

# ASC Certification and Labelling Program

Duncan Leadbitter

Commercial Manager – Australia and New Zealand

July 2024



**Setting The  
Standard for  
Seafood**



# The Aquaculture Stewardship Council

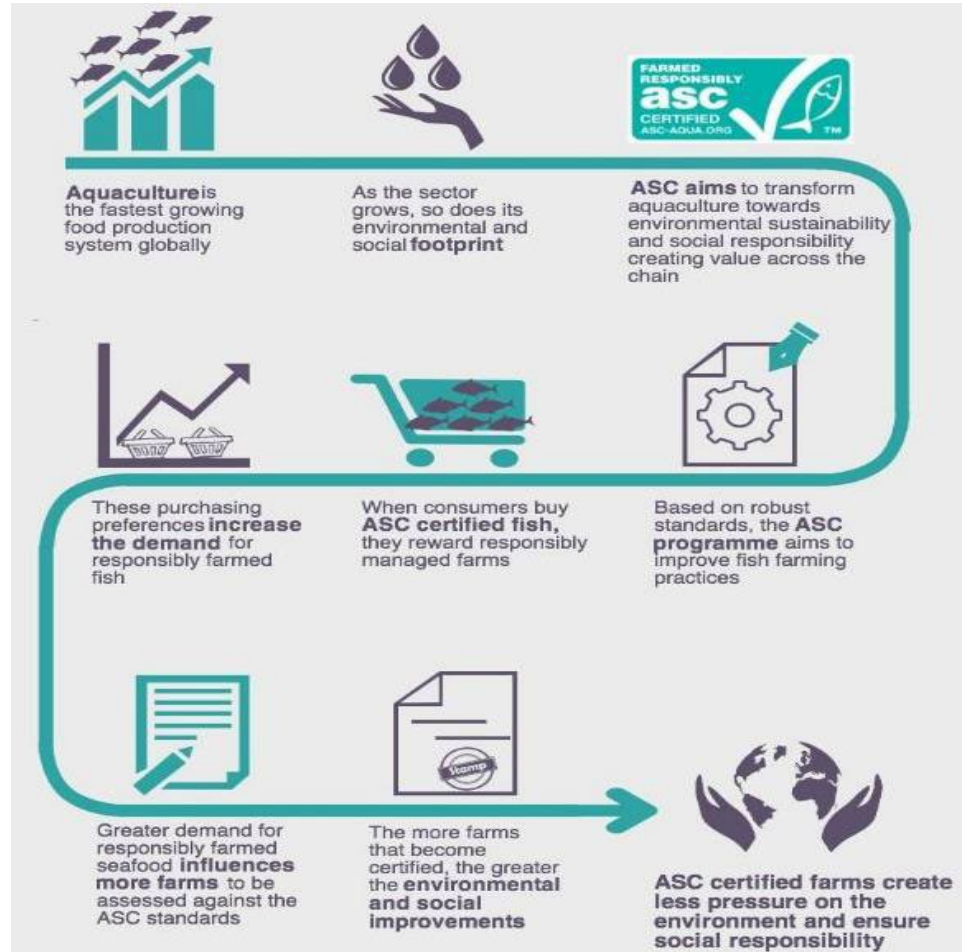
## General background and overview

- Independent, not-for-profit certification & labelling program
- Established in 2010: WWF & IDH
- Global, market-based & voluntary
- Based on science & transparency
- Work with industry, NGOs and all others who want to participate

# Theory of Change

## Market based program

Harness informed consumer demand to drive change in aquaculture development and management practices via a rigorous and transparent certification and labelling program based on international standards created and agreed by multiple stakeholders



# ASC program

**“Consumer trust requires information about origin and credible label”**



**Farm certification**



**Chain of Custody Certification**  
*Shared platform with MSC*



**Product approval**

# 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification programme



- Rules for standard development
- Rules for certification and accreditation requirements
- Rules for governance
- Guidance for M&E and impact



- Manages program
- Owns ASC Standards
- Owns ASC-logo
- Standard development & revision
- Monitoring & Evaluation



- 'Accredits' certification companies
- Monitors performance of certification companies



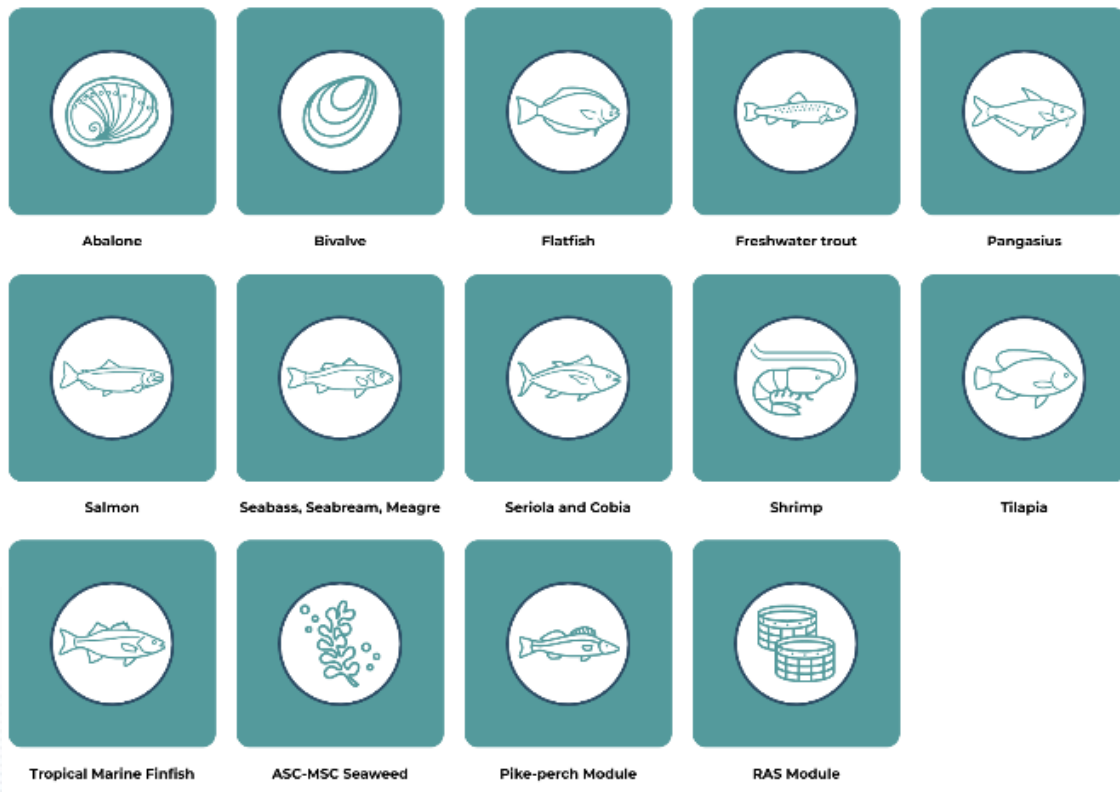
- Voluntarily chooses ASC certification
- Hires certification company



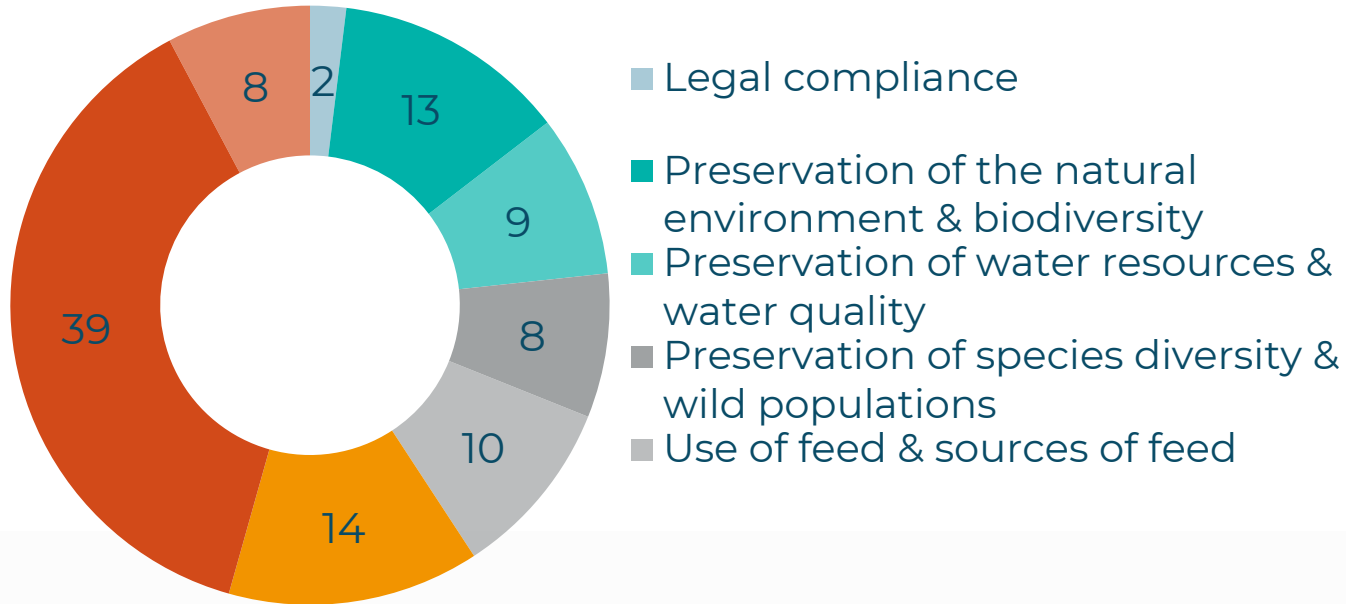
# The ASC Standards

- 9 + 1 Species based Farm Standards – a shared seaweed standard with MSC
- Now a Feed Standard and two specific modules
- 7 Principles - Addressing the key impacts on Environment, Social & Community
- Performance indicators setting ‘thresholds’
- Disclosure of monitoring data
- Stakeholder consultation  
Multi-stakeholder “Aquaculture Dialogues”
- Continuous improvement: 3-5 year cycle (ISEAL)

# Current standards – some may have more than one species

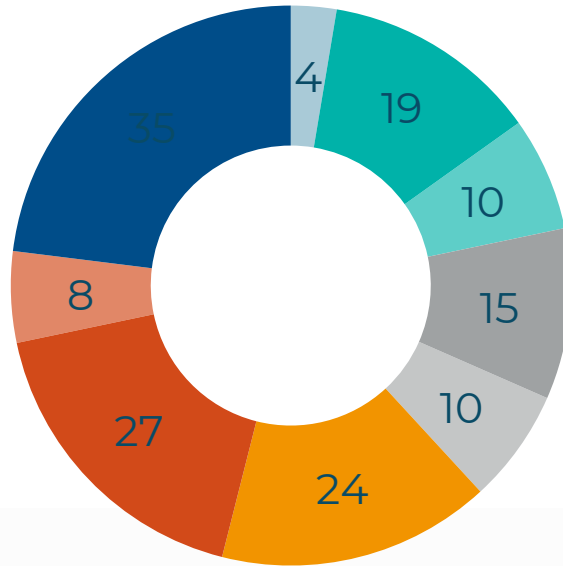


# The ASC Shrimp Standard





# The ASC Salmon Standard



- Legal compliance
- Preservation of the natural environment & biodiversity
- Preservation of water resources & water quality
- Preservation of species diversity & wild populations
- Use of feed & sources of feed
- Good animal health & husbandry

# Environmental principles

- Legal compliance
- Preservation of the natural environment & biodiversity
- Preservation of water resources & water quality
- Preservation of species diversity & wild populations
- Use of feed & other resources sourced responsibly
- Good animal health & husbandry





# Social and community principles

Based on UN ILO conventions, e.g.:

- No child labour
- No forced labour
- No discrimination
- No abusive disciplinary practices
- No excessive working hours
- Freedom of association
- Fair & decent wages
- Health & safety for working and living on the farm



# Social & community principles

Including the communities:

- Assessment of the farm's social impacts, e.g. fishermen, neighbours
- Consultation with communities, e.g. for farm expansion
- Seek & address stakeholder concerns via conflict resolution policy
- Allow public access to resources

# The process is very transparent

Timetable is indicative and generally takes longer



# Current status

Globally and in  
Australia as of June  
2024

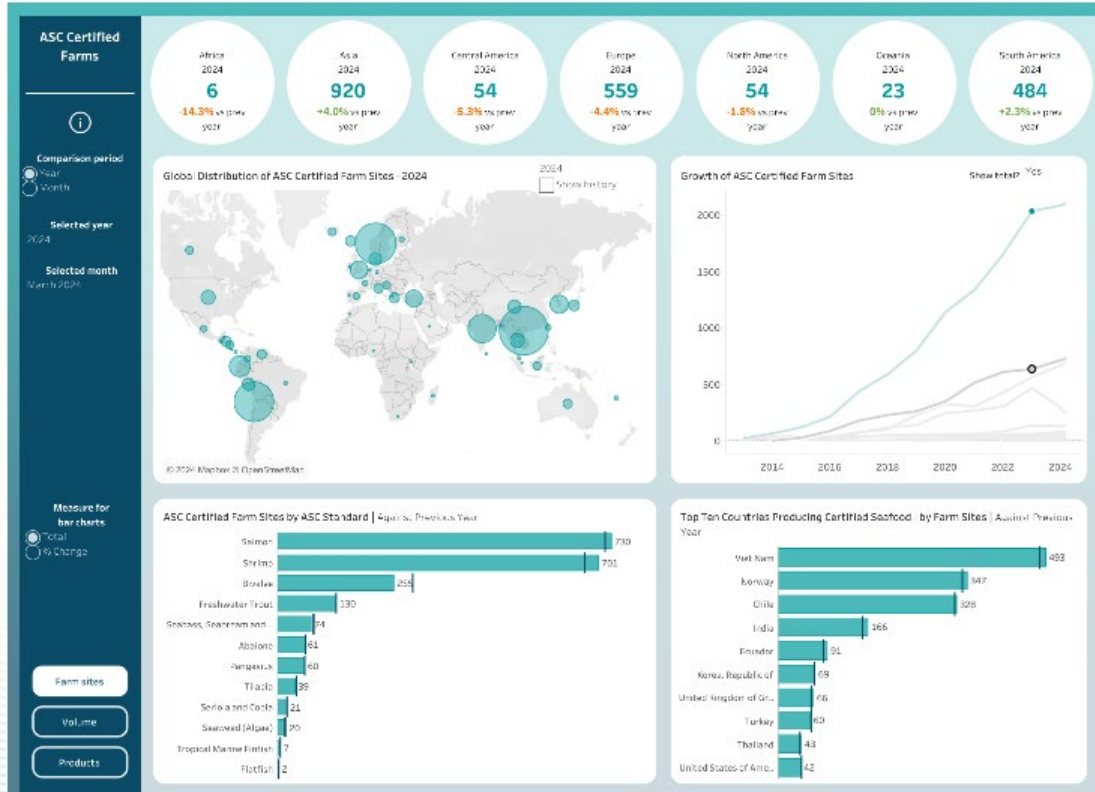


Setting The  
Standard for  
Seafood



# The ASC has grown strongly since created

Growth in numbers of species certified, area of farms and more



# in Australia

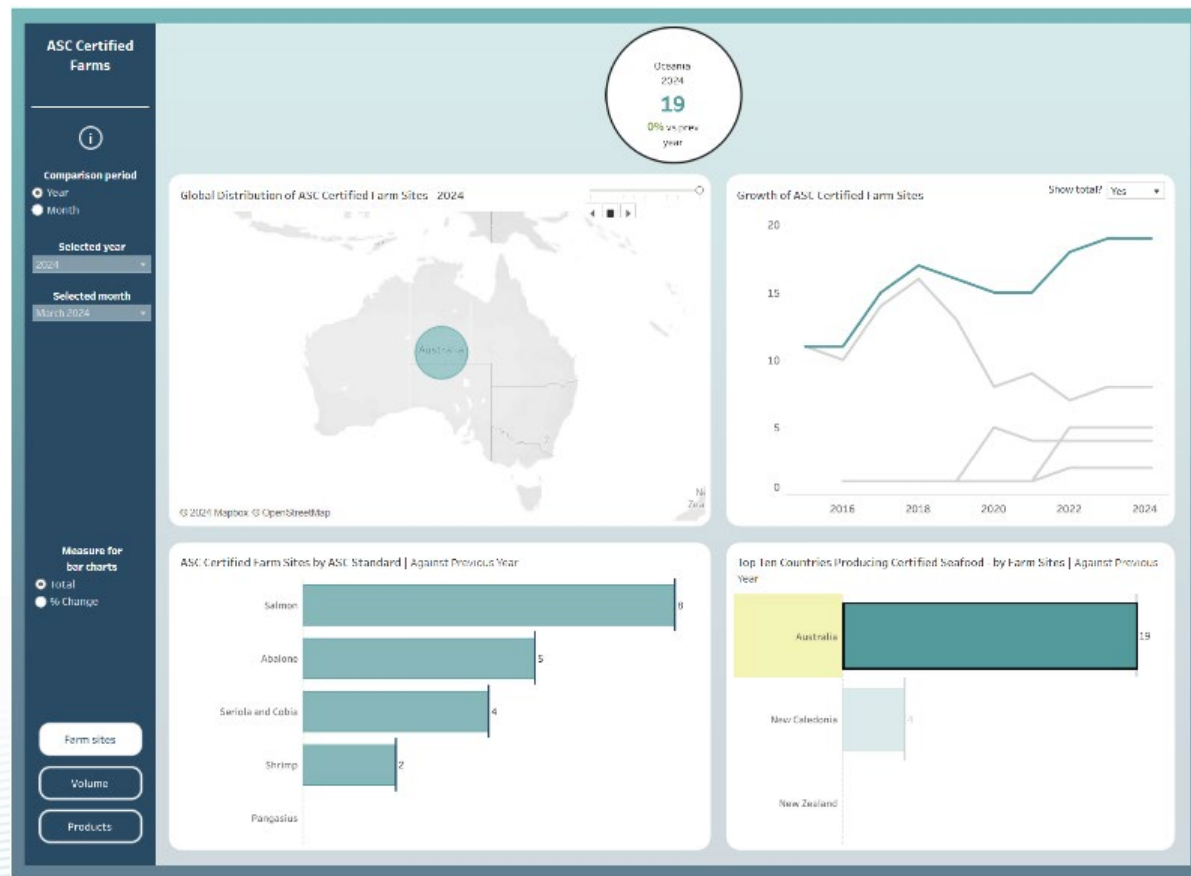
- Low volumes but diverse species mix which reflects Australian seafood production
- Currently
- Early growth was Atlantic salmon but this has expanded to include yellowtail kingfish, black tiger prawns and two species of abalone
- Currently about 100 labeled products in Australia – dominated by imported salmon, prawns, barramundi, pangasius, oysters, mussels and trout.



# Australia – farm overview

Decline in certified  
salmon farms in  
Macquarie  
Harbour evident  
after 2017

New species come  
onboard from 2018



# And in Australia

Modest growth in farms and products

Low volumes but diverse species mix which reflects Australian seafood production  
Currently

Early growth was Atlantic salmon but this has expanded to include yellowtail kingfish, black tiger prawns and two species of abalone

Currently about 100 labeled products in Australia – dominated by imported salmon, prawns, barramundi, pangasius, oysters, mussels and trout.

**50 ASC  
certified  
species in  
production**

**99 countries  
in which  
ASC  
certified  
seafood can  
be  
purchased**

**1193 master  
brands  
delivering  
the ASC  
logo to  
customers**



Founding partners



GLOBAL SALMON INITIATIVE



Nomad Foods



# ASC Supporters

# And at the customer end –

the logo is there to attract attention and it is the symbol of the degree of scrutiny and hard work involved



# What does ASC bring?



Setting The  
Standard for  
Seafood

# How the ASC adds value

- Credible claim, trusted ASC logo
- Rigorous third party verification
- Key impacts of farming
- Transparency: audit reports
- Consultation during farm assessment
- Traceability of products (CoC)
- Global benchmark
- Positive marketing and story-telling
- Reassurance and consumer trust
- Impact



# Making a difference – positive impacts

We track the improvement requirements required of farms by the certifiers on an annual basis. These data are for 2022



**1,488 Improvement to drive environmental responsibility**



**720 Improvements to drive social responsibility**



# And more is coming

## Updated and aligned farm standard

New consolidated farm standard that bring together all the requirements common to each species and resolves inconsistencies. It also updates each of the principles and adds new indicators such as new requirements for animal welfare. Consultation phase recently completed and it should be released in early 2025

## Aquaculture Improvement Program

Rollout of Aquaculture Improvement Program (AIP). This has been in development for about 3 years focusing on shrimp farming in Asia. The program brings together farm experts to work with farmers (especially small scale) to improve performance to meet the ASC Standard. Will be rolled out to other species in the future

# Further questions?



**Setting The  
Standard for  
Seafood**

**Aquaculture Stewardship Council  
Daalseplein 101, 3511 SX, Utrecht, Netherlands  
Tel: +31 30 230 5929**

**[www.asc-aqua.org](http://www.asc-aqua.org)  
[communication@asc-aqua.org](mailto:communication@asc-aqua.org)  
Aquaculture Stewardship Council, 2016**

Aquaculture Stewardship Council Limited, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3AX. The ASC is a charity registered in England and Wales no 1150418. A non-profit making company limited by guarantee. Registered in England no 08172832. The ASC logo is a registered trademark.