ASC 2024 Stakeholder Survey and Farm Standard Survey

In collaboration with GlobeScan
Introduction

This document includes the ASC 2024 Stakeholder Survey and Farm Standard Survey questions to allow you to prepare your answers or discuss within your organisation. The survey will be available online for submissions from Wednesday 10th April.

Please contact consultation@asc-aqua.org with any questions.

After some initial introductory questions about you, the survey consists of two parts:

1. A 5-minute section asking about your perceptions of ASC

2. A section seeking feedback on the new ASC Farm Standard. To help you complete this section, there are supportive materials.

You can choose to answer just the first section, or both.
Relationship with ASC

1. To start, how familiar are you with the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)?
   - 1. Never heard of it
   - 2. Know by name only
   - 3. Slightly familiar
   - 4. Moderately familiar
   - 5. Very familiar

Demographics

2. In which country are you based?

3. Please select the sector which best describes you or your organisation
   - 1. Academia and research
   - 2. CABs and auditors
   - 3. ASC-certified farms (producers)
   - 4. Non-ASC-certified farms (producers)
   - 5. Feed traders and suppliers
   - 6. Governments and regulating bodies
   - 7. NGOs
   - 8. Primary processors
   - 9. Retailers and brands
   - 10. (Representative of) affected community
   - 97. Other (please specify)

4. Are you an ASC certificate holder?
   - 1. Yes
   - 2. No
5. How likely are you to seek ASC certification in the future?
   1. Very unlikely
   2. Somewhat unlikely
   3. Somewhat likely
   4. Very likely
   99. Don’t know

6. What type of production systems do you apply on your farm?

   Please select all that apply.
   1. Cage Production Systems
   2. Flowthrough/Raceway Production Systems
   3. Pond Production Systems
   4. Recirculation Aquaculture System (RAS) Production Systems
   5. Suspended Production Systems
   97. Other (please specify)

7. Which of the following species do you farm?

   Please select all that apply
   1. Abalone – all abalone species
   2. Bivalve – all (filter-feeding) bivalve species
   3. Flatfish
   4. Pangasius
   5. Salmonids – freshwater
   6. Salmonids – marine water
   7. Seabass, Seabream, Meagre
   8. Seriola and Cobia
9. Shrimp

10. Tilapia

11. Tropical Marine Finfish

12. Pike-perch – Sander lucioperca

97. Other (please specify)

8. For which of the following species do you currently hold, or have you ever held certification?

Please select all that apply

1. Abalone – all abalone species

2. Bivalve – all (filter-feeding) bivalve species

3. Flatfish

4. Pangasius

5. Salmonids – freshwater

6. Salmonids – marine water

7. Seabass, Seabream, Meagre

8. Seriola and Cobia

9. Shrimp

10. Tilapia

11. Tropical Marine Finfish

12. Pike-perch – Sander lucioperca

97. Other (please specify)

98. None of the above
Part 1: Stakeholder Survey

We would now like to understand your views on different topics in relation to seafood.

9. Which of the following social, environmental and safety topics are most important for the farmed seafood industry to address?

Please select 3 things from the following list in order of importance. You can change your selection by clicking on the statement again.

1. Minimal use of antibiotics and chemicals
2. Preventing pollution of water
3. Preserving biodiversity and wildlife
4. Preventing deforestation and protecting sensitive habitats.
5. Use of responsible feed
6. No forced or child labour
7. Safe and healthy work conditions
8. Fair wages for workers
9. Engagement with communities local to the farm
10. Care for fish health and welfare
11. Minimising greenhouse gas emissions
12. Minimising water use and optimising re-use

You selected these topics as the most important social, environmental and safety topics for the farmed seafood industry:

10. How effective do you think ASC is across each of these areas?

Please use a scale from “not at all effective” to “extremely effective”.

1. Not at all effective
2. Not very effective
3. Somewhat effective
4. Very effective
5. Extremely effective
11. How much trust do you have in ASC?

*Please use a scale from “no trust” to “full trust”.*

1. No trust
2. Little trust
3. Some trust
4. A lot of trust
5. Full trust
99. Don’t know

12. How effective is ASC across each of the following areas?

*Please use a scale from “not at all effective” to “extremely effective”.*

1. Not at all effective
2. Not very effective
3. Somewhat effective
4. Very effective
5. Extremely effective
99. Don’t know
1. Delivering positive impacts in aquaculture

2. Bringing good value relative to programme cost and complexity

3. Being a thought-leader in responsible aquaculture

4. Adding value to your organisation or business (through ASC and/or its label on pack)

5. Providing the best available supply chain assurances

6. Communicating and engaging with you / your organisation

7. Adding value through ASC’s Improver Programme

8. Delivering more impact than similar farmed seafood certification schemes

**13. What is ASC’s role in the future of sustainable seafood?**

*Please write as much as you can*
Part 2: ASC Farm Standard Survey

Welcome to the survey on the new ASC Farm Standard.

ASC sets strict environmental and social requirements for responsible seafood farming. To help inform these standards, ASC gathers feedback through stakeholder consultations.

The questions in this consultation will ask for specific feedback related to the new ASC Farm Standard and the topics within it.

This survey is optional. You can skip any questions and can opt out at any time.

14. Please rate the new ASC Farm Standard on each of the following.

*Please use a scale from “very poor” to “excellent”.*

1. Very poor
2. Poor
3. Satisfactory
4. Good
5. Excellent

99. Don’t know

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<td>7. Ability to audit</td>
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15. Please add comments about your above responses to the Standard and its requirements in the box below.

16. Could you meet Farm Standard requirements with your current farm practices?

Please select one of the following

1. Definitely not
2. With a great degree of difficulty
3. With some difficulty
4. We could easily meet the Farm Standard requirements
5. We are meeting the requirements without any changes to the way we do business

99. Don’t know

17. What additional resources, including costs, (if any), will be involved in meeting Farm Standard requirements?

Please select one of the following

1. High additional resources
2. Moderate additional resources
3. Minor additional resources
4. No additional resources
5. Reduced resources/costs

99. Don’t know

18. What are the main additional resources, including costs?

Please type in your answer.

You previously selected the following topics as the most important social, environmental and safety topics for the farmed seafood industry:

19. How effective is the ASC Farm Standard in addressing each of these areas?

Please use a scale from “not at all effective” to “extremely effective”.
1. Not at all effective
2. Not very effective
3. Somewhat effective
4. Very effective
5. Extremely effective
99. Don’t know

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20. Overall, what do you think are the main benefits and challenges of the new Farm Standard?

*Please type in your answer.*

1. Benefits of the Farm Standard
2. Challenges of the Farm Standard
Part 3: ASC Farm Standard Topics in-depth

We now have more detailed questions about the Standard.

21. Please select which topic(s) you wish to respond to, based on your area of interest.

1. 2.4 Alien species and native biodiversity (including escapes)
2. 2.6 Water quality
3. 2.10 Energy use and greenhouse gas emissions
4. 2.14 Pre-grow out (hatcheries and intermediate sites)
5. 3.9 Working hours
6. 4.3 and 4.4 Health and welfare: Fish and shrimp slaughter

98. None of the above

Block 1: 2.4 Alien species and native biodiversity (including escapes)

The next set of questions will be about Alien species and native biodiversity

Please read the information below before answering the questions. You can also find additional information in the Alien species and native biodiversity (including escapes): in-depth topic explainer.

This criterion requires producers to minimise harm caused to native biodiversity because of escapes of alien species.

- Impacts from alien species on native biodiversity differ per species, region and ecosystem in which the alien species is introduced. This impact is evaluated through a globally-recognised independent scientific methodology, i.e. the Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa (EICAT).

- EICAT evaluates 13 impact mechanisms based on observed evidence. Classification of harm occurs according to 6 levels, ranging from ‘data deficient’ to ‘massive harm’.

- Species classified as ‘data deficient’, minimal harm’ or ‘minor harm’, are considered ‘harmless’. For these species, the Standard sets default requirements to manage escapes according to operational risks.

- Species classified as ‘moderate harmful’, major harmful’ or ‘massive harmful’, are considered ‘harmful’. For these species, the Standard sets escalating requirements that intend to reduce the risk of escapes but also increase the certification consequences when animals escape beyond the defined limits.

- The criterion also outlines exceptions for hybridisation and the type of culture system in operation.
22. Please rate the Alien species and native biodiversity criterion on the following.

*Please use a scale from *very poor* to *excellent*.*

1. Very poor  
2. Poor  
3. Satisfactory  
4. Good  
5. Excellent  
99. Don’t know

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23. What are your suggestions for improving the requirements?

24. What additional resources, including costs (if any), will be involved in meeting the Alien Species and native biodiversity criterion?  

*Please select one of the following*  

1. High additional resources  
2. Moderate additional resources  
3. Minor additional resources  
4. No additional resources  
4. Reduced resources / costs  
99. Don’t know
25. What are the main additional resources, including costs?

*Please type in your answer*

We have some final questions about specific parts of this topic.

The Farm Standard uses the independent, scientific EICAT categorisation to determine the harmfulness of an alien species.

26. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

*Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.*

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree
99. Don’t know

27. Why did you give that rating?

If categorisation based on EICAT evaluation finds that a species is moderately, majorly or massively harmful then the Farm Standard sets out additional, stricter requirements.

28. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

*Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.*

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree
99. Don’t know
29. Why did you give that rating?

The Farm Standard does not include escalated requirements for the farming of species classed as data deficient or of minimal harm

30. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree
99. Don’t know

31. Why did you give that rating?

Block 2: 2.6 Water quality

The next set of questions will be about the Water quality part of the Standard.

Please read the information below before answering the questions. You can also find additional information in the Water quality: in-depth topic explainer.

The aim of this criterion is to minimise water quality impacts. This criterion applies to producers using feed or fertilisers in their farming practices, and those who are releasing effluents.

- Requirements in this criterion are outlined based on the waterbody type, A, B and C, classified by the producer according to its sensitivity to nutrient enrichment. This classification factors in flow rates and hydraulic retention times and provides examples.
- Type A is the more sensitive waterbody with requirements for the producer including:
  - Establishing baselines at the waterbody and farm levels to benchmark following requirements
• Establishment of an Area Management Agreement (AMA) with other ASC certificate holders in the same waterbody
• Effluent monitoring using ASC provided measurement tools
• Implementing corrective actions if the waterbody shows declines in water quality

  o All waterbody types are required to:
    • Monitor and manage nutrients released into receiving waters and minimise fines in feed
  o Where producers are releasing effluents to Type B receiving waters, they are required to measure downstream concentrations of nutrients
  o This criterion sets out clear indicators and measurement guides and tools for the reporting required, along with requirements on disclosure and reporting for Type A waterbodies.

32. Please rate the Water quality criterion on the following.

Please use a scale from “very poor” to “excellent”.

1. 1. Very poor
2. 2. Poor
3. 3. Satisfactory
4. 4. Good
5. 5. Excellent
99. Don’t know

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33. What are your suggestions for improving the requirements?
34. What additional resources, including costs (if any), will be involved in meeting the Water quality criterion?

*Please select one of the following*

1. High additional resources
2. Moderate additional resources
3. Minor additional resources
   4. No additional resources
4. Reduced resources / costs
99. Don’t know

35. What are the main additional resources, including costs?

*Please type in your answer*

We have some final questions about specific parts of this topic.

The Farm Standard sets out different requirements for water quality. These requirements vary according to the type of waterbody in which a producer is located. Producers located in waterbodies which are the most sensitive to nutrient enrichment will need to meet the strictest requirements.

36. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

*Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.*

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree
99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?
The Farm Standard outlines how producers located in Type A waterbodies should characterise a Waterbody Unit of Management, establish an Area Management Agreement and collect farm and waterbody baseline data.

37. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

*Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.*

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree
99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?

The Farm Standard will require corrective actions if the waterbody shows signs of negative impacts, if the total aquaculture sectoral contribution to a waterbody exceeds 30% (Type A waterbodies only).

38. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

*Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.*

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree
99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?
Block 3: 2.10 Energy use and greenhouse gas emissions

The next set of questions will be about the Energy use and greenhouse gas emissions part of the Standard.

Please read the information below before answering the questions. You can also find additional information in the Energy use and greenhouse gas emissions: in-depth topic explainer.

The ASC Farm Standard requires producers to measure, report, and manage their GHG emissions

- This plan must be informed by regular measurement and reporting to ASC of on-farm energy use and farm and feed-related emissions
- The Standard requires producers to report energy and greenhouse gas data to ASC for central aggregation and communication rather than for producers to publicly report data individually
- The Standard contains species-specific emissions benchmarks for producers to work towards. These are set out in Appendix 9
- Farms exceeding benchmark targets must demonstrate meaningful actions to work towards achieving them in their management plan

ASC has developed a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Calculator that supports feed suppliers and producers with custom-made tools to help measure and track emissions following the methodological requirements of the ASC Feed Standard and the ASC Farm Standard

This criterion enables producers to calculate their emissions and report them to others in the supply chain. The criteria also aligns previous species-specific requirements and enables better management and reduction of GHG emissions without strict limits, ensuring it is achievable for producers

39. Please rate the Energy use and greenhouse gas emission criterion on the following.

Please use a scale from “very poor” to “excellent”.

1. Very poor
2. Poor
3. Satisfactory
4. Good
5. Excellent
99. Don’t know
40. What are your suggestions for improving the requirements?

41. What additional resources, including costs (if any), will be involved in meeting the Energy use and greenhouse gas emission criterion?

*Please select one of the following*

1. High additional resources
2. Moderate additional resources
3. Minor additional resources
4. No additional resources
5. Reduced resources / costs
6. Don’t know

42. What are the main additional resources, including costs?

*Please type in your answer*

We have some final questions about specific parts of this topic.

**This criterion requires producers to report energy and greenhouse gas data to ASC for central aggregation and communication rather than for producers to publicly report data individually.**
43. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

*Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.*

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree

99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?

**The Standard contains species-specific emissions benchmarks for producers to work towards. These are set out in Appendix 9.**

44. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

*Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.*

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree

99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?

**Block 4: 2.14 Pre-grow out (hatcheries and intermediate sites)**

The next set of questions will be about the Pre-grow out part of the Standard.
Please read the information below before answering the questions. You can also find additional information in the Pre-grow out (hatcheries and intermediate sites): in-depth topic explainer.

This criteria determines what is classified as pre-grow out and grow out, by species, to enable a clear understanding of the requirements applicable to individual species at each stage of production.

- During their life-cycle, aquaculture products often spend time at different pre-grow out production sites before their final grow-out site. The ASC Farm Standard sets out and defines a cut-off between pre-grow out stages and the start of the grow-out phase. The final grow-out site is the subject of the ASC audit.
- If receiving stock from a pre-grow out farm, the grow out producer must map the pre-grow out farms involved in growing ASC product using the ASC Pre-Grow Out Supply Chain Mapping Template provided on the ASC website.
- The ASC Farm Standard requires that a grow-out producer of ASC-certified seafood ensures that the pre-grow out farm suppliers meets specific legal, environmental, human rights, health and welfare standards.
- Whether the pre-grow out farm suppliers meets these requirements will be determined by the grow out farm through requesting documentary evidence of conformance rather than through an onsite audit. Evidence of conformance will then be verified during the ASC audit by the ASC-contracted auditor.
- The ASC Farm Certification is expanded to cover intermediate sites, those that provide grow out supply to a final grow out site. Where a final grow out site receives supply from another (intermediary) grow out site, both will be subject to a full ASC audit.
- The pre-grow out farms will complete a Stock Status Record Template to ensure relevant information related to the stock is passed to the grow out producer.

45. Please rate the Pre-grow out criterion on the following.

*Please use a scale from “very poor” to “excellent”.*

1. Very poor
2. Poor
3. Satisfactory
4. Good
5. Excellent
99. Don't know

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46. What are your suggestions for improving the requirements?

47. What additional resources, including costs (if any), will be involved in meeting the Pre-grow out criterion? 

*Please select one of the following*

1. High additional resources
2. Moderate additional resources
3. Minor additional resources
4. No additional resources
5. Reduced resources / costs
6. Don’t know

48. What are the main additional resources, including costs?

*Please type in your answer*

We have some final questions about specific parts of this topic.

**The Farm Standard sets out a cut-off between pre-grow out stages and the start of the grow-out phase.**

49. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

*Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree


4. Somewhat agree

5. Fully agree

99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?

**Whether the pre-grow out farm supplier meets specified requirements will be determined by the grow out farm through requesting documentary evidence of compliance, rather than through an onsite audit. Evidence of compliance will then be verified during the ASC audit by the ASC-contracted auditor.**

50. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

*Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.*

1. Fully disagree

2. Somewhat disagree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Somewhat agree

5. Fully agree

99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?

**Block 5: 3.9 Working hours**

The next set of questions will be about the Working hours part of the Standard.

Please read the information below before answering the questions. You can also find additional information in the Working hours: in-depth topic explainer.

This criterion requires that producers demonstrate that they are preventing excessive working hours in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and are providing adequate rest periods.
This criterion requires producers keep records of hours worked by every employee with requirements set for average working hours per day and week. Under the Standard, working hours can be averaged over a 17-week period, as long as arrangements conform to legal and contractual requirements and collective bargaining agreements.

The criterion sets out the required hours of employee rest hours per 8 hours of work, per 24-hour day and per 7-day period and sets a minimum annual leave requirement of 3 weeks, pro rata. The Standard requires that there must be a rest day every seven days and does not allow for shift patterns longer than seven days.

51. Please rate the Working hours criterion on the following.

*Please use a scale from “very poor” to “excellent”.*

1. Very poor
2. Poor
3. Satisfactory
4. Good
5. Excellent
99. Don’t know

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<td>3. Ability to audit</td>
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52. What are your suggestions for improving the requirements?

53. What additional resources, including costs (if any), will be involved in meeting the Working hours criterion?

*Please select one of the following*
1. High additional resources
2. Moderate additional resources
3. Minor additional resources
4. No additional resources
5. Reduced resources / costs
99. Don’t know

54. What are the main additional resources, including costs?

Please type in your answer

We have some final questions about specific parts of this topic.

In the Standard, working hours can be averaged over a 17-week period if the average is less than 48 hours per week, as long as arrangements conform to legal and contractual requirements and collective bargaining agreements.

55. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree
99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?

The Standard currently requires that there must be a rest day every seven days. It does not allow for shift patterns longer than seven days, even where more rest time is awarded to account for this longer shift pattern.

56. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.

The Standard does not currently distinguish between and define rest hours, on-call hours, and standby hours even though some employers may pay or account for these differently.

57. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree

99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?

Block 6: 4.3 and 4.4 Fish Health and welfare: Fish and shrimp slaughter

The next set of questions will be about the Health and welfare – fish and shrimp slaughter part of the Standard.

Please read the information below before answering the questions. You can also find additional information in the Health and welfare - fish and shrimp slaughter: in-depth topic explainer.

The purpose of this criterion is to ensure farm practices prior to and during slaughter promote animal welfare. Specific requirements and best practices are outlined to introduce training and monitoring with focus on species specific welfare.
The ASC Farm Standard sets out three steps that:

1. ensure inadequate slaughter methods are eliminated
2. implement compulsory stunning, with electrical or mechanical stunning methods preferred. Guidance is provided per species, specifically for shrimp, cleaner fish and fish
3. guarantee that stunning and slaughter are effective via monitoring for absence of gill, eye and body movements and for lack of reaction to painful stimuli

58. Please rate the Slaughter criterion on the following.

*Please use a scale from “very poor” to “excellent”.*

1. Very poor
2. Poor
3. Satisfactory
4. Good
5. Excellent
6. Don’t know

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59. What are your suggestions for improving the requirements?

60. What additional resources, including costs (if any), will be involved in meeting Slaughter criterion?

*Please select one of the following*

1. High additional resources
2. Moderate additional resources
3. Minor additional resources
4. No additional resources
5. Reduced resources / costs
99. Don’t know

61. What are the main additional resources, including costs?

Please type in your answer

We have some final questions about specific parts of this topic.

The Farm Standard requires stunning, defines effective stunning and sets out mandatory stunning methods (with immediate or delayed effect depending on species).

62. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.

1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree
99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?

In defining effective stunning and killing, the Standard requires monitoring for absence of gill, eye and body movements and of reaction to painful stimuli.

63. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this approach by ASC?

Please use a scale from “fully disagree” to “fully agree”.


1. Fully disagree
2. Somewhat disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Fully agree

99. Don’t know

Why did you give that rating?