shall be written to be enforceable in a court of law of the country in which the contracted parties operates.
- The contract shall define the parties by legal identity, signatory name, address, and contact details. Signatures shall be clearly visible on copies held by all parties.
- The contract shall define a starting date and an ending date.
- The contract shall identify the location of the farm the product is expected from, including the total production area size covered under the contract.
- The contract shall clearly specify the product in both quality and quantity terms. Quality definitions shall be written in terms that are open to verification of the quality definition by all parties of the contract. If the contract includes quota (either a minimum or a maximum), the contract shall also establish the consequences of not meeting minima quota or exceeding maxima quota.
- It shall state the time and manner of delivery of the product.
- It shall clearly establish prices, or price calculation formulas (including price adjustments related to variations in quality, quantity or time of delivery), payment obligations and terms of payment.
- If credits and/or inputs are provided by the contracting party to the contracted party, the terms, under which these are delivered and priced or valued, shall be clearly defined and not be above interest rates prevailing on the open market.
- It shall clearly indicate mutual obligations of all parties and spell out sanctions or consequences of not upholding those.
- Arrangements covering insurance shall be defined in the contract, or any absence of these shall be clearly mentioned.

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<sup>11</sup> See definition of “Contract farming” in Annex A.

<sup>12</sup> Adapted from Appendix III Part A of the ASC Shrimp Standard version 1.0, 2014, which was based on FAO and GIZ guidance.

- The contract shall indicate the consequences of major failures to uphold commitments made in the contract, such as non-delivery of product and/or non-payment for received product, so-called “acts of God” (on the side of the contracted party), or bankruptcy (on the side of the contracting party).
- Intermediate changes to contract conditions are communicated on paper and come with the right of either party to terminate the contract.
- The contract shall refer to a dispute settlement mechanism or to an arbitrator to resolve disputes accessible to the contracted party. This can be a government agency, authority, or civil society organization without a direct stake in the outcome of the contracted agreement.
- The contract shall define termination arrangements, review procedures, (intermediate) monitoring arrangements and under what circumstances and conditions a contract is transferable.

## **ANNEX C7 – GROUP MEMBER’S DIRECT SALES**

(File downloadable from ASC website until the online database is available)