

Seafood Certifications and Voluntary Labor Standards

Seafood Certifications with Social Elements and Certification Initiatives

This document provides a list of certification programs with social components; the list is not exhaustive and does not include all seafood certifications. The information provided was submitted by the certification programs. This document is intended for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice nor as providing recommendations or endorsements of any kind. Readers should always refer to the original reference source for complete information and important contextual background such as the scope and objectives of the specific resource.

To learn specific social responsibility information collected by these certifications, please reference [Social Responsibility Information for Seafood Supply Chains: A Compilation of Resources](#).

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AENOR

AENOR is a Certification body that operates in a range of sectors, with agrifood as its core sector. AENOR has been leading conformity assessments in Spain since its creation in 1986 and now has local offices in all the Spanish Regions, in Central America, and in a number of countries, including Italy, Portugal, China, Morocco, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico. AENOR carries out a range of Social Responsibility audits and certifications schemes, including [SA 8000](#) and [SR 10](#). In 2016, AENOR launched the [APR \(Tuna from Responsible Fishing\)](#) Certification Scheme, which aligns with the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188). The Scheme is based on

the national standard [UNE 195006](#), which specifies requirements for Working Conditions, Fishing Activity Control, Sanitary Control, Maritime Control, and Good Fishing Practices. As of 2021, vessels responsible for 12 percent of the world's total tuna catch are certified under the APR certification. Only tuna from vessels that meet the APR standard can be sold with the AENOR APR label.

[Aquaculture Stewardship Council \(ASC\)](#)

The Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) is a global organization working with aquaculture producers, seafood processors, retail and foodservice companies, scientists, conservation groups and the public to promote environmental and social certification and labelling program for responsibly farmed seafood. The ASC operates with Chain of Custody (CoC) certification to ensure traceability, which includes certifying environmental, social and economic aspects of the supply chain. Social and economic issues considered during the audit process include: labor rights and conditions, gender rights, cultural rights, social services, income, and value chain fairness. Launched in January 2012, the ASC set up the CoC requirements and procedures with the Marine Stewardship Council (see more details under the MSC section of this report) and uses standards developed according to ISEAL guidelines.

Founded in 2010 by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Dutch Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH), the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) is an independent not for profit organization with global influence. ASC aims to be the world's leading certification and labelling program for responsibly farmed seafood. The ASC's primary role is to manage the global standards for responsible aquaculture, which were developed by the WWF Aquaculture Dialogues. For ASC, CoC is certified through application of the MSC CoC, to which ASC CoC requirements have been added as a scope, to ASC certified aquaculture products. Only products that originate in ASC certified farms and are sold through an MSC certified CoC (with ASC CoC scope) are eligible to carry the ASC ecolabel. ASC standards include social criteria which state that aquaculture should be undertaken in a socially responsible manner that ensures that the operations do not negatively impact farm workers and local communities. This includes criteria regarding the labor rights of individuals, and labor requirements in ASC standards are based on the core principles of the International Labor Organization (ILO).

[Fair Trade Certified Seafood](#)

For over 20 years, Fair Trade USA® has been supporting producer and worker communities across industries to ensure products are made according to fair trade standards which drive income sustainability, community and individual well-being, empowerment, and environmental stewardship. In 2014, Fair Trade USA launched its seafood program to bring those benefits to fishers, fish farmers, and seafood processing workers because addressing social and environmental challenges in fisheries and aquaculture while running a seafood business is complex. Companies require comprehensive solutions that reduce supply chain risk and is trusted by customers.

Fair Trade USA's seafood program offers a complete solution that aims to build strong communities by ensuring financially stable families, safe working conditions, access to services through community development premium investments, and biologically healthy ecosystems.

- Fair Trade's certification covers social, economic, and environmental challenges and includes traceability requirements – with hands-on support throughout the process.
- The Fair Trade Certified™ label has high recognition in the U.S. market, with marketing and sales support to showcase industry leadership on navigating the complex issues of social, economic, and environmental challenges within seafood.
- The Fair Trade Premium gives a portion of product sales back to the producers and workers businesses rely on. This investment strengthens supply chains and staff relationships while creating visible improvements in local communities.

Fair Trade USA is more than a certification – it's a partnership in working to increase market recognition while reducing risk and improving the livelihoods of the people upon which business depends.

[FISH \(Fairness, Integrity, Safety and Health\) Standard for Crew](#)

The Fairness, Integrity, Safety, and Health (FISH) Standard for Crew is a voluntary, third party labour certification program for crew on wild harvest fishing vessels. FISH is a business-to-business model that enables responsible harvesters, and those who purchase and sell their seafood, to assure stakeholders the seafood harvested comes from responsible sources with respect to crew treatment, compensation, and conditions. FISH was developed with input from the full seafood supply chain, from large and small harvesters to processors to retailer and restaurant groups to create a global program. It is adapted primarily from the International Labour Organization (ILO) Work in Fishing Convention, 2007, Number 188 (ILO C188) and related ILO Guidance Number 199 (R199). The Standard also reflects the intent of the International Maritime Organisation Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels, 1977 and incorporates elements from the IMO International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F) and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The Standard is also aligned with the work of the Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative - the Consumer Goods Forum-initiated work to benchmark third party certification systems for labour conditions. FISH has requirements for accreditation of certification bodies and competency of its auditors. FISH allows for individual, company, and group level certifications. FISH is focused on the mission of third-party certification of labor on vessels and is positioned to serve as a complement to existing programs addressing fisheries sustainability, food safety, and labour in land-based facilities.

[Friend of the Sea \(FOS\)](#)

Friend of the Sea (FOS) – a Nonprofit organization – is committed to improving the global sustainability of seafood by developing international certification programs for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. FOS criteria follow the FAO Guidelines for eco-labeling and include a social component to the audit. Audit checklists are available to download from the FOS website. All the checklists include a social accountability section that has four requirements: compliance with international and ILO directives regarding child labor, remunerating workers with salaries conforming at least to the legal minimum, assuring workers' access to medical care, and applying safety measures www.riseseafood.org in accordance with legal requirements. FOS also recommends that organizations should be SA8000

certified (see SA8000 –Social Accountability in this section for more information), which is a standard based on ILO, UN, and national laws that cover child labor, forced labor, health and safety issues, working hours, and disciplinary practices, in addition to other relevant standards. These audits are conducted by independent Certification Bodies accredited by the National Accreditation Bodies.

[Global Aquaculture Alliance \(GAA\) Best Aquaculture Practices \(BAP\)](#)

A division of the Global Aquaculture Alliance, Best Aquaculture Practices is an international certification program based on achievable, science-based and continuously improved performance standards for the entire aquaculture production chain – including processing plants, farms, hatcheries and feed mills. BAP standards are the most comprehensive for farmed seafood, covering environmental responsibility, social accountability, food safety and animal welfare. The BAP program is based on independent audits that evaluate compliance with the BAP standards developed by GAA.

[GLOBALG.A.P. Aquaculture Standard](#)

The GLOBALG.A.P. Aquaculture Standard Aquaculture - Finfish, Crustaceans, Molluscs and Seaweed operates under a third party accredited certification system. To claim certified status at point of sale, all stages of production must be certified: feed, seedlings, farming, and post-harvest activities. Certification is linked to the scientific name of the product. GLOBALG.A.P. is the only recognized scheme for food safety at farm level by the GFSI. GLOBALG.A.P. Aquaculture Certification requires the Integrated Farm Assurance All Farm and Aquaculture Modules, the Chain of Custody Standard, and the Compound Feed Manufacturing Standard. The new voluntary Responsible Operations Standard add-on for feed mills supplying to GLOBALG.A.P. certified farms adds social, environmental, and marine sourcing sustainable criteria to the compulsory food safety requirements and good manufacturing practices. There are currently 30 species certified under this system in 35 countries worldwide. Recall/withdrawal mock tests are mandatory and must be performed annually.

GLOBALG.A.P. (Good Agriculture Practice) is a global organization that sets voluntary standards for the certification of agricultural products around the world. The GLOBALG.A.P. aquaculture standard covers the complete holistic approach: food safety, environment including biodiversity, traceability, animal health and welfare, workers occupational health & safety and welfare. The standard covers the entire product chain from feed to hatcheries and farms and chain of custody. In addition, GLOBALG.A.P. offers GRASP, which stands www.riseseafood.org for GLOBALG.A.P. risk assessment on social practice. GRASP is compulsory for the aquaculture scope with full compliance required for labeled products.

[International Transport Workers' Federation \(ITF\) Blue Certificate](#)

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), together with ILO social partners, has come up with a set of policies to establish minimum standards for workers in the fishing industry, ILO Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (ILO C188), which is yet to be ratified by sufficient countries to see it come into force. ITF has a set of policies applicable to seafarers (specifically, the shipping industry) that could also be applied to fishing vessels, including those flying the flag of a country that ITF has identified as a flag of convenience (FOC; see 'Challenges'). According to the ITF's website, 'all FOC vessels covered by

an ITF- acceptable agreement are issued an ITF Blue Certificate by the ITF Secretariat, which signifies the ITF's acceptance of the wages and working conditions on board.' Certification compliance is monitored by a network of over 130 ITF inspectors in ports throughout the globe.

[Marine Stewardship Council \(MSC\)](#)

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is a global nonprofit organization working with partners around the world to keep oceans healthy and full of life through sustainable fishing. The program, which is voluntary, encourages responsible fishing management and sustainable fishing practices to protect the future of fishing communities, preserve ocean ecosystems, and ensure seafood is available to everyone, always.

Developed in coordination with scientists, conservation groups, industry, and stakeholders, the MSC Standard is the global gold standard for wild caught sustainable seafood. To become certified, fisheries enter a rigorous, impartial, transparent, and traceable process. Only seafood from fisheries that meet the MSC's strict standard for sustainability can be sold with the MSC blue fish label.

The Marine Stewardship Council condemns the use of forced or child labor and recognizes the importance of social issues when considering sustainability. Any entity convicted for forced or child labour is ineligible to participate in the MSC. All fisheries in the MSC program must complete and submit a Certificate Holder Forced and Child Labor Policies, Practices and Measures template, detailing the measures they have in place to mitigate the presence of forced or child labor. If a fishery does not submit the appropriate template, the fishery will not be eligible for certification and existing certificates will be suspended. The MSC also requires all chain of custody certificate holders to undergo independent labour audits or submit a self-assessment form depending on country and activity-based risk scoring tools.

[Naturland Organic Aquaculture and Sustainable Capture Fishery](#)

Naturland Organic Aquaculture and Sustainable Capture Fishery Naturland is one of the major international associations for organic agriculture and promotes organic farming worldwide. Currently over 100,000 farmers, bee-keepers, fish farmers and fishers in 60 countries are working according to the Naturland standards. At Naturland, organic applies to lives in water, too. With its standards on Organic Aquaculture, Naturland transferred the organic and social principles to the production of fish and seafood and with its standards on Sustainable Capture Fishery created a framework for sustainable fishery of wildfish. The Naturland understanding of sustainability also includes the social aspect and thus the situation of the people in their working and living environments. That is why the social conditions found both onboard ship and on fish farms, certified to the Naturland standards, come under scrutiny during the inspection procedure. Wherever they are in the world, conformity is required with the Naturland Social Responsibility standards. With reference to such UN conventions as those on human and children's rights, and the core labour standards of the International Labour Organization, they govern working conditions and protect the employees. The standards include the prohibition of exploitative child labour and any form of forced labour, as well as a guarantee of freedom of assembly and access to trade unions. Other key aspects are the adoption of measures on health and safety at the

workplace, equality and opportunities for further training. With its supplementary certification Naturland Fair, Naturland combines organic and fair trade under one logo which is applied to products from both the north and the south. Because aquaculture farmers, fishermen and workers must get a fair deal for their hard work. With the Naturland Fair standards Naturland has established a set of stringent and obligatory standards. Naturland Fair partners pay fair prices to the producers, cultivate long-term, co-operative trading relationships and acknowledge their social responsibility. Procuring raw materials from local sources and commitment to communal projects contribute to the common good.

[Seafish Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard \(RFVS\)](#)

Administered by Global Seafood Assurances (GSA), the Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard (RFVS) was developed by GSA through a two-year process to enable fishing operations to provide audited assurance of decent working conditions for workers and operational best practices from “catch to shore.” The RFVS provides assurances that seafood supply chains are free of human rights abuses; that fishing crews are treated fairly, trained appropriately, and are working in safe conditions with payment, meals and rest time provided.

[Seafood Task Force Vessel Auditable Standards \(VAS\)](#)

The Seafood Task Force (STF) is a non-profit, business-led coalition built on the necessity for better accountability, transparency and oversight in seafood supply chains.

The STF vision is a future where the supply chains of its members are fully traceable, free from the risk of human rights violations and free from environmental degradation.

The STF’s priority is to implement programmes that tackle the deep-rooted issues and some of the most complex challenges faced by the seafood industry that can’t be addressed sufficiently by certification alone.

STF sets traceability, social and environmental standards through its [STF Code of Conduct](#) and [guidance documents](#). All STF members are required to sign a membership agreement demonstrating a commitment to implement the Code and to take an active role in the STF’s annual programme and action plan.