

Seriola and Cobia Aquaculture Dialogue (SCAD)

Process Guidance Document (version 5: 28 February 2011)

This document outlines key process elements of the SCAD. It builds off of the *Aquaculture Dialogues Process Guidance Document*, a broader document that relates to all of the Aquaculture Dialogues which is available at:

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

Scope

The purpose of the SCAD is to create standards that will minimize the key impacts of Seriola/Cobia aquaculture and move producers towards better performance. The process is open to stakeholders anywhere and the SCAD seeks to bring together a wide range of stakeholders, such as producers and other members of the supply chain, researchers, NGOs, government officials and investors to engage in collaborative and voluntary standard setting. To ensure that as wide a range of stakeholders as possible will have the information and opportunity to engage in the SCAD process, stakeholders worldwide will be informed about the dialogue and encouraged to participate in SCAD events, to review the outputs and to comment on the draft standards.

Governance and Decision Making

1) Decision-Making Body

a) The SCAD Steering Committee (SC) is the primary decision-making body of the SCAD. The SC is made up of at least 4 representatives selected from both industry and the environment community.

b) SC decisions will be informed by the full SCAD meetings, any technical working groups that are established and the input of stakeholders. See *Aquaculture Dialogues Process Guidance Document* for definitions of these terms.

c) The SC is currently composed of the following stakeholders, represented by the individuals listed below:

- Dan Benetti/Aaron Welch, University of Miami
- Bill Harris/Steve Craig, Virginia Cobia Farms
- George Leonard, Ocean Conservancy
- Neil Sims, Kona Blue
- Jose Villalon, WWF-US

2) Expanding the SCAD SC Membership (as needed)

a) Process:

- 1) SC members identify potential new candidate members, with due regard for the balance of representation on the SC.
- 2) New candidate member suggestions must be approved by all SC members.

- 3) Upon approval, the SCAD Coordinator will contact the proposed new member to determine their interest and availability to join the SC

b) Criteria for SCAD SC Membership:

The SC is composed of volunteers and by people who are interested in the process and are willing to commit the time to do the work.

- 1) Add representative and technical value to ongoing dialogue and debate.
- 2) Support consensus-based decision-making (past, present, and future)
- 3) Commit to attend and/ or fully participate in all GSC meetings.
- 4) Good command of written and verbal English.
- 5) Commitment to the theory of change of the aquaculture dialogues and the accompanying goals for certification -- which includes accepting that there are significant social and environmental impacts of the marine fin fish farming industry in some places.
- 6) Understanding that the SC is developing an international, multi-species performance based standard using a consensus-based process.
- 7) Willing to help to improve the standards in a constructive way by adapting the chosen criteria and indicators in order to cover the identified risks in an applicable manner.
- 8) Provision all relevant background information to ensure sufficient screening.

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 (ISO), 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 following alternate decision-making protocol will be used by the SC.

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, with no major opposition from any one stakeholder category. 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 GSC member and a second of that motion from a SC member of another sector.

Conflict Resolution

It is possible that irresolvable conflict may develop within the SC or the broader SCAD. All attempts will be made to resolve conflicts internally. However, in case this is not possible, WWF as the dialogue convener, will identify 2-3 mutually acceptable professional mediators who can be called on if irresolvable conflict develops. GSC 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 Aquaculture Dialogue website. At a minimum, request for comments will be made via email to the SCAD distribution list.

1) Public Comment on Draft Standards

a) The 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) The full draft suite of principles to standards will be posted for public comment for 60 days for what will be the central consultation process. 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 posted for a second 30-day comment period.

e) At the end of the second 30-day comment period, the SC will review all comments and develop final standards. The final standards will be posted on the Aquaculture Dialogue website.