



Improver Programme by ASC Requirements (for Aquaculture Improvement Projects)

Version 1.0

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Responsibility For These Requirements

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

For comments or questions regarding the content of this document, please contact the Improver Programme by ASC team via AIPService@asc-aqua.org.

Version Control:

Version:	Released Date	Effective Date	Description of Amendment
V 1.0	1 September 2023	1 September 2023	

It is the responsibility of the user of the document to use the latest version as published on the ASC website.

To ensure the continued effectiveness of the ASC Standards, as outlined in ASC's Theory of Change, the revision must occur every three to five years.

The next review of the Improver Programme by ASC Requirements is intended for 2027.

Available language(s)

The official version of this document is English. ASC may translate the Standard into additional languages as necessary. In case of any inconsistencies and/or discrepancies between available translation(s) and the English version, the online English version (pdf format) will prevail.

About Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)

The Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that operates a voluntary, independent third-party certification and labelling programme based on scientifically robust Standards.

The Standards define criteria that help to transform the aquaculture sector towards environmental sustainability and social responsibility, as per the ASC Mission.

ASC Vision

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

ASC Mission

To transform aquaculture towards environmental sustainability and social responsibility using efficient market mechanisms that create value across the chain.

Improver Programme by ASC

In line with ASC's mission to transform aquaculture, we recognise that as the fastest growing food sector in the world, about 47% of global production is recognised as having responsible performance, with less than 4% achieving farm level certifications.

Improvement programmes and pathways are not new to the industry but have struggled with a lack of measurable progress and explicit frameworks to guide the process. The Improver Programme by ASC addresses these problems by establishing an improvement framework that makes certification and market opportunities accessible.

Scope

This document comprises all administrative and process requirements that Applicant and existing Aquaculture Improvement Projects (AIPs), Improver Programme Implementers and Improver Programme Verifiers shall conform to, in addition to the requirements in the respective ASC Farm Standards.

Improvement scope

The Applicant AIP that seeks to improve its aquaculture operation practices is determined and adheres to the Improver Programme by ASC Requirements as outlined in this document.

The Applicant AIP can choose the improvement scope for their Aquaculture Improvement Project (AIP); including:

- **AIP to ASC certification (AIP2ASC):** Aimed to improve practices to a level that is certifiable by the end of the AIP.
- **AIP to Better Practices (AIP2BP):** Aimed to improve responsible practices in specific environmental or social areas without having the ambition to become certified.

Biological and geographic scope

This document applies to all locations and scales of aquaculture production systems in the world.

Normative Reference

The name of the programme is Improver Programme by ASC. The name ASC Improver Programme by also be used.

This document applies to the Applicant AIPs, ASC Improver Programme Implementers, and ASC Improver Programme Verifiers. In addition to this document, all listed documents below are important for implementation in the improvement phase.

The Applicant AIPs, ASC Improver Programme Implementers, and ASC Improver Programme Verifiers are strongly encouraged to read carefully the most recent versions and any guidance documents available for their understanding of the ASC Improver Programme Requirements and ASC Standard.

For references without dates or version numbers, the latest edition of the document referred to applies.

1. Improver Programme by ASC: See [Improver Programme by ASC Homepage](#)
2. ASC Farm Standard: See [Our Farm Standard](#)
3. MSC Chain of Custody (CoC) Standard: See [Our CoC Standard](#)
4. ASC Certification System: See [Our Certification System](#)
5. ASC Certification Requirements for Unit of Certification: See [ASC-RUoC](#)
6. ASC Variance Request Procedure: See [VR Procedure](#)
7. ASC GIS Tools and Guidance: See [ASC GIS Portal](#)

Terms And Definitions

The definitions applicable to this document are available in Annex 1 of this document.

The definitions applicable to the ASC Standards and Certification Systems are also available through [ASC's Vocabulary Portal](#).

PART A – Aquaculture Improvement Project (AIP)

Applicant AIP and Formation

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Applicant AIP	1	<p>Farms seeking to improve their aquaculture operations shall;</p> <p>1.1 Form an organisation or adapt an existing organisation (the AIP) that seeks to join the Improver Programme by ASC.</p> <p>1.2 The AIP applicant that is not an existing organization may seek to join the Improver Programme by ASC if an existing organisation or individual who is part of the group is willing and able to enter a contract with ASC on behalf of the group.</p>
AIP Eligibility	2	<p>All applicant AIP Partners shall meet ALL the following eligibility criteria:</p> <p>2.1 Legality: possess a valid licence and permit to operate.</p> <p>2.2 Environmental: no deforestation of mangrove or natural wetlands carried out after 1999 by any farm within the applicant AIP and farm(s) do not inhabit highly sensitive IUCN designated protected areas as identified in the requirements of ASC standards.</p> <p>2.3 Social and Fraud Prevention: no AIP Partner or farm owner have been charged with/convicted of/admitted to any fraudulent practice or criminal act within the past 24 months before applying to be part of the applicant AIP.</p> <p>2.3.1 If an AIP Partner has been charged or admitted to fraudulent practice within the past 24 months, the Partner in question shall present to the applicant AIP proof of change(s) implemented to address the charge(s).</p> <p>2.4 Capacity: the applicant AIP has sufficient resources (e.g., budget, people) available to achieve its objective(s).</p> <p>2.5 Commitment: all applicants are committed to improve their practices and pursue the AIP improvement timeframe and requirements.</p>
AIP Scope	3	<p>The applicant AIP shall choose one improvement scope, according to its discretion and current level of performance.</p> <p>3.1 AIP to ASC certification (AIP2ASC): the applicant AIP that wishes to improve practices to a level that is certifiable by the end of the AIP.</p> <p>3.2 AIP to Better Practices (AIP2BP): the applicant AIP that wishes to improve responsible practices in specific environmental or social areas without having the ambition of becoming certified.</p>
Formation	4	<p>The applicant AIP may consist of one or more than one aquaculture farms where improvements are expected to be implemented and may include additional Partners The farm or farms are Partners.</p> <p>The applicant AIP may be formed as a Single Site, Multi-site or Group if the scope is AIP2ASC and shall implement, besides the ASC Standards the specific ASC requirements relating to the administration and internal management systems that are applicable to each of the expected certification type described in ASC RUoC.</p>
A Single Site AIP2ASC	5	<p>A Single Site: one aquaculture operation farm having all the following elements:</p>

		<p>5.1 Capable of signing a binding contract that is legally enforceable.</p> <p>5.2 One production site which has clear boundaries as described in the associated legal licences and permits and may include multiple pens, cages, ponds, tanks, raceway systems or beds.</p>
<p>Multi-Site AIP2ASC</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Multi-Site: More than one aquaculture operation farm having all the following elements:</p> <p>6.1 Capable of signing a binding contract that is legally enforceable.</p> <p>6.2 Consisting of more than one site and all sites have clear boundary lines.</p> <p>6.3 All farms operate within the same jurisdiction or within neighbouring jurisdictions that share relevant common regulations.</p> <p>6.4 All farms shall be subject to and comply with the same ASC standard (e.g., shrimp).</p> <p>6.5 All farms shall operate in the same or similar production system.</p> <p>6.6 The applicant AIP is the only entity authorised to sell AIP products from all members.</p> <p>6.7 The applicant AIP may choose to apply for a multi-site either:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">6.7.1 Without an Internal Management System (Option 1)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">6.7.2 With an Internal Management System (Option 2)</p> <p>6.8 Other related ASC Multi-Site requirements may be applicable.</p>
<p>Group AIP2ASC</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>A Group: More than one aquaculture farm having all the following elements:</p> <p>7.1 The applicant AIP representing all group members is capable of signing a binding contract that is legally enforceable.</p> <p>7.2 Each member in the group operates either a single site or a multi-site.</p> <p>7.3 All farms operate within the same jurisdiction or within neighbouring jurisdictions that share relevant common regulations.</p> <p>7.4 All farms shall be subject to and comply with the same ASC standard (e.g., shrimp).</p> <p>7.5 All farms shall operate in the same or similar production system.</p> <p>7.6 All farms shall be small-scale producers as defined by the ASC group requirements.</p> <p>7.7 Medium and large-scale producers may join the Group and comply with all requirements as a Group Member, but every site shall each be subject to external audits.</p> <p>7.8 The applicant AIP is the only entity authorised to sell AIP products from all members.</p> <p>7.9 A Group management body (GMB) is appointed to be in charge of implementing and monitoring compliance against the requirements of the Improver Programme by ASC, ASC Standard, and Group requirements.</p> <p>7.10 Other related ASC Group requirements may be applicable.</p>

Partners (General)

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Partners	8	<p>Any Partner, including Supply Chain Partners, Governments, Funders, Investors and others, willing to support the Improver Programme by ASC and/or ASC AIPs may choose one of the engagement options below.</p> <p>8.1 Option 1: AIP Partners</p> <p>8.2 Option 2 : Improver Programme by ASC Partners</p> <p>8.3 Option 3: Combination Partners</p> <p>Other partners shall play an active role either in improving their operations (AIP Partners) or in supporting the goals of the Improver Programme by ASC. (IP by ASC Partners).</p>
Middlemen or collectors	9	Middlemen or collectors handling aquaculture products from the AIP may join the applicant AIP as Partners in any options.
Feedback to AIP	10	AIP Partners with supporting roles and Improver Programme by ASC Partners may share their feedback with the AIP after visiting the AIP improvement sites.

AIP Partners (Option 1)

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
AIP Partners	11	<p>The AIP Partner may be directly engaged with an approved AIP or multiple AIPs.</p> <p>11.1 The AIP Partner shall sign a Partnership Agreement (FORM B2) with the selected AIP(s) and shall be listed on the ASC website under the respective AIP(s) with indication of their role(s) in the AIP.</p> <p>11.2 The AIP Partner, at their discretion, shall have access to farm sites and other facilities within the scope of the AIP to assess the progress of improvements made.</p> <p>11.3 The AIP Partner may make claims about their engagement as laid out in the Improver Programme by ASC Claims guidelines.</p> <p>11.4 If the role includes sourcing from the engaged AIP, the Supply Chain Partner shall report the purchased (and sold) volumes of products from the AIP in the form and manner specified by ASC.</p> <p>11.5 The Partner engagement shall be subject to the AIP self-evaluations and ASC independent verification against the declared and agreed roles, responsibilities and obligations specified in the ASC Partnership Agreement and Improvement Plan(s).</p>
Lead Partners	12	If the applicant AIP consists of more than one partner, a lead partner shall be appointed. Additional partners will serve supporting roles.

Legal Entity	13	An applicant AIP or its lead Partner shall be an incorporated or other legally recognised entity that can enter into a valid contract or be represented by an existing organisation or individual willing to enter into an agreement with ASC for the purpose of establishing an AIP.
Partnership Agreement	14	The AIP Partnership Agreement shall be specific to an AIP and signed by all the AIP Partners..
	15	<p>The AIP Partnership Agreement shall describe/specify.</p> <p>15.1 Role, responsibility, and obligations (including financial support) of each AIP Partner as agreed upon by all AIP Partners.</p> <p>15.2 Representative of the AIP who can speak on behalf of the AIP.</p> <p>15.3 The manner in which partners may represent their participation in the AIP.</p> <p>15.4 Improvement scope of the AIP to which all Partners are committed (AIP2ASC or AIP2BP).</p> <p>15.5 Decision-making mechanism(s) within the AIP relative to the AIP scope of activities. Including, but not limit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15.5.1 Changing of the scope 15.5.2 Admitting new Partners 15.5.3 Removal of or leaving AIP Partners <p>15.6 Measures to be taken when a Partner does not adhere to terms and conditions specified in the Agreement.</p> <p>(FORM B2 - ASC AIP Partnership Agreement)</p>
Being informed	16	All AIP Partners shall be fully informed and updated on the Gap Analysis, the AIP's Improvement Plan (and all updates to the AIP), and the findings of self-evaluations and external verifications.
Resignation	17	<p>AIP Partners may resign from the AIP at any time by submitting a letter to the AIP Manager with reason(s) for resignation.</p> <p>17.1 The AIP shall acknowledge the resignation of a Partner in writing.</p>
Additions	18	<p>Addition of new Partners to the AIP:</p> <p>18.1 Any party may apply to an AIP listed on the ASC website to become a Partner.</p> <p>18.2 New Partners of the AIP shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18.2.1 Meet all the requirements for becoming a Partner, 18.2.2 Be formally accepted and approved by the AIP, and 18.2.3 Sign an AIP Partnership Agreement. <p>18.3 The AIP should consider the following criteria, in addition to those the AIP has established, when evaluating the eligibility of applicant Partners to the AIP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18.3.1 The capacity of the applicant to reasonably meet the ASC requirements in the AIP's Improvement Plan within the AIP's (remaining) timeline. 18.3.2 The willingness of the applicant to commit to the AIP's Improvement Plan. 18.3.3 The capacity of current AIP Partners to support the applicant.

Inform Change to ASC	19	The AIP Manager shall amend the AIP Partner Registry of Partners to reflect the resignations or additions and send to ASC within 3 days of the respective decision (FORM B3) for updating the AIP page on the ASC website.
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Improver Programme by ASC Partners (Option 2)

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Improver Programme by ASC Partners	20	The Partner may be engaged in the Improver Programme by ASC via ASC (Improver Programme by ASC Partners) 20.1 The Improver Programme by ASC Partner shall sign an Agreement with ASC (Improver Programme by ASC Partner Agreement) to state their intent and type of support (Form B8). 20.2 The Improver Programme by ASC Partners and their type of engagement shall be listed on the ASC website.
Partners Benefit	21	The Improver Programme by ASC Partners may 21.1 Make claims about their engagement, following Improver Programme by ASC claim guidelines. 21.2 Request ASC to facilitate visits to AIPs and their improvements sites they source from or support or have interest in.
Supply Chain Partners	22	The Supply Chain Partners 22.1 May source products from any active AIPs listed on the ASC website that have the status "Active and Product Available". 22.2 Shall commit to sourcing increasing volumes of products from ASC AIPs over time while continuing to source ASC certified products and not replacing the latter with the former in volume terms. 22.3 Shall report accurately purchased (and sold) volumes of products from ASC AIPs in the form and manner transparently specified by ASC. 22.4 Shall be subject to ASC's monitoring and evaluation of its engagement.
Partners Status	23	ASC shall publish a summary of the status of the Improver Programme by ASC on a yearly basis, informing the Partner of results of their engagement.

Combination Partners (Option 3)

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Combination Partners (Option 3)	24	The Partner may be directly engaged with a listed AIP and engage in the Improver Programme by ASC via ASC. 24.1 The details of such a combination shall be agreed with ASC before it is signed or otherwise implemented.

AIP Manager

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
New Appointment	25	<p>The applicant AIP shall appoint an individual as AIP Manager and send a completed AIP Manager Nomination Form (FORM B1) to ASC.</p> <p>25.1 The new AIP Manager shall be added to the ASC Improver Programme's portal and published on the ASC website.</p>
Listed	26	ASC shall maintain a list current and former AIP Managers for all AIPs.
Role and Responsibility	27	<p>The AIP Manager shall</p> <p>27.1 Be part of the lead Partner organisation or an AIP farmer</p> <p>27.2 Be the contact person for communication with ASC.</p> <p>27.3 Be the contact person for communication with other AIP related parties including partners within the AIP, the implementer, verifier, and other service providers.</p> <p>27.4 Maintain the AIP Registry of Farm Sites (FORM B3)</p>
Document Submission	28	Any document (e.g. self-evaluations) submitted to ASC shall be submitted by the AIP Manager with the support of the ASC Approved Implementer(s) appointed by the AIP.

PART B – AIP Process

AIP Applications

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Submission	29	The AIP shall submit a completed AIP Application (FORM B4) to ASC.
Application Review	30	<p>ASC Shall review the application.</p> <p>30.1 ASC shall contact the AIP Manager if further information is required.</p> <p>30.2 ASC shall either accept or reject the application based on the following criteria:</p> <p>30.2.1 Eligibility of the applicant AIP or Partners.</p> <p>30.2.2 Completeness of the Application form.</p> <p>30.2.3 Accuracy of the information provided.</p> <p>30.2.4 Truthfulness of the declaration; and, previously failed application/project or ASC certification for irreconcilable reason(s) relative to compliance or conformance issues.</p>
Rejected Application	31	<p>If the application was rejected by ASC</p> <p>31.1 ASC shall explain its reason(s) and indicate the steps that will need to be taken, if any, in order for the applicant to re-submit their application.</p> <p>31.2 An application that is revised and re-submitted shall be subject to the same review and decision process as used for the initial application.</p>
Accepted Application	32	<p>If the application was accepted,</p> <p>32.1 The AIP shall sign an Agreement with ASC (ASC/AIP Agreement Template - Form B5)</p> <p>32.2 ASC shall publish an up-to-date list of approved AIPs on its website with respective statuses being: active, successfully completed, not completed, yellow card, Suspended, Removed.</p>

Appointment of an AIP Implementer

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Implementer Appointment	33	<p>Once the AIP application has been accepted by ASC, the AIP shall appoint an Implementer(s) to 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.</p> <p>33.1 The AIP shall only appoint ASC approved Implementer(s), who are listed on the ASC website.</p> <p>33.2 The AIP may appoint more than one Implementer to support its improvement efforts.</p> <p>33.3 The AIP appointed Implementer may be in-house or hired externally as long as the requirements for Implementers are met.</p>
Implementer Dismissed	34	<p>The AIP may remove the Implementer(s) and may appoint new Implementer(s) at any time.</p> <p>34.1 When an Implementer(s) is removed, the AIP shall inform the Implementer(s) being changed of the reason(s) for the AIP decision.</p> <p>34.2 The AIP shall inform all AIP Partners and ASC of the removal and appointment of new implementer(s) (Form B13) or update its AIP details on the ASC IP platform.</p>
Performance Evaluation	35	<p>At a minimum, the AIP shall submit to ASC its evaluation and feedback of the performance of the Implementer(s) when an Implementer leaves or is replaced and at the end of the project (FORM B12).</p>

Conduct a Gap Analysis

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Gap Analysis	36	<p>All aquaculture operations within the AIP shall be assessed against a predefined set of requirements, depending on the end goal of the AIP (AIP2ASC or AIP2BP).</p> <p>A Gap Analysis shall be conducted by using FORM B6-ASC and instructions therein - AIP Gap Analysis Template.</p> <p>The AIP formed as Multi-site AIP2ASC or Group AIP2ASC shall require to be assessed against the applicable management system requirements, specified by the ASC RUoC.</p>
AIP2ASC	37	<p>The AIP2ASC shall conduct and complete the respective Gap Analysis package, comprising of a set of Eligibility, Essential, Mandatory, Completion and Reporting requirements and indicators against the applicable ASC Farm Standard.</p>
AIP2BP	38	<p>The AIP2BP shall conduct and complete the respective Gap Analysis indicators, comprising of a set of Eligibility, Essential, Mandatory, Completion and Reporting requirements and indicators against the desired level (s) of performance in topical areas that AIP Partners agree to improve when applied to an AIP.</p>

CoC and Social requirements	39	Processing facilities that are recognised AIP Partners, but do not already hold and ASC CoC Certification, may decide to improve and thus be analysed against the MSC Chain of Custody (CoC) requirements and ASC Social standard indicators (FORM B14).
Change of Scope	40	The AIP shall conduct an addendum Gap Analysis and submit to ASC a Change of Scope Form (FORM B4A) if it changes the AIP scope from AIP2BP to AIP2ASC. Change from AIP2ASC to AIP2BP is not allowed.
Adding new farm	41	A Gap Analysis shall be conducted on any new farm against the relevant standard indicators. 41.1 The AIP Gap Analysis and Improvement Plan shall be updated accordingly and submitted to ASC.
ASC Approved Implementer	42	All Gap analyses shall be conducted by ASC approved Implementers who are listed on the ASC website. 42.1 If conducted by unapproved Implementers, the Gap Analysis results shall not be accepted.
Evidence-based	43	A Gap Analysis shall be conducted to analyse the AIP's current level of performance against the designated requirements. The results shall be written clearly with supporting evidence to ensure objectivity and evidence-based analysis.
Gap Analysis Results	44	All AIP Partners shall be informed and updated on the Gap Analysis results.

Improvement Plan

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Implementer	45	The AIP shall develop its Improvement Plan (FORM B6) based on the Gap Analysis results, with support of the AIP appointed Implementer.
Improvement Plans	46	All improvement actions shall be planned in such a way that their execution and effectiveness can be verified before the target completion date of the AIP. The Improvement Plans shall specify the AIP's commitment in % of implementation and planned by considering a completion timeframe required by IP by ASC requirements in each phase. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maximum six (6) months after the Improvement Plan is approved. ○ Completed 100% of Essential + 10% Mandatory + an elective % of Completion requirements/ indicators. • Phase 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maximum twelve (12) months after phase 1 ○ Completed 100% of Essential + 40% Mandatory + an elective % of Completion requirements/ indicators.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maximum 12 months after phase 2 ○ Completed 100% of Essential + 70% Mandatory + an elective % of Completion requirements/ indicators. • Phase 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Before the last self- evaluation and last verification ○ Completed 100% of Essential + 100% Mandatory + 100% of Completion requirements/ indicators.
Timeframe	47	The Improvement Plan shall have a maximum time frame of three (3) years from its approval date.
Self-Evaluation	48	The Improvement Plan shall include planned self-evaluations following the above maximum timelines throughout the AIP lifetime.
AIP Partner Agreement	49	<p>All AIP Partners or their representatives shall agree on the Improvement Plan.</p> <p>49.1 Improvement actions shall be assigned to AIP Partners according to their respective roles, responsibilities and obligations specified in the signed AIP Partnership Agreement.</p> <p>49.2 The AIP shall establish and maintain internal mechanisms for decision making and complaint/appeal processes.</p>
Submission	50	The AIP shall submit the Improvement Plan together with the Gap Analysis to ASC for review within two (2) months from the AIP application approval date.
Review by ASC	51	ASC should review and take a decision on the submitted Improvement Plan within one (1) week of receipt
Rejected or Approved Improvement Plan	52	<p>ASC may reject or approve the (revised) Improvement Plan based on the following criteria:</p> <p>52.1 Completeness of the Improvement Plan and Gap Analysis;</p> <p>52.3 Consistency between the Improvement Plan and Gap Analysis</p> <p>52.4 Correct use of the AIP templates for Gap Analysis and Improvement Plan;</p> <p>52.5 Information provided by stakeholders differing from the information submitted by the AIP.</p> <p>If the Improvement Plan is rejected, ASC shall notify the AIP with justification and recommendation for adjustment within three (3) days from the decision date.</p>
Status updating	53	ASC shall update the AIP status on the ASC website when the Gap Analysis and Improvement Plan is approved.
Review and Update by AIP	54	The AIP shall review and update the Improvement Plan after each self-evaluation, independent verification, or Partner's visit feedback, and submit the revised Improvement Plan to ASC for review and update.

Record Keeping	55	The AIP shall keep all records related to the implementation of improvement actions for self-evaluation and for independent verification purposes.
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Self-Evaluation and Self-Reporting

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Appointed Implementer	56	The self-evaluation, root cause analysis and proposed corrective actions shall be conducted with support of the AIP-appointed Implementer.
Self-evaluations	57	The focus of self-evaluations shall be placed on: 57.1 The progress of implementation of the approved Improvement actions. 57.2 Whether the expected outcomes of the improvement actions are achieved. 57.3 Whether the Improvement Plan needs to be updated; and 57.4 Correctness and accuracy of claims being made by the AIP Partners.
Timeframe	58	The self-evaluation of the implementation progress shall be conducted accordingly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1: The first self-evaluation shall be conducted at six (6) months from the date of approval of the Improvement Plan Phase 2 – 3: The AIP shall conduct subsequent self-evaluations as a minimum every twelve (12) months or at the end of each phase after the first self-evaluation. Phase 4: The last self-evaluation shall be conducted in time to allow for a final verification to sign off the AIP completion.
On-site evaluation	59	As part of the self-evaluation, the AIP shall evaluate on-site improvements at AIP Partners premises as defined in the Improvement Plan. 59.1 Performance of each farm/processor site shall be evaluated on-site once a year as a minimum. 59.2 Farm performance against metric standard indicators shall be recorded in the self-evaluation report (FORM B6)
Root cause (s) and Corrective Actions	60	If the progress does not meet the target, within five (5) days of completion of the self-evaluation the AIP shall analyse the root cause(s) with relevant partners and propose corrective actions (FORM 6) to avoid recurrence.
Date submission	61	Within two (2) weeks of completion of each self-evaluation, the AIP shall submit the self-evaluation report, including root cause analysis (RCA) and corrective actions if applicable, to ASC for publication on the website and for arranging external verifications.
Completion Indicators	62	The AIP shall record in the self-evaluation report the actual percentage of Completion requirements and indicators achieved.

		If the improvement actions against Completion requirements and indicators, not completed by the specified timelines, shall become due Mandatory in the next self-evaluation. (Upgraded)
Update and inform	63	The AIP shall update all AIP Partners on self-evaluation, root cause analysis (RCA) and corrective actions, if applicable.

Periodic Independent Verification

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Verifier	64	ASC shall appoint an independent Verifier for the AIP, who is approved and listed on the Improver Programme by ASC Database
Changing Verifier by ASC	65	During the course of the AIP, ASC may change the Verifier if and when it is deemed necessary. ASC shall communicate the reason(s) for the change to the AIP.
Changing Verifier by AIP	66	The AIP may request a change of the Verifier using FORM B9, if there is evidence that the verifier; 66.1 Lacks required competence to conduct the verification effectively. 66.2 Lacks qualifications to conduct the verification; or 66.3 Has an inappropriate professional attitude.
Timing	67	The independent verification shall be conducted according to the timeframe below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1: The first independent verification shall take place within a maximum of four (4) weeks following submission of the first self-evaluation report. • Phase 2 – 4: Within the AIP lifetime, the AIP shall receive a verification per phase, including a final one to sign off the AIP completion. The focus of the first verification shall be placed on the progress made in the first phase of the AIP.
Planning	68	ASC shall inform the AIP of the verification visit maximum 1 month prior to the actual verification. 68.1 Failure of the AIP to arrange for the verification to take place may result in potential AIP suspension or removal from the Improver Programme by ASC. 68.2 The AIP being removed from the Improver Programme by ASC due to this reason shall not be readmitted within twelve (12) months from the date of removal.
Stakeholders' engagement	69	The Verifier shall reach out to identify stakeholders to collect additional information and/or interview them during the verification. 69.1 This shall be documented in the verification report.
Risk Assessment Tool	70	For each verification, the Verifier shall follow the verification instructions provided in the AIP Risk Assessment Tool.

Methodology	71	The Verifier shall verify the self-evaluation results by interviewing AIP Partners, their staff, the AIP Manager; reviewing records, and inspecting farm sites and facilities where improvements are expected to happen on-site. The verification may be conducted both remotely and on-site.
Full Access to AIP	72	The AIP shall provide the Verifier with full remote and physical access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents and records relevant to the AIP implementation, including relevant purchasing and sale records and use of claims by its partners. • AIP Partners and their staff for interviews. • All operations and sites within the scope of the AIP. • Take samples for testing as required.
Verification Report	73	The Verifier shall prepare the verification report (FORM B7) that shall contain as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of deficiencies with objective evidence of each. • List of the sites sampled and verified; and • Recommended measure(s) against the deficiencies of the AIP (see section Measures below).
Draft Report	74	The Verifier shall submit the verification draft report to ASC and the AIP at the same time within two (2) weeks upon completion of the verification. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If needed, the AIP may be requested to provide additional information and/or data to conclude the verification.
Action needed from AIP	75	After receiving the draft verification report, the AIP Manager shall inform all AIP Partners about verification results as well as actions to address deficiencies and areas for improvement identified by the Verifier. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AIP may have one round of clarification of the verification report with the Verifier before it is finalised within the timeframe.
Final Report	76	The final verification report, including additional information and/or data and clarification from the AIP shall be completed within four (4) weeks of the completion of the verification visit.
Update Improvement Plan	77	The AIP shall update the Improvement Plan to include those actions identified in the final verification report. The revised Improvement Plan shall be submitted to ASC within two (2) weeks upon receipt of the final verification report.
Status Updates	78	ASC shall update the AIP status on the ASC website according to the measures recommended by the Verifier.

Measures against AIP deficiencies

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
AIP Deficiencies	79	AIP deficiencies may be identified during self-evaluation, independent verification, or visits by AIP Partners or Improver Programme by ASC Partners.
Categories	80	Deficiencies shall be categorised as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type 1: Delay in meeting target(s); • Type 2: Making claims without ASC's prior approval or any other inappropriate or prohibited use of ASC AIP claims; • Type 3: Sale of more product than the AIP produced.
Root Cause Analysis	81	The AIP shall conduct a root cause analysis of the identified deficiencies and implement corrective actions to address the issues and prevent recurrence.
Prevent recurrence	82	The AIP may decide to take internally agreed upon measures when deficiencies are repeated by the AIP itself or by AIP Partners.
Risk Analysis	83	The Verifier shall consider the following factors on the aggregated level of the deficiency situation to recommend corresponding measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of the deficiency occurrence • Severity of the deficiencies.
Yellow Card	84	The Verifier may recommend to ASC the following measure(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a Warning Letter to the AIP and flag a Yellow Card on the ASC website for the AIP. • No immediate effects on the AIP but the AIP shall take immediate actions to address the situation within a maximum of three (3) months from the publication date of the final verification report. • The AIP shall submit evidence of implementation of immediate actions to the Verifier and ASC within the given three (3) months period.
Suspension	85	Failure to send evidence shall escalate to the AIP suspension. <p>85.1 Suspend the AIP for up to six (6) months and change the AIP status from 'Active' or 'Active with Yellow card' to 'Suspended'.</p> <p>85.2 AIP Partners shall stop making and suspend any AIP-related claims from the suspension date and for the entire suspension period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIP Partners shall stop selling and reporting products from the AIP. • The AIP shall take actions to address the suspension reasons and submit evidence to the Verifier and ASC. <p>85.3 The six (6)-month suspension period, from the publication date of the final verification report, shall not be extended.</p>
Removed/ Failure	86	Failure to address the deficiency situation within the given six (6)-month period shall escalate to removing the AIP from the Improver Programme by ASC. The following actions will occur:

		<p>86.1 Removal of the AIP from the Improver Programme by ASC and changing of the AIP status from 'Active' or 'Suspended' to 'Removed'.</p> <p>86.2 AIP Partners shall stop making and suspend any AIP related claims from the removal date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIP Partners shall stop selling and reporting products from the AIP. • AIP Partners may not form a new AIP or join an active AIP for a period up to twelve (12) months.
No extension	87	The initial AIP completion date shall not be extended due to the reasons of imposed Measures.

Completion of the AIP

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
AIP Timeframe	88	<p>The AIP shall be completed by one of these following conditions, at a minimum.</p> <p>88.1 Within a maximum of three (3) years from the approval date of the Improvement Plan or</p> <p>88.2 At the end of approved phase 4.</p> <p>88.3 At any time given the results of the verification report are satisfied and complied with all requirements and indicators.</p>
Early Completion	89	The AIP may complete its Improvement Plan before the deadline for completion.
Extension	90	<p>A one-time extension of six (6) months may be granted, if ALL conditions below are met:</p> <p>90.1 The AIP applies for extension at six (6) months prior to the project deadline at the latest, using FORM B10.</p> <p>90.2 The extension application shall include justifiable reason(s) and a proposal for an adjusted Improvement Plan.</p> <p>90.3 The AIP has not received any Warning Letter (Yellow Card) or been suspended throughout the duration of the AIP.</p> <p>All changes on the ASC website to the AIP's scope and timelines shall be made transparently and in a timely manner by ASC.</p>
Completion	91	<p>A final verification visit shall be conducted to sign off the implementation of the Improvement Plan.</p> <p>91.1 The final status of the AIP may be either (i) 'Successfully Completed' or (ii) 'Not Completed'.</p>
Pre-assessment	92	The AIP with the AIP2ASC objective may discuss with ASC to arrange for a combined final verification and pre-assessment of the certification process.

Product from the AIP

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
AIP Products	93	Only products coming from AIP partner farms registered with the AIP shall be marketed and sold as AIP products.
ASC Logo Use not allowed	94	Product coming from the AIP shall not bear any ASC related logo or label on B2B or B2C pack.
Data Record	95	<p>The AIP shall document the flow of product coming from farms and processing facilities within the AIP, before the product leaves the AIP.</p> <p>95.1 The AIP shall provide required key production data of each farm site and processing operations in the manner, and at the time, and frequency specified by ASC. Key Data Elements (KDE) may be applied.</p> <p>95.2 The AIP shall keep all records of each crop stocked, grown, harvested, and processed, including sold volumes.</p>

Improver Programme by ASC Claims

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Claims	96	<p>All AIP Partners and Improver Programme by ASC Partners may make claims using ASC pre-defined template to make known their efforts and engagement in ASC AIP(s) or Improver Programme by ASC.</p> <p>If all AIP Partners and Improver Programme by ASC Partners wish to make claims using the Improver Programme by ASC Identifier, a licencing agreement with ASC needs to be signed. All claims are required to meet the rules defined in the AIP Logo User Guide.</p>
Claim approval	97	All claims and their wording shall be approved by ASC before being used publicly or in other contexts (e.g., B2B materials).
No ASC logo use	98	Partners shall NOT make any on-pack claim by using the ASC logo or label to communicate about product sourced from AIPs.
	99	All claims shall be dated (as specified by the AIP Claims Procedure)
	100	The use of claims shall be subject to verification for correctness, accuracy and evidence of engagement of those who make the claims.
Claims by the AIP Partners	101	AIP Partners shall only make claims that correspond to their agreed roles, responsibilities and obligations as specified in the AIP Partner Agreement.

First Claims	102	AIP Partners shall only make claims after the first successful independent verification, confirming that improvement actions have been implemented as planned.
Successfully Completed	103	Partners of a 'Successfully Completed' AIP may make post-AIP claims and shall refer to the specific AIP that they were engaged in on the ASC website.
Not Completed AIP	104	Partners of a 'Not Completed AIP' shall immediately stop making any claim upon acceptance of the final verification report with the conclusion that the AIP is not completed.
Breaching Rules	105	Partners of the 'Not Completed AIP' found to be continuing to make any ASC AIP claim shall not be admitted to any future ASC AIP or ASC certification, both individually or as part of another AIP or group.

Dispute, Complaints and Appeal Mechanisms

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Mechanisms operated by the AIP.	106	The AIP shall have transparent mechanisms to handle and resolve disputes, complaints and/or appeals raised by Partners. All AIP Partners shall know how to use the mechanisms in case the need arises.
Appeal by the AIP to ASC	107	The AIP may file a complaint to ASC with regards to performance of their Implementer or ASC-appointed Verifier. 107.1 The AIP may appeal a decision taken by Verifiers and ASC with regard to approval of the AIP application, Improvement Plan, Verification Report, and measures imposed using FORM B11 - AIP Complaint or Appeal. 107.2 ASC shall handle complaints and appeals from AIPs and Partners according to its Improver Programme by ASC Disputes Procedure, which is transparent and fair to all parties.

PART C – ASC IMPROVER PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTERS

ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFICATION

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Qualification	108	<p>Individuals or organisation seeking to be approved as Implementers shall meet all the required competencies specified below</p> <p>108.1 Education: Have a degree or higher education diploma</p> <p>108.2 Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-year actual working on aquaculture or agriculture farm(s) • Successfully completed/managed five (5) projects in capacity building and/or extension services for (small/aquaculture) farmers. <p>108.3 Professional training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management training • Successfully completed ASC training on Standard(s), including social topics • Successfully completed Improver Programme by ASC training • MSC/ASC CoC training <p>108.4 Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid technical knowledge of aquaculture and the seafood sector • Understanding of social and environmental issues, especially in aquaculture • Understanding of Quality Management System and Documentation • Understanding of Law and Regulations related to aquaculture. • Good knowledge of local context <p>108.5 Soft skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to communicate clearly and effectively. • Analytical skills • Skills and interest in working with people. <p>108.6 Language(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to Speak the local language(s) and to communicate in English
Eligibility	109	<p>Applicant Implementers may be self-employed or employed by a company or organisation.</p>
Conflict of Interest	110	<p>Applicant Implementers shall not be employed, either part-time or full-time, by an organisation that is an applicant-to-be or approved as an Improver Programme by ASC Verifier, or a CAB that is either seeking or holds ASC accreditation.</p> <p>110.1 Applicant Implementers shall disclose to ASC any connection with those companies or organisations within the past three (3) years prior to applying to become an Improver Programme by ASC Implementer.</p>

Application Procedure

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Application Submission	111	Individuals seeking to be approved as Implementers shall submit the Implementer Application form (C-1) with accompanying evidence of required competencies. 111.1 Applicant Implementers may submit the application first while pending evidence for professional training.
Team Lead Appointment	112	Applicant Implementers may be more than one person or a team/organisation. Appointment of a Team Lead may be required with these roles and responsibilities; 112.1 To liaise and communicate with ASC and AIP Partners. 112.2 To oversee the team member's qualifications to ensure they meet the Improver Programme by ASC Requirements. 112.3 To identify training needs and planning; 112.4 establish internal control and performance monitoring measurement.
Evidence	113	Applicant Implementers shall complete their application with evidence within a maximum of three (3) months, or the application process shall start again.
ASC first receiving the application	114	ASC shall acknowledge in writing within one (1) week of receipt of the application. The acknowledgement shall indicate whether or not the application is complete.
Reviewing	115	ASC may decide to interview the applicant Implementer when reviewing their application.
Rejection	116	The review decision (approved/not approved) shall be taken within a maximum of four (4) weeks of receipt of a complete application form. 116.1 ASC shall inform the applicant Implementer in writing and of specific reason(s), should the application be rejected. 116.2 Applicants whose applications were not accepted may re-apply once the reasons for non-acceptance have been effectively addressed.
Internal / External resources	117	ASC shall only approve individuals as Implementers; however, approved Implementers may work for an AIP Partner, not for profit organisation or other company or association.
Registration Number	118	ASC shall assign a unique registration number for each approved Implementer and publish agreed details on the website.
Publication on website	119	Once published on the ASC website, approved Implementers may promote their services using the designation " ASC Approved Implementer " along with their registration number.

		<p>119.1 Any texts related to the Improver Programme by ASC used to promote their service portfolio shall be submitted to ASC for official approval.</p> <p>119.2 Communicating about the Improver Programme by ASC without prior approval of the text shall result in a Warning Letter and a Yellow card on the ASC website.</p>
Using non-ASC approved materials	120	<p>Approved Implementers may disseminate ASC-approved information about the Improver Programme by ASC</p> <p>120.1 Using non-ASC approved materials for promoting the Improver Programme by ASC shall result in a Warning Letter and a Yellow Card on the ASC website.</p>

Maintain Qualification

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Maintain Qualification	121	<p>To maintain qualification, the approved Implementers shall meet ALL requirements specified below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting an AIP within a maximum of twelve (12) months after being approved by ASC. Supporting at least one AIP at any point in time Participate in training on changes to the Improver Programme by ASC prior to the changes coming into effect. Participate in Improver Programme by ASC calibration sessions organised by ASC. Participate in and contribute to the Improver Programme by ASC discussion forum with other approved Implementers, Verifiers and ASC staff providing technical content to discussions. Positive feedback/evaluation by the AIP(s) receiving the Implementer support. <p>The record shall be submitted to the Improver Programme by ASC Database</p>
Feedback from AIPs	122	ASC shall have the right to visit or interview AIPs receiving support from approved Implementers as a means to evaluate Implementers' performance.
Transparency	123	ASC shall publish Implementer Performance on the website on a yearly basis based on a transparent Implementer performance evaluation mechanism.

PART D – IMPROVER PROGRAMME BY ASC VERIFIERS

Eligibility and Qualification

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Qualification	124	<p>Individuals seeking to be approved as Verifiers shall meet all the required competencies specified below</p> <p>124.1 Education: Have a degree or higher education diploma</p> <p>124.2 Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One year of actual working on aquaculture or agriculture farm(s) • Successfully working as an active (lead) auditor (1st, 2nd or 3rd party) for at least five (5) audits or ten (10) audit days, or conducted at least three (3) project evaluations prior to application to become an ASC Verifier <p>124.3 Professional training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully completed an ISO 19011 based auditor training. • Training on project management and evaluation • Successfully completed ASC training on standard(s), including social topics • Successfully completed Improver Programme by ASC training • MSC/ASC CoC training <p>124.4 Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid technical knowledge of aquaculture and the seafood sector • Understanding of social and environmental issues, especially in aquaculture • Good knowledge of local context <p>124.5 Soft skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to communicate clearly and effectively. • Analytical skills • Skills and interest in working with people. <p>124.6 Language(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking local language(s) and ability to communicate in English
Employment	125	<p>Applicant Implementers may be self-employed or employed by a company or organisation.</p> <p>125.1 If being employed by a company or organisation, applicant Verifiers shall have an official permission to be ASC Verifiers and to conduct ASC verification.</p>
Conflict of Interests	126	<p>Applicant Verifiers shall not be working in any capacity with or for an organization that is a Partner of an applicant or existing ASC AIP.</p> <p>126.1 Applicant Implementers shall disclose their employment history or list the projects which they were involved in capacity of the past three (3) years prior to submitting the ASC Verifier Application.</p>

Application Procedure

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Application Submission	127	Individuals seeking to be approved as verifiers shall submit the verifier Application form (D-1) with accompanying evidence of required competencies. 127.1 Applicant Verifiers may submit the application first while pending evidence for professional training.
Evidence	128	Applicant Verifiers shall complete their application with the evidence within a maximum of three (3) months, or the application process shall start again.
ASC first receiving application	129	ASC shall acknowledge in writing within one (1) week of receipt of the application. The acknowledgement shall indicate whether or not the application is complete.
Reviewing Process	130	ASC may decide to interview the applicant Verifiers when reviewing their application.
	131	ASC may decide to witness a trial verification by applicant Verifiers before taking the approval decision.
	132	The witnessing of the verification may be remote or on-site by an ASC designated staff member or agent, including another experienced approved Verifier.
Rejection	133	The review decision (approved/not approved) shall be taken within a maximum four (4) weeks of receipt of a complete application form. 133.1 ASC shall inform the applicant Verifiers in writing and of specific reason(s), should the application be rejected. 133.2 Applicant Verifiers whose applications were not accepted may re-apply once the reasons for non-acceptance have been effectively addressed.
Approval	134	Upon approval, a service contract shall be signed by ASC and approved Verifiers
Registration Number	135	ASC shall assign a unique registration number for each approved Verifiers and publish agreed details on the website.
Publication on website	136	Once published on the ASC website; approved Verifiers may promote their services using the designation 'Approved ASC-IP Verifier' along with their registration number. 136.1 Any texts related to the Improver Programme by ASC used to promote their service portfolio shall be submitted to ASC for official approval. 136.2 Communicating about the Improver Programme by ASC without prior approval of the text shall result in a Warning Letter and a Yellow Card on the ASC website

Using non-ASC approved materials	137	Approved ASC Improver Programme Verifier may disseminate ASC approved information about the Improver Programme by ASC. 137.1 Using non-ASC approved materials for promoting the Improver Programme by ASC shall result in a Warning Letter and a Yellow Card on the ASC website.
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Improver Programme by ASC Verification

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Assignment from ASC	138	Verifiers shall only receive verification work orders from ASC. 138.1 Approved Verifiers shall follow risk-based instructions in the verification work order. 138.2 Any verification conducted without ASC's knowledge shall be invalid and shall have an effect on Verifier performance evaluation.
Change of assignment	139	A Verifier assigned to an AIP may be changed by ASC depending on circumstances or based on a request from AIP due to competency and/or a lack of professional attitude.
Witnessing by ASC	140	ASC shall have the right to witness any verification with or without prior notice, remotely or in person on site. 140.1 Verifications may be witnessed by ASC staff members or ASC designated agents, including another experienced approved Verifier.

Maintain Qualification

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Maintain Qualification	141	To maintain qualification, the approved Verifiers shall meet ALL requirements specified below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting a verification within a maximum of twelve (12) months after being approved by ASC. • Conducting at least one verification a year. • Participating in training on changes to the Improver Programme by ASC coming into effect. • Participating in Improver Programme by ASC calibration sessions organised by ASC. • Participating and contributing to Improver Programme by ASC discussion forums with other approved Implementers, Verifiers and ASC staff providing technical content to discussions. • Positive feedback/evaluation by the verified AIP(s).
Feedback from AIPs	142	ASC shall have the right to contact verified AIPs to receive their feedback to evaluate the Verifier's performance.
Transparency	143	ASC shall publish the Verifier's Performance on the website on a yearly basis based on a transparent performance evaluation mechanism.

Impartiality of Verifiers and CABs

KEY	NO.	REQUIREMENTS
Conflict of Interests	144	CABs may be involved in ASC AIPs as Verifiers but shall not be involved afterwards in certification of any AIP that the CAB or any member of the audit team has worked with for one full certification cycle of the AIP in question.
	145	<p>Verifiers shall disclose to ASC and any ASC Accredited CABs that they employed, regarding any real or perceived conflicts of interest including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any ASC accredited CABs that the Implementer has worked for, either full time, part time or on a contract basis; • Any involvement with farm groups that were applicants to or Partners in the Improver Programme by ASC.

ANNEX 1: IP by ASC Vocabulary

	TERMS	DEFINITION
A	AIP	Aquaculture Improvement Project
	AIP2ASC	Aquaculture Improvement Project towards ASC Certification
	AIP2BP	Aquaculture Improvement Project towards <u>B</u> etter <u>P</u> ractices
	Applicant AIP	Group or organisation that has prepared, or is preparing to submit an application to be accepted into the Improver Programme by ASC.
	ASC Improver Programme Membership	An establishment organised and hosted by ASC consisting of companies, funds, investors, governments, NGOs, institutes, etc. that support and contribute into the Improver Programme by ASC through membership fees and/or in-kind contribution.
	AIP Partner	Company, producer or any other entity who want to be part of an AIP to improve their own practices/performance or support others within the AIP to improve their practices/performance via in-kind or in-cash contribution. AIP Partner Companies may source product from the AIP(s) that they are engaged in and will report sourcing data to the AIP and Improver Programme by ASC.
C	Claim	Defined message/statement used to communicate about efforts and engagement in the ASC AIPs or the Improver Programme by ASC to set an organisation/company apart. Claims include any public or business to business message/statement or promotional communications. <i>(adapted from ISEAL Sustainability Claim Good Practice Guide)</i>
	Completion indicators and requirements	These are standard indicators and AIP requirements. The AIP can choose when they meet them as long as they are met before the AIP is concluded.
D	Deficiency	Deficiency could be an outcome from self-evaluation, Partner's monitoring or in dependent verification. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in implementing improvement actions or in achieving targets as specified in the Improvement Plan. • Wrong use or abuse of an AIP claim or use without prior approval. • Overselling available product from an AIP.
	Detection Date	4.1 Date of the closing meeting when a non-conformity is reported to a client.

E	Eligible indicators and requirements	Standard indicators and AIP requirements that must be met when applying to ASC be an AIP. These indicators and requirements are non-negotiable and must be met by applicant AIP Partners to be accepted into the Improver Programme by ASC.
	Essential indicators and requirements	These are standard indicators and AIP requirements that must be met at the end of Phase 1 of the AIP Improvement.
F	Funder	An individual, government entity or company that has given funds to an individual AIP or the Improver Programme by ASC.
I	Implementer	An individual or organization that has been approved by ASC to help AIPs to implement the Improver Programme by ASC requirements.
	Investor	An individual, government entity or company that has invested in an AIP or ASC Improver Programme with an expectation to earn a return on the investment.
	Improver Programme by ASC Partner (Member)	Company, funder, investor, government, NGO, institute or any other entity who has an interest in and supports the Improver Programme by ASC through a membership fee and/or in-kind contribution (e.g. research, capacity development, etc.). Improver Programme by ASC Partners are subject to verification of their claims and their actual contribution and/or sourcing practices.
P	Key Production/Processing Data	Key data at farm and processor levels required by the Improver Programme by ASC to enable monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of the programme and managing the product volumes produced by AIPs.
M	Mandatory indicators and requirements	These are standard indicators and AIP requirements that must be met by a certain % at each phase of the AIP Improvement Plan. Improvement areas proposed by the AIP with the objective AIP2BP are automatically mandatory requirements. Mandatory indicators and requirements are directly linked to the production of aquaculture species.
V	Verification	Independent confirmation of the self-evaluation results with regard to progress made in implementing the AIP's Improvement Plan through the provision of objective evidence. Verification for an AIP is conducted by an independent Verifier appointed by ASC. <i>(Adapted from ISO 22095:2020)</i>
	Verifier	An individual that has been approved by ASC to evaluate the implementation of ASC active AIPs.

ANNEX 2: Document Master List

Normative Documents

CODE	USER	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE
XX	ALL	Improver Programme Requirements	This document

Template / Form

CODE	USER	DOCUMENT NAME	SOURCE
B1	AIP	AIP Manager Nomination Form	
B2	AIP Partners	ASC AIP Partnership Agreement	
B3	AIP	AIP Registration form. (Farm site & Partners)	
B4	AIP	AIP Application	
B4A	AIP	Change of Scope	
B5	ASC & AIP	ASC/AIP Agreement	
B6	AIP & Implementer	AIP Gap Analysis and Improvement Plan Template for AIP	
B7	Verifier	Verification Report	
B8	ASC & ASC Improver Programme Partners	Improver Programme by ASC Partner Agreement	
B9			
B10	AIP	Project Deadline Extension	
B11		AIP Complaint or Appeal.	
B12	Implementer	Implementer 's Performance Evaluation	
B13	AIP	Implementer Appointment	
B14	AIP & Implementer	AIP Gap Analysis Template for CoC	