

Freshwater Trout Aquaculture Dialogue Process Guidance Document

Overview

The purpose of this document is to describe the process that the Freshwater Trout Aquaculture Dialogue (FTAD) will use to develop consensus-based environmental and social standards.

The Dialogue's goal is to develop measurable standards that minimize the key environmental and social impacts associated with freshwater trout farming, while ensuring product quality and economic viability.

The Dialogue, a science-based forum initiated by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in 2008, is open to anybody and includes a wide range of stakeholders, such as producers and other members of the market chain, researchers, NGOs, government officials and investors.

The process for the FTAD is based on the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling (ISEAL) Alliance's Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards. The guidelines emphasize the need for the standards to be:

- Created by a broad and diverse set of stakeholders
- Based on consensus
- Developed through a transparent process
- Science-based
- Measurable and performance-based

The key components of the Dialogue are:

Initial Outreach: The Dialogue is convening a series of public meetings to inform stakeholders about the process, solicit input on the process and begin drafting standards.

Structure Decision-Making: The Dialogue will create a Steering Committee (SC) of up to 10 people who are responsible for making all final decisions related to the process and standards. The roles, responsibility and composition of the steering committee are described below, along with the SC's decision-making protocol. The steering committee ratifies this document, which is an addendum to the *Aquaculture Dialogues Process Guidance Document* that encompasses all of the Aquaculture Dialogues.

Develop Draft Standards: The SC is responsible for developing the standards based on input from the public Dialogue meetings. The SC can create technical working groups and draw on other resources to help inform its work.

Second-Stage Outreach: The Dialogue will provide a period for public comment on the draft standards and may hold additional meetings. Details of the comment period are provided below.

Finalize: The SC will incorporate feedback from the public comment period and stakeholder meetings into a final version of the standards.

Additional information on the Dialogue process is available in the *Aquaculture Dialogues Process Guidance Document* at:

<http://www.worldwildlife.org/what/globalmarkets/aquaculture/WWFBinaryitem9674.pdf>

FTAD Governance and Decision Making

1) Decision Making Body

- a) The SC is the primary decision making body of the FTAD and is composed of up to **10** people representing a range of geographic regions and stakeholder groups. To achieve a balanced composition, the SC should aim to have 3 NGO representatives, 3 producer representatives, 1 feed manufacturer, 1 retailer and 1 researcher/academic. The SC should also aim to include a diversity of geographic representation that reflects trout producing countries. The SC currently includes:

Niels Alsted: BioMar

Dawn Purchase: Marine Conservation Society

David Basset: Federation of European Aquaculture Producers

Luz Arregui: Tres Mares

Jose Villalon: World Wildlife Fund

- b) Nominations for the SC will be accepted at full Dialogue meetings and up to two weeks afterwards. Current committee members will select additional SC members based on the criteria listed above to ensure a balanced representation. The SC may choose to add committee members in between full Dialogue meetings if there is an urgent need to enhance stakeholder representation on the committee.
- c) SC decisions will be informed by Dialogue participants, technical working groups, advisory groups and external stakeholders. See *Aquaculture Dialogues Process Guidance Document* for definitions of these terms.

FTAD Decision Making Protocol

- 1) **Consensus:** Consensus is the primary form of decision making of the SC. The definition of “consensus” applies to the SC decision making process for standards, as well as other key decisions (e.g., process and communications). The SC uses the definition of “consensus” used by the International Organization of Standards (ISO¹), which is:

“General agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process seeking to take into account the views of interested parties, particularly those directly affected, and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. Consensus need not imply unanimity.”

i) Clarifying terms in the ISO definition

- (1) *Sustained opposition* - Sustained opposition means that an important part of concerned interests has indicated, despite meaningful discussion of an issue, that the position or solution put forward continues to be unacceptable to that interest.
- (2) *Substantial issues*- Issues that materially affect the standards or decision being taken as appropriate.
- (3) *Important part of concerned interests* - Clearly recognized representative of a segment of concerned interests that have been engaged in the discussions as a member of the decision-making body, such as all Steering Committee members.
- (4) *Interested parties* - Any party that has participated substantively in the dialogue process, including those outside the Steering Committee, that may present issues for the steering committee to debate and decide.
- (5) *Directly affected* - Includes those whose lives or livelihoods would be altered by the proposed decision or standard financially or otherwise, as well as the affected public.
- (6) *Consensus need not imply unanimity*- Under consensus, one or more parties may not fully agree with a decision, but is able to accept it.

2) *Alternate decision-making protocol*: In the case that consensus cannot be reached, the SC will use the following alternate decision-making protocol.

1. Supermajority voting will, if necessary, be used by the SC to approve measures and make decisions. The SC will seek unanimity but settle for overwhelming agreement after every effort has been made to address outstanding concerns.
2. A provision will pass with 75 percent majority vote and no major opposition from the two largest stakeholder groups on the Steering Committee (producers and NGOs). No major opposition means that a provision won't pass if a majority of NGO representatives or a majority of producer representatives oppose it. Minority viewpoints will be documented along with all outstanding concerns.
3. Any member of the SC can call for a straw poll at any time during deliberations.
4. A provision will only go to a vote after ample time and effort has been given to trying to achieve consensus. This includes developing technical working groups

and committees to work through difficult issues first. Voting will only be conducted for the entire suite of principles, criteria, indicators, and standards and not for piecemeal issues.

5. The decision to move to voting from consensus can be taken by a move by one SC member and a second of that motion from a SC member of another sector.

FTAD Conflict Resolution

It is possible that irresolvable conflict may develop within the SC or the broader FTAD as we move closer to standards. All attempts will be made to resolve conflicts internally.

However, in case this is not possible, WWF, as the dialogue convener, will identify two to three mutually acceptable professional mediators who can be called on if irresolvable conflict develops. The SC will be expected to fund the costs of mediators if conflicts cannot be addressed internally.

Public Comment Process for Draft Standards

Draft standards will be posted for public comment on the Freshwater Trout Aquaculture Dialogue website. At a minimum, request for comments will be made via email to the Freshwater Trout Aquaculture Dialogue distribution list.

1) Public Comment on Draft Standards

- a) A formal 60-day public comment period on the draft standards will not begin until there is a complete package of principles, criteria, indicators, and standards ready for comment.
- b) At the end of the comment period, all comments will be posted with attribution.
- c) The SC will review all comments and all comments will be considered in the revision of the suite of standards.
- d) Within 30 days of the close of the public comment period, the SC will post a response to the body of comments as a whole or responses to individual comments as is deemed most appropriate. Simultaneously, a final revised suite of standards will be distributed.
- e) The SC will offer a second public comment period of approximately 30 days to review the revised document, after which the SC will review all comments and develop final standards. The final standards will be posted on the Freshwater Trout Dialogue website.

ⁱ ISO is the International Organization for Standardization—it is a legal association that consists of national standards institutes from 157 member countries. ISO facilitates the development of international standards (ranging from industrial to technical and quality management standards) and the widespread adoption of them in order to break down barriers to trade.