



Mangroves and Other Wetlands Technical Working Group

Terms of Reference

October 2019

Introduction

The TAG Terms of Reference make provision for the formation of Technical Working Groups (TWGs) to support the technical and scientific work of the TAG. Typically, a TWG will be comprised of technical experts; external to ASC's governance bodies, and a member of the TAG acting as a sponsor; to facilitate communication and understanding between the TAG and the TWG and support the ASC technical lead. The ASC's Secretariat will provide logistical support to the group and a Project Lead from ASC will be appointed to provide the group with the technical resources. An external facilitator may be also appointed.

References

[ASC Standard Setting Procedure](#)

[ASC Metrics Methodology](#)

[ASC Complaints Procedure](#)

[TAG Terms of Reference](#)

1. Terms of Reference

1.1 Background

Initially, the review and revision of the indicators related with mangroves and other wetlands was part of the ASC Shrimp Standard Revision. However, other relevant ASC Standards include requirements on this topic and vary in their approach, so it was decided to extend the scope to other species where relevant as part of the aligned ASC Farm Standard project. In this context, the revision aims to develop consistent criteria on the conservation, restoration and protection of mangroves and other wetlands for all species to the extent possible. A Technical Working Group was established in 2019 (Appendix 08.1) with the mandate from ASC to review and revise current ASC criteria and indicators on mangroves and other wetlands. The formation of the group aimed to achieve a wide representation, covering different stakeholder segments and producing regions, and is composed by representatives from the industry, academia, international organisations, such as IUCN and Conservation International (CI), and NGOs.

Inappropriate and unplanned siting and expansion of aquaculture farms has the potential to result in production failures, ecological degradation, and important environmental negative impacts. Thus, it is imperative when aquaculture farms are designed, established, or expanded that due consideration is given to the environment, ecologically sensitive habitats, other land use in the vicinity and the sustainability of the farming operations. Within the ASC standards, principle 2 covers environmental related criteria and indicators, and aims at minimising possible environmental-related impacts associated with the initial siting, construction and/or expansion of the farm.

1.2 Statement of purpose of the Technical Working Group

Mangrove rehabilitation and reforestation has been not successful in most of the cases. ASC currently address mangrove rehabilitation after clearing but there is not a focus in conservation and responsible farm siting and expansion.

To assess if the focus in a single issues like mangrove or wetlands is still effective or a consider an ecosystem-based approach also considering the BEIA (report) mitigation and monitoring recommendations that might be auditable tools to assess the impact of the shrimp farm on biodiversity and the environmental. This approach recognises the interactions between organisms and view ecological units as a whole as opposed to taking a single-issue approach which has the potential to harm the wider ecological unit.

ASC intent that the TWG of Mangrove discuss the white paper content and recommend requirements to be added in the current ASC environmental indicator.

1.3 Terms of Reference

The TWG will have the following responsibilities:

- a. Incorporate lessons learnt from ASC shrimp variance request process, witness assessments, compliance assessments, ASC monitoring & evaluation, rating organisations, practical implementation experience of the certification programme (e.g. FFDR calculation, phosphorous measurement guidance).
- b. Align with GSSI-indicators as well as with various other benchmark reports (incl. Seafood Watch) Oxfam, stakeholders interviews, CABs and ASI meetings/ feedback:
 1. To assure that the standards' content is relevant and rigorous,
 2. To provide a higher level of consistency across the current standards where needed,
 3. To deliver greater clarity to users of the document (farmers, CABs and auditors), and
 4. To ensure consistency of implementation by farms and CABs.
- c. Comply with ISEAL indicator regarding standard review and revision cycle.
- d. Develop draft indicators for requirements in the development of the Aligned Standard.
- e. Attend the TWG meetings or other in relation to this review as necessary and/or required by the Project Lead.

2. Membership

TWG membership shall aim to balance interests from the standard's key interest groups and geographical representation. All members should support the aims of the [ASC, its Vision and Mission](#), and commit to engaging constructively. To fulfil the group's purpose in recommending Criteria/Indicators that collectively address impacts of aquaculture on mangroves and other wetlands based on the latest scientific knowledge and current best practices within the aquaculture industry, the TWG will be formed primarily by experts with a scientific background. Participation of others stakeholder segments may be sought by the TWG at ad-hoc bases.

Table 1: TWG Members

Name	Role	Organisation	Stakeholder sector	Primary region represented
Aslan Fnu	Biologist	Biotrop Indonesia	Industry	Asia
Maeve Nightingale	Biologist	IUCN	NGO	Asia
Mauricio Mejia	Biologist	WWF	NGO	Central America
Malin Jonell	Environmental expert	Seawinn	Academia	Europe
Steve Crooks	Environmental expert	Silvestrum	Academia	Europe
Roel Bosma	Environmental expert	Independent consultant	Industry	Europe

Name	Role	Organisation	Stakeholder sector	Primary region represented
Jannaka de Silva	Environmental expert	IUCN	NGO	Europe/Global
Minna Eps	Biologist	IUCN	NGO	Europe/Global
Dane Klinger ¹	TAG Sponsor	Conservation International	NGO	North America
Bobby Davis	Biologist	WWF	NGO	North America

3. Reporting requirements

3.1 The TWG will report to the TAG on November 2020 and January 2021 on the progress and development of revised indicators.

4. Duration and review times

4.1 It is expected that the TWG will be active during development of draft indicators. The recommendations would then be provided to criterion leads and TAG for consideration in development of final requirements.

Table 2: TWG timeline

	Date	Activity	Outcome/Deliverable
1	OCT 2019	TWG meeting	Assess and discuss current Mangrove requirements on the ASC Shrimp standard v1.0
2	JAN 2020	TWG meeting	Review and revise criteria on the conservation and protection of mangroves and other wetlands
3	MAY 2020	TWG meeting	Review and revise criteria on the conservation and protection of mangroves and other wetlands
4	AUG 2020	TWG meeting	Review and revise criteria on the conservation and protection of mangroves and other wetlands
6	NOV 2020	Present draft of TWG's recommendations to TAG for endorsement for public consultation	Draft recommendations endorsed by the TAG for public consultation

Four TWG meetings were held. It is not yet determined whether the TWG will continue to convene.

5. Resources

Membership of ASC TWGs is voluntary and unpaid. Reasonable expenses will be paid for attendance at in-person meetings to cover travel and associated subsistence costs. Accommodation will be provided.

¹ Joined the TWG at a later stage.