



Setting The  
Standard for  
Seafood



# ASC Supply Chain Module

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# Responsibility for these Requirements

The Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) holds responsibility for this document.

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<b>V1.0</b>	<i>Planned for</i> 30 Nov 2026	ASC Supply Chain Module release, covering traceability (aligned with MSC CoC), food fraud, food safety, human rights and humane slaughter.

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# About ASC

## The Power of Seafood

A nutritious protein source and a key component of global food security, 3.3 billion people rely on seafood for at least 20% of their animal protein consumption, and between 400 – 600 million people are directly and indirectly involved with the industry<sup>1</sup>.

With population estimates of 10 billion by 2050, and with wild caught fisheries at capacity, farmed seafood comprises almost 60% of seafood consumed as its numbers and importance continues to grow<sup>1</sup>. Care must be taken immediately to limit the industry's negative impacts.

Responsible seafood farming eases pressure on natural resources, protects precious ecosystems, promotes economic opportunities and addresses food security challenges, caring for seafood, people and the planet. A crucial link in the circular economy, it upcycles multiple by-product streams into much needed high-quality protein.

### Our Vision

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

### Our Mission

To transform seafood farming towards environmental sustainability and social responsibility, creating value across the chain using market mechanisms, improvement incentives and delivering value-added services from farm to fork

## Transforming Seafood Farming

ASC is accelerating the transformation of the farmed seafood industry by:

- **Championing Change** – raising awareness of what needs to change and collaborating to create pathways for the change required to accelerate positive impact on people and planet, fish and farms.
- **Making Change** – developing and implementing the world's leading independent certification and improver programmes for responsibly farmed seafood.

Our supply chain partners choose ASC certification for the most robust standards and the highest assurance ensuring traceability and transparency throughout the supply chain. By choosing ASC labelled seafood, consumers in over 100 countries are contributing to a sustainable future.

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<sup>1</sup> UN Fisheries Panel (COFI36): Aquaculture as a solution to food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty

# Overview of the ASC Certification Programme

## Certification Programme

The ASC Certification Programme is a voluntary third-party certification programme consisting of the following independent actors:

### Scheme Owner: Aquaculture Stewardship Council

As scheme owner, ASC sets and maintains the ASC Feed Standard and the ASC Farm Standard and associated assurance documents and their underpinning procedures, as well documents and resources that support the implementation of the Certification Programme. An overview of all documents and the latest version can be found on the ASC Controlled Document Master List.

### Conformity Assessment Body:

Provides certification services in accordance with the requirements of the scheme.

The legal entity responsible for the Unit of Certification (UoC), contracts a Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) which employs auditor(s) that conduct an independent conformity assessment (hereafter 'audit') of the UoC against the relevant ASC Standard. The management requirements for CABs as well as auditor competency requirements are described in the Certification and Accreditation Requirements (CAR) and are assured through accreditation.

### Integrity Services Provider and Accreditation Body:

The Integrity Services Provider is appointed by ASC to oversee the integrity of the programme.

Integrity services and accreditation are currently provided by Assurance Services International (ASI), however, ASC is in transition to move the accreditation to Accreditation Bodies (AB) signatory to the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Aquaculture Stewardship Council multilateral recognition arrangement (MLA) for product certification. Integrity services will remain with ASI. An overview of currently accredited CABs is available on the [ASI website](#).

## ASC Chain of Custody Certification

Once ASC certified seafood is produced by a certified farm UoC, each company in the supply chain that owns ASC certified product must hold valid ASC Chain of Custody (CoC) certification. This assures consumers and seafood buyers that ASC labelled products come from certified farms. ASC uses the Marine Stewardship Council's (MSC) Chain of Custody Standard, plus the ASC-owned Supply Chain Module, to verify the origin of seafood sold as ASC certified. This process benefits companies that handle both ASC and MSC certified seafood by allowing them to do a combined audit. CoC certification covers activities beyond farm production, such as processing and packing. For more information see the ASC [Chain of Custody](#) webpage or contact [assurance@asc-aqua.org](mailto:assurance@asc-aqua.org).

## ASC Label and Claims

ASC certified entities shall only use the ASC label, claim, and trademarks if authorised through a signed ASC Licensing Agreement.

Unauthorised label display or use of trademarks is prohibited and will be treated as a trademark infringement. For more information see ASC's [Label User Guide](#) or contact [licensing@asc-aqua.org](mailto:licensing@asc-aqua.org).

## ASC Assurance Net

The independent actors and processes described above are interlinked to provide the most robust and reliable assurance system, supported by ASC's transparent processes and stakeholder participation. CABs conduct strict audits to verify conformity against the ASC standards. ASI assesses the CABs to confirm that certification was granted following the requirements and with integrity. Both CABs and ASI may conduct these activities unannounced, and all the evaluation results for ASC certified farms are publicly available for interested stakeholders who may provide additional information to the certification process.

ASC has a dedicated and experienced assurance team that develops the programme requirements. Working closely with assurance partners, ASC monitors conformance across the supply chain.

ASC adds another layer of assurance by designing tailored tools that support additional verification of conformity. These tools evaluate the conformance of ASC certified products in different stages: antimicrobial residues and provenance (TestASC), verification of production cycles with remote sensing (MapASC), digital tracking of products in the supply chain (TraceASC) and data networks for risk management (MonitorASC).

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# Introduction to this Document

These ASC Supply Chain Module requirements are normative for all conformity assessment bodies (CABs) carrying out chain of custody audits with ASC products in scope.

This document provides supplementary requirements to the MSC Chain of Custody program documents:

- o [Chain of Custody Standard](#)
- o [Chain of Custody Certification Requirements](#)
- o [General Certification Requirements](#)
- o [Vocabulary](#) and
- o [Forced and Child Labour Eligibility Requirements](#)

The latest published version of each document applies.

Whenever the term 'organisation' is used in this document, it applies to both certified organisations and applicants, unless otherwise specified.

## Normative References

The documents listed below are part of the ASC Certification Requirements.

The following apply directly to Chain of Custody applicants and certificate holders:

- a. This ASC Supply Chain Module
- b. The MSC CoC Standard
- c. The ASC data retention and data ownership policies at [www.asc-aqua.org](http://www.asc-aqua.org)
- d. Applicable laws and regulations of governmental or other competent authorities
- e. ASC Sampling and Testing Procedure.

# PART A – Requirements for organisations

## Traceability and Conformance

**1.1** The organisation shall submit specified data to the TraceASC digital traceability platform when requested to do so by ASC.

**Guidance.** Data required to be submitted is specified in the ASC [Data Submission Requirements](#). It includes purchase and sales volumes, species, buyers and suppliers, and covers consumer-facing and non-consumer facing products.

**1.2.1** Organisations that buy directly from ASC farm certificate holders shall check the starting point of CoC at least annually, and before a new farm certificate holder supplier is used, to confirm there is no gap in CoC certification coverage between the point where the farm certification ends and their point of purchase as first buyer in the supply chain.

**Guidance.** The starting point of CoC and first point of sale is stated in the ASC farm audit report. For example, if the traceability coverage of a farm certificate ends where product is offloaded at the dock, the first buyer's CoC certificate must cover the supply chain from the dock onwards. Similarly, if traceability coverage of the farm certificate ends at the farm gate, the first buyer's CoC certificate must begin at the farm gate. Any gap in CoC certification can be addressed by ensuring coverage in the scope of the organisation's CoC certificate or within the scope of another certificate (CoC or farm if appropriate).

**1.2.2** Organisations that buy directly from ASC farm certificate holders, including when a new ASC farm certificate holder is added as a supplier, shall check for the presence of factors that may affect eligibility of product to be sold as certified.

**Guidance.** Refer to the [ASC website](#) for product eligibility and sourcing guidance for ASC certified products. Organisations should refer to this guidance to determine if any factors affect product they handle.

**1.2.3** Organisations that buy processed or packed products directly from ASC farm certificate holders shall verify that such processing or packing is conducted in a valid CoC certified facility with relevant activities in its scope of certification.

**1.3** The organisation shall have an effective process to inform their CAB within two (2) days when the following apply:

- a. if a court case or other legal action related to the scope of the CoC Standard arises, or
- b. of becoming aware that they, or their products, are not in conformance with any relevant applicable laws, regulations, ASC standards and/or requirements.

**1.4** The organisation shall allow MSC or its designated agents, ASC or its designated agents, the CAB and/or the Integrity Services Provider to collect samples of seafood from certified sources or other substances for the purposes of product authentication testing or verification of conformity.

**Guidance.** Specific test results and other information gathered during sampling will remain confidential and will only be shared with the CAB, ASC or ASC's Integrity Services Provider, if needed.

Test results may be added to the MonitorASC antimicrobial database. Samples from certified sources include seafood that is not sold or dispatched as certified. Collection of samples not sold or dispatched as certified will be conducted only as needed for investigations and for ASC development of new product authentication tools. If samples for testing are required by ASC, and the results show conformance, the cost may be charged to ASC. CABs may also decide to collect samples for testing, in which case the cost is charged to the client. Sampling agents should refer to the ASC Sampling and Testing Procedure.

**1.5** The organisation shall comply with the terms of the ASC Licensing Agreement if applicable, and shall correctly use the ASC label, claim and CoC code on all certified consumer-facing products.

**1.6** Certified products shall not be misidentified regarding production date and traceability codes, when these are used.

**Guidance.** It is not required to specify production date (harvest date, packing date or first freezing date), but where this is specified, it shall be accurate. Simplified or grouped production dates are acceptable provided they are justifiable and full details are accessible.

## Food Safety

**2.1** Organisations whose activities include processing, contract processing, packing or repacking shall be certified by a [Global Food Safety Initiative \(GFSI\) recognised scheme](#) or [ISO 22000](#), or conform with an acceptably equivalent program, covering the scope of their supply chain activities.

Organisations with less than EUR 10 million annual turnover **or** less than 200 MT annual volume of seafood handled **or** less than 50 seafood-business staff are exempt from this requirement, however they shall still comply with applicable food safety regulations and inspections.

**Guidance.** Acceptably equivalent programs can be found on [ASC's website](#). Only sites that perform the specified activities must meet the food safety requirement. Organisations exempt due to size are strongly encouraged to demonstrate production of safe and legal seafood through independent endorsement appropriate to the scale and location of their business, for example [BRCGS START](#), [GFSI Global Markets Programme](#), [FSSC Development Program](#), [Safe and Local Supplier Approval \(SALSA\)](#) in the UK or other similar programmes for small businesses.

## Fraud Vulnerability Assessment

**3.1** The organisation shall maintain a food fraud vulnerability assessment (FVA) procedure that covers farmed seafood products and shall effectively implement an up-to-date intervention plan.

**Guidance.** FVAs are required for all ASC CoC certificate holders. The FVA procedure and intervention plan may be the same as required by the GFSI-recognised food safety scheme that the organisation is certified with, provided it covers farmed seafood products. The FVA may encompass existing elements of an organisation's Vulnerability Assessment Critical Control Points (VACCP) or Threat Assessment Critical Control Points (TACCP) plans. The assessment can be done at the appropriate timing for the organisation as part of the normal internal management cycle, provided it is completed at least once

per year. The intervention plan can follow the same cycle, provided it is up to date in reflecting the latest risks and actual cases the organisation faces and is able to effectively address relevant risks of food fraud.

## Human Rights

- 4.1** The organisation shall effectively implement the ASC Human Rights Code of Conduct (Annex 1) and demonstrate its compliance during unannounced assessments.
- 4.2** The organisation shall document its commitment to:
- effectively implement the ASC Human Rights Code of Conduct,
  - accept unannounced assessments of conformance with the Code by ASC selected agents,
  - conduct remediation, when deemed necessary as a result of unannounced assessments,
  - public transparency of its human rights policy and the outcomes of unannounced assessments including remediation,
  - share findings of any third-party labour audits with ASC if requested,
  - participate in use of human rights assurance tools if requested by ASC, and
  - cover expenses for unannounced assessments and remediation processes as applicable.
- 4.3** The organisation shall publish a documented human rights policy, approved by senior management, demonstrating its commitment to at least the following:
- freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; and
  - the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; and
  - the effective abolition of child labour; and
  - the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and
  - a safe and healthy working environment; and
  - being a good neighbour and respecting the rights of surrounding communities.
- 4.4** The organisation shall ensure that employees and workers are aware of the human rights policy through training and/or active communication and dissemination.
- 4.5** During CoC audits the organisation shall provide human rights information to auditors as required by ASC in the audit report.

## Humane Slaughter

- 5.1** The organisations whose activities include slaughter at their own or at subcontracted sites shall demonstrate that slaughter is conducted humanely in conformance with the ASC Farm Standard indicators on slaughter of fish (Criterion 4.1.3) and crustaceans (Criterion 4.2.3).

- 5.2** A third-party audit shall be conducted by an ASC qualified farm auditor on behalf of a CAB accredited for ASC following the requirements in Annex 2.
- 5.3** Organisations receiving ASC products immediately after slaughter, shall verify that slaughter was conducted at a site included in the scope of a valid ASC farm or ASC CoC certificate.

## PART B – Requirements for CABs

### Traceability and Conformance

- 6.1** The CAB shall request information from applicants about any ongoing or concluded court cases or other legal action related to the scope of the CoC Standard that have occurred in the previous 24 months.
- 6.2** The CAB shall record the geographic coordinate location of the certified site(s) in the CoC database.
- 6.3** Notwithstanding MSC unannounced audit requirements, additional ASC CoC certificate holders shall be selected for unannounced audits, in accordance with the following:
- The most recent version of the ASC unannounced audit risk calculator shall be used to select certificate holders which are classified as high-risk by the calculator.
  - For CABs with less than 100 ASC certificate holders, one (1) additional ASC CoC certificate holder shall be selected.
  - For CABs with 100 or more ASC certificate holders, two (2) additional ASC CoC certificate holders shall be selected.
  - For this requirement, it is not necessary for the audit to occur on-site.
  - For this requirement, unannounced audits are not additional to regular annual audits.
  - Product sampling for testing shall take place during unannounced audits if determined necessary by the CAB or ASC.
- 6.4** Where the CAB becomes aware of objective evidence of a client's non conformity at any point during the certificate cycle, within five (5) days the CAB shall raise a non-conformity and classify it per MSC CoC requirements, or take a certification decision relative to the nature of the non-conformity.

**Guidance.** The CAB must act on objective evidence regardless of action or inaction of other parties. Response action may include refusal of certification, issuing non-conformities or suspension or withdrawal of the certificate, per existing requirements depending on the severity of the issue and the evidence available.

- 6.5** If the CAB becomes aware of a), b) or c) below, within seven (7) days the CAB shall determine timelines and actions to be taken to verify conformance with relevant requirements in the CoC Standard:
- the ASC Licensing Agreement has been suspended or terminated due to conformance issues as notified by ASC,
  - a court case or other legal action related to the scope of the CoC Standard,
  - information that the organisation or its products are not in compliance/ conformance with relevant applicable laws, regulations, ASC Standards and/ or requirements.

**6.6** If the CAB becomes aware that requirements of the ASC Licensing Agreement are not met, they shall notify ASC within five (5) days by emailing [assurance@asc-aqua.org](mailto:assurance@asc-aqua.org).

**6.7** The CAB shall comply with any request from ASC to collect samples of seafood from certified sources or other substances for the purposes of product authentication testing or verification of conformity. Sampling shall be conducted according to the ASC Sampling and Testing Procedure.

**Guidance.** The ASC Sampling and Testing Procedure is available on the [ASC website](#) or can be requested from [assurance@asc-aqua.org](mailto:assurance@asc-aqua.org). Refer to the guidance to clause 1.4 in this Supply Chain Module. Requests for samples will be based on ASC risk assessments or relate to assurance investigations. Sample requests to CABs will primarily take place when ASC staff or their agents are not available to collect the samples.

**6.8** The CAB shall include the following in CoC certification contracts with organisations with ASC products in scope:

- a. the client shall conform to the ASC Supply Chain Module.
- b. the client shall accept expedited audits and assessments, including unannounced audits and assessments, from their CAB, Integrity Services Provider, ASC and/or ASC designated agents.

**6.9** The CAB shall suspend an ASC CoC certificate if the CAB or ASC determines the organisation meets any of the ineligibility criteria defined by ASC.

## Food Safety

**7.1** Prior to each audit, the auditor shall confirm that organisations whose activities include processing, contract processing, packing or repacking are certified by a [Global Food Safety Initiative \(GFSI\) recognised scheme](#) or [ISO 22000](#), or conform with an acceptably equivalent program, covering the scope of their supply chain activities (unless the organisation is exempt based on size).

## Human Rights

**8.1** The CAB shall verify human rights requirements 4.2 – 4.4 and document this in the CoC audit report.

**8.2** The CAB shall collect and document data on human rights information at CoC audits as required by ASC in the audit report.

**8.3** The CAB shall suspend the certificate if ASC determines the organisation has not successfully resolved findings of non-conformance with the Human Rights Code of Conduct found during unannounced assessments.

## Humane Slaughter

- 9.1** The CAB shall review the ASC farm auditor's report and letter of conformance issued by a CAB accredited for ASC on the Farm Standard slaughter indicators to verify conformance with requirement 5.1 and document this in the CoC audit report.
- 9.2** The CAB shall suspend the certificate if ASC determines the organisation has not met or has not successfully resolved findings of non-conformance with the Farm Standard slaughter indicators.

## Ineligibility

- 10.1** The CAB shall not certify (nor continue to certify) organisations which meet any of the ineligibility criteria defined by ASC. The following ineligibility criteria relate to activities involving an organisation's beneficial owners, leadership, staff or other connected persons or other entities under the organisation's control.
- (i) Illegal activities or products that are not consistent with applicable laws and regulations relevant to the 'scope of the CoC Standard'
  - (ii) Fraudulent activities, such as forged documents or 'seafood fraud'
  - (iii) Corruption or unethical behaviour
  - (iv) History of repeated, persistent or systematic non-conformities
  - (v) Conviction for forced labour, child labour, slavery or human trafficking
  - (vi) The organisation presents a reputational risk to ASC via association due to doubt about its transparency, impartiality or overall credibility

**Guidance.** There must be objective evidence that a criterion applies. Relevant information and evidence may come from ASC, the CAB or other parties. If a CAB is in doubt of whether an organisation should be certified, they should exercise caution and deny certification until evidence demonstrates the organisation's conformance with ASC requirements. ASC anticipates use of the ineligibility criteria would occur infrequently and in relatively rare serious cases. In relation to **10.1(i)** regarding illegal activities or products, refer to Table 1 below.

Companies may become eligible for certification after 24 months provided there is sufficient evidence of an adequate root cause analysis and proven effective implementation of corrective actions.

**Table 1.** Examples of types of laws that are applicable or not applicable in relation to **10.1(i)** regarding illegal activities or products.

Applicable/ in scope	Not applicable/ not in scope
Permits and licenses to operate, including for site and equipment	Environmental laws (unless part of permits and licenses)
Record-keeping and reporting laws, and others affecting traceability	Tax and bankruptcy laws
Labelling, packaging and product-related laws	Criminal laws (violent crime, illicit drugs, white collar crime)
Food safety and public health laws	Maritime laws
Business and corporate laws (related to management system)	Military laws
Social and labour laws (child labour, forced labour, slavery, human trafficking, civil rights, immigration law)	Family and personal injury laws

**10.2** If ASC imposes conditions on a certificate holder relevant to the ineligibility criteria, the certificate holder shall comply with the conditions in order to maintain or regain CoC certification.

**10.3** ASC CoC certification is not available to companies operating in locations listed in the ASC Sanctions Policy on the ASC website [link to be added].

**10.4** ASC CoC certification is phased out for operations in China following the structured approach communicated by ASC to CABs and the Integrity Services Provider as follows:

- a. No new applicants for CoC certification with ASC scope shall be entered in the CoC database.
- b. No new initial audits nor certification decisions for initial audits shall take place.
- c. Non-certified subcontractors operating in China shall not trade or handle ASC certified products after 14 November 2027.
- d. All ASC CoC certificates shall expire no later than 14 November 2027.

## PART C – Vocabulary

### ASC certified product

A product that originates from a certified farm or farms and is identified or labelled as certified. Consumer-facing products shall be correctly ASC-labelled per ASC requirements in order to be considered certified.

### ASC non-conforming product

A product that is identified, sold or dispatched as certified but is not traceable to an ASC certified farm or farms, or does not conform with ASC requirements. ASC non-conforming product is not allowed to be sold as certified.

### Scope of the CoC Standard

Refers to the topics addressed by the CoC Standard and the Supply Chain Module. For a topic to be considered in scope, there must be at least one requirement included in the CoC Standard or Supply Chain Module related to that topic. For example, topics within scope are product labelling, seafood fraud, traceability, human rights, and food safety, while environmental topics such as pollution are out of scope.

### Seafood fraud

Seafood fraud is the deliberate misrepresentation or adulteration of seafood products (or ingredients), for financial or economic gain, with the intention of deceiving the customer. There are many different types of seafood fraud that can take place at multiple points along the supply chain, both locally and internationally.

Examples include - substitution (of species, of non-certified for certified, etc), volume inflation, intentional mislabelling of products and/ or ingredients, provenance misrepresentation, misbranding, false marketing, counterfeiting, falsifying documents, unapproved enhancements, undeclared use of food additives such as water-binding agents to deceptively increase product weight, adding water or ice to deceptively increase weight, illegal use of food additives to enhance visual quality, inclusion of substances that are not consistent with claims (such as non-GMO, feed ingredients), or others.

# ANNEX 1: ASC Human Rights Code of Conduct

## 1. Legal Compliance

The organisation shall set wages, before overtime and bonuses, at or above the legal minimum wage.

The organisation shall ensure that working hours, including overtime and breaks, comply with applicable legal requirements.

The organisation shall ensure that any recruitment agencies used comply with applicable legal requirements and are licenced or certified by the relevant authority, where such licensing or certification exists.

The organisation shall comply with all other applicable legal requirements relevant to human rights.

## 2. Recruitment

The organisation shall ensure that employees do not pay recruitment fees of any kind and that the Employer Pays Principle is in place.

## 3. Forced Labour

The organisation shall not engage in any form of forced labour, including when recruitment agencies are used. Employees have the right to enter into and terminate their employment freely and of their own choice.

The organisation shall not have conditions in the workplace that include any of the following<sup>2</sup>: abuse of vulnerability, deception, restriction of movement, isolation, physical and sexual violence, intimidation and threats, retention of identity documents, withholding of wages, debt bondage, abusive living and working conditions and excessive overtime.

## 4. Child Labour

The organisation shall not engage in child labour. This includes any work that interferes with schooling or that is dangerous and harmful to children. Young workers may not be engaged in hazardous work or night work, nor work excessive hours or overtime.

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<sup>2</sup> ILO Indicators of Forced Labour, 2025  [ILO Indicators of Forced Labour 2025.pdf](#)

## 5. Discrimination and Harassment

The organisation shall not engage in or tolerate any form of discrimination, violence or harassment, and shall ensure that all employees and applicants receive equal treatment and opportunities in all employment and recruitment practices. Any disciplinary procedures shall be fair, transparent, and uphold employee dignity.

## 6. Health and Safety

The organisation shall ensure a safe and sanitary work environment, as well as safe, decent and hygienic accommodation, where applicable. This shall include carrying out a site-specific health and safety risk assessment and putting suitable measures in place as a result.

Any person working at the site shall receive health and safety training as required to carry out their job.

The organisation shall maintain written records of health and safety accidents and near misses, as well as any corrective actions.

## 7. Collective Bargaining and Freedom of Association

The organisation shall allow all employees to join or form a trade union or worker organisation, and to engage in collective bargaining, without interference. Where this is restricted by law, alternative lawful mechanisms for employee engagement shall be allowed. Any collective bargaining agreements in place shall be upheld, including those related to working hours, breaks, overtime and wages.

## 8. Contracts, Wages and Working Hours

The organisation shall ensure that all employees have received, understood and agreed upon, written information about their employment conditions.

Wages shall be paid in full directly to employees at least monthly and may not be delayed, deferred or in any way withheld. Certificate holders are encouraged to pay a living wage to their employees.

Overtime shall be consensual and paid at a premium rate. The organisation shall maintain records of hours worked by every employee.

## 9. Grievance Mechanism

The organisation shall have a grievance mechanism that is accessible, fair and applicable to all employees. All employees shall be trained on the grievance mechanism, and no employees shall face any retaliation of any kind for submitting grievances.

## 10. Community Engagement

The organisation shall have meaningful engagement with Indigenous and tribal peoples, and local communities, as well as other stakeholders in and around the area in which they operate.

A culturally appropriate, accessible, safe and fair grievance mechanism shall be in place to support timely resolution of concerns.

Through ongoing due diligence, the organisation shall identify, prevent, and mitigate potential or actual negative social, cultural and environmental impacts on surrounding communities arising from its activities.

# ANNEX 2: Requirements for CABs accredited for ASC executing third-party audits of humane slaughter at CoC sites

## 1. CAB and auditor qualifications

- 1.1 ASC CABs providing services to CoC organisations evaluating ASC slaughter indicators shall be accredited for the ASC Farm Standard sub-scope as required in the ASC Farm and Feed Certification and Accreditation Requirements and listed on the [ASC website](#).
- 1.2 Auditors evaluating ASC slaughter indicators shall be registered with an accredited CAB as required in 1.1 and be approved for the environmental auditor role after the fulfilment of qualifications specified in the ASC Farm and Feed Certification and Accreditation Requirements.
- 1.3 CABs providing the service to CoC organisations evaluating the ASC slaughter indicators may be a different CAB than the one providing certification services for the ASC Farm Certification program to the farm site(s) in the group.
- 1.4 The CAB shall keep records of all audit processes executed for a minimum period of three (3) years.
- 1.5 ASC may request the CAB to implement corrections or corrective actions to improve issues detected during audits witnessed or assessments conducted by ASC or its agents.
- 1.6 If corrections or corrective actions are not implemented by the CAB, ASC may block the access of the CAB to the ASC slaughter indicators report template and remove the CAB from the list of approved CABs in the ASC website.

## 2. Application process and contract

- 2.1 The CAB shall develop an application form and contract, following its own procedures, to collect information from CoC organisations and deliver services according to the scope of the slaughter activity, either finfish slaughter or crustacean slaughter.
- 2.2 The contract shall include the following clauses granting ASC and its agents the right to:
  - a) Access to the organisation records and audit reports related to the evaluation of ASC slaughter indicators.
  - b) Witness or execute announced or unannounced assessments against the ASC slaughter indicators with the purpose to evaluate the organisation performance.
  - c) Request corrections and corrective action plans for non-conformities detected during assessments executed by ASC or its agents.
  - d) Publish assessment reports on the ASC website.

### 3. Audit planning

- 3.1 The evaluation of the ASC slaughter indicators shall only be conducted when fish or crustaceans are received at the slaughter facility, and the complete stunning and slaughter process is conducted. Audits conducted without witnessing active stunning and slaughter process are not valid.
- 3.2 The CAB and the organisation should plan the audit time in order to have the latest audit report and conformance letter available for the annual CoC audit.
- 3.3 The CAB and the organisation should plan a new audit before the expiration of the conformance letter to allow enough time for non-conformities closure, technical reviews and conformance decision.
- 3.4 If more than one slaughter site is used by the organisation, the CAB shall conduct an individual audit per site.

### 4. Audit execution

- 4.1 CABs shall allocate a minimum of three (3) hours to evaluate the ASC slaughter indicators per site.
- 4.2 The audit shall include witnessing of the stunning and slaughter process, site inspection, interviews with staff responsible for the stunning and slaughter and review of records and procedures.
- 4.3 The auditor shall conduct a general opening and closing meeting to explain the audit plan, scope of the evaluation and report the non-conformities detected during the audit.

### 5. Audit findings

- 5.1 The auditor shall record in the ASC Humane Slaughter Indicators report template, reproducible and verifiable evidence for the evaluation of the ASC slaughter indicators. The evidence shall be objective and sufficient to support the evaluation conclusion of conformance or non-conformance.
- 5.2 The CAB shall establish a period for closure of non-conformities detected during audits of maximum three (3) months.
- 5.3 The CAB shall close a non-conformity if it determines that the evidence provided demonstrates effective implementation of corrections and corrective actions.
- 5.4 If non-conformities are not closed in the maximum period of three (3) months, the CAB shall not issue the conformance letter and a new audit shall be conducted.

### 6. Audit reports and technical review

- 6.1 The auditor shall use the ASC Humane Slaughter Indicators report template and complete all the mandatory fields.
- 6.2 The CAB auditor shall complete an individual audit report per site.

- 6.3 The CAB shall assign a person to conduct a technical review of the audit reports and closure of non-conformities who was not directly involved in the audit process and meets the competency requirements for Technical Reviewers in the ASC Farm and Feed Certification Requirements.
- 6.4 The CAB shall have a final report completed and uploaded in the ASC designated platform within maximum 28 days after the closure of all non-conformities.
- 6.5 ASC may conduct quality reviews of audit reports and submit comments to the CAB that shall be addressed as appropriate by the CAB.

## 7. Conformance letter

- 7.1 The CAB shall issue an individual conformance letter per site audited.
- 7.2 The CAB shall issue a conformance letter against the ASC slaughter indicators when all non-conformities are closed, and a technical review of the audit report is completed.
- 7.3 The conformance letter shall have a maximum validity of 12 months from the date of issuance.
- 7.4 The CAB shall not issue a conformance letter with open non-conformities.
- 7.5 The CAB shall include the following information in the conformance letter:
- a) title saying "Conformance Letter." The term "certificate" shall not be used.
  - b) name of the CoC certificate holder organisation.
  - c) name or reference of the site audited.
  - d) ASC CoC code of the organisation owning or subcontracting the slaughter facility.
  - e) a statement of conformance against the ASC Farm Standard slaughter indicators specifying the criteria numbers and the standard version used for the audit.
  - f) issue and expiration date.
  - g) date of the audit.
  - h) scientific and common name of the species covered by the audit.
  - i) any other information required by CAB procedures for conformance letters.

## ANNEX 3: ASC humane slaughter indicators for CoC sites

### 4.1.3 – Finfish Slaughter Indicators:

**4.1.3.1** The organisation shall appoint a staff member responsible for overseeing the implementation of fish health and welfare requirements during slaughter.

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**4.1.3.2** The organisation shall ensure all fish, including fish not destined for human consumption, are stunned prior to killing according to the methods and transition periods outlined in Farm Standard **Appendix 12 (12.4, Table 5)**.

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**4.1.3.3** The organisation shall ensure that at least 95% of the fish lose consciousness immediately after stunning, and any remaining conscious fish are re-stunned. Unconsciousness shall persist until the fish are killed.

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**4.1.3.4** The organisation shall ensure that stunning and killing are effective by verifying the absence of all of the following:

- opercular movements; and
- eye movements; and
- body movements (except for involuntary muscular spasms); and
- reaction to a painful stimulus.

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**4.1.3.5** The organisation shall have measures in place to immediately respond to ineffective stunning or killing, including the presence of a back-up system, and shall implement appropriate corrective actions to prevent recurrence.

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**4.1.3.6** The organisation shall not use any of the following methods to kill fish:

- asphyxiation in air; or
- carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) bath; or
- salt bath; or
- ammonia bath; or
- evisceration.

**4.1.3.7** The organisation shall maintain records of the activities carried out under Indicators 4.1.3.3 and 4.1.3.4.

## 4.2.3 – Crustacean Slaughter Indicators

**4.2.3.1** The organisation shall appoint a staff member responsible for overseeing the implementation of crustacean health and welfare requirements during slaughter.

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**4.2.3.2** The organisation shall ensure crustaceans are killed immediately after harvest:

- by immersion in an ice slurry bath; or
- through an electrical device followed by immersion in an ice slurry bath.

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**4.2.3.3** The organisation shall not process crustaceans alive.

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**4.2.3.4** The organisation shall ensure ice slurry baths are maintained at  $\leq 4^{\circ}\text{C}$  at all times and crustaceans are immersed for an appropriate amount of time to be killed effectively.

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**4.2.3.5** The organisation shall ensure that if electrical devices are used for stunning the manufacturer's instructions are followed.

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**4.2.3.6** The organisation shall not use any of the following methods to kill crustaceans:

- asphyxiation in air; or
- carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) bath; or
- salt bath; or
- ammonia bath; or
- evisceration.

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**4.2.3.7** The organisation shall ensure that an overdose of anaesthetic is only used to kill crustaceans not destined for human consumption.

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**4.2.3.8** The organisation shall ensure that killing has been effective by verifying the absence of coordinated leg and body movements.

**4.2.3.9** The organisation shall have measures in place to immediately respond to ineffective stunning or killing, including the presence of a back-up system, and shall implement appropriate corrective actions to prevent recurrence.

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**4.2.3.10** The organisation shall maintain records of the activities carried out under indicators 4.2.3.4 and 4.2.3.8.

**Table 5.** Species-specific permitted stunning methods and transition periods, as required by Indicator 4.1.3.2

Permitted methods of stunning	Salmon	Trout (FW & SW)	Seabass, seabream, meagre	Pangasius	Tilapia	Seriola	Cobia	Flatfish	Marine Tropical
Percussion	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓
Electrical	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Overdose Anaesthetic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Transition period (from the issue date onwards)</b>	<b>Immediate</b>	<b>1 year</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>3 years</b>