

# Joint Commitment to Aquaculture Sustainability



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Fair Trade USA (FTUSA) has long been a driver of sustainable livelihoods, social responsibility, and community development, via the application of robust and credible social and economic standards that support farms, fisheries, and factories in a transition towards improved social welfare and environmental sustainability. The Capture Fisheries Standard for wild fisheries has been the cornerstone of the Fair Trade seafood program. Since its inception in 2014 the program has generated nearly \$1,000,000 in community development premium for fishermen, workers, and their communities.

To build upon this success and recognizing the value of collaboration, FTUSA and the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) [signed a Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) to deliver more socially and environmentally beneficial impact from aquaculture and to improve the livelihoods of farmers, workers, and the environment using the partners' proven models. The ASC offers a leading science-based certification program promoting responsible aquaculture production, while Fair Trade USA has a proven model for workplace safety, producer empowerment, and community and individual well-being. The expertise of both organizations will contribute to the shared goal of furthering improvement of social and environmental performance of the aquaculture sector and the prosperity of the individuals working in the industry.

The producer context for aquaculture is similar to that of agriculture in terms of the challenges faced by small-scale producers and by workers on larger farms, making the Fair Trade model a good fit for this industry. In an effort to improve the lives of the estimated 19 million aquaculture workers around the world, the partners will firstly pilot the systems, operations, implementation, and auditing of the FTUSA Agricultural Production Standard (APS) on certain ASC-certified farms to test the applicability of its use in an aquaculture setting. Over the next year we will be field testing the APS, consulting with stakeholders to ensure key issues are addressed in the development of FTUSA's aquaculture program and using learnings to finalize our approach to aquaculture certification.

Fair Trade USA and ASC have had remarkable success driving better performance, accountability, and improving livelihoods through certification. Partnerships between complementary systems such as these can leverage systems efficiencies to reduce barriers and deliver efficient pathways for those that choose to seek certification. Future stages of collaboration will jointly explore how to drive greater improvement through the synergies between ASC's new Improver Program and FTUSA's aquaculture program.

The Standards Team at Fair Trade USA is leading the process to expand the scope of the APS to include aquaculture. During this project, Fair Trade USA will hold opportunities to comment on the draft expansion of scope of the standard including at least one public comment period. Interested stakeholders should visit our website for more information and email us at [standards@fairtradeusa.org](mailto:standards@fairtradeusa.org) with questions, comments, or if you would like to be contacted at the start of the public comment period.

