

Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC): 2022 At a Glance

2022 was a year of increasing awareness and uptake of the ASC programme. We supported our producers, created meaningful market connections, made relevant programme improvements and brought the ASC brand further into the spotlight.

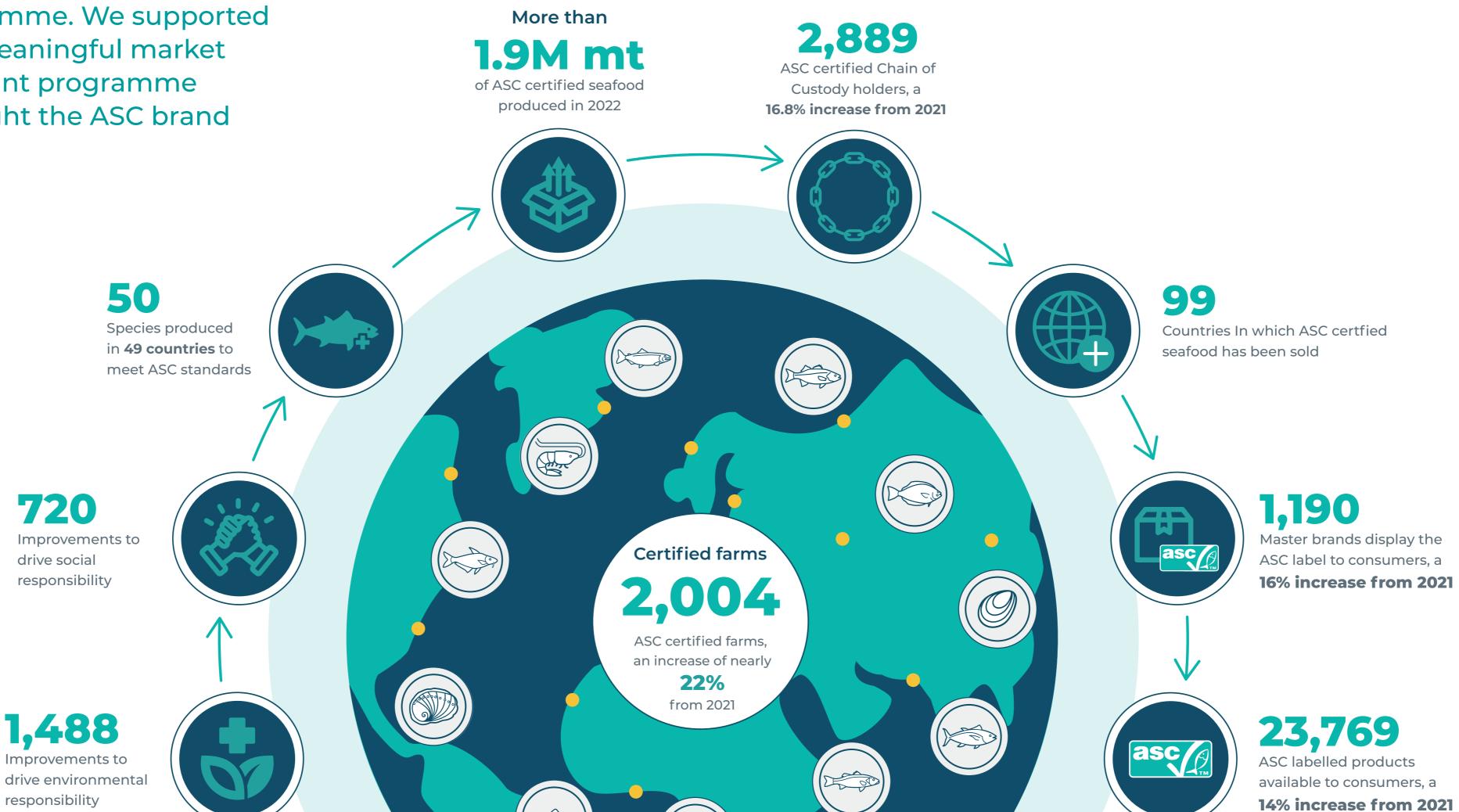
720

drive social

responsibility

1,488

responsibility













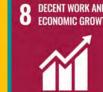


































Welcome to our ASC **Impacts Report 2022**

Looking back on our past year we celebrate continued growth, development of our technical programmes and share progress across our business contributing to achieving our mission.

Join our journey though:

2022 At a Glance **Our Impacts**

Our Certification Programme

Our Engagement

Our Foundations

This is an interactive report for you to explore. Hover and click to find more information and explore how we are contributing throughout our journey to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Transforming aquaculture to enhance environmental and social responsibility is critical for our planet, food security, and building resilient communities. We are grateful for the continued support of farmers and industry stakeholders, communities, markets, and partners that engage with and value the ASC programme.

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about our work.



"It is increasingly being recognised that the aquaculture industry must play a more active role in addressing challenges associated with the demands of a growing human population.

I am proud of the robust work we are carrying out within ASC to contribute and continue to refine our strategies in support of our mission. And we know that as a sector, we can only continue our positive impacts through strong collaboration and a clear action plan."

Chris Ninnes

CEO





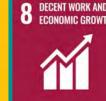


































ASC and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals

In 2022, ASC released a study measuring how responsible aquaculture can contribute to the United Nation's 17 Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 associated targets. The SDGs are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all Member States in 2015.

Our findings show that ASC can meaningfully address most of the industry's global challenges. We demonstrate this through alignment with a significant proportion (49%, or 82/169) of all SDG targets; with more than 80% of those considered to be 'well' or 'very well' addressed. There remain improvements to be made across the aquaculture industry, along with a general lack of verifiable performance data that must be addressed by all actors to fully understand our collective contributions, and responsibilities. Transparent data

disclosures delivered through ASC certification can provide a proxy to credible and third party-verified SDG claims and help to de-risk farmed seafood supply chains.

Throughout this report, we track some of our SDG contributions across the impacts and improvements we've made. Our complete report "How Responsible Aquaculture can contribute to the UN's SDGs" can be found online.





ASC Benefits

Our ASC benefits reflect the values that we embed across our work.



Proven Impact

We deliver measurable and meaningful impact on the planet and people (through certification and beyond) for anyone to check



Transparency to Strengthen Reputation

We openly show the responsible performance of ASC producers, enhancing trust in ASC's label, strengthening ASC partners reputation



Most Robust and Relevant Standards

We develop and deliver the most robust and relevant standards with care for the planet and people, based on the latest science



Highest Assurance Throughout

Our certification system and track and trace tools assure that if the ASC label is on the pack it comes from an audited responsible farm



Global Supply and Sales Opportunities

We create global market and supply access and sales opportunities through our global footprint, expertise and value-added services



Strong Global Brand

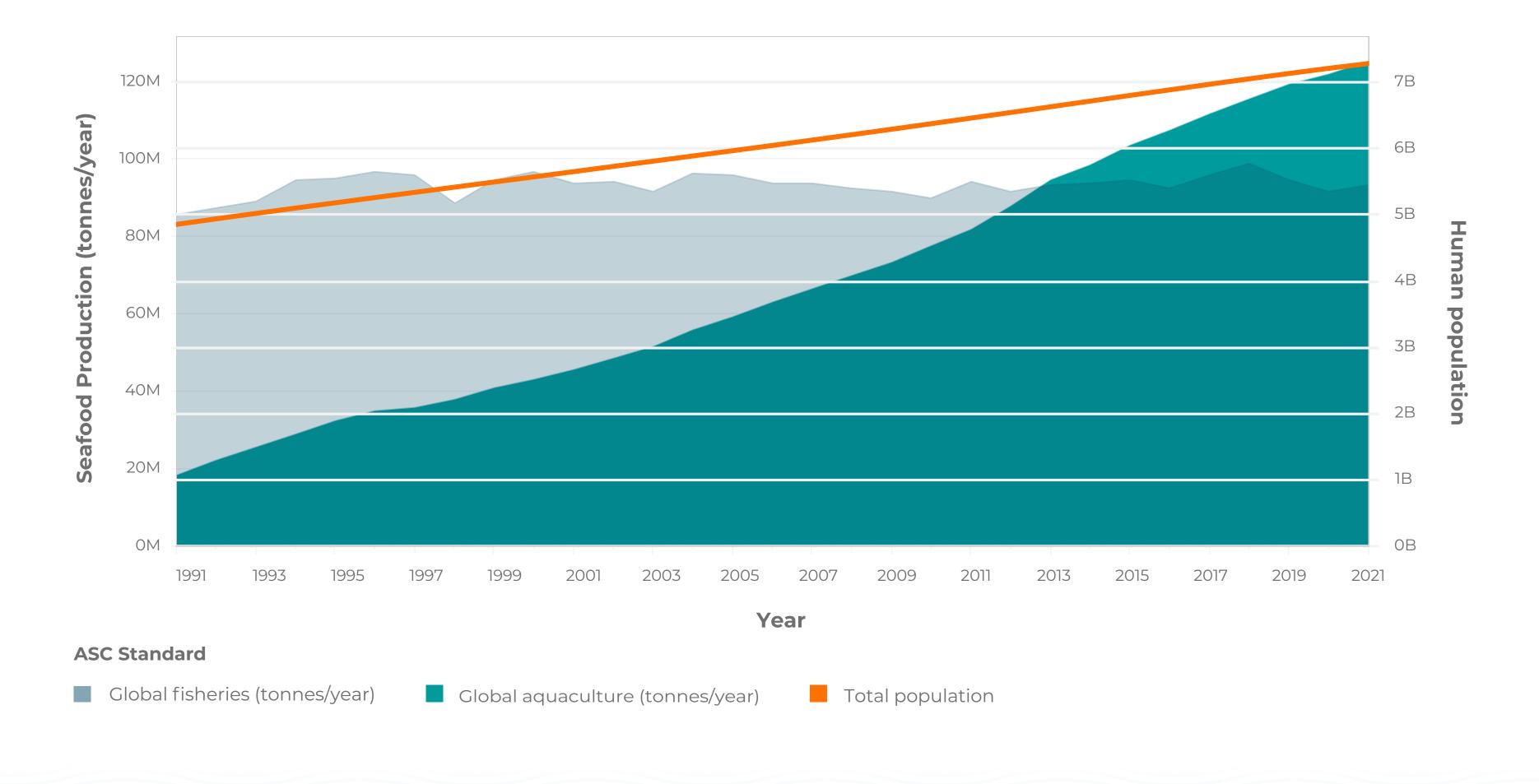
Our ASC brand has high consumer awareness, trust and sustainability associations, and a strong reputation amongst stakeholders globally

Our Mission

Is to transform aquaculture towards environmental sustainability and social responsibility, using efficient market mechanisms that create value across the chain

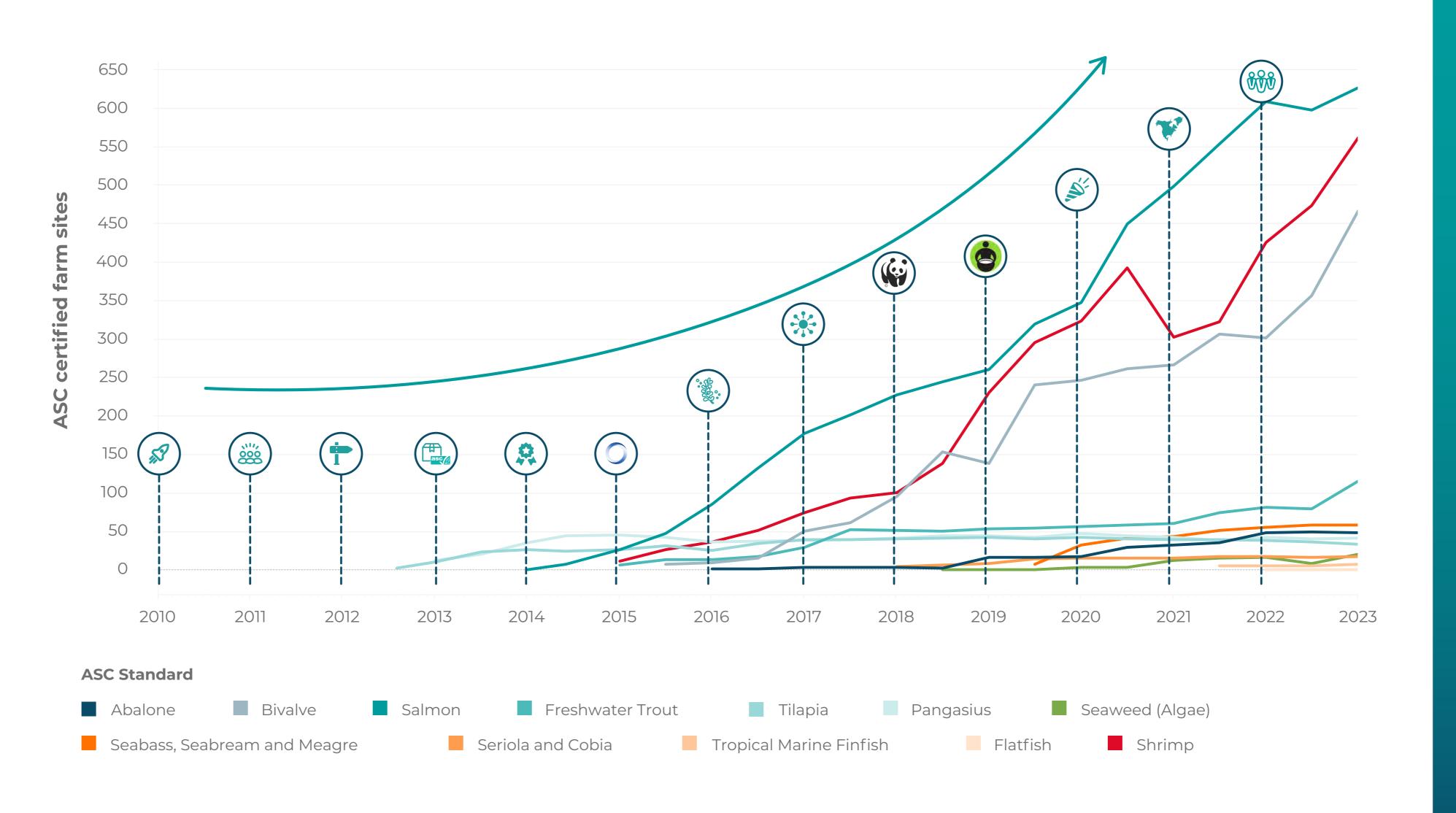
Global Aquaculture Continues To Grow

As the world's population grows, seafood farming can contribute to food security–providing nutritious, affordable protein with much lower climate impacts than land-based animal farming. To be a viable, sustainable solution, seafood farming must be conducted responsibly.





Our Path The number of **ASC** certified farms has increased steadily since the first farm became ASC certified in 2012. Setting The Standard for Seafood







































Measuring Impact

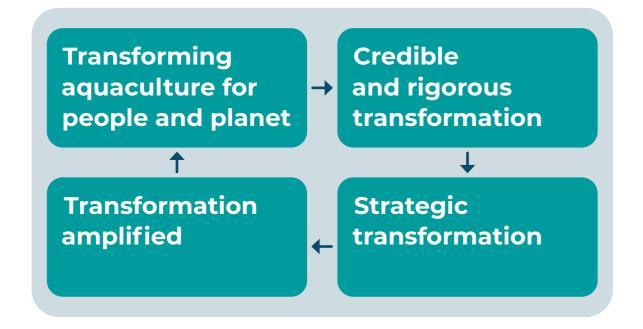
ASC's work drives transformation towards responsible seafood farming. Our theory of change communicates how effective market mechanisms propel social and environmental improvements in aquaculture. We achieve this by:

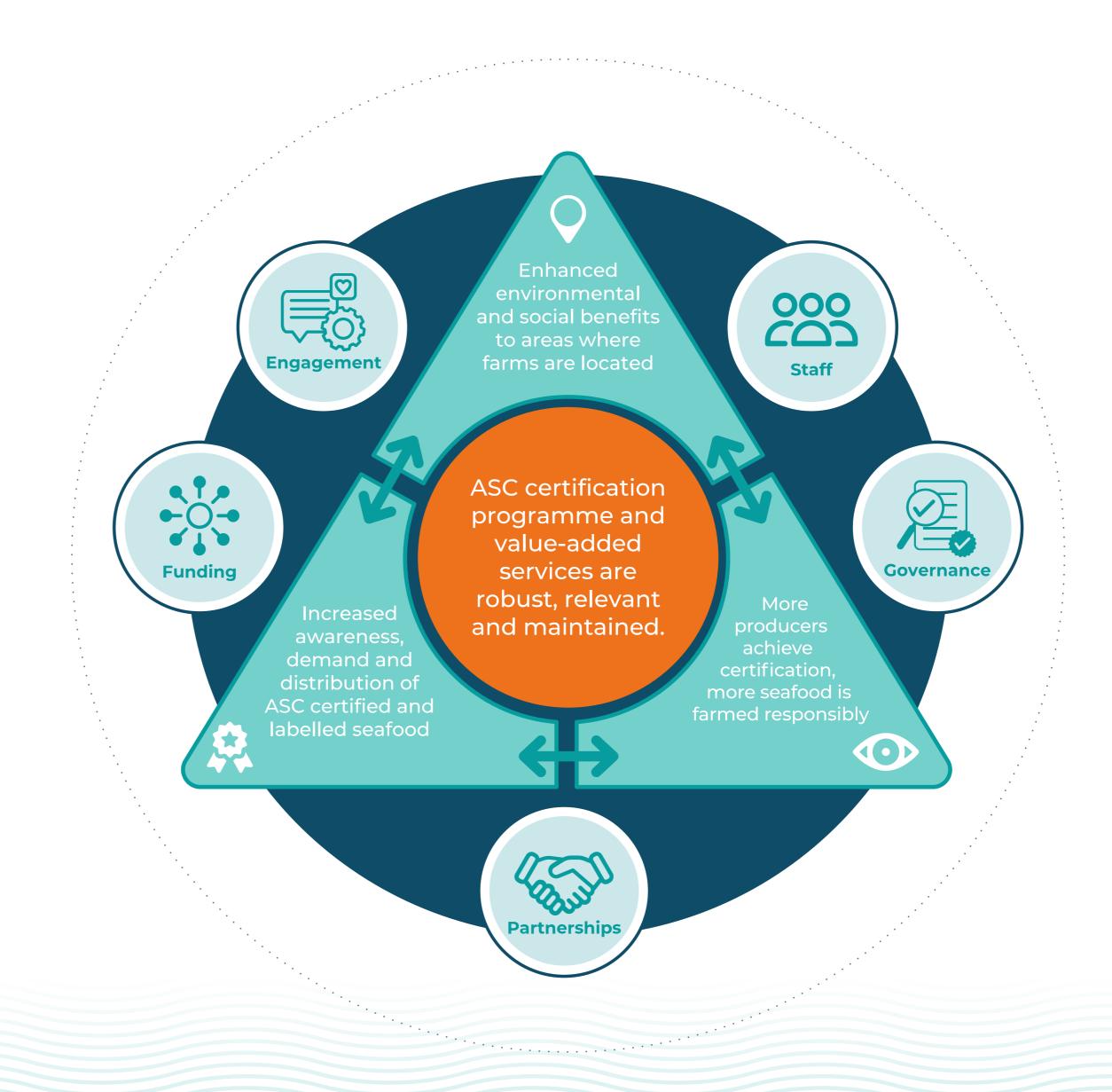
- Monitoring, understanding and communicating our impacts (Section 2: Our Impacts)
- Building and maintaining a rigorous certification programme bound by sciencebased standards, robust governance systems and effective assurance mechanisms (Section 3: Our Certification Programme)
- Multiplying our impacts through markets and customers, our consumer campaigns and collaborations

(Section 4: Our Campaigns and Communications)

This work is supported through clear, ambitious strategic objectives, and the people and partnerships that make our work possible

(Section 5: Our Foundations)













































Transforming Aquaculture for Planet and People

Our Vision

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

ASC certified seafood is farmed across 49 countries, delivering 50 different species of seafood. To achieve ASC certification, farmers must adhere to strict environmental, fish health, social and legal requirements.

As the most robust standard for responsibly farmed seafood, we set a high bar that is also achievable. While globally ASC certified farms continue to grow and our label is chosen in more markets, we still have plenty to do to continue progressing towards our mission.



31%

of global production is ASC certified



3.4%

of global production is ASC certified



1%

of global production is ASC certified



3.1%

of global production is ASC certified

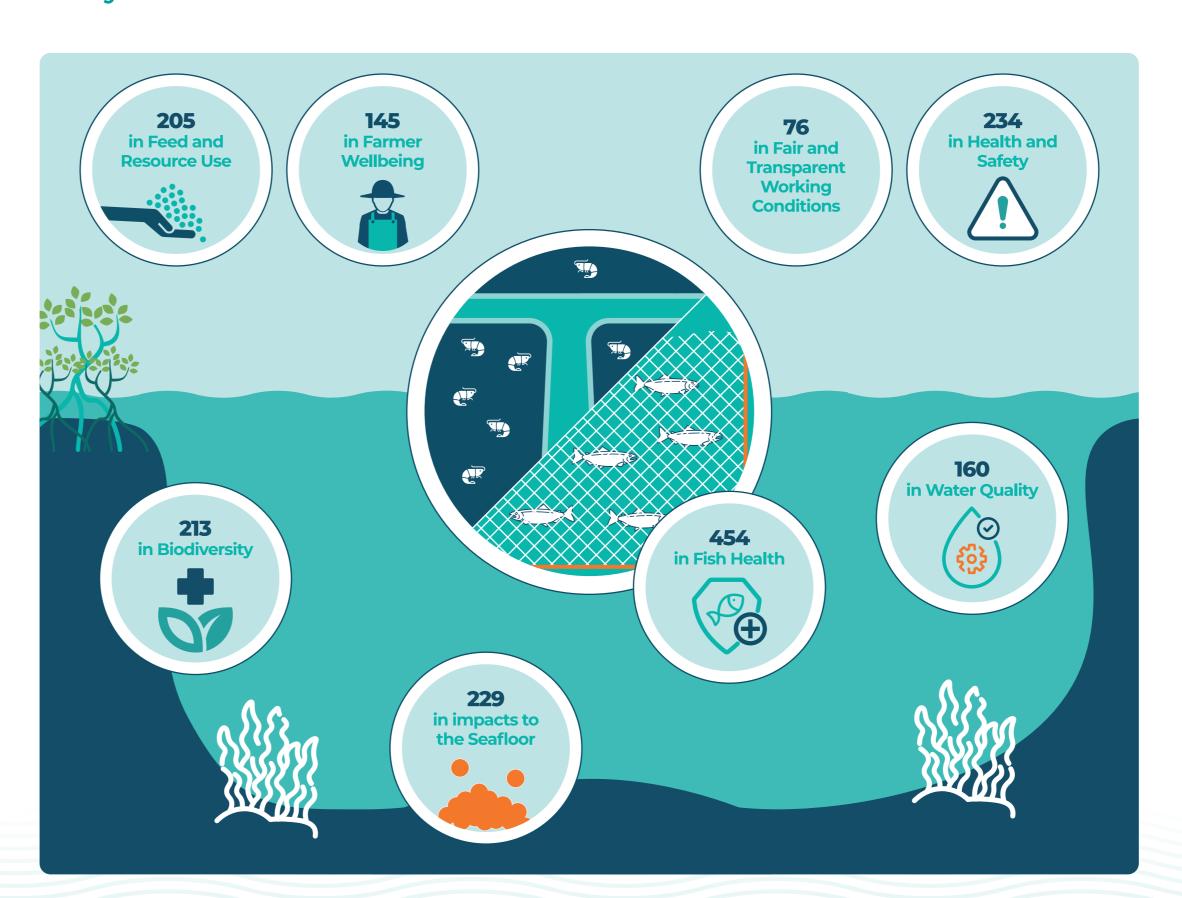


On-Farm Improvements

ASC standards set requirements to protect ecosystem functions, minimise environmental impacts and secure a safe and responsible working environment. Improvements are recognised where a farm during audit failed to fully comply with an ASC requirement, and then took verifiable action to improve or resolve the issue, as assessed by trained auditors.

On-farm improvements made across farming operations could include contributions to mangrove restoration, changing over to copper-free nets in the case of salmon farms, developing grievance mechanisms for employees, and improving operating procedures. These types of changes are some of the important benefits of responsible seafood farming but may happen outside of the ASC certification process. We recognise the importance of these improvements and ASC's position to enable these changes. The improvements attributed throughout this report recognise those measurable actions taken that fall within the scope of ASC standards.

- Protect natural habitat, local biodiversity and ecosystem
- Preserve water resources and quality
- Responsible use of feed and resources
- Preserve the diversity of wild populations
- Ensure the good health of farmed fish
- Ensure social responsibilities towards employees and local community



































For the Planet

ASC maintains responsible seafood farming standards to certify production across 20 species groups. We spotlight the impacts to salmon and shrimp – the two leading farmed seafood species in the world (excluding carp), which together represent more than 12% of global aquaculture production.

ASC certified salmon farms made measurable strides in improving their performance in 2022.

318 improvements

in Fish Health

59 improvements

in Responsible Feed Use

360 improvements

in Biodiversity Protection



Fish Health

Good fish health and welfare are cornerstones of responsible aquaculture.

Proper husbandry, health parameters, site-specific biosecurity plans, disease prevention schemes and welfare practices contribute to effective management of fish health.

> 99% of ASC certified salmon farms in 2022 operated with verified fish health management plans

> 99% of ASC certified salmon farms have four or more site visits by a designated veterinarian each year





































For the Planet



Responsible Feed Use

Responsible feed use means optimising efficient use of feed and limiting impacts associated with raw material inputs. The ASC species standards, along with the new ASC Feed Standard, limit the impacts of feed production end promote efficient use of feed.

100% of ASC certified shrimp farms that rely on feed source fishmeal and fish oil from responsible fisheries.

Responsible fisheries are those certified by ISEAL member sustainability schemes.







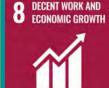
































For the Planet



Biodiversity

Using land responsibly, reducing interactions with habitats and wildlife, and conserving wild genetic populations are essential to biodiversity conservation and are critical components of ASC's standards.

100% of ASC certified shrimp farms

have conducted independent biodiversity environmental impact assessments

> 105,000 ha
of habitat responsibly
farmed







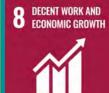




































A Salmon Story

Perched on a remote peninsula along Scotland's wild west coast sits Mowi's MacLean's Nose salmon farm. The farm achieved ASC certification in 2021, as a result of hard work by Farm Manager Rosie Curtis and her team.

On MacLean's Nose farm, the team's care is evident in how they ensure fish are healthy and well looked after, monitoring details including how much they are fed to ensure excess food doesn't accumulate, which can have negative environmental impacts.

"It's a tough certificate to get, so I display my certificate with pride."

Rosie Curtis, Farm Manager

Community engagement is an important component of responsible seafood farming. When a farm becomes ASC certified, it must prove that it is socially responsible and that includes being a good neighbour. Local communities are also invited to have their say on potential ASC certification of nearby farms.

Rosie and her colleagues take an active role in their local community, dedicating themselves to community services like the local fire brigade and coast guard. In rural areas like theirs, these vital services wouldn't be possible without people like Rosie and her team. There is no predicting when an incident might occur requiring the coast guard or fire service, and when it happens, they will have to leave immediately. Rosie is grateful to Mowi for allowing them to give to their community in this way.

For the People

"Collaborating with ASC has been very rewarding because ASC and ThinkAqua share a vision for sustainable aquaculture. Delivering a project in partnership with local NGOs, shrimp processors and farmers has been a very positive experience, thanks to the responsiveness and active engagement of the ASC team. The collaborative experience, where everyone's involvement and learning is respected, has been incredibly valuable for all involved."

Anton Immink

CEO ThinkAqua



Health and Safety

Protecting workers begins with a safe and healthy working environment.

Maintaining low risk of accidents and injuries is of high importance.

ASC standards require farms to train employees regularly, ensure equipment and buildings are safe, supply and use protective gear, and provide insurance for medical and associated costs. When risks are detected, corrective or mitigating actions must be taken. For farms with high-risk jobs like diving, the ASC requirements are even more robust.

152 improvements on ASC certified salmon farms

and

31 improvements on ASC certified shrimp farms

resulted in upgraded procedures and policies, enhanced site supervision plans, improved worker training, and better informed, more responsible staff.

SDG Watch



































For the People



Community Engagement

Seafood farms can create vital economic opportunity within communities. It's important that they don't impact them negatively impact them or infringe on legal or customary rights of Indigenous and tribal peoples. Being a good neighbour starts with understanding who may be affected by farm operations and in what way. The ASC standards require community engagement and opportunities for dialogue during the audit process.

63 improvements

on ASC certified salmon farms

and

36 improvements

on ASC certified shrimp farms

resulted in upgraded procedures and policies, increased training for farm staff, and action plans for regular communication with stakeholders.

100% of ASC certified shrimp

farms have conducted participatory social impact assessments to identify potential negative impacts on local communities and other affected groups.









































For the People



Community Engagement

Many countries have national minimum wages, but these are often too low to provide a decent standard of living, leaving workers in poverty. Wages that don't cover the additional or unexpected costs of healthcare or emergencies increase the likelihood of families getting into debt. Insufficient wages can result in poor health, missed educational opportunities and increased need for social support.

The ASC standards require all farms to pay a 'basic needs' or 'fair and decent' wage or make the improvements necessary towards achieving that.

In 2022, we increased our knowledge and capacity for work on important social themes through dedicated partnerships and growing the ASC team.

We are currently working with farms and auditors to test a living wage measurement tool to understand the living wage gap in seafood farming, the causes and how this might be resolved.

24 improvements

on certified salmon farms

and

38 improvements

on ASC certified shrimp farms

lead to farm
owners' enhanced
understanding of basic
needs, better staff
training, improved
HR training and
supervision, and
updated farm policies
and procedures.







































Our ASC Certification Programme

ASC maintains credible and reliable certification and assurance systems so consumers can trust the ASC label when they see it.

5 targeted assurance tools

3 Technical Advisory meetings

2 Public **Consultations on all** key development projects

Annual forum convening auditors, oversight and ASC

Setting the standard for seafood relies on our sound and layered assurance system, backed by a participatory process that is relevant to industry and markets, which responds to our changing world, and maintains scientific rigor. In 2022, ASC made significant programme improvements to further strengthen our standards and expand our commitment to responsible seafood farming.

Audits were conducted on 1,222

farms to verify their performance. **Social auditors**

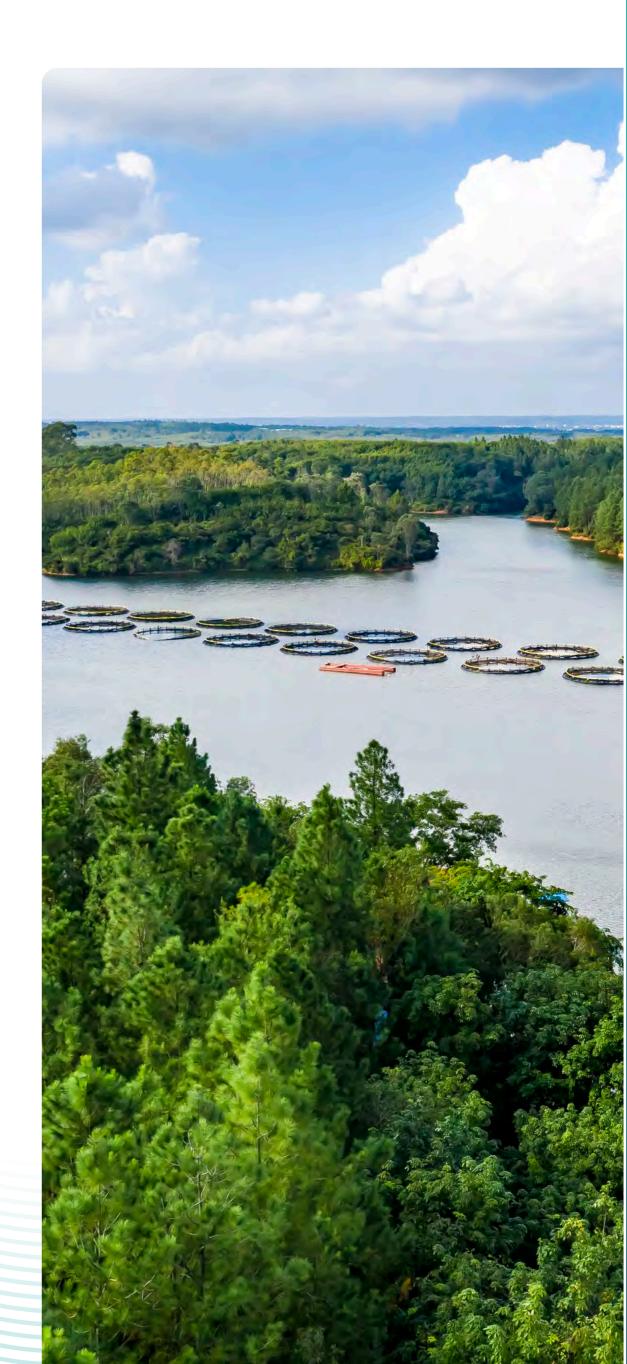
1,484 days on ASC certified farms. **Environmental** auditors spent 2,786

days on ASC certified farms.

Our CO2 Footprint

monitor progress.

As a part of our commitment to the climate, ASC worked with the Climate Neutral Group to conduct an assessment of our CO2 footprint. This assessment accounts for all emissions from operations over which ASC has control and includes data across scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions. Initial results identify air travel and home working as ASC's highest sources of emissions. The information delivered through this baseline assessment will inform our development and implementation of a reduction strategy; assessments will be conducted annually to











































We get it right

In 2022, we continued developing key activities to deliver enhanced traceability.

Our assurance tools have detected supply chain risks such as incidents of prohibited antibiotic use in shrimp, leading to suspension or cancellation of certifications.

ASC invests in new programme assurance tools to enhance our existing assurance systems and increase the integrity of the ASC label. These new tools were piloted to create assurances that supply chain risks are appropriately assessed and addressed.

Continual Improvement

Assurance Services International (ASI) delivers oversight and analysis of the performance of independent Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) and in-field challenges identified by auditors during ASC assessments. Annual findings contribute to the continued development of ASC's assurance programme.

In 2022, 105 assessments were completed in 28 countries.



Accredited Certification Assessment Bodies (CAB)

93 auditors worldwide



2,889

Chain of Custody licence holders

16.8% increase from 2021

































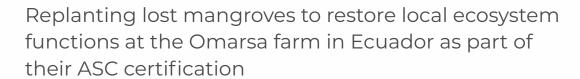














A Shrimp Story

A sustainability trendsetter on many counts, Omarsa Group became the world's first shrimp farm to earn ASC certification in 2014, blazing the trail for other shrimp farms on the journey towards sustainability.

They started in 1977 with 250 hectares to farm. Purchasing nearby farms over time, Omarsa now run three shrimp farms across nearly one million hectares, plus three hatcheries and two processing plants. They are the second largest shrimp exporter in Ecuador.

"Sustainability is at the heart of all of our activities"

Nilda Saldise Ravelo, Omarsa's Head of Corporate Social Responsibility

While shrimp farming has been a notorious cause of mangrove deforestation around the world, Omarsa set about doing things differently from their early days, restoring degraded mangroves on the farms they acquired. This effort promotes biodiversity, re-creates essential habitat and provides protection from erosion—a protection for local wildlife, plants and communities from waves, tides, currents and weather.

Employing more than 7,000 people in the area, Omarsa also has strong social responsibility commitments. Their community engagement has included teaching local women to sew for employment, building access to fresh drinking water and providing free English classes to local children.

"By educating the people in our communities," explains Nilda, "we are hoping that that they will become part of Omarsa, thereby ensuring that they have a better future for themselves and their families – keeping them away from drugs, away from gangs and from bad influences."

Key achievements of ASC's certification and assurance systems in 2022

ASC continued ensuring the relevance of our existing core set of standards, which are reviewed and updated when new information becomes available and when experience with their operation suggests their content can be improved.

All updates and revisions to ASC standards followed our robust multi-stakeholder, science-based review process. This review process exemplifies ASC's commitments to the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling's (ISEAL) Standard Setting Code and adherence to transparency.



ASC Feed Standard

- Training and examinations for auditors to qualify for conducting assessments against the ASC Feed Standard
- Delivery of the ASC Feed Standard interpretation manual



ASC Chain of Custody (CoC) Module

 Release of the new CoC module in May 2022, which provides greater value and a higher level of assurance to programme participants and buyers who rely on the ASC label



ASC Salmon Standard

 Stakeholder consultations in 2021 and 2022, resulting in redesigned metrics that reflect the best salmon practices for sea lice control





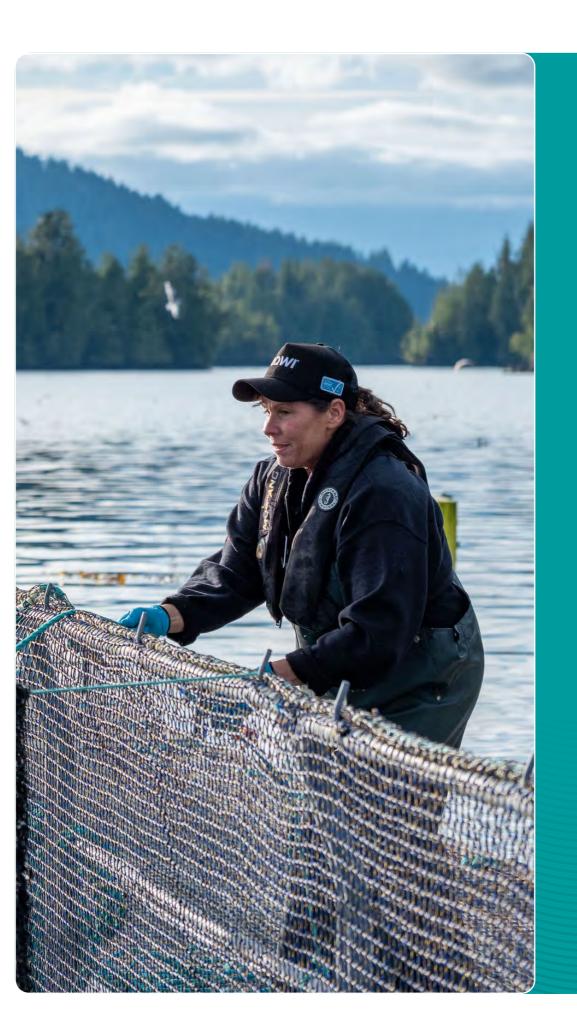
Relevant, Robust, Responsive

Our certification and assurance systems maintain strict procedures to ensure our work is grounded in best practices and current operations, responsive to our changing world, inclusive of stakeholder engagement and robust throughout. We achieve this by following best practices as prescribed through ISEAL Codes, and ensuring decisions have technical support through our governing bodies. The recent revision of the ASC Salmon Standard provides a clear example of these processes.

ASC is ISEAL Code Compliant. Our system has been independently evaluated against ISEAL's Codes of Good Practice.

More information at <u>isealalliance.org</u>





Opportunity

ASC certification of salmon farms around the world has revealed opportunities for improving the Salmon Standard as discrepancies in farm operations became evident. This was especially prominent in British Columbia, Canada, where regulations were directed at different life stages and treatments. Regional variability is a result of environmental and biological differences in wild salmonids, sea lice species and sub-species, host profiles, water temperatures, and the complexity of different ecosystems.

At the time, ASC requirements set thresholds to follow a precautionary approach to keep lice levels near zero during sensitive periods. Farms filed variance requests (VRs) to address variations in the ASC requirements from the regional differences in regulatory sea lice limits.





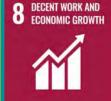




































Relevant, Robust, Responsive



Action

ASC embarked on a clear process to understand the full scope of the problem. Interviews with more than 60 stakeholders around the world—from regulators, academia, farms and NGOs—provided the information necessary to establish a technical review of sea lice thresholds in the context of species, population and geographic specifics.

We established a Technical Working
Group (TWG) and Technical Consultation
Group (TCG) of renowned experts
across key stakeholder groups.
These two groups provided a staged
consultation process prior to the full
public consultations to review global

regulations, research on sea lice limits and the impacts of sea lice control treatments on the welfare of farmed fish.

Through ASC's governance process, the phases of content development were provided for public consultation from March 2021, with the proposed revisions delivered in a 60-day consultation during March and April 2022. In July 2022, the final proposed indicators were confirmed by the technical groups and brought to ASC's Technical Advisory Group. The new ASC Salmon Standard was endorsed and subsequently approved by the Board in August 2022.

































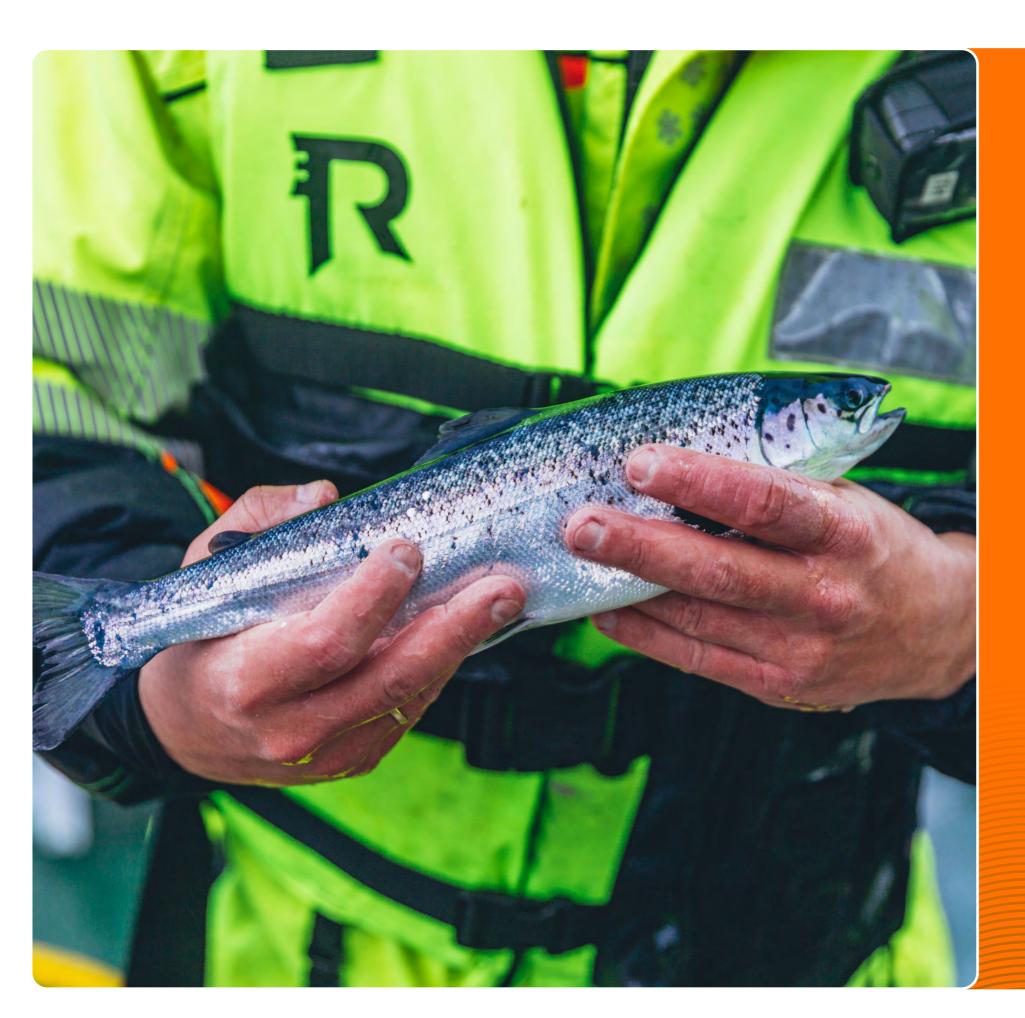








Relevant, Robust, Responsive



Outcome

In 2022, ASC released its Salmon Standard version 1.4, revising Criterion 3.1 to establish allowable sea lice thresholds. The revision more accurately reflects regional differences in operations while continuing to drive improvements.

- New species of sea lice found on western Canadian salmon farms are covered, along with the global application of a consistent and clear sampling protocol.
- ASC indicators reflect regional approaches for setting maximum on-farm sea lice levels, specific to salmon life stage and sensitive

- period (when wild juveniles may be in proximity to the farm).
- Transparent reporting and corrective actions when farms exceed sea lice load allowances are in place to ensure improvements are taken.

With these new requirements, ASC reviews new information on a sixmonth basis to consider outcomes that can trigger a revision.

The ASC Salmon Standard v1.4 became effective February 1, 2023.





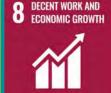




































Public Consultations



In 2022, one of our largest public consultations ever focused on further development of the upcoming ASC Farm Standard. The Farm Standard is the largest overhaul of the ASC certification programme since its inception—a single standard covering all ASC certifiable species, which will drive efficiencies in the system and enhance ASC's impacts.

Feedback

Feedback was received from all key stakeholder groups—farms, feed mills, retail and brand partners, environmental and social NGOs, assurance bodies and auditors, researchers, governments, supply chain actors and concerned citizens.

169 respondents

Developing and aligning select criteria for the ASC Farm Standard also required dedicated consultations on specific topics.

Benthic Impacts

Regular on-farm monitoring these helps ensure that the surrounding ecosystem maintains its structure and function. With the support of a Technical Working Group, ASC developed a tiered approach for farms to monitor and understand their impact on the benthic environment, where demonstrated improvements in performance ease the monitoring process.

103 respondents

Fish Health and Welfare

Responsible farming practices contribute to the health and welfare of farmed fish. These include defining disease prevention schemes and adherence to good welfare practices which promote the protection of the physical integrity of fish farmed at ASC certified farms. Feedback was solicited across three main pillars of routine operations, handling and slaughter.

56 respondents

"ASC standards must satisfy the requirements of a wide range of stakeholders, and developing them is therefore a rigorous and lengthy process. ASC holds the competency to develop standards that recognise what is required on the road towards sustainable aquaculture. And this is where the role of ASC's technical advisors comes in-to ensure representation of diverse experience and governance rigour to the important decisions upheld through certification."

Petter Arnesen

Chair of ASC's Technical **Advisory Group**





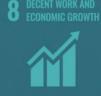


































Improver Programme by ASC

Connecting people and the planet to drive sustainability

Certification and aquaculture improvement projects are key tools for markets to support and incentivise better practices in seafood farming. They utilise the power of the private sector to promote positive changes toward sustainability. The Improver Programme by ASC provides a path for early entry into the improvement process.

Bridging the gap between conventional seafood farming and certification, the Improver Programme by ASC (AIP) is designed to enhance environmental and social responsibility at the farm level. By developing and implementing timebound improvement plans, independent verification and public visibility of progress, the Improver Programme by ASC levels the playing field for industry engagement with the supply chain.

The Improver Programme by ASC supports farms to increase their responsible practices and enhance benefits to local ecosystems and communities. We do this in partnership with like-minded organisations, building capacity on the ground, streamlining assessments and information-sharing, and addressing complex challenges at landscape level to drive meaningful change at scale.

In 2022, ASC welcomed new farms into pilot projects In Indonesia and Bangladesh to make measurable improvements and contribute learnings to the further development of the programme.

These projects were implemented in collaboration with global non-profits, local partners, industry representatives and processors. Projects in Indonesia were in partnership with Sustainable Fisheries Partnership in an ISEAL Innovations Fund project supported by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO. Our partners Lenk and Luna have supported projects in Bangladesh.

ASC is excited to launch this important initiative in late 2023.

See our Partners



















JALA









































Our Engagement

ASC's mission to transform aquaculture is rooted in incentivising improvements, collaborating with partners and raising awareness among consumers. As retailers increase their demands for sustainable practices and consumers reward these practices, the transformation is amplified. In 2022, our work led to better understanding our stakeholders and their needs, recognising their efforts to further our mission, and mobilising our staff to respond to market demands and bring responsible seafood into consumers' hands. Our teams work to ensure our continued presence in our mature European markets while augmenting ASC's mission in developing markets.

Stakeholders view sustainability as a positive trend and a challenge.

In 2022 ASC conducted our most comprehensive stakeholder survey to date. More than 220 respondents, representing producers, auditors, NGOs, commercial partners and others, across 41 countries, contributed to identifying the areas where we are doing well, where improvements could be made, and future opportunities and challenges lie.

Stakeholders recognise key benefits delivered through ASC: the logo provides assurance that ASC delivers a good product, ASC serves as a catalyst for improved production processes and opens doors to new customers and markets. **84% of respondents** find these benefits to be **very valuable.**

A majority of people **(80%)** believe ASC is achieving its mission and **72%** find the mission is clearly communicated.



7 out of 10
believe ASC collaborates
effectively with other
organisations



90%

of stakeholder respondents believe
ASC is responding well to their
feedback or have neutral opinion

Stakeholders mentioned three key benefits that ASC offers them:



ASC gives consumers an easy choice and ensures they can make a difference



ASC stimulates businesses to improve their production processes with a long-term objective



ASC open doors to new customers and markets

SDG Watch



































Collaboration and Endorsement

We deliver impact through collaboration with others on our shared objectives



ASC staff and members of FEAP meet at the Seafood Expo Global in Barcelona.

A collaboration to drive improvements in the European aquaculture sector was formalised with an MOU signed by the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) and ASC.

In the EU, aquaculture employs nearly 70,000 people, mostly in small businesses or micro-enterprises in coastal and rural areas. FEAP and ASC's shared work will identify opportunities and guide improvement practices to achieve economic and environmental benefits.



Wakao Hanaoka, CEO, Seafood Legacy Co., Ltd. along with Koji Yamamoto, ASC General Manager for Japan

Seafood Legacy, a Tokyo-based social and environmental organisation, recognises the role of responsibly farmed seafood in achieving a more sustainable global seafood market. Seafood Legacy signed an Memorandum of Understanding with ASC to strengthen information exchange, seek media collaboration, and identify links between production areas and markets and domestic and international distribution channels.



ASC's Pla Duangchai, Producer Outreach Coordinator leading a session during the Women in Ocean Foos Innovation Summit.

In November 2022, ASC sponsored and participated in the Women in Ocean Food Innovation Summit, organised by Hatch and Conservation International Ventures. Eleven teams of female entrepreneurs were invited to participate in the two-week business programme. The programme featured topics to help teams develop their project's commercial scalability, technological readiness, and industry fit, and connect with a global network of aquaculture industry experts. The in-person programme in Bali focused on the areas of seaweed value chain innovation and improvement, downstream solutions and conservation.































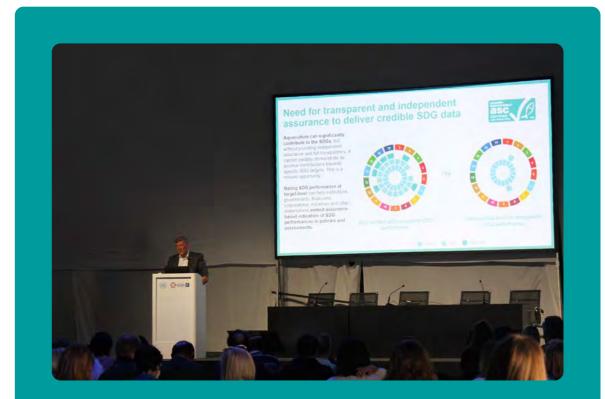






Collaboration and Endorsement

ASC staff participated in **30 events in 2022** as keynote speakers and panelists, engaging in forums and hosting booths to raise awareness about the global importance of responsible seafood farming.



UN Ocean Conference, Lisbon

Chris Ninnes, ASC CEO, and Bertrand Charron, Director of Research and Insight, delivered presentations at the UN Ocean Conference.



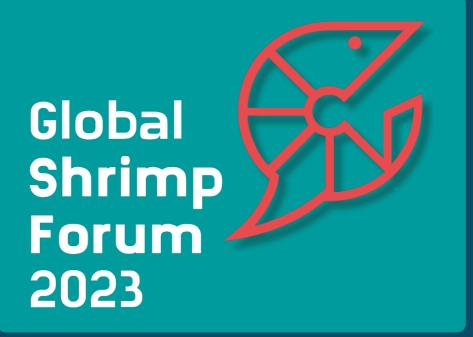
Blue Food Innovation Summit, London

Chris Ninnes, ASC CEO, presented 'The Road to Sustainable Aquaculture' at the 2022 inaugural Blue Food Innovation Summit.



Sustainable Ocean Summit and Global Blue Finance Summit (BlueFIN)

Bertrand Charron, ASC Director of Research and Insight, participated as a panellist in 'Blue Foods: Scaling up Sustainable Aquaculture and Seaweed' at the Sustainable Ocean Summit in Barcelona.



Global Shrimp Forum 2022

The first annual Global Shrimp Forum (GSF), held in the Netherlands, was initiated by an independent nonfor-profit foundation set up by ASC, Shrimp Insights and Contango. The foundation, through the GSF, is establishing a global platform for knowledge sharing, innovation, and value-chain collaboration to progress a sustainable future for the industry.







































Driving Market Demand

ASC's Market Development Team is positioned in 12 countries, covering Australia, Asia, Europe, the UK, and North America, to drive uptake and build connections between producers and supply chains. In 2022, we met with more than **200 partners** and drove **14% more ASC certified products** to become available to consumers worldwide. Our work supports our engagements across both mature and emerging markets.

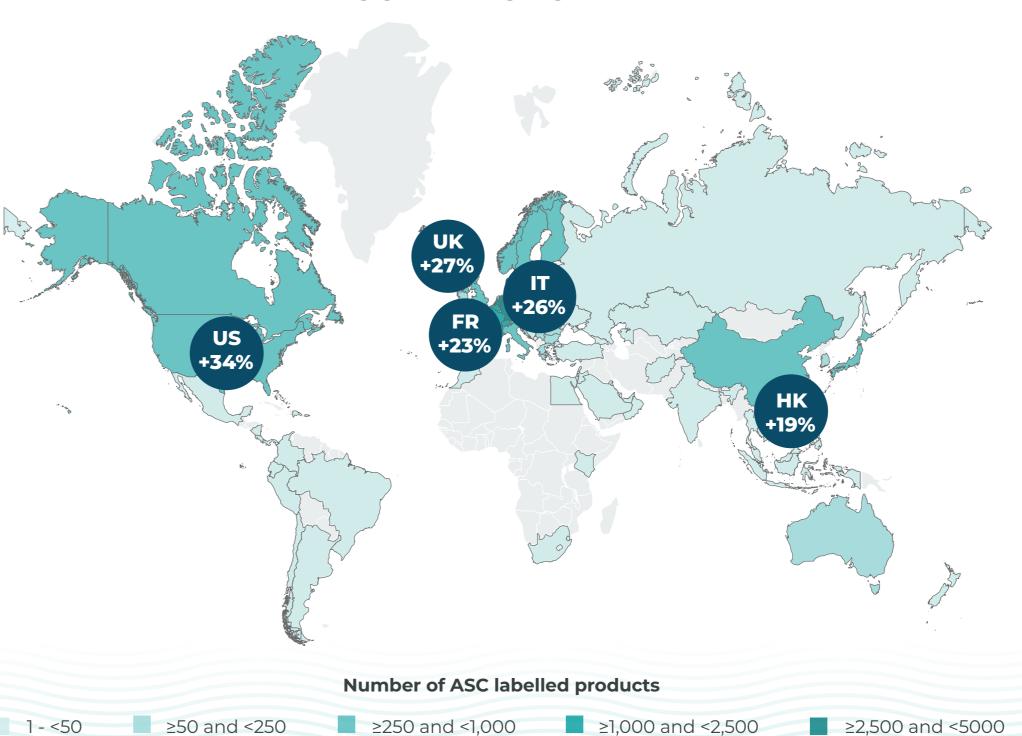
Early adopters in the Netherlands have consistently engaged ASC as a partner, followed closely by DACH (Germany, Austria, Switzerland), Belgium, France and Nordic markets – demonstrating the continued importance of sustainability in Europe. Responsibly farmed shrimp and salmon remain the key commodities across these markets, and as ASC campaigns reach new audiences, we see further diversification of product types. In 2022, we saw an **18% increase** in the number of products from processed categories (such as fish oils and supplements, pet food and other prepared meals) from the previous year.

Demand for a diversity of sustainable seafood continues to grow in Asia. The strong domestic Chinese market has enhanced the variety of ASC certified species—achieving certification for several new species—and expanding responsible farming methods, including:

- bivalve bottom-seeding
- finfish net cages in seawater and freshwater
- shrimp in salt and freshwater ponds
- crayfish in paddy fields
- smart marine aquaculture engineering platforms for abalone
- large yellow croaker in an aquaculture ship

Commitments from key retailers in the UK along with demand from the French market led to a **144% growth** in ASC certified Scottish salmon farms in 2022. ASC uptake is also increasing in Southern Europe, with continued growth of ASC labelled products on shelves. Increasing recognition in the US for responsibly farmed seafood contributes to demand for ASC certified shrimp from Latin America and South East Asia.

ASC labelled products are available to consumers worldwide, with strong growth highlighted across select markets.











SDG Watch



ASC Farm Summits bring commercial partners to ASC certified farms

In 2022, we launched a new series of summits that brought together retailers and seafood farmers on ASC certified farms.

In partnership with Guayaquil-based Sustainable Shrimp Partnership (SSP) and the National Chamber of Aquaculture for Ecuador, ASC hosted 14 US and Canadian retailers in Ecuador for a multi-day summit to learn upclose about shrimp production—visiting a hatchery, two ASC certified shrimp farms and three ASC Chain of Custody certified processors.

Later in the year, six retailers joined ASC in Chile for a similar gathering coordinated with partners from World Wildlife Fund (WWF), increasing retailers' knowledge about ASC certified salmon farms and Chain of Custody certified processors.

These successful summits will be expanded on in 2023 to bring retailers from Europe, Asia and North America to farms in Ecuador, Turkey and Vietnam.







Two attendees tour the ASC certified Produmar Shrimp Farm in Guayas, Ecuador.

"We see ASC certification as an important tool in the toolbox. It's a way to communicate with our members simply and effectively that the seafood they are buying is meeting clearly-defined environmental and social standards. That's why the work we are doing here in Chile is so important. It is in the collective interest of the whole seafood supply chain to move the industry towards and beyond more responsibly produced and certified product, and it is through partnerships and collaboration that we can make that a reality."

Tim Wahlquist

Responsible Sourcing and Packaging – AGMM, Costco Wholesale









































A Trout Story

A small seafood farm nestled in the wild Rocky Mountain beauty of south-central Idaho became the first ASC certified trout producer in the U.S. The Riverence family of farms raises rainbow and steelhead trout at the highest global standard for responsible seafood production.

Across their 14 farms, Riverence employs more than 300 workers, producing more than 22m pounds of trout each year. By raising eggs and fish in land-based, clear spring waters, Riverence delivers high quality, responsible seafood with minimal environmental impact. Their carefully monitored land-based production system provides year-round consistency and full control over their aquatic environments, preventing escapes and protecting biodiversity.

"We're dedicated to this land and the gift of clear spring water that the Magic Valley provides. We view it as our responsibility to take good care of the resources we have, doing more while using fewer resources, and providing a safe, premium food source that will serve humanity for generations to come. We are proud to now have this work certified by the Aquaculture Stewardship Council."

Rob Young, CEO, Riverence Group

Riverence is a vertically integrated company, with a facility that breeds the highest quality, non-GMO eggs for their farms' future trout production.

"Animal welfare and product quality are some of the most essential standards I emphasise with my team" Taylor Sturdevant, Incubation and Shipping Lead, Riverence Group

"Do good when nobody is watching is probably the value that sticks with me. Our values are constantly guiding me and others to do the right thing at this company. Our goal has always been to create a company where people and the environment are respected."

Todd English, Vice President of Sustainability, Riverence, Riverence Group

In 2022, we interviewed more than 12,000 consumers in 12 different countries about their perceptions and consumption of seafood

Our largest consumer survey ever revealed that ASC is the most recognised certification for farmed seafood, and trust in the ASC label is strong.

The results included:



More than two-thirds of consumers believe the seafood industry has the potential to be sustainable and responsible.



ASC has attained higher levels of trust than similar programmes in our focus markets. Markets where there is currently no significant difference will become focus markets with strategic investments in the coming years.



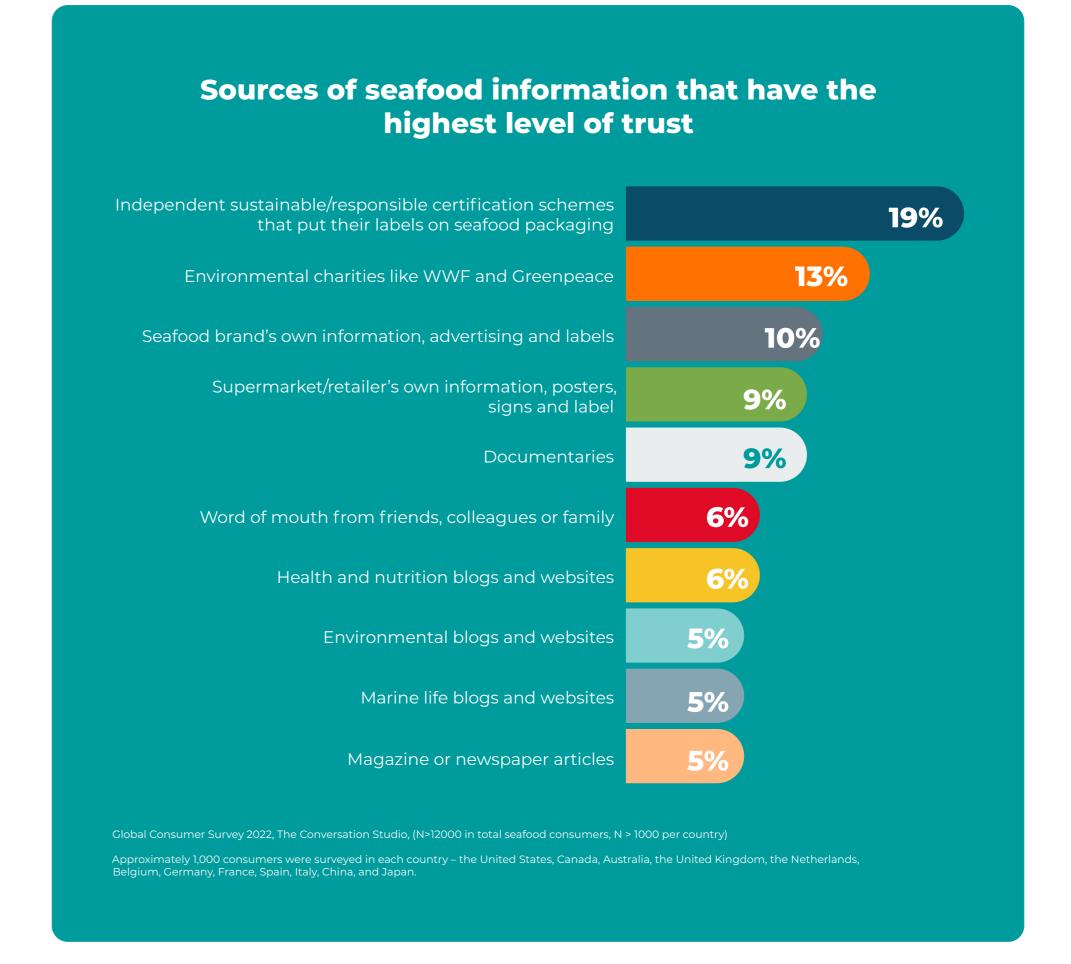
ASC is the most recognised certification scheme for farmed seafood. Consumer awareness of our ASC label is significantly higher than similar programmes in many key markets.



Consumers largely believe they can play a part in improving the seafood industry. Their most trusted sources of information about seafood sustainability are independent certification schemes that put their labels on packaging—more than environmental organisations, seafood brands, retail brands or other sources.



Understanding of the ASC label has increased standing for sustainability/responsibility in many markets.





































Consumers are opting for the ASC label

Logo

No logo



Products with the ASC label show significantly higher purchase intent by consumers when compared with the same, unlabelled product across markets in the Netherlands, Germany, France and the UK.









ASC has been actively engaged in the Netherlands since 2013. ASC label awareness measured 67% in 2022.







Purchase intention +10%

ASC has been actively engaged in Germany since 2016. ASC label awareness measured 56% in 2022.















ASC has been actively engaged in France since 2017. ASC label awareness measured 48% in 2022.

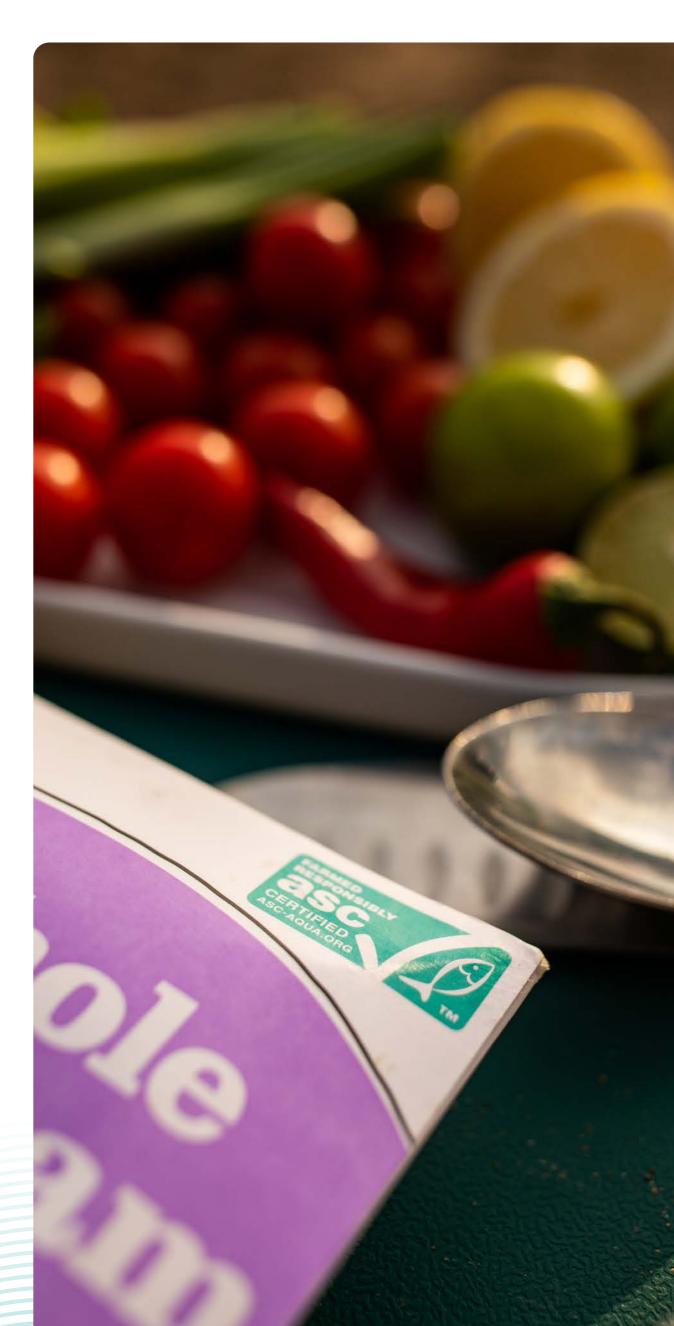






Purchase intention +10%

ASC has been actively engaged in the United Kingdom since 2021. ASC label awareness measured 44% in 2022.























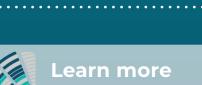








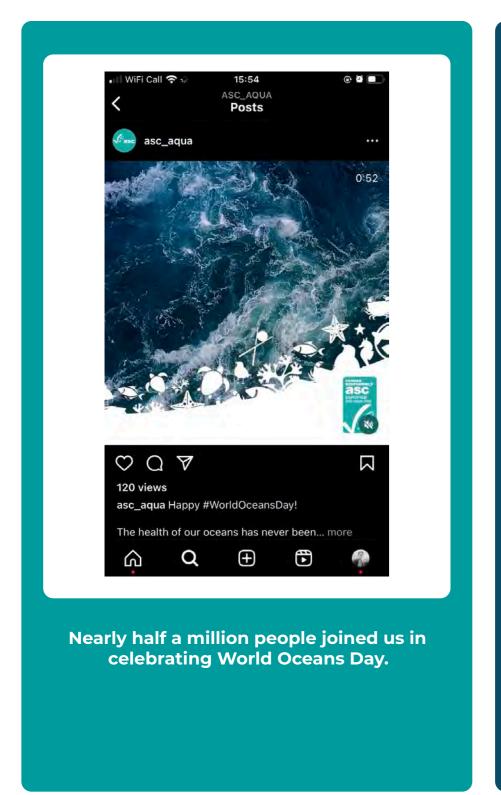




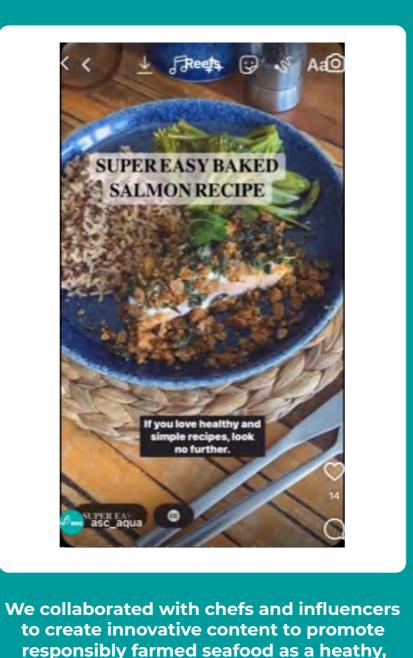


We amplify our message to reach our audiences

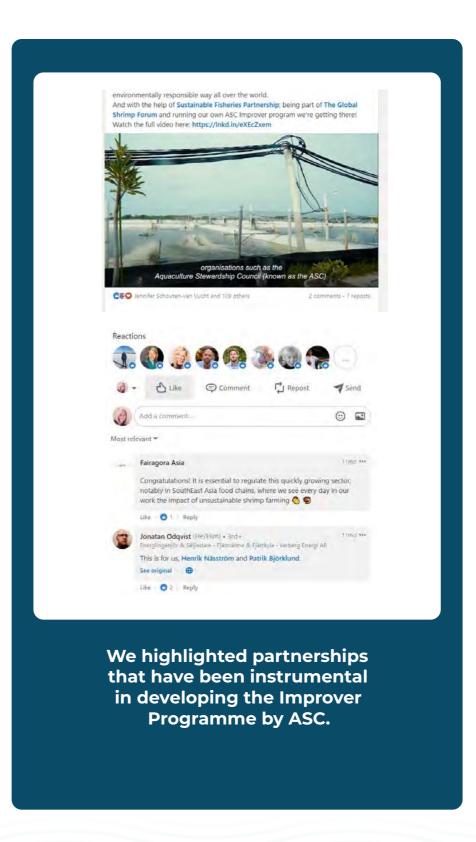
As ASC's work grows, our impact grows. We share the message of our impact broadly though our website and social media platforms. In 2022 we saw a 37% increase in social media followers compared to the previous year and a 74% increase in social media engagement.

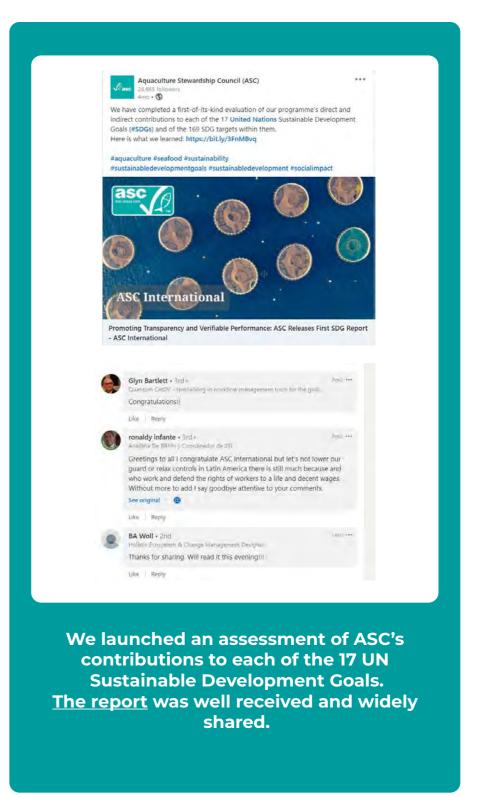


















































Collaboration and Endorsement

In 2022, we strengthened our work and our message through key collaborations, and industry leaders increasingly recognised ASC.

Influencers + ASC = stronger together

ASC teamed up with 27 celebrity chefs, ASC certified restaurant chefs, nutritionists, and culinary and lifestyle influencers who supported our local campaigns.

These influencers are driving change by creating and promoting content on their channels. They have written and prepared healthy, delicious recipes featuring ASC certified seafood and highlighted them to millions of seafood lovers through videos, reels, stories and posts on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and Twitter.

In 2022, these influencers included



UK registered dietitian Nichola Ludlam-Raine—a.k.a. Nic's Nutrition



Japanese comedian, chef and influencer Hiroyuki Baba



Australia's Guy Turland for the third year in a row. Guy is an international chef, restauranteur, TV host and cookbook author

Dutch study confirms credibility and reach of ASC

Milieu Centraal, an independent organisation that provides practical sustainability advice and conducts benchmarks on sustainability labels on behalf of the Dutch Government, rated ASC as a 'top quality' label for seafood for the third time in a row. This put us in good company with other leading sustainability certifications.



























































An estimated 727 million people saw or heard our campaigns in 2022 at their local supermarkets, on billboards, in newspapers or magazines, on TV or radio, via social media, or at in-person events.

ASC's first campaign ran in the Netherlands in 2013 'Think Fish Week'. In 2022, while this campaign's 10th edition was being commemorated, we we running 17 dedicated consumer campaigns in 11 countries across Europe, Asia, Australia and North America.

Year on year, ASC increases creative efforts focused on consumer audiences, with the aim of building ever greater consumer awareness of the ASC label to drive consumer demand in both our developed and developing countries.

France

In-store and online campaigns highlight sustainable certified fish options in-store as well as in brochures and retail magazines. In-store tastings were held at 16 Carrefours, meeting 2,150 seafood lovers while they shopped.

Australia

Billboards illustrating that ASC seafood is 'farmed with care' were viewed across Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane Gold Coast and Adelaide-reaching over 11% of citizens.

Germany/Austria/Switzerland

We followed Cara, a fish lover, on an expedition as she met with fishermen, farmers, producer and fellow seafood lovers in the world of responsible fish.



US

In the 'Sea Green Be Green' campaign, ASC partnered with local retailers, restaurants, chefs and influencers to host events that introduced customers to responsibly farmed seafood choices.

UK

The UK's leading retailer – Sainsbury's - partnered with us to celebrate their 100% commitment to ASC. Millions of customers throughout the UK have seen the campaign in the news, online, in Sainsbury's magazine and in-store.

Sweden

For the first time in history, ASC partnered with the MSC on a sustainable seafood campaign in Sweden.

Japan

The 9th Sustainable Seafood Week (SSW2022) was conducted with MSC and 77 CoC partners to promote responsible seafood to consumers. We led an online social media campaign with Ocean Trading, the leading Atlantic salmon supplier into Japan.

Benelux

In the Netherlands, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of 'Sustainable Fish Week' as well as the 8th successful 'Sustainable Fish Week' in Belgium'.

SDG Watch



































ASC – MSC Joint Campaigns

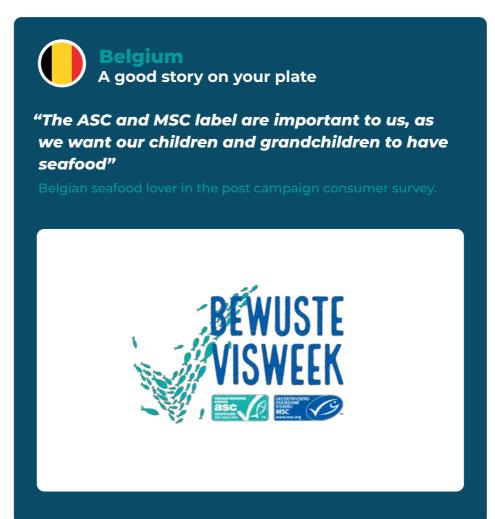
ASC campaigns are powerful engagement opportunities that make a significant impact.

In 2022, we collaborated with about 260 commercial and non-commercial partners on campaigns—retailers, fishmongers, top brands, fish farms, NGOs, zoos and aquaria. Together we hosted events, competitions, promotions and tasting sessions, delivering memorable messages to empower consumers to choose their seafood with care.

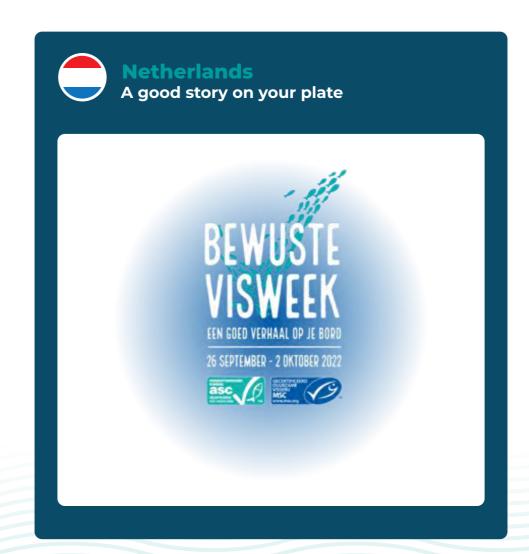
In European markets, our seafood campaigns involved major retailers that included **90%** of the market share in the Netherlands and **62%** in France. We generated millions of audience impressions across media and social channels, instore promotions, retailer catalogues and online communications.

We teamed up again with Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) to organise **Six consumer campaigns across nine countries** on three continents. On average, **13%** to **41%** of the population has seen or read something from the campaigns in these countries. In post-campaign consumer surveys, we saw an uplift in consumer recognition of the ASC label by as much as **7%**.

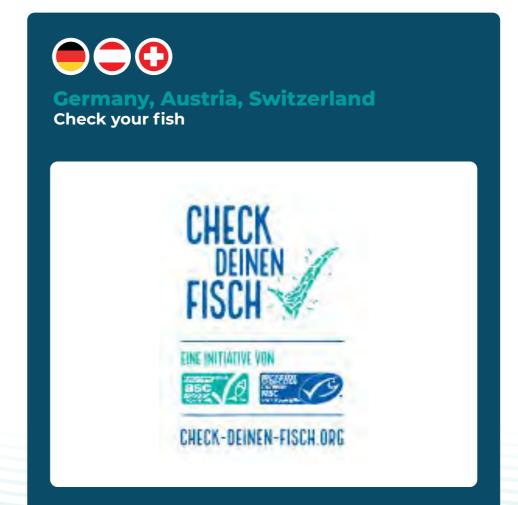










































Our Foundations

During 2022, our newly-constituted board and the Executive Officers worked diligently to develop a new strategy to drive the continued development of ASC. Now that we have passed our first ten years in operation, we are looking to innovations that will drive future impact. We have also embedded expertise and programme development into our new strategy. These steps will help us to further drive responsible aquaculture and build upon the strong foundations laid during our first 10 years as an organisation.

"The Board of Trustees supports ASC's critical attention to the impact its work achieves on the ground and in key organisation through its strategies and activities. ASC has grown significantly during the 10 years of its existence as a science and research-based institution, markedly increasing its shares in commercial aquaculture markets globally. At a critical juncture of diversifying markets and adopting state-of-the-art technologies, driving further environmental and social impact is at the core of ASC's strategy. The Board, in its current composition since April 2022, reflects the skills and experiences needed to engage with and govern the institution at the start of ASC's second decade."

Margret Thalwitz
Chair the ASC Board of Trustees





























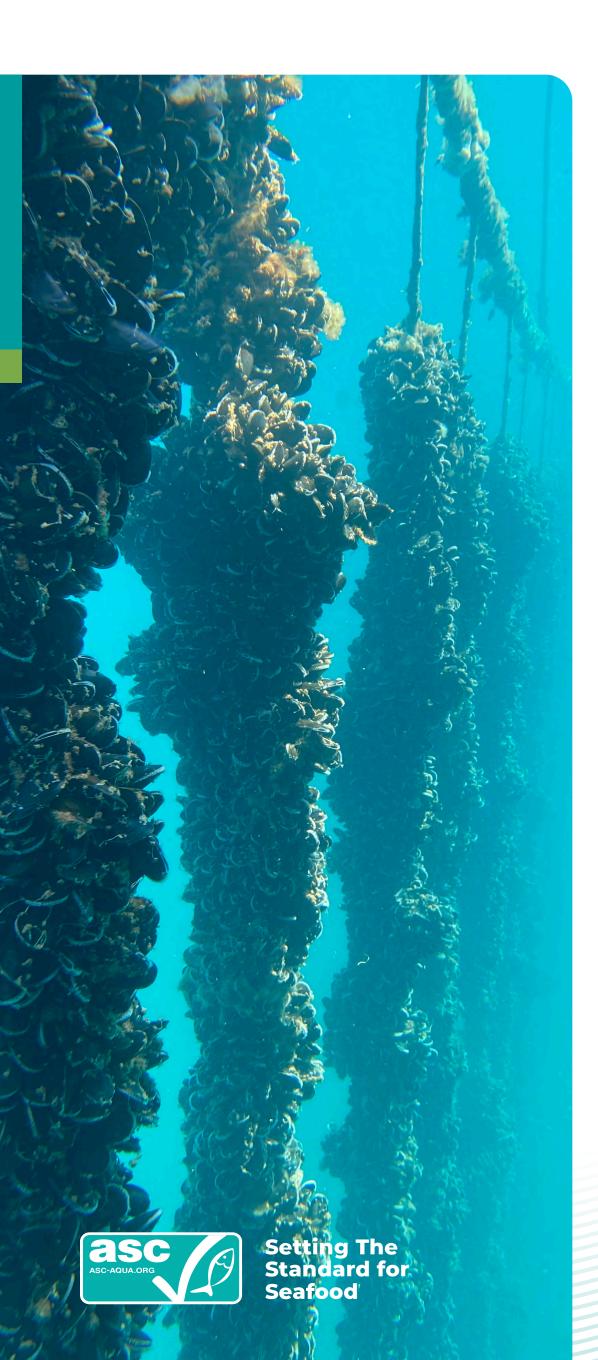












Setting Sights on Sustaining our Impacts

In 2022, ASC completed a comprehensive review of our previous 10 years of growth and future opportunities. Our new high-level long-term strategy charts our path to 2030, with a detailed threeyear (2023-2025) plan focusing on sustaining our impact and growth.

Our new strategy builds on the strengths of ASC's functional departments, existing projects and new initiatives across Technical Operations, Markets and Marketing and Central Services to deliver on our vision and mission.

Important strategic choices have been made including:

- Introduction of innovative projects and tools to improve our already robust standards and high certification and supply chain assurances
- Development of tailored campaigns to drive ASC brand awareness and reputation in growing and new focus markets and featuring labelled products in stores
- Enhancement of initiatives and producer support for responsible transformation in select production areas to serve the current and new ASC markets
- Additions to value-added services to enhance our offerings to our customers

- Continued and enhanced demonstration of our impacts
- Investment in our people culture, and systems

ASC is making a positive environmental and social impact both with our certification programme and beyond including exploring ways to improve seafood farming where achieving certification might not be within reach in the short-term.

The Improver Programme by ASC is a key initiative to extend our impact beyond certified farms. As we roll out and expand this pilot over the coming years and continue to develop and launch new initiatives in collaboration with partners, we are focusing on making positive changes in the most needed areas.

With this refreshed strategic direction, endorsed by our new executive board in 2022, we will provide updates through our Annual Reports as we progress towards achieving our desired outcomes.

ASC launches five-year strategy for North American markets to build interest, awareness and understanding of ASC certification among consumers, driving value and recognition of the green label. Progressive What's Next in Seafood Sustainability? **ASC named 2023 Food Trend in USA**







































ASC Global Presence

With staff located across the globe, ASC brings together varied education, experience and perspectives to our work. Our team are well positioned to meet with partners to track emerging issues related to aquaculture governance, development and market demands.







Project spotlight:

Integration of seafood certification and jurisdictional assurance models

ASC teamed up with
Sustainable Fisheries
Partnership (SFP), Monterey
Bay Aquarium's Seafood
Watch on a project to better
integrate aquaculture
certification and ratings
schemes. The three-year
project, completed in 2022,
was funded by an ISEAL
Innovations Fund grant
supported by Swiss State
Secretariat for Economic
Affairs (SECO).

With the shared goal of improving aquaculture practices, this project explored opportunities for collaboration and integration around three main areas:

- 1. Integrating data to improve performance assessments
- 2. Creating a multi-scale approach to farm improvement
- 3. Developing a verification model of non-certified farms sourcing products with ratings into the market

The project builds on the work undertaken in the context of the Seafood Certification and Ratings Collaboration, which unites five global programmes to coordinate their tools and increase their impact so that more seafood producers move along a clear path towards environmental and social responsibility.

Project learnings and outputs are available through the <u>ISEAL</u> <u>Innovations Fund</u>.



Financial Impact

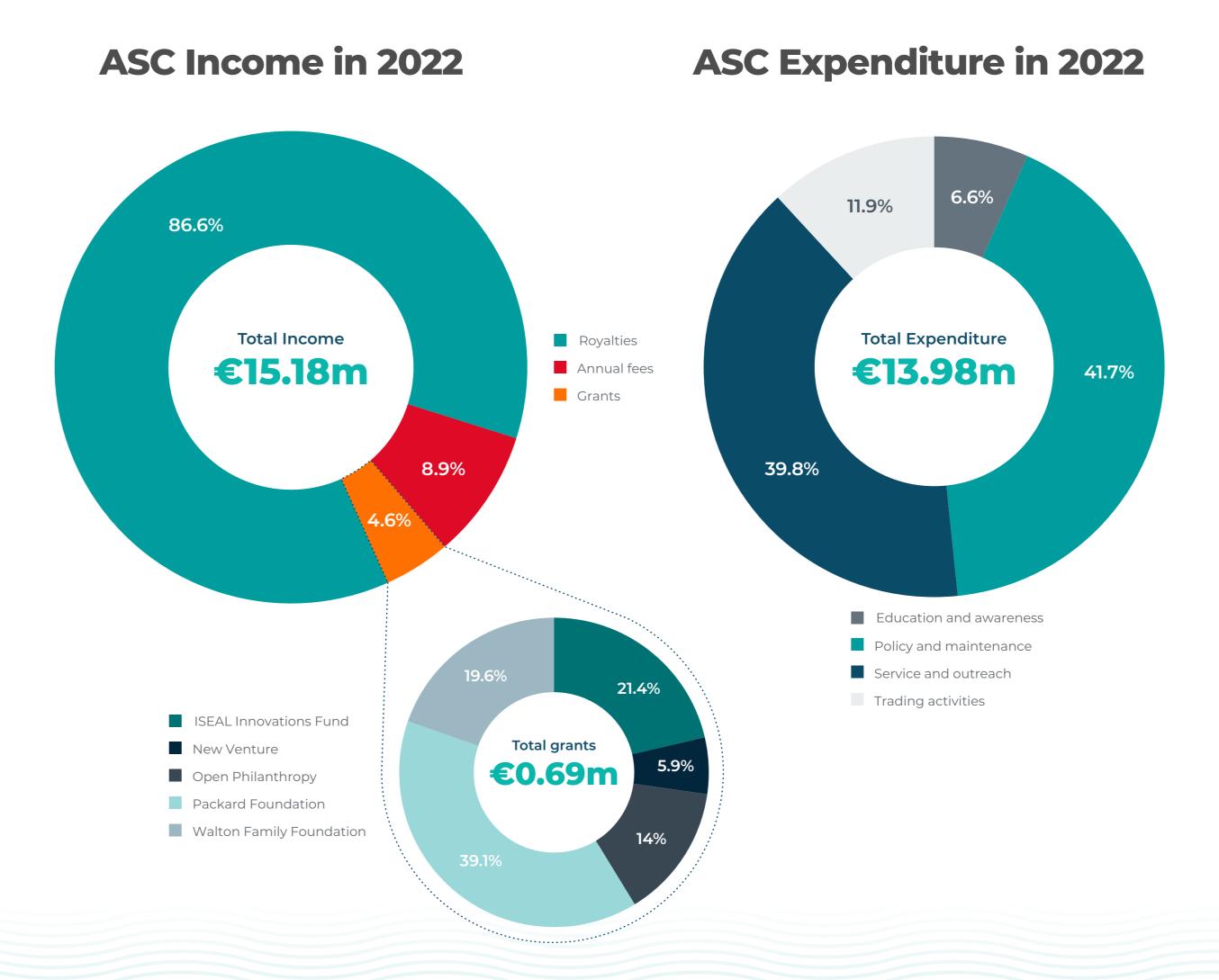
ASC achieved strong growth in income in 2022, despite ongoing challenges from external economic circumstances. Income increased by 23% from 2021 (€12.4m), resulting largely from continued market demand for certified seafood. As an independent, not-for-profit organisation, ASC receives funding from two main sources:

Annual fees collected from Licence
Holders in commercial operations
and royalties collected on consumerfacing facing products bearing the
ASC label.

Growth in income, along with tight control of expenditure, meant that ASC was able to cover its operating costs from its own generated income, while meeting some discrete project costs from grants and foundational support (€ 693k).

In 2022, ASC expenditure rose 64% from 2021, primarily supporting the certification programme (policy and maintenance of standards) and marketing and communications activities (servicing and outreach to farms and the commercial sector). Additionally, we made key strategic investments in the Improver Programme by ASC, the appointment of senior directors to lead ASC as it continues to grow, the development of the strategy, restructuring of three main organisational functions, and implementing new functional teams to support our growth and strategic direction.

We also realised an increase in expenditure related to initiating activities which were delayed due to the pandemic and our ability to travel.



Setting The Standard for Seafood





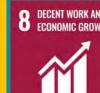






























Looking Forward

Our strategy revision signals our commitment to ASC's current business model and recognises that we will need to expand our services to bring more responsible seafood to the world.

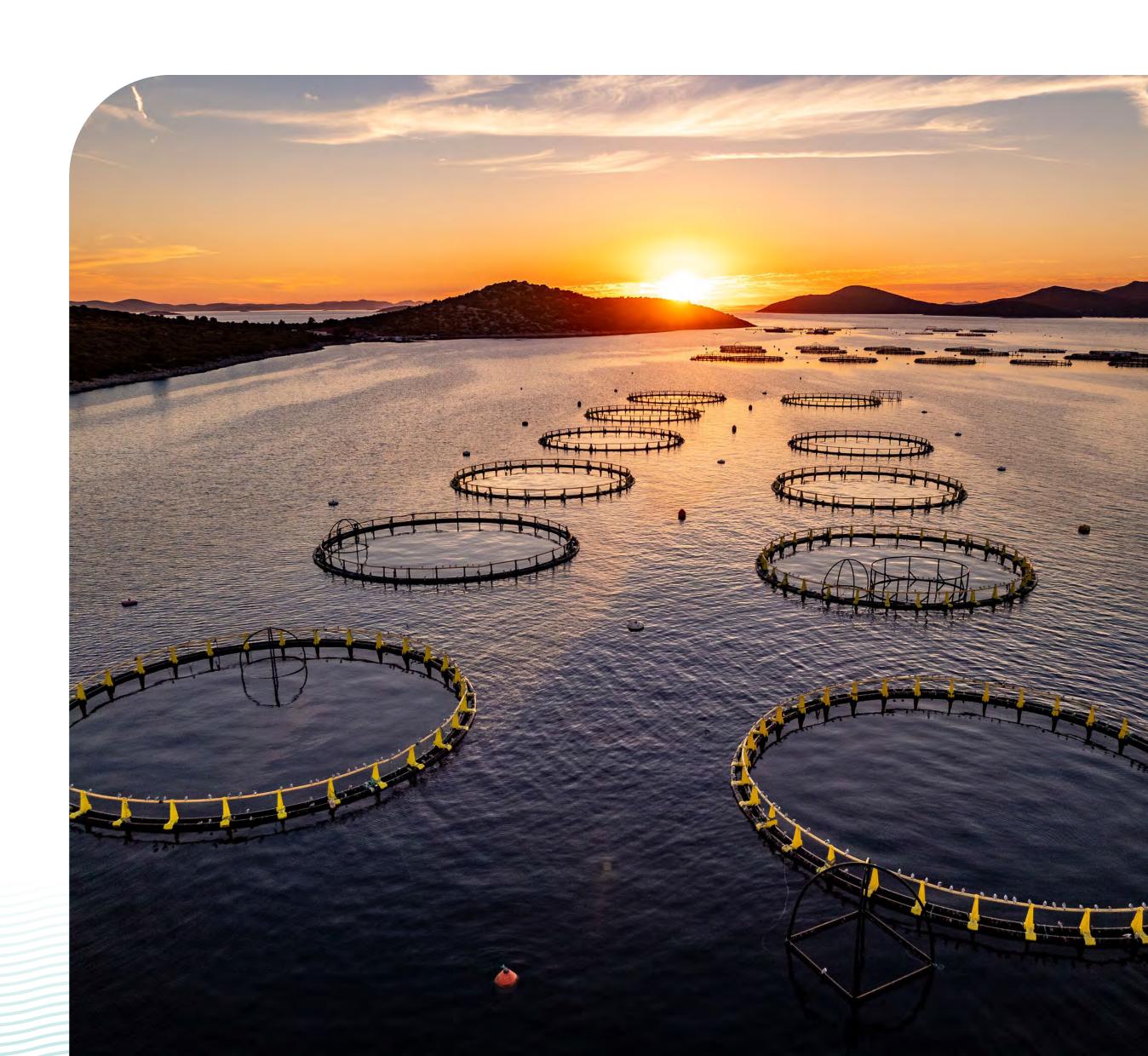
This will come through a deeper understanding of market demands, the integration of innovations and refined data collections tailored more specifically to our programme needs, and investing in our people and culture. The Improver Programme by ASC, as one project example, will offer producers a pre-competitive framework for improving their practices and receiving recognition through verifiable change. We will continue to enhance our assurances through multi-system approaches throughout the supply chain.

We will continue our full engagements across European markets, while dedicating resources to the North American and Asian Pacific markets, where ASC is receiving growing recognition. Our new website offers an improved user experience, design and access to information. Our commitment to transparency and demonstrating impacts will provide our stakeholders with new reports and dashboards on the performance of ASC certified farms. As we launch into our next ten years, we are pleased to continue meaningful engagements across the sector to progress towards our shared goals of more responsible seafood farming.

We are thankful to all ASC certified farms, Chain of Custody clients, stakeholders, colleagues, our funders for choosing ASC certified seafood and our consumers who continue to choose ASC labelled seafood.

Sharing in our commitment to transparency was critical to the delivery of this report and our developing work moving forward!





How you can help



Choose ASC certification

Commit to making improvements to farming and feed operations and contributing responsible products to the supply chain



Choose ASC labelled seafood

ASC labelled seafood ensures that your seafood meets the highest standards



Provide feedback

Share your
expertise and
provide comment
on farm audits,
pilot projects and
our standards in
development or
review



Share our stories

Join us in spreading the word and encouraging more responsibly-produced seafood for the world



Support our work

Donate to support our activities in order to achieve more responsibly farmed seafood



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Released August 2023

www.asc-aqua.org





Methodology Notes

ASC data maintained by our programme and used in this report are collected through several mechanisms: Public audit reports produced by conformity assessment bodies (CABs) detail species produced, farm sites and Unit of Certification (UoC), harvested production volumes, and farm performance related to environmental and social indicators during the production cycle. Data from these reports are used to verify farm compliance against the requirements of the ASC Standards and to monitor and evaluate our programme's performance. ASC certified production volumes represent the total reported in any given month for all valid certificates, expressed in metric tonnes per year. UoCs are the operations covered by an ASC certificate. A UoC includes all production or harvest sites such as production ponds, and all storage, transport, slaughter or processing operations (including subcontracted operations) under control of the client, up to the point where the product enters further into the chain of custody.

Product and markets data are obtained from supply chain actors with ASC Chain of Custody certification and logo license agreements. Product numbers are based on active (in market) products bearing the ASC label that are available to consumers. All figures for 2022 represent the complete year and are pulled as of 1 January 2023.

Analysis conducted on environmental and social improvements relies on annually reported nonconformity (NC) data recorded by CABs during the certification cycle. Where a farm fails to fully comply with an ASC Standard requirement the CAB raises an NC, signaling to the farm that improvements must be made to fully meet the requirement. Compliance categories are are reported as compliant, not compliant, not applicable, or not audited, by the CAB. NCs are graded as minor or major, depending on the severity of the issue and the steps to be taken to close it. All NCs reported were cross-referenced to whether improvements had been made in 2022 compared to NCs raised in previous audits (2020 or 2021) for the same indicator. An improvement was evidenced by the reduction or closure of an NC, resulting in an action taken on the farm. Improvements at the indicator level are summed up and attributed to impact areas as defined within ASC standards. Data in this report represent the most recent and accurate data for 2022 and may differ slightly from previously reported data for the same timeframe due to data quality processing.

Percentage of improvements are the result of the number of NCs that improved in 2022 compared against the total number of NCs raised in the previous audits (2020 or 2021) for the same indicators. In total,

56,912 indicators were assessed covering 784 UoCs—the number of UoCs with sufficient data between years to identify whether an improvement was made—representing about three-quarters of total UoCs in 2022 across 11 ASC Standards (excluding the ASC-MSC Seaweed standard). For additional details on methodology or to request ASC data, please contact data@asc-aqua.org.

Data on events, engagement and collaborations are tracked by ASC staff. Stakeholder and consumer surveys were conducted independently.

External data used in this report has been obtained through the following sources:

- Human population data: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division.
 2022. World Population Prospects 2022, Online Edition
- Global aquaculture and fisheries data: FAO. 2023.
 Global Capture Production. Fisheries and Aquaculture
 Division [online]. Rome. https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/collection/capture?lang=en
- Portions calculated at 125 g, edible yields according to: Gephart, J.A., Henriksson, P.J.G., Parker, R.W.R. et al. 2021. Environmental performance of blue foods. Nature 597, 360–365 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-021-03889-2
- Proportion of global aquaculture based on: FAO. 2022.
 The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022.
 Towards Blue Transformation. Rome, FAO. https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0461en
- Data on consumer preferences: Implicit Reaction Time Research 2021-2022, Bloakes (N=212) based on Neuro Science Methodology
- Stakeholder survey: Global Consumer Survey 2022,
 The Conversation Studio, (N>12000 in total seafood consumers, N > 1000 per country)



