

Quick Start Guide – IP by ASC

For Aquaculture Improvement Projects (AIP)

Eligibility checklist for the Applicant AIP and Partners.

Farms seeking to improve their aquaculture operations shall meet ALL eligibility criteria from the table below prior to applying to the Improver Programme by ASC (IP by ASC).

Criteria	Requirements	Checklist (Yes/No)
Legality:	Applicant Farm(s) have obtained a valid license and permit to operate aquaculture farm and business.	
Environmental:	Any applicant Farm(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ has no deforestation of mangrove or natural wetlands after 1999. ○ do not inhabit highly sensitive IUCN designated protected areas as identified in the requirements of ASC standards. 	
Social and Fraud Prevention	Applicant Farm(s) and Partners have not been charged/convicted/admitted to any fraudulent practice or criminal act within the past 36 months before applying to be part of the applicant AIP.	
Capacity	The applicant AIP has sufficient resources (e.g., budget, people) available to achieve its objective(s).	
Commitment	All applicants are committed to improve their practices and pursue the AIP improvement timeframe and requirements.	
12 months Rules	Applicant Farm(s) and Partners shall not be removed from the IP by ASC within previous 12 months.	

How to apply to Aquaculture Improvement Project (AIP)

1. Farms seeking to improve their aquaculture operations and meet the eligibility requirements may be advised to carefully read the [IP by ASC requirements](#).
2. Contact ASC IP team via AIPService@asc-aqua.org if you wish to apply for an AIP. The following information should be provided to ASC;
 - Farm(s) information: Site Location, GIS Coordinates, Production scale, Species, Production system etc.
 - Partner(s) information: Company Name, partnership agreement etc.
 - Improvement Scope that the applicant AIP wish to apply to the programme.
3. After receiving the application form from ASC, the applicant AIP shall submit the completed form to ASC for reviewing and accept.
4. Once the AIP application has been accepted by ASC, the applicant AIP shall sign an agreement with ASC and appoint an ASC approved implementer(s) as listed on the ASC - AIP website. The Implementer(s) will assist the AIP in all aspects of the project: gap analysis, developing and implementing its Improvement Plan, self-evaluation, preparation for verification, and support in the implementation of the Improvement Plan.

How to implement an Aquaculture Improvement Project (AIP).

1. Once the AIP application has been accepted by ASC, the AIP shall conduct the Gap Analysis and develop an Improvement Plan according to the current farm(s) performance to meet the IP by ASC requirements.
2. The Gap Analysis and Improvement Plan shall be submitted to ASC for review within two (2) months from the approval date of the AIP application.
3. ASC will review and take a decision on the submitted Improvement Plan within one (1) week upon receipt.. In exceptional cases of large number of farms within an AIP application, ASC may take longer to review.
4. Once the Gap Analysis and Improvement plan are approved, ASC shall update the AIP status on the ASC website. The AIP can enter the implementation phase according to the IP by ASC requirements and timeframe.
5. Implementation Phase:
 - **Phase 1:**
 - **After six (6) months** from the date of approval of the Improvement Plan, the AIP is required to conduct the first self-evaluation.

- **Within two (2) weeks** of completion of each self-evaluation, the self-evaluation report including root cause analysis (RCA) and corrective actions shall be submitted to ASC.
- **Within four (4) weeks** following submission of the first self-evaluation report, ASC will appoint an independent ASC-approved Verifier to conduct a verification.
- **Within two (2) weeks** after completion of the verification, the Verifier shall submit a verification draft report to ASC and the AIP.
- **Within four (4) weeks** after completion of the verification, the final verification report, including additional information and/or data and clarification from the AIP shall be completed and submitted.
- **Within two (2) weeks** upon receipt of the final verification report, the AIP shall update the Improvement Plan to include those actions identified in the final verification report and submitted to ASC.
- **Phase 2 – 4:**
 - At a minimum every 12 months after the first self-evaluation, the AIP shall conduct subsequent self-evaluations; or at the end of each phase. The process will be repeated according to timeframe indicated in Phase 1.
- 1. The AIP shall be completed by one of these following conditions, at a minimum.
 - Within a maximum of three (3) years from the approval date of the Improvement Plan or
 - At the end of approved phase 4.
 - After the 1st phase of improvement onward and the results of the verification report are satisfied and complied all requirements and indicators.
- 2. AIP Partners shall only make claims after the first successful independent verification.
- 3. ASC will publish the performance and progress of the AIP on the [ASC website](#).

For Implementers

Eligibility checklist for Applicant Implementers

Individuals or organizations seeking to be approved as Implementers shall meet ALL the required competencies specified below

Criteria	Requirements	Checklist (Yes/No)
Education	Have a degree or higher education diploma	
Experience:	All applicant Implementers have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One year actual working on aquaculture or agriculture farm(s) ○ Successfully completed/managed 5 projects in capacity building and/or extension services for (small/aquaculture) farmers. 	
Professional training:	All applicant Implementers have passed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project management training ○ Successfully completed ASC training on standard(s), including social topics ○ Successfully completed IP by ASC training ○ MSC/ASC CoC training 	
Knowledge	All applicant Implementers have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solid technical knowledge about aquaculture and the seafood sector ○ Understanding of social and environmental issues, especially in aquaculture ○ Understanding of Quality Management Systems and Documentation ○ Understanding of Law and Regulations related to aquaculture. ○ Good knowledge of local context 	
Soft skills	All applicant Implementers have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ability to communicate clearly and effectively. ○ Analytical skills ○ Skills and interest in working with people 	
Language(s)	All applicant Implementers will be able to speak in the local language(s) and have the ability to communicate in English.	
Conflict of Interest.	Applicant Implementers shall not be employed, either part time or full time for an organization that is an applicant to be or approved as an IP Verifier or for a CAB that is either seeking or holds ASC accreditation.	

How to apply to be an ASC-Approved Implementers.

1. Individuals seeking to be approved as Implementers and meet the eligibility requirements may be advised to carefully read the [IP by ASC requirements](#).
2. Contact ASC IP team via AIPService@asc-aqua.org if you wish to apply to be an Implementer.
3. Upon receiving the application form from ASC, the applicant shall submit the Implementer Application form (C-1) with accompanying evidence of required competencies.
4. Within a maximum **four (4) weeks** of receipt of a complete application form, ASC will review and take a decision on whether or not to approve the application.
5. If approved, ASC will assign a unique registration number for each approved Implementer and publish agreed details on the website.
6. Once being published on the ASC website; approved Implementers may promote their services using the designation “**ASC Approved Implementer**” along with their registration number.
7. ASC Approved Implementers may be contacted by an AIP OR the ASC approved Implementer may start engaging with the AIP to offer support services.