

# Audit Guidance for Friend of the Sea Standards

Version 1, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017



This document is a work in progress. Especially during the first year of implementation, Friend of the Sea encourages feedback with suggestions for improving this document.

Readers should verify that they are using the latest copy of this document and other related documents. The current version of all FOS documents are available on the FOS's website at [www.friendofthesea.org](http://www.friendofthesea.org)



## Revisions

Version number	Date	Description of amendment
1	27/10/2017	First issue

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Friend of the Sea

Founded in 2008, Friend of the Sea (FOS) is a non-governmental organisation committed to improving the global sustainability of seafood by developing international certification schemes for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture products. The mission of FOS is to safeguard the marine environment and its resources by incentivising a sustainable market and implementing specific conservation projects.

The present document is a guideline for auditors that are operating the FOS standards for wild catch, aquaculture, fish oil and chain of custody.

## 1.2. Purpose of the document

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on the FOS standards for Certification Bodies (CBs) and auditors, to ensure consistent interpretation and application across Countries and CBs, hence improving the efficiency of the assessment process. This Audit Guidance document provides this guidance through:

- 1- Description of how to interpret the principles and criteria from the FOS standards;
- 2- Audit instructions to verify compliance through indicators;
- 3- Information relating to exceptional situations;
- 4- Objective criteria for critical limits;
- 5- Instructions to complete the audit report.

Chapter 3 of this document provide guidance per each criterion of all FOS standards. A brief explanation is given for each criterion, together with the description of indicators and list of documentation to collect and attach to the report.

## 1.3. References

UNI EN ISO 19011:2003 Audit guidelines for quality management and/or environmental management systems.

UNI EN ISO/IEC 17065:2012 Requirements for organisations that certify products, processes and services.

FOS 0001 Certification procedure for FOS standards

FOS Wild Certification criteria for sustainable seafood from wild fisheries.

FOS Aqua Inland Certification criteria for sustainable land-based fish farming.

FOS Aqua Marine Certification criteria for sustainable sea-based aquaculture.

FOS Aqua Shellfish Certification criteria for sustainable bivalves farming.

FOS FF, FM, FO, O3 Certification criteria for fish feed, fishmeal, fish oil, omega 3 from sustainable fisheries.

FOS CoC Certification criteria for the traceability of Friend of the Sea products.

#### **1.4. Definitions and Abbreviations**

**AB:** Accreditation Body

**AG:** Audit Group

**AGL:** Audit Group Leader

**AU:** Auditor

**CA:** Corrective action

**CAR:** Corrective action report

**CB:** Certification Body

**CO:** Company (owner or manager) requesting the certification

**CoC:** Chain of Custody

**FOS-Aqua:** Certification criteria for sustainable freshwater aquaculture

**FOS-FF:** Certification criteria for sustainable fish feed.

**FOS-FM:** Certification criteria for sustainable fishmeal.

**FOS-FO:** Certification criteria for sustainable fish oil.

**FOS-O3:** Certification criteria for sustainable fish-based nutraceutical products (Omega3).

**FOS-Wild:** Certification criteria for sustainable seafood from wild fisheries.

**IAF:** International Accreditation Forum

**ILO:** International Labour Organization

**MS:** Management system

**NC:** Non-conformity

**SQRT:** Square root

**TC:** Technical committee

## 1.5. Friend of the Sea Certification System

Friend of the Sea certification program allows the assessment of fisheries and aquaculture products according to sustainability criteria and requirements.

Friend of the Sea certification system is defined by the following documents:

1. Certification procedure (FOS 0001): description of procedures and regulation of the certification and accreditation process for COs and CBs. This includes 1) rules and regulations for the accreditation of CBs; 2) rules and regulations for the certification of COs against FOS standards; 3) minimum qualifications of auditing staff.
2. Standards: documents that contain criteria and indicators in the form of checklist for ensuring sustainable seafood production and seafood traceability. A complete list of standards can be found in section 1.6.
3. Audit Guidance: guidance document to provide clarification and training to auditors, enabling CBs to operate in a consistent manner.

**Therefore, the present document is integral part of the FOS Standard and shall be applied together with the standards and the FOS 0001 procedure to all FOS audits, without any exception.**

The procedure to follow for the certification of FOS standards, from the assessment to the issue of certificates, is described in detail in chapter 3 of FOS 0001.

The assessments shall be carried out following the standards documents, appropriate for the production type, provided by FOS. The auditor shall complete all parts of the standard document during the assessment and provide corrective action reports (CARs) when NCs are detected.

## 1.6. Friend of the Sea standards

Summary of FOS seafood standards, versions, scope and validity.

Standard	Current version	Scope	Valid from	Compulsory from
FOS Wild	Rev. 3.1 18/10/17	Wild catch fisheries	15/02/2017	15/02/2018
FOS CoC	Rev. 5 24/10/16	Chain of Custody	15/02/2017	15/02/2018
FOS FO, FF, FM, O3	Rev. 5 24/10/16	Fish oil, fish feed, fishmeal, omega 3	15/02/2017	15/02/2018
FOS Aqua Marine	Rev. 2 03/11/14	Marine aquaculture	03/11/2014	03/11/2015
FOS Aqua Inland	Rev. 3 18/10/16	Inland (pond and tanks) aquaculture	18/10/2016	18/10/2017
FOS Aqua Shellfish	Rev. 3 16/06/2016	Shellfish aquaculture	16/06/2016	16/06/2017



## 2. Audit guidance

### 2.1. General requirements for the audit process

The auditor shall contact the company well before the on-site inspections to collect and review all the documentation necessary to assess compliance to FOS standards. Details of how to prepare and implement this first part of the audit process are given in chapter 3 of FOS 0001. All audits shall be carried out in compliance to ISO 19011. Prior to the audit date, an auditor shall review all the relevant documentation possible to reduce the onsite visit duration, including corrective actions and past audit findings. During an audit, an auditor need to see evidences that the processes are implemented in accordance to the standard's requirements.

The company shall be fully (100%) compliant to all requirements to be granted certification. An exception is only made for those requirements that are not applicable due to a specific type of activity (e. g. requirements for tuna fisheries are not applicable to fisheries targeting species different from tuna). The auditor decides independently whether the company is fully compliant based on the evidences collected before and during the audit. Recommended indicators are not compulsory to achieve the certification. Nonetheless, all the aspects related to these indicators shall be reviewed and any NCs detected shall be highlighted in the audit report as a 'recommendation'. The company shall address and solve these recommendations within the next renewal audit. The auditor is responsible of assessing and reporting the implementation of recommendations during the subsequent audit. **Downgrading the level of any requirement, e. g. changing classification of an important requirement to a recommendation, is not permitted under any circumstance.**

The CB shall inform the client that an effective action plan is required in order to close major non-conformities. The action plan submitted by the client shall include a description of:

- a) The root cause of the NC;
- b) The corrective actions (CAs) intended to satisfactorily address the non-conformity; and
- c) An appropriate timeframe to implement corrective action.

Only Y and N are considered acceptable answers to the requirement. N/A is not acceptable except when the requirement explicitly specifies that.

The CB shall submit to FOS all information and data that are part of the assessment and surveillance process together with the audit report.

The auditor shall attach complete documents in pdf format. Clear reference of paragraph and page number shall be included in the report. Pictures of single pages of documents are not accepted as evidence of compliance.

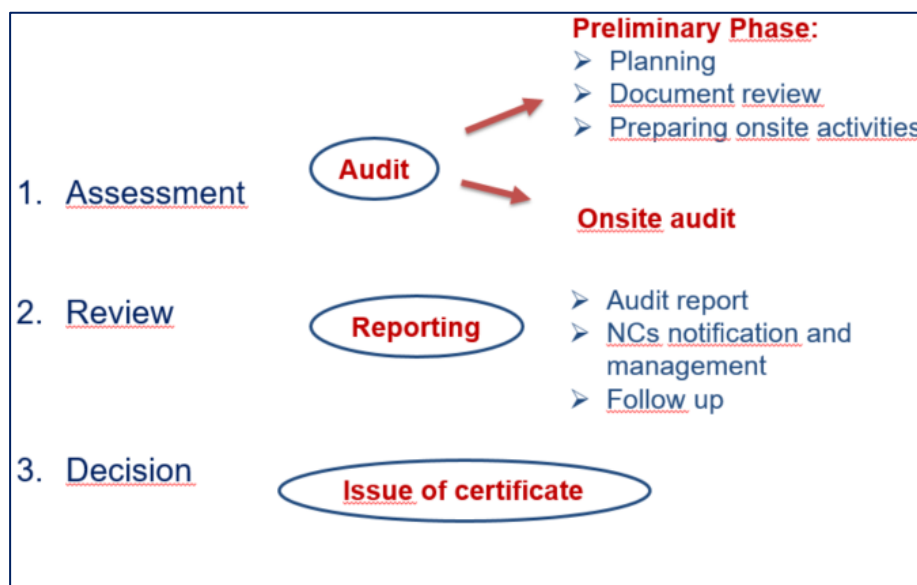


Figure 1: Summary of FOS certification procedure

### ***Opening meeting, gathering information***

All audits shall begin with an opening meeting, at which auditors shall confirm with the client as a minimum:

- The audit plan, including how the audit activities will be undertaken and any visits to vessels, sites and/or subcontractors;
- The access required and the type of information and documentation needed;
- The proposed scope of certification, including the complete list of vessels, farming sites, processing sites to be included in the certification;
- The list of certified suppliers and of any subcontractors that are or will be handling certified products, identifying which ones are independently certified.

Methods for gathering evidence during the audit include:

- interviewing relevant personnel;
- inspection of records and written procedures;
- observation of ongoing activities;
- photos.

Types of documental evidence that shall be gathered and reported during the audit include:

- procedures, including operational procedures, management review and other relevant reports
- internal audits, corrective and preventive action records;
- quality and management objectives;
- statements and meeting records;
- audit records;
- KPI and process monitoring records;
- purchasing records, sales receipts and supplier payment records;
- employee training records.

### ***Closing meeting***

Auditors shall conduct a closing meeting at the conclusion of each audit with the applicant's representative(s) to verify that the applicant understands:

- Any actions the client may have to complete and their timeframes before certification can be awarded;
- That all CAs addressing major NCs shall be implemented and verified by the auditor before the certification can be awarded;
- That proposal(s) of implementation of any minor NC(s) shall be presented to the CB and approved by the auditor before the certification can be awarded;
- That until the certification process is concluded and the certificate is issued, the applicant is not certified and cannot make any claim concerning certification;
- That the client must inform the CB and FOS of any significant future changes that affect certification;
- That the scope, subcontractor and supplier list is correct and agreed.

## **2.2. FOS CoC – Criteria and Indicators for the Certification of the Traceability of Friend of the Sea products**

### **2.2.1. Scope**

FOS Chain of Custody (FOS CoC) requirements are for CBs' use when assessing the traceability systems of producers and processors of FOS certified products deriving from sustainable fish farms and fisheries. CoC certification is required for all organisations processing certified products that wish to make a claim that the seafood they are processing comes from a sustainable source that has been certified to FOS standards.

CoC certification is not required for organisations trading or handling a certified product after it is placed into tamper-proof packaging.

The CB shall determine if the systems of tracking and tracing in the company under assessment are sufficient to ensure all fish and fish products identified and sold as certified by the company under assessment originate from certified production systems.

The FOS CoC Standard includes the FOS FO, FM, FF and O3 Standard in sections 4 and 5. The requirements included in these sections are only applicable in case the CB inspects an organisation producing and/or processing fish oil, fishmeal, and fish feed from FOS-certified seafood. For companies encapsulating certified fish oil into nutraceutical products (*i. e.* omega 3 capsules), only the FOS CoC Standard is necessary.

See section 2.3 of this document for guidance on FOS FO FM, FF and O3 Standard.

### **2.2.2. Unit of certification**

The unit of certification consists in all economic operators who take legal ownership of the FOS certified seafood product and/or all seafood products derived thereof.

Economic operators are considered to be legal owners if they sell certified products under their own private label. Applicants that do not take ownership can choose to become certified if they wish. Organisations that are trading or handling products from certified fisheries or farms but do not ever identify or sell these as products as 'certified' will not require CoC certification.

### **2.2.3. General instructions for the auditor**

Only fish and fish products originating from producers positively assessed against FOS Wild, FOS Aqua or FO FM, FF and O3 standards may enter into certified chains of custody and be

eligible to be sold as FOS certified or carry the FOS ecolabel. The auditor shall provide in the 'Description of the organisation' section the list of all seafood species contained in the final product, their respective certified suppliers, and the complete list of production and/or processing sites included in the scope of certification.

The CB shall identify and document:

- a) the source of raw material,
- b) the point of intended change of ownership of product, and
- c) the point from which subsequent Chain of Custody is required.

Appropriate records shall be maintained that demonstrate the traceability of certified fish or fish products back to FOS certified producers.

The CB shall identify and document any areas of risk for the integrity of certified products and how they are managed and mitigated. For each risk factor, there shall be a description of the risk present and details of the mitigation or management of risk.

All the economic operators in the unit of certification shall be inspected during the audit and clearly listed in the audit report and certificate (at discretion of the certificate holder).

For all the traceability requirements, the auditor shall review the content and implementation of procedures relevant to CoC and describe them briefly in the audit report, with clear reference to attached documentation. Examples of procedures could include written protocols for maintaining segregation, procedures of purchasing of certified products, employee training manuals, etc.

During the audit, auditors shall review records relating to the receipt, sale and any applicable physical handling of the products listed in the proposed scope.


For each of the activities listed in the proposed scope, the CB shall collect and review evidence that the applicant's management system and procedures as recorded and implemented, meet the requirements of the CoC Standard.

For clients with multiple sites, the auditor shall cross-check evidence seen at the central office with procedures and activities observed at operations sites.

## 2.2.4. CoC certification requirements

### 1. Traceability

The following set of requirements refer to the identification, traceability and verification of sustainability characteristics of FOS certified products.

Requirement		Level
1.1	<b>The organisation identifies each product and each batch uniquely</b>	<b>Essential</b> 

The auditor shall list what method and which system either administrative, physical or both is used for unique identification of the consignment. To verify this requirement, the auditor shall follow at least one sample of consignment in different stages of the process and trace back (to the supplier/raw material) and forward (to the point of sale) asking the documents, records and or data entry of the consignments. The auditor shall report this traceability check in the 'Traceability Check' section, at the end of the checklist.

In the case it is difficult to identify a consignment, due to continuous processing and tanks or warehouses continuously receiving inputs and being dispatched, it is required that the economic operator keeps data about the day and time of the inputs and outputs. It is acceptable that the consignment number is the day and time for identification and traceability.

If the organisation is not handling products listed in the proposed scope at the time of the audit, the auditor can collect evidence that the system in operation conforms to the FOS CoC Standard for one or more sample products similar to those in the proposed scope.

Requirement		Level
1.2	<b>A specific traceability system exists, ensuring that the product audited respects all the requirements of this standard and that there is</b>	<b>Essential</b>

	<b>no possibility of mixing with non-certified products</b>	
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Auditors shall establish that appropriate measures are taken by the organisation to segregate, identify and prevent mixing between certified and non-certified product. If subcontractors are used, auditors shall verify that appropriate systems are in place to ensure identification and traceability of certified products at point of dispatch and receipt (see requirement 1.7).

The principle of traceability is that each economic operator in the CoC is responsible for the data supplied in the product declarations submitted to the next economic operator. Final certified products shall be traceable from the dispatch area of the producer until the next owner. At each point of transfer from one owner to the next owner shall be traceable who is the supplier and who is the client and who is responsible for transport and storage.

The auditor shall verify and describe the traceability system during the traceability check, as for the previous requirement. For full compliance, the contract between the supplier and next owner details which party is responsible for the product, both parties and the transporters keep a signed copy of the legal transport documents. The auditor shall collect all evidences and attach them to the final report.

Examples of evidences are labelled samples and protocols for traceability procedures.

<b>Requirement</b>		<b>Level</b>
<b>1.3</b>	<b>The organisation provides detailed identification of the origin of products, including vessel name, fishing area and fishing gear, or aquaculture plant and site.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify this requirement while tracing back and forward the specifications through the CoC together with the samples, as for requirement 1.1 and 1.2.

All trade units shall be identified by unique codes to ensure traceability. The auditor shall verify that the consignments are identified by unique numbers and verify that the identification system does not allow for parts of the chain that may have the same number.



Each of the actors involved in the distribution chain in the scope of certification shall generate and hold the information necessary for traceability. The information is to be held on paper or electronically, keyed to the unit IDs.

The trade unit ID shall contain a minimum of the following information:

For wild catch products:

- a) Vessel ID: flag state, name and registration number of the vessel
- b) Species: scientific name or FAO 3 alpha code or Taxonomic Serial Number
- c) Area/Country of origin: FAO area/RFMO area from marine fish or country of origin for fish from inland waters
- d) Fishing gear: FAO alpha code

For farmed products:

- a) Species: scientific name or FAO 3 alpha code or Taxonomic Serial Number
- b) Country of origin
- c) Production method

For fish oil, fishmeal and nutraceutical products:

- a) Species: scientific name or FAO 3 alpha code or Taxonomic Serial Number
- b) Country of origin
- c) Supplier

	Requirement	Level
1.4	<b>The organisation carries out minimum once a year a training course for the employees involved in the maintenance of the Chain of Custody, to achieve and maintain an appropriate knowledge.</b>	<b>Important</b>

The auditor shall collect any evidence of any training, workshop or course organised by the applicant to train all staff involved in the maintenance of the CoC.



To verify this requirement, auditors may interview responsible personnel to verify their competency in understanding and applying the traceability system.

In case of unavailability of written records of trainings, auditors shall interview at least one individual per site visited and shall record their name or role and an assessment of their level of competency in the audit checklist. Interviews shall be used to determine if personnel understand the relevant process or procedure that ensures conformity with the CoC Standard.

Refer to ISO 19011 for guidance on interviewing.

Requirement		Level
1.5	<b>The organisation checks the functionality of the traceability system at least once a year.</b>	<b>Important</b>

The auditor shall collect any evidence of traceability system check. This may be written procedures, records, or performance reports. The auditor shall also report the date of last implementation of the system check.

Requirement		Level
1.6	<b>A product recall procedure exists and is tested minimum once a year.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall briefly describe the procedure and collect any evidence of the existence and implementation of a product recall procedure. The auditor shall report the date of the last test and attach all the evidences to the audit report.

Requirement		Level
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<b>1.7</b>	<b>The organisation demonstrates that all CoC requirements reported in the CoC standard are met by all its subcontractors.</b>	<b>Important</b>
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The auditor shall document the names of any proposed subcontractors that would be handling certified product and whether each subcontractor is certified. If the applicant intends to use certified subcontractors, the auditor shall check that the proposed subcontractor's scope includes the relevant activities. If the subcontractors are not certified nor included in the scope of certification, the auditor shall collect evidence that all FOS CoC requirements are met by all the organisation's subcontractors.

If the client is carrying out contract processing activities for certified products, the auditor shall review the relevant procedures to ensure that contract processing is undertaken in conformity with FOS CoC requirements.

If the subcontractor is already handling product for the client, the auditor shall cross-check a sample of dispatch and receipt records, product details and volumes from the client and subcontractor.


If the organisation has no subcontractor, the auditor shall insert N/A in the comments area.

'Subcontractors' here does not include transportation and those not directly involved in the production process. See Glossary in Appendix A for definition.

The auditor may include the following records where relevant: bills of landing, invoices, delivery notes, health certificates / veterinary checks, catch certificates, and purchase orders.

<b>Requirement</b>		<b>Level</b>
<b>1.8</b>	<b>The organisation shall keep records documenting compliance to all CoC requirements for a period that exceeds the shelf life of the certified product and the periodicity between audits.</b>	<b>Important</b>

The auditor shall verify that the organisation documents regularly compliance to all traceability criteria required by the present standard for a period that exceeds the shelf life of the certified product and the periodicity between audits. References to the reviewed documentation shall be made in the audit report and a brief description of the procedure may be included.

Requirement		Level
1.9	<b>The organisation uses FOS ecolabel only in association with products, whose raw material is supplied by FOS certified suppliers.</b>	Essential 

The auditor shall identify whether the applicant's actual or proposed suppliers are certified and verify the approved source of the product(s) during the on-site inspections. The auditor shall list all the suppliers in the audit report. The organisation is not required to have identified all suppliers and is not required to be handling all of the products listed in the potential scope at the first certification audit. Nonetheless, this is a compulsory requirement during any surveillance and renewal audit.

If the applicant has listed suppliers that are not certified, the CB shall inform the client that suppliers need to be certified before the applicant can identify or label any products from the supplier as 'certified'. The list of certified company is available on FOS website (<http://www.friendofthesea.org/certified-products.asp>).

If the applicant uses FOS logo on their own products or for a customer, the auditor shall verify that the client is authorised to use the trademark by confirming that:

- a) the applicant can show a license agreement with FOS signed by both parties; and/or
- b) the applicant can show proof of product approval from FOS for packaging designs for a sample of products.

In absence of proof, or where the applicant includes non-certified seafood ingredients in product sold as certified, the auditor shall contact FOS via [quality@friendofthesea.org](mailto:quality@friendofthesea.org).

Requirement		Level
1.10	The latest annual revenue declared by the organisation shall be verified by the auditor.	Essential

When submitting the application form for requesting a quotation for certification costs, the organisation is asked to state the annual revenue of the previous year, choosing between the following ranges in EURO:

- 0-10.000
- 10.001-50.000
- 50.001-100.000
- 100.001-1 Million
- 1-50 Million
- 51-100 Million
- 101-200 Million, etc up to 500 Million and above.

This datum is used to calculate the annual royalties paid by the organisation to FOS. The auditor shall revise documentation proving that the information provided is correct.

## 2. Management System


The requirements listed in this section are applicable only to producers and processors that are seeking group certification, *i. e.* the group, as a legal entity, is the certificate holder once certified. These requirements are not applicable when group members apply individually.

It is recommended that the auditor requests and review all the documentation relevant to the following requirements before the on-site audit, except for documents that are considered confidential. In this case the information will have to be presented during the on-site audit.

Requirement		Level
2.1	There is documentation that clearly demonstrates that all the group members belong to the same management system	Essential

The auditor shall collect evidence that all the producers or processors under the certification scope belong to the same management system. There shall be written contracts in force between each member and the group entity, including group name and legal identification and producer name and legal identification.

Other relevant documents may include internal audit reports, management procedures, internal register of approved members, licences.

	Requirement	Level 
2.2	<b>The group undertakes internal inspections of all members, covering all products under the certification scope to ensure compliance with the certification requirements.</b>	<b>Recommended</b>

As the CB does not inspect all producers or production sites, but just a sample, the existence and implementation of internal inspections of all members by the group management system shall be verified by reviewing the appropriate documentation.

It is not the responsibility of the CB to verify the compliance of each producer or processor to the management system, but it is the organisation's responsibility.


	Requirement	Level
2.3	<b>Records of the internal audit and follow up of corrective actions resulting from the internal audit shall be maintained and available</b>	<b>Recommended</b>

The auditors reviews and reports records of internal reviews, their frequency, and documented procedures for the identification and evaluation of corrective actions to be undertaken.

### 3. Social accountability

The following requirements aim to ensure that the organisation applying for FOS CoC does not include an entity responsible for violations against labour laws.

If the review of written documentation is not possible, the auditor can assess compliance to these requirements through staff interviews and observations of activities.

Requirement		Level
3.1	<b>The organisation shall respect human rights, complying to the following requirements:</b>	
3.1.1	<b>compliance with national regulations and ILO on child labour</b>	

The Minimum Age Convention 1973 (No. 138) sets ‘the general minimum age for admission to employment or work at 15 years (13 for light work) and the minimum age for hazardous work at 18 (16 under certain strict conditions)’.

For the purpose of this standard, a child is defined as any person less than 15 years of age. A higher age would apply if the national minimum age law stipulates a higher age for work or mandatory schooling. If the local minimum age law is lower than 15, in accordance with developing country exceptions under ILO Convention No.138, the lower age will apply.

The auditor shall ask the organisation to review copies of the official identification of all the employees, showing date of birth to assess compliance to this requirement.

The auditor shall collect evidences that hazardous work is not performed by staff below age 18. This includes heavy lifting disproportionate to their size, operating heavy machinery, working night shifts and exposure to any toxic chemicals.

For small family business, an exception to this requirement may be made, based on the assessment of the organisation.

Requirement	Level
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<b>3.1.2</b>	<b>pay the employees adequate salaries compliant at least with minimum legal wages</b>	<b>Essential</b>
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The auditor shall ask the organisation to review copies of employees' contracts, wage records, working hours and pay slips signed by workers to assess full compliance. If the organisation is not in possession of legal documents showing minimum wages for the country where the organisation operates, the auditor shall gain this information independently and verify that employees are paid at least the minimum wage. This applies also to seasonal/casual workers.

The auditor shall also make sure that the organisation knows the minimum wage.

More information about ILO standards on wages can be found at <http://www.ilo.org/global/standards/subjects-covered-by-international-labour-standards/wages/lang--en/index.htm>

<b>Requirement</b>		<b>Level</b>
<b>3.1.3</b>	<b>grant employees access to health care</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify that the organisation grants all employees access to health care.

Evidences of implementation of this requirement may be employee insurance covering work-related medical expenses.

<b>Requirement</b>		<b>Level</b>
<b>3.1.4</b>	<b>apply safety measures required by the law</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify what the local occupational safety regulation requires and collect evidences that all mandatory safety measures are respected by the organisation.

If a national health and safety does not exist in the country where the organisation operates, the auditor shall verify and collect evidences that:

- hazards and risks in the work environment are minimised;
- there are not immediate dangers to life;
- safe drinking water is provided to all workers;
- health and safety trainings are provided to all workers.

More information about ILO standards on occupational safety and health are available at <http://www.ilo.org/global/standards/subjects-covered-by-international-labour-standards/occupational-safety-and-health/lang--en/index.htm>





## Traceability test

In this section of the report, auditors shall record the results of the traceability test relating to certified products (or similar non-certified product).

A traceability test is a record-based trace of a consignment sold or ready for sale back to its related raw material(s) or supplier(s). The traceability test shall test that these records are available and link the consignment through each stage of receipt, production, processing and distribution, including handling at any subcontractors facilities.

The test shall link input to output or vice versa through unique lots or delivery numbers, internal traceability records, purchase records (that identify the supplier(s), the lots or batches of purchase), handling records and supply records.

2. Cross-checks of a sample of purchase records with delivery records and against the actual product received, where possible.

Auditors shall determine the number of samples or products to use for traceability tests, ensuring this sample is obtained during the on-site inspection, or during the same day as a remote audit and is in sufficient number to:

- a. Take into consideration the range of different handling processes, species in scope and responsible parties;
- b. Be confident that the system is effective for all the products listed in the potential scope;
- c. Include checking traceability and/or volume records for product sent to and received from subcontractors, if applicable;
- d. Include records of any contract processing where relevant.

The auditor shall carry out at least one traceability test involving an operations site during each audit. Additional traceability tests can be carried out based on the auditor's judgement.

Ensure that a traceability test is always carried out back to point of purchase for any products selected for product sampling.

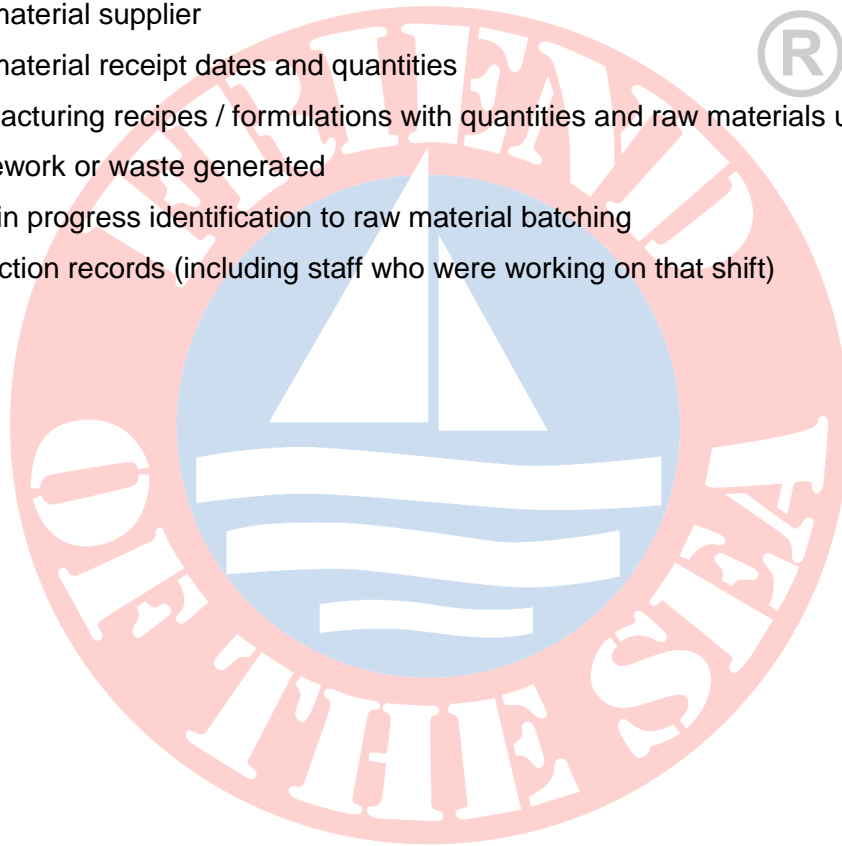
### Examples of forward traceability evidence:

- Number of units manufactured on the day for each recalled product type

- List of customers who were sold the affected product
- The quantities of affected product that each customer received
- Reports on any affected product that has yet to be sent to customers. These maybe still stored in warehouse storage areas
- Any write-offs or stock waste that occurred for the finished product
- Reconciliation reports of units manufactured to units sold to waste to warehouse storage

Examples of backwards traceability evidence:

- Raw material supplier
- Raw material receipt dates and quantities
- Manufacturing recipes / formulations with quantities and raw materials used
- Any rework or waste generated
- Work in progress identification to raw material batching
- Production records (including staff who were working on that shift)



## **2.3. FOS FOS-FF, FM, FO and O3 - Criteria and indicators for the certification of sustainable fish feed, fishmeal, fish oil and omega 3**

### **2.3.1. Scope**

FOS FF, FM, FO and O3 requirements are for CB's use when assessing the production and traceability systems of producers and processors of fish feed, fishmeal, fish oil and omega 3 products deriving from sustainable fish farms and fisheries.

This certification is required for all organisations producing or refining fish oil and omega 3, or producing fishmeal and fish feed.

For companies encapsulating certified fish oil into nutraceutical products (*i. e.* omega 3 capsules), only the FOS CoC Standard is required (see section 2.2).

The FOS FO, FM, FF and O3 Standard is included in in sections 4 and 5 of the FOS CoC Standard to facilitate the auditor's reporting activity, as both standards shall apply to fish oil production facilities.

### **2.3.2. Unit of certification**

The unit of certification consists in all the operators involved in the production or processing of fish oil, fish feed, fishmeal and omega 3 products, that are not independently certified.

### **2.3.3. FOS FOS-FF, FM, FO and O3 certification requirements**

As the raw material for the production of fish oil shall originate from certified fisheries and fish farms, auditors are requested to verify the sources of products and their traceability. Therefore, all the companies producing fish oil products shall be audited against both FOS CoC and FOS FOS-FF, FM, FO and O3 Standards.

The auditor shall list all the suppliers of raw material (*e.g.* crude fish oil), including those supplying by-products from fish processing operations.

### **Genetically modified organisms (GMO)**

Requirement		Level
4.1	The use of genetically modified organisms is prohibited	Essential

The auditor shall verify that none of the ingredients used in the manufacturing of fish oil, fish feed and fishmeal derives from GMOs. This is applicable to all ingredients.

#### Source of fish oil ingredients

Requirement		Level
5.1	<b>Fishmeal, fish feed, fish oil, and omega 3 ingredients shall derive from any of the following:</b> <b>-Fish by-products from fish processing and or/aquaculture and/or discards;</b> <b>-Friend of the Sea certified fisheries or fleets;</b> <b>-Friend of the Sea certified suppliers of raw material.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify that all the ingredients the final product is made of derive from FOS certified raw materials, *i. e.* fish products from certified companies. Alternatively, fish by-products and by catch can be included in fishmeal and fish oil as raw materials.

*'Fish by products'* are raw materials originating from fish processing operations, and *'discards'* refer to all non-retained by-catch of fishing operations.

Fish by-products can include fish cartilage, carapaces of crustaceans, shells, and whole fish that do not meet specifications for human consumption due to physical damage or quality substandard.

The auditor shall verify that the origin of the material is traceable back to the suppliers and that these are certified. The auditor shall review all the necessary documents proving the origin of all ingredients, such as traceability records and FOS certificates.

The auditor reports all the relevant documents reviewed during the audit in the final report, together with the complete list of suppliers.

Requirement		Level
5.2	<b>Fish by-product shall not come from a species listed under 'Vulnerable' or worse categories on the IUCN Red list</b>	<b>Essential</b>

Fishery by-products shall not be taken from species listed by IUCN (the International Union for the Conservation of Nature) under the following categories:

- Vulnerable
- Endangered
- Critically endangered
- Extinct in the wild

This information can be found at <http://www.iucnredlist.org/>



## **2.4. FOS Wild – Sustainable Fishing Requirements**

### **2.4.1. Scope**

Sustainable fishing requirements are for CB's use when assessing fisheries against the FOS Wild Standard. The standard is applicable to all operations engaged in the wild capture of marine or freshwater fish, molluscs and crustaceans (hereinafter referred to as 'fish'). FOS Wild Standard is not a species-specific standard, and it is applicable to all fishing activities targeting any species of fish.

### **2.4.2. Unit of certification**

The unit of certification is the fishery for which FOS certification is sought. A fishery is defined by the target stock(s), the fishing method or gear type(s) and the fishing vessels or fleets initially intended to be covered by the certification. FOS Wild certification can therefore encompass a whole fishery or a subcomponent of a fishery, such as a national fleet fishing a shared stock, or a shipowners association.

The stock under consideration exploited by the unit of certification may be one or more biological stocks, as specified by the applicant entity. The certification applies only to products derived from the stock under consideration. The unit of certification can include multi gear fleets.

### **2.4.3. General Instructions for the auditor**

The auditor shall provide in the 'Description of the organisation' section the list of all species (scientific and common name) and the complete list of fishing vessels under assessment. In fact, it will be possible to certify only the species and the vessels included in the scope of certification. As a consequence, the applicant entity will be able to use the logo only in association with products originating from seafood caught by certified vessels.

Any change to species, vessels or production sites included in the scope of certification, to the sampling procedure, and the initial quotation need to be notified beforehand and approved by FOS.

The applicant entity needs to be contacted per time to confirm the scope of certification and agree with on a date in which the sample of vessels to be inspected are at port. Guidance for the preliminary audit phase is provided in Appendix A.

The auditor shall review all the information available and take his/her certification decision independently, based on objective facts and scientific data collected.

Data are facts that result from measurements and observations. Only data that are relevant, reliable and up-to-date shall be used as supporting evidence of conformity to FOS Wild requirements. Only data and/or other information that deliver the best scientific evidence available shall be considered and reported in the audit report. The currency of data and information is important because their capacity for supporting reliable assessment of current status and trends declines as they get older. Data sources shall always be reported.

Where limited information is available, the auditor should be more precautionary in their assessment of information adequacy.

Remote audits shall assess applicants against the same criteria and requirements as an on-site audit. If the audit is remote, this may be carried out either on a call, video conference or through an initial email exchange.

#### **2.4.4. Stakeholders consultation in fishery assessments**

CBs assessing companies against FOS Wild Standard shall actively seek stakeholders input during the certification process.

CBs are requested to inform all the relevant stakeholders about the audit of all companies seeking FOS Wild certification and recommend their input. The list of all contacted stakeholders (name, role and organisation) shall be provided in the audit report in the section I) of the FOS Wild Standard checklist.

The stakeholders to be informed about the certification process shall include a minimum of:

- i) the competent fishery management organisation (e. g. RFMO, national fishery management authority, etc.);
- ii) fishing industry association (e. g. shipowners or fishermen representatives, national or state seafood industry association);
- iii) local NGOs with a focus on ocean conservation or seafood sustainability.

FOS does not provide requirements for the CBs to follow during the process of information and consultation of stakeholders, as this process varies according to the circumstances and

context of each fishery. The CBs can therefore use their preferred method to inform the relevant stakeholders, as long as the process is reported in the audit report.

The information and consultation of stakeholders shall be considered an integral part of the preliminary audit phase.





## 2.4.5. FOS Wild certification requirements

### 4. Stock status

The following requirements refer to status of the fish stock(s) targeted by the applicant entity. The main requirement of FOS Wild certification is that the target stock is not data-deficient, overfished or overexploited. These are essential conditions, without which certification cannot be granted, unless new data supporting a condition of non-overfishing and non-overexploitation are produced.

*A fish stock* is the living resources in the community or population from which catches are taken in a fishery. It is considered as a population relatively isolated from other stocks of the same species and hence self-sustaining.

The term 'stock' is here intended to include all commercial species of fish.

When more than one species is included in the scope of certification, the auditor shall report in detail the information about the status of all stocks for all requirements.

All the requirements related to the status and trend of the stock under assessment shall include data of bycatch, discards, unobserved mortality, incidental mortality, unreported catch, and catch outside of the unit of certification.

The purpose of the stock assessment is to contribute to the best scientific evidence available, which is used by the fishery management organisation to manage the fishery.

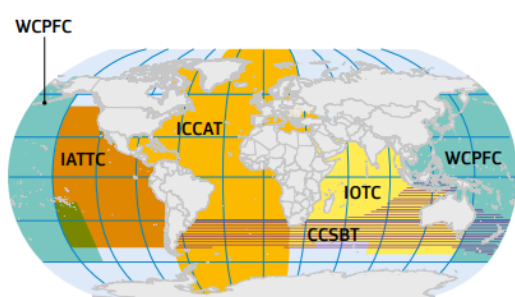
The auditor shall consider the trophic position (*i.e.* the position in the food web) of target stocks to ensure precaution in relation to their ecological role, in particular for key prey species (species that support a large proportion of the trophic connections of the ecosystem with significant predator dependency) and key predators.

Any supporting evidence provided by the applicant entity shall be verified by means of independent research of official data and information.

	Requirement	Level
1.1	<b>The state of the stock under consideration shall be assessed by the fisheries management organisation.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

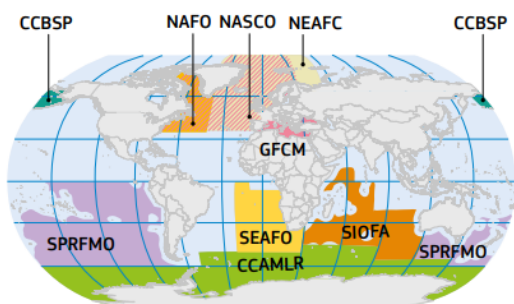
A *fisheries management organisation (FMO)* is an institution responsible for fisheries management, including the formulation of rules governing fishing activities. The FMO may also be responsible for collection of information, its analysis stock assessment, monitoring, control and surveillance.

Regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) are international organisations formed by countries with fishing interests in an area. Some of them manage all the fish stocks found in a specific area, while others focus on particular highly-migratory species, notably tuna, throughout vast geographical areas.



#### RFMOs for highly migratory fish stocks (tuna and associated species)

- CCSBT Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna
- IATTC Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
- ICCAT International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
- WCPFC Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
- IOTC Indian Ocean Tuna Commission



#### RFMOs for non-tuna species

- CCAMLR Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
- CCBSP Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea
- GFCM General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
- NEAFC North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
- NASCO North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization
- NAFO Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
- SEAFO South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization
- SPRFMO South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization
- SIOFA South Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement

Source: European Commission – Eurostat/GISCO. Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics, © FAO (UN), © TurkStat.

Up-to-date data and/or information on the stock status is available from the following:

1. FAO (FIRMS <http://firms.fao.org/firms/en>)
2. RFMOs
3. National Research Institutions
4. Regulating bodies with fishery management authority
5. Peer-reviewed research papers

When specific information on the stock under consideration is not available, other evidence based on similar stocks can be used for fisheries with low risk to that stock under consideration. If this is the case, the auditor shall collect all the data available, report those of similar stock, and clearly justify his/her decision by providing the necessary information.

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Level</b>
<b>1.1.1.</b>	<b>The stock under consideration shall NOT be data deficient.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall report clear references to reviewed documentation providing the data related to the stock(s) under consideration.

*Data deficient stocks* are stocks where limited or no data are available to inform management, e.g. baseline biological data such as size at maturity, fishing mortality and growth rates are unknown, the stock status is unclear, the only available data are very old (i.e. last stock assessment is over 10 years old).

A stock is NOT data deficient when:

- 1) Stock status reference points are available, derived either from analytical stock assessment or using empirical approaches;
- 2) Information on habitats and ecosystem is available;
- 3) Information of impact of fishery on habitats and ecosystems is available.

The certification of a data deficient stock is not possible.

Requirement		Level
1.1.2.	<b>The stock under consideration shall NOT be overexploited.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

An overexploited stock is a stock subjected to overfishing, *i.e.* to a level of fishing effort or fishing mortality (F) higher than the maximum rate of fishing mortality that allows the maintenance of the population size at its reproductive capacity (maximum sustainable yield of fishing mortality,  $F_{MSY}$ ).

Hence, for a non-overexploited stock, the following condition shall be verified:

$$F \leq F_{MSY} \text{ or } F / F_{MSY} \leq 1.$$

When a stock is subjected to overfishing a reduction of the effort would lead overtime to an increase in total catch.

The auditor shall report the level of F and  $F_{MSY}$  from relevant studies made available by the competent fishery management authority or from published research papers. The data reported should be preferably not older than five years and shall not be older than 10 years.

If F and  $F_{MSY}$  data are not available the auditor shall list the appropriate limit reference point used for fishing mortality by the competent management authority and its current value for the stock under consideration.

The auditor shall report the catch and mortality related to the applicant entity of all species taken by the applicant entity, together with the data sources used.

Requirement		Level
1.1.3.	<b>The stock under consideration shall NOT be overfished.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

A stock is considered *overfished* when exploited beyond an explicit limit beyond which its abundance is considered too low to ensure reproduction, *i.e.* when biomass is estimated to be below a limit biological reference point.

For a non-overfished stock the following condition shall be verified:

$$B \geq B_{MSY} \text{ or } B/B_{MSY} \geq 1,$$

$$\text{or } SB \geq SB_{MSY} \text{ or } SB/SB_{MSY} \geq 1,$$

where  $B$  is the biomass of all the individuals in the stock under consideration, and  $B_{MSY}$  is the biomass that enables a stock to deliver the maximum sustainable yield. The surplus biomass that is produced by the population at  $B_{MSY}$  is the portion that can be harvested without reducing the population.

Spawning stock biomass (SB or SSB) is the total weight of the fish in a stock that are old enough to spawn (the biomass of all fish beyond the age or size class in which 50% of the individuals are mature). May be used instead of biomass as a reference for overexploitation of a fish stock.

#### **Maximum sustainable yield (MSY)**


The basic definition of MSY is the largest long-term average annual catch that can be sustained over time. The FAO Glossary defines MSY as 'the largest average catch or yield that can continuously be taken from a stock under existing environmental conditions. For species with fluctuating recruitment, the maximum might be obtained by taking fewer fish in some years than in others.' The constant fishing mortality that gives this MSY is  $F_{MSY}$ , and the average population size while MSY is provided is  $B_{MSY}$ .

There are many ways to estimate MSY and related reference points. Many of them make substantial assumptions and so there can be considerable uncertainty about the accuracy of the estimates of MSY and related reference points. Because the productivity (e.g. recruitment) of many fish stocks is naturally highly variable through time the biomass can vary greatly around  $B_{MSY}$  (in some cases even with an appreciable chance of the stock being below the biomass limit reference point) when fished at the constant  $F_{MSY}$ . To an extent this variability in stock biomass can be mitigated by use of a harvest control rule that reduces the fishing mortality when stock biomass is low or a limit reference point is approached.

Because of the uncertainty related to the estimation of MSY reference points and surrogates for fishing mortality and stock biomass, these should be treated as precautionary limit reference points, rather than target reference points.

See also *The development and diversity of reference points*, (FAO <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/v8400e/V8400E02.htm>).

The auditor shall report the level of B and  $B_{MSY}$  (or SB and  $SB_{MSY}$ ) from relevant studies made available by the competent fishery management authority or from published research papers. The data reported should be preferably not older than five years and shall not be older than 10 years.

Requirement		Level
1.1.4.	<b>The methodology of assessment of the status and trends of the stock under consideration shall be made publicly available in a timely manner.</b>	Essential 

The method used to assess the status of the stocks under assessment shall be published either by the FMO or the competent national fishery management authority. In some case, this can be made available also by the applicant entity or other institutions.

Any documental evidence of the implementation of this requirement shall be attached to the report and reference to the documentation shall be provided in the report. Alternatively, a link to the website where the information is published can be provided.

Requirement		Level
1.2.	<b>If the organisation complies with all the requirements of the standards in the present document and does not catch more than 10% of the total catch (weight) of the same target species in the stock under consideration, requirements 1.1.2., 1.1.3. do not apply.</b>	Essential

This requirement allows the certification of small-scale artisanal fisheries targeting stocks that might have been overfished by bigger scale vessels and fisheries. This is applicable only:

- to **small-scale artisanal fisheries**, i.e. those using fishing crafts with size < 24 m and/or engine <375 kW;
- If the fishery does not catch more than 10 % of the total catch of the target species

Requirements 1.1.2 and 1.1.3 apply to any other case.

The auditor shall provide sufficient supporting evidence of the above conditions and the applicability of this requirement to the specific case of the applicant entity.

## 5. Ecosystem and habitat impact

The requirements in this section refer to '*habitat*' as the entire habitat associated with the fishery, i.e. each habitat in the full area managed by the management authority where the applicant entity operates.

The auditor shall identify and define the habitat affected by the activity of the fishery under assessment and any associated effect, damage, and vulnerability.

	Requirement	Level
2.1	<b>Current data are collected and updated about the effects of the fishery under assessment on the ecosystem structure and habitats vulnerable to damage by fishing gear, also considering the role of the stock in the food web (e.g. key prey or predator species).</b>	<b>Essential</b>

Updated data are collected about the effects of the fishery on:

1. **ecosystem structure**, with special consideration of the role of the target species in the food web;
2. **habitats** vulnerable to damage by fishing gear.

The auditor shall verify that current data about the ecosystem effects of fishing on both aspects are collected and maintained. Information shall be adequate to determine the risk posed to the



habitat and ecosystem structure by the applicant entity and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage impacts on the habitat and ecosystem structure.

Current data can be collected either by the applicant entity or by the FMO. Evidence shall be gathered and provided in the report. The auditor shall provide examples of how data are collected regarding both aspects. Addressing only one item in the report is not considered sufficient.

#### **Habitat and ecosystem structure are not the same**

A *habitat* is the environment inhabited by the target species, where it can find food, shelter and mates for reproduction, and is defined by a specific substratum (*i.e.* seabed type), animal and plant species associated, depth and temperature.

An *ecosystem* is a community of living organisms in conjunction with the non-living components of their environment (*e.g.* water, sediments and light), interacting as a system. These biotic (living) and abiotic (non-living) components are linked together through nutrient cycles and energy flows. *Ecosystem structure* refers to the structure of the network of interactions among organisms, and between organisms and their environment.

*Ecosystem effects of fishing* include all the direct and indirect impacts of fishing operations on aquatic ecosystems, such as non-target catches, endangered species, dependent predators and preys, habitat, and ecosystem structure. The structure of an ecosystem is given by the relationship between organisms and the environment. The alteration of the structure can affect the productivity and the stability to disturbance of the ecosystem. Fishing activities can alter the ecosystem structure through direct damage of habitats by the fishing gear and through the effects of the removal of the target species on dependent predators and preys of that species.

See section 2.4.3 for definition of data and their adequacy to reporting for FOS requirements.

It is recommended that the auditor includes a description of the habitat affected by the fishing activity that includes information about:

- 1) substratum type (mud, fine sediments, coarse sediments, gravel/pebble, boulders, bedrock, biogenic);
- 2) geomorphology (flat, slope, sea mounts, canyons, etc.);
- 3) predominant communities (sponges, corals, bivalve beds, encrusting invertebrates, seagrass beds, etc.).



When assessing the status of habitats and the impacts of fishing, the auditor shall consider the full area managed by the local, regional, national, or international governance body(s) responsible for fisheries management in the area(s) where the applicant entity operates.

Requirement		Level
2.2	<b>The fishery or fleet complies with Marine Protected Areas regulation.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify, through random sampling using vessel tracking systems, such as Global Fishing Watching (<http://globalfishingwatch.org/map/>) and Vessel Finder (<https://www.vesselfinder.com/>) or valid alternative evidence, that the fishing activity is not carried out in infringement of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) regulation, e.g. fishing in protected areas. The auditor shall provide a list of Protected Marine Areas in the applicant's fishing area (refer to [www.mpaglobal.org](http://www.mpaglobal.org)).

The presence of use a vessel monitoring system (VMS) also provides adequate supporting evidence to this requirement. The VMS is a satellite-based monitoring system which at regular intervals provides data to the fisheries authorities on the location, course and speed of vessels.

Requirement		Level
2.3	<b>The fishery or fleet shall use fishing gears that do not affect the seabed unless proven that such impact is negligible.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall list all the gear types used by the applicant company and assess their impact on the specific type of seabed and its benthic communities. In the case of multi-gear fisheries, the auditor shall indicate the gear used per each target species.

While assessing the gear-habitat interaction, the auditor shall consider:

- a) the likelihood of organisms of being removed and killed by the fishing gear,

- b) the removability of substratum,
- c) the intensity of the fishing activity (over both temporal and spatial scales).

Below you can find a list of fishing gear types ordered from the lowest impact to the highest impact on the seabed:

1. Hand collection
2. Hand line
3. Traps and pots
4. Demersal longline
5. Gill net or other entangling net
6. Danish seine
7. Demersal (bottom) trawl, including pair, otter twin-rig, otter multi-rig
8. Dredge

The seabed and benthic communities shall recover to their original conditions within a maximum of 30 days from the impact of the fishing gear on the seabed. The auditor shall consider the rate of recovery of the biota associated with the habitat using information on age, growth and recolonisation rates where available. Where information is not available for the unit of certification, reference shall be made to comparable data from studies elsewhere. In case the fishery under assessment affects multiple habitats, all of them shall be considered during the assessment. Natural disturbance shall also be considered.

Any supporting evidence provided by the applicant entity shall be verified by means of independent research of official data and information.

Requirement		Level
2.4	<b>The organisation has requested or conducted an assessment of the impact of its fishing activities on essential habitats for the stock under consideration and on habitats vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>

The standard here requires an assessment of the impacts of the applicant entity on essential habitats for the stock under consideration and on habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage

by the fishing gear. The assessment should consider the full spatial range of the relevant habitat, not just that part of the spatial range that is potentially affected by fishing.

*'Essential fish habitats'* are defined as the environment in which the stock lives, including everything that surrounds and affects its life, e.g. water quality, bottom, vegetation, associated species (FAO Term Portal [www.fao.org/faoterm](http://www.fao.org/faoterm)).

The auditor should also verify the knowledge within the fishery management system of the essential habitats for the stock under consideration and habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the applicant entity.

The most probable adverse impacts should be considered, taking into account available scientific information, and traditional, fisher or community knowledge provided that the validity can be objectively verified.

The auditor shall review documental evidence of the assessment of the impact of fishing activities or any related study.

### **3. Gear selectivity**

Professional fishing techniques and gear aim to maximise the catch of the target species, but fishermen do not only catch fish, shellfish, or crustaceans of the desired species and sizes. Untargeted catches may include other fish, some possibly of commercial interest, or other organisms such as starfish, jellyfish, protected birds or mammals. Bottom gear may also be of significant negative impact to vulnerable marine habitats, notably on coral reefs or seagrass beds. The more a fishing method leads to catching only what is targeted (in terms of species and sizes) and avoiding unwanted catches, the more the fishing method is selective.

Requirement		Level
3.1	<p><b>Accidental catches (bycatch) shall not include species listed in the IUCN red list of endangered species as ‘vulnerable’ or higher risk.</b></p> <p><b>The IUCN assessment shall have been carried out no more than 10 years before.</b></p>	Important

The auditor shall review logs of accidental catches and verify that none of the species reported are listed as ‘vulnerable’ or higher risk by the IUCN. See guidance for requirement 5.2 of FOS FOS-FF, FM, FO and O3 in section 2.3.3 for further details. The information obtained shall be compared with the accidental catches actually occurred on site at the time of unloading. Additionally, interviews of crew can be used to gain further evidence.

The auditor may report also bycatch studies related to the particular gear type, target species and fishing area of the fishery under assessment carried out by the competent FMO or research institutes as stronger supporting evidence.

Requirement		Level
3.1.1	<p><b>The organisation collects and maintains current data and/or other information about the effects of the fishery on endangered species, non-target catches and discards.</b></p>	Essential

Ecosystem effects of fishing include all the direct and indirect impacts of fishing operations on aquatic ecosystems, such as non-target catches, endangered species, dependent predators and preys, habitat, and ecosystem functioning. This requirement specifically refers to the effects of the fishery under assessment on endangered species, non-target catches and discards to make sure that the organisation is aware of the selectivity of the fishing gear used and monitors the effects of their activity on these components of the ecosystem.

**Endangered species** refers to species in danger of extinction and whose survival is unlikely if causal factors continue operating. This includes species whose numbers have been drastically reduced to a critical level or whose habitats have been so drastically impaired that they are deemed to be in immediate danger of extinction. Also included are those that possibly are already extinct, in so far as they definitely have not been seen in the wild in the past 50 years.

**Discards or discarded catch** is that portion of the catch returned to the sea as a result of economic, legal, or personal considerations.

**Bycatch or non-target catch** is any species for which the gear is not specifically set, although they may have immediate commercial value and be a desirable component of the catch. Anything other than the target stock is non-target catch.

The standard here requires an assessment of the impacts of the applicant entity on endangered species, non-target catches and discards. The results of the assessment should provide sufficient understanding of the relevant endangered species, non-target catches and discards and fishery impacts on them to enable their protection from those impacts, *i.e.* for the management objective to be achieved.

The applicant entity shall demonstrate that they collect and maintain adequate information about the effects of the fishing activity on endangered species, non-target catches and discards. The auditor shall report the data collection system and frequency for all the three items. Addressing only one is not deemed acceptable.

Traditional, fisher or community knowledge can be used as reference, provided its validity can be objectively verified.

Requirement		Level
3.2	The level of discard shall not be over 8% of total catch (in weight).	Essential

The auditor shall report the level of discards declared by the applicant entity and that available from published reports and studies about the fishery under assessment. All relevant documental evidence shall be reviewed, *e. g.* logbooks.

Requirement		Level
3.3.1	<b>The fleet or fishery shall provide a census of number of all fish aggregating devices (FADs) deployed during the previous 12 months and shall report on a yearly basis to Friend of the Sea regarding FADs deployment per vessel.</b>	<b>Important</b>

A fish aggregating (or aggregation) device (FAD) is an artificial object used to attract ocean going pelagic fish such as marlin, tuna and dolphin fish in association with purse seine and pole and line fishing. They can be anchored or drifting. Drifting FADs are often equipped with a satellite transmitting buoy to enable their relocation.

The company shall maintain records of the total number of FADs deployed during the previous 12 months. The auditor shall review those records and the reporting system in place to update FOS.

Only applicable to fisheries and fleet targeting tuna. N/A to fisheries targeting any other species.

Requirement		Level
3.3.2	<b>The fleet shall use non entangling FADs only, to avoid entanglement of sharks, turtles and other non-target species.</b>	<b>Important</b>

FADs can produce unwanted bycatch due to sharks and turtles becoming entangled in the netting that is used to make FADs. The design of a non-entangling FAD should involve:

- I. no netting or meshed materials covering the surface structure, but instead ropes, canvas, cloth sheets;
- II. no plastic or metal frames to reduce the amount of synthetic marine debris being released at sea, but instead biodegradable materials such as bamboo, palm leaves, or coconut fiber.

The auditor shall verify this requirement by reviewing documentation or pictures when samples are not available during the inspection.

Only applicable to fisheries and fleet targeting tuna. N/A to fisheries targeting any other species.

Further information is available at <https://iss-foundation.org/knowledge-tools/guides-best-practices/non-entangling-fads/>

#### 4. Legal Conformity

Requirement		Level
4.1	All fishing vessels shall be officially registered.	Essential

All fishing vessels to be certified, and hence included in the scope of certification, shall be officially registered, according to the national system in use.

Vessels registrations and fishing licences shall be requested for all vessels in the scope of certification, not just those inspected by the auditor. All registration numbers shall be reported either in the table in section f of the FOS Wild Standard checklist document or in an annex to the audit report. The auditor shall report also the fishing licences details of all vessels. This documentation can also be requested remotely during the preliminary audit phase.

Incomplete or partially completed vessels registration and licence details are not accepted.

Requirement		Level
4.2	The fleet does not include vessels with a flag of convenience.	Essential

Flags of convenience (FOCs) are used to evade tax rules, licence regulations, safety standards and social requirements for the treatment of crew. Flags of convenience are increasingly used as a means of avoiding measures taken by countries or regional fisheries organisations to

manage fisheries and conserve stocks. It has therefore a paramount importance that the auditor verifies that each vessel included in the scope of certification is not registered under a nation identified as FOC. A list of FOCs can be found at <http://www.itfseafarers.org/foc-registries.cfm>

This is applicable also to parallel registration, *i. e.* when a vessel is registered under two different flag: if one of the two flags under which a vessel or fleet is registered results as FOC, the auditor shall raise a NC.

Moreover, parallel registration of fishing vessels is problematic, although permitted by international regulation, as there may be difficulties in establishing which jurisdiction the vessel and its crew are subjected to.

The compliance with this requirement can be verified when requesting the vessels' registrations also remotely during the preliminary audit phase.

Requirement		Level
4.3	The fleet does not include IUU (illegal, unreported, unregulated) fishing vessels.	Essential

The FAO definition of IUU fishing is as follows (FAO, 2002):

*Illegal* fishing refers to fishing activities:

- conducted by national or foreign vessels in waters under the jurisdiction of a State, without the permission of that State, or in contravention of its laws and regulations;
- conducted by vessels flying the flag of States that are parties to a relevant regional fisheries management organisation but operate in contravention of the conservation and management measures adopted by that organisation and by which the States are bound, or relevant provisions of the applicable international law; or
- in violation of national laws or international obligations, including those undertaken by cooperating States to a relevant regional fisheries management organisation.

*Unreported* fishing refers to fishing activities:



- which have not been reported, or have been misreported, to the relevant national authority, in contravention of national laws and regulations; or
- undertaken in the area of competence of a relevant regional fisheries management organisation which have not been reported or have been misreported, in contravention of the reporting procedures of that organisation.

*Unregulated* fishing refers to fishing activities:

- in the area of application of a relevant regional fisheries management organisation that are conducted by vessels without nationality, or by those flying the flag of a State not party to that organisation, or by a fishing entity, in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures of that organisation; or
- in areas or for fish stocks in relation to which there are no applicable conservation or management measures and where such fishing activities are conducted in a manner inconsistent with State responsibilities for the conservation of living marine resources under international law.

RFMOs publish lists of vessels engaged in IUU fishing in their areas of responsibility. The European Union publishes a list of vessels engaged in IUU ([http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L\\_.2015.199.01.0012.01.ENG](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2015.199.01.0012.01.ENG)).

A combined IUU vessel list is available at <http://iuu-vessels.org/iuu>. The auditors are encouraged to look for new tools and updated lists that may become available, as IUU vessels frequently change their identification (name, flag etc.) to hide their activities.

The applicant entity shall be free from IUU catches of target species. Moreover, unreported IUU fishing should be considered as ‘unobserved mortality’.

Requirement		Level
4.4	<b>The fleet shall be Dolphin Safe approved by the Earth Island Institute.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The applicant entity shall be included in the Dolphin Safe (DS) list of the Earth Island Institute (EII): [www.dolphinsafetuna.org](http://www.dolphinsafetuna.org). If this is not the case, the applicant entity shall sign the EII DS policy and a copy shall be attached to the audit report.

Requirement		Level
4.5	<b>The organisation complies with national and international fisheries regulations.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall gain knowledge of the applicable fisheries laws before the onsite inspection and verify general compliance of the applicant entity with them. The information and documents related to legal compliance can be gathered during the preliminary audit phase. Fisheries laws and regulations are available at <http://www.fao.org/faolex/en/>.

All the following shall be verified also on board the inspected vessels during the on-site audit.

The auditor shall verify compliance with the following and specify applicable indicators for each of them:

#### 4.5.1 Total allowable catch (TAC)

TACs or quotas, are catch limits (expressed in tonnes or number of individuals) that are set annually for most commercial fish stocks by the competent FMO. These limits are based on scientific advice on the stock status and represent one of the most important management measures for ensuring the sustainability of fish stocks.

The auditor shall **report the TAC set for all stocks** under assessment and verify the compliance of the applicant entity with the limit set.

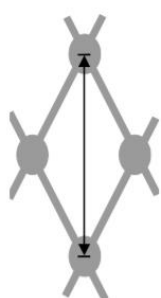
If no TAC is in place, the auditor shall report the  $F_{MSY}$  value and provide estimation of current mortality generated by the applicant entity, or any other proxy applied by the competent FMO.

#### 4.5.2 Use of a logbook

Commercial fishing companies and ship owners are required by law to complete logbooks. There might be different reporting requirements for various Countries.

The auditor **shall report the prescriptions of the national regulation**, and in particular all standards governing the correct use of the contents of the fishing log book, including the declaration on all landings, the report on all catch and catch landing, the deadline for submitting the report and the method of notification and keeping records on time and place of transshipping of catch.

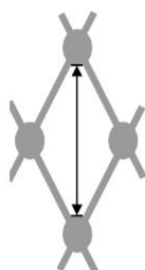
#### 4.5.3 Minimum net mesh size



**length of mesh:**

for knotted netting, the distance between the centres of two opposite knots in the same mesh when fully extended in the N-direction,

for knotless netting, the distance between the centres of two opposite joints in the same mesh when fully extended along its longest possible axis.



**opening of mesh:**

for knotted netting, the longest distance between two opposite knots in the same mesh when fully extended in the N-direction,

for knotless netting, the inside distance between two opposite joints in the same mesh when fully extended along its longest possible axis.

Source: Mesh size measurement revisited, ICES 2004

Mesh size is regulated to allow undersized individuals to escape, and hence to limit the catching of juveniles (small fish). Fishing young fish prevents them from growing to a larger size and contributing to spawning and future generations.

This requirement is not applicable to unmeshed gear types, e. g. long line and hand line, but there may be similar regulations for other gear types.

The auditor shall measure the mesh size during the audit and compare it to the minimum mesh size allowed by the national regulation. If multiple gears are used, this information shall be reported and verified for all of them.

Usually, a mesh is of diamond or square shape delimited by four threads of rope knotted at their ends. The mesh size represents the maximum

possible opening (spacing) between two opposite knots when stretching the mesh at its maximum. Also the use of double codends (i.e. one codend inside another) and chafers (i.e. pieces of canvas or netting attached to a codend for strengthening purposes) can reduce the effective mesh size, and need to be considered when assessing the compliance with this requirement.

See Jones (1984) for further information about mesh sizes and their measurement.

#### 4.5.4 Net size

The auditor shall report the net dimensions prescribed by the national regulation for the particular gear type and target species, and verify the compliance of the applicant entity with such regulation. If multiple gears are used, this information shall be reported and verified for all of them.

#### 4.5.5 Minimum legal size of the target species (or minimum landing size)

The auditor shall inspect the landing during the onsite visit and verify, but measuring at least a couple of individuals randomly sampled, that the target species are not below minimum authorised sizes. This management measure also aims to limit the catching of juveniles.

#### 4.5.6 Distance from the shore

The auditor shall verify that the applicant entity carries out fishing activity respecting the distance from the shore set by the national fishery regulation.

#### 4.5.7 Measures for the reduction of accidental catches

If any measure for the reduction of bycatch, e. g. separating devices that allow the escapement of unwanted species, tori lines for reduction of bird bycatch, is compulsory in the fishery under assessment, these shall be adopted and the auditor shall verify their use by the applicant entity.

#### 4.5.8 No fishing in protected habitats

See requirement 2.2 for guidance.

#### 4.5.9 No use of forbidden gears, chemicals and explosives

The auditor shall verify that forbidden gears, chemicals and explosives are not used nor kept on board the vessels.

### 5. Fishery Management

The requirements in this section refer to the management of **the fishery as a whole, not just of the fishing company under assessment**. A fishery is a unit determined by an authority or other entity that is engaged in harvesting fish. The unit is generally defined in terms of some or all of the following: people involved, species, fishing area, fishing method and class of boats. Therefore, the following requirements refer to or take into account agencies or entities involved in the management of the fishery, the legislative framework within which the fishery is undertaken, the management measures implemented and the processes and procedures that enable the collective functioning of the various components.

The auditor shall determine and state which jurisdictional category or combination of jurisdictional categories apply to the management system of the applicant entity, including consideration of formal, informal and/or traditional management systems.

When conclusions about compliance are based on the consideration of informal or traditional management systems, the auditor shall provide, in the rationale, evidence demonstrating the validity and robustness of the conclusions by cross checking information obtained through different methods and opinions and views from different segments of the stakeholder community.

**Important:** *The compliance of the applicant entity with the majority of the requirements in this section can be verified during the preliminary audit phase. The auditor is strongly recommended to carry out this part of the audit before the on-site inspection, as information about the fisheries management is often public and can be collected remotely.*

Requirement		Level
5.1.1a	<b>A fishery management organisation, that holds a legal mandate in compliance with national and international laws, manages, by means of a Fishery Management Plan (FMP), the fishery of which the fishery or fleet under audit is a part.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

This requirement refers to the management of the fishery as a whole, not just of the fishing company under assessment.

The auditor shall determine and state which FMO is in charge of managing the fishery of which the applicant entity is part. The auditor shall also gather evidence that the FMO that manages the fishery of which the applicant entity is part holds the legal mandate for establishing fisheries management measures and taking management decisions.

The auditor shall request a copy of the fishery management plan and attach it to the audit report.

Requirement		Level
5.1.1b	If the stock under consideration is a transboundary fish stock, straddling fish stock, highly migratory fish stock or high seas fish stock, a bilateral, sub regional or regional fisheries organisation or arrangement is in place.	Essential

This requirement refers to the management of the fishery as a whole, not just of the fishing company under assessment.

This requirement is applicable in the case that the stock under consideration is a transboundary fish stock, straddling fish stock, highly migratory fish stock or high seas fish stock. In these cases the applicant entity is subject to international cooperation for management of the stock. Hence, as well as the legal mandate for establishing fisheries management measures, there is expected to be an international institution or arrangement established, between the States involved to be responsible for the coordination of fishery management activities over the entire area of distribution of the stock.

Activities of the international institution may include consultation between parties involved, formulation of fishery regulations and their implementation, collection of information, stock assessment, etc.

If the fishery under assessment belongs to this category, there shall be:

- I. national and international laws, arrangements, agreements and policies governing the actions of the authorities and actors involved in managing the fishery;
- II. a framework for cooperation with other territories, sub-regional or regional fisheries management organisations, or
- III. other bilateral/multilateral arrangements that create the cooperation required to deliver sustainable management under the obligations of UNCLOS Articles 63(2), 64, 118, 119, and UNFSA Article 8.

The auditor shall also provide evidence that States and entities in the arrangement collaborate in the management of the whole stock unit and bycaught or discarded species over their entire area of distribution and that the arrangement ensures the rights of the small-scale fishing communities are granted.

In case this requirement is not applicable, the auditor shall provide justification.

Requirement		Level
5.1.1c	<b>The fishery management organisation convenes regularly to update its management advices according to the most updated data.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

This requirement refers to the management of the fishery as a whole, not just of the fishing company under assessment.

The standard here requires that the FMO regularly receives the best scientific evidence available regarding the status of the stock and responds to updates in a timely manner. For achieving this, the FMO needs to convene regularly to manage the process of information collection, stock assessment, planning, formulation of management objectives and targets, establishing management measures and enforcement of fishery rules and regulations.

It is not specified any specific frequency of meetings of the FMO, but the standard requires that this is done in a timely and organised way that is properly documented. The auditor shall report all the supporting documentation.

Requirement		Level
5.1.2	<b>The fisheries management system (FMS) under which the fishery or fleet under audit is managed shall be both participatory and transparent, to the extent permitted by national laws and regulations.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

This requirement refers to the management of the fishery as a whole, not just of the fishing company under assessment.

‘Participatory’ is to be intended as involving participation or providing the opportunity for individual participation.



A participatory approach to fisheries management requires the opportunity for all interested and affected parties to be involved in the management process. Stakeholders shall not have specific decision rights, but there should be a consultation process that regularly seeks and accepts relevant information, including traditional or community knowledge, and a transparent system that considers the information obtained.

A participatory management should involve stakeholders' participation. Examples of stakeholders are industry fish workers, environmental and other interested organisations.

It is required that the FMO makes information and advice used in its decision making publicly available, to the extent allowed by national laws and regulations.

Both participation and transparency are needed to fulfil this requirement.

The auditor shall collect relevant documentation proving the involvement of interested parties.

The relevant documentation shall be attached to the final report.

Requirement		Level
5.1.3	<b>Small-scale fishing communities and deep-sea fishers shall be involved in the planning and implementation of management measures affecting their livelihood, as appropriate.</b>	<b>Important</b>

This requirement refers to the management of the fishery as a whole, not just of the fishing company under assessment.

Small-scale fishing communities include all those small-scale fishers, fish workers and their communities who are directly dependent on access to fishery resources and land. When setting management measures that affect the livelihoods of the small-scale fishing communities, the FMO should ensure involvement of the local fishing communities in the planning and implementation of management measures. Examples of this could be the involvement in monitoring and control of fishing activities, or consultation in setting management measures.



The auditor shall provide evidence of the involvement of local communities in the planning and implementation of management measures.

Requirement		Level
5.2.1	<b>A precautionary approach is applied through the FMS to protect the target stock and its habitat and safeguard the marine environment.</b>	<b>Important</b>

A precautionary approach shall be applied by the FMS to the conservation, management and exploitation of aquatic resources to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment.

#### ***Precautionary approach to fisheries management***

The precautionary approach involves the application of caution during the decision-making processes when information is uncertain, unreliable or inadequate.

The definition for the precautionary approach given in the FAO International Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1995) states: 'The precautionary approach shall be interpreted to mean being cautious when information is uncertain, unreliable or inadequate and that the absence of adequate scientific information shall not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures'.

This approach requires, amongst others:

- i. identification of measures that will avoid or correct undesirable outcomes promptly;
- ii. that where the likely impact of resource use is uncertain, priority should be given to conserving the productive capacity of the resource;
- iii. all fishing activities must have management authorisation and be subject to periodic review.


FOS Standard requires that the management system uses a suitable method of risk management to take into account relevant uncertainties in the status of the stock under consideration and the impacts of the unit of certification on that stock and on the ecosystem.

Where the application of less data demanding approaches results in greater uncertainty, the management system should apply more precaution, which may require lower levels of utilisation of the resource.

A past record of good management performance can be considered a supporting evidence of the adequacy of the management measures and the management system.

The CBs shall assess the suitability of the risk management method applied.

The auditor shall verify if the Country the flag of the fishing company refers to has ratified the FAO Code of conduct. Otherwise, the organisation shall include a precautionary approach in their procedures, including a risk assessment procedure.

	Requirement	Level 
5.2.2	<b>Management measures specify the actions to be taken in the event that the status of the stock under consideration (with special consideration to deep-sea stocks) drops below a level consistent with achieving management objectives. These measures shall prompt the restoration of the stock to such levels within a reasonable timeframe.</b>	<b>Important</b>

*Management measures* are here intended as specific controls applied in a fishery to contribute to achieving the objectives (i. e. *management objectives*), including fishing effort limitations, catch quotas, gear regulations, closed areas and time closures, access and use rights.

It is here required that the fishery management system sets specific actions to be undertaken in the case the target reference points (e. g. MSY) are exceeded and/or limit reference points are approached or exceeded or the desired directions in key indicators of stock status are not achieved.

*Limit reference point:* limit beyond which the state of a fishery is not considered desirable.

*Target reference point:* desirable state of a fishery. Management actions should aim at bringing and maintaining the fishery to this level.

For example, decreasing fishing mortality if the stock size approaches its limit reference point.

A brief description of the management measures with reference to the documentation, including target reference points is required.

Requirement		Level
5.2.3	<b>Efficacy of management measures and their possible interactions is kept under continuous review.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall provide evidence of periodical reviews of the efficacy of management measures applied within the fishery. This could be any report or communication published by the FMO or evidence that regular studies are carried out and that scientific evidence is considered by the fishery management.

Requirement		Level
5.3	<b>The compliance with fishery regulations is achieved through monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

Monitoring, control and surveillance are activities undertaken by the fishery enforcement system to ensure compliance with the fishery regulations. Enforcement refers to the enforcement of rules and regulations and is part of the activities of monitoring, surveillance and control.

The auditor shall collect and report procedures and evidences of activities of monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement undertaken by the fishery governing body.

Evidence of high levels of compliance in the fishery of which the unit of certification is part with all applicable laws and regulations is indicative of effective monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement. The CB shall assess the suitability of monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement for the fishery.

If the stock under consideration is not transboundary, this requirement only concerns the effectiveness and suitability of monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement activities at the national level. For transboundary stocks, evidence of compliance at international level is required.

Requirement		Level
5.4	<b>The fleet or fishery shall record bycatch during every fishing trip.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify that bycatch data are recorded during every fishing trip and reported to the fishery management authority according to the applicable regulation. The auditor shall review and report bycatch recording procedures. During the on-site visit, the auditor shall request to review the vessels' bycatch reports. The auditor shall attach copies of the reports to the audit report.

Requirement		Level
5.5	<b>The fleet or fishery shall record discards.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify that discards are recorded during every fishing trip and reported to the fishery management authority according to the applicable regulation. The auditor shall review and report discards recording procedures. During the on-site visit, the auditor shall request to review the vessels' discards reports. The auditor shall attach copies of the reports to the audit report.

Requirement		Level
5.5.1	<b>Bycatch and discard data shall be made publicly available by either the FMO or the organisation.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>

The auditor shall verify whether bycatch and discard data are made publicly available. The data could be published on the FMO's website or on reports published by research institutions.

Requirement		Level
5.6	<b>A management system to prevent possible accidental catch and significant negative impacts of endangered species shall be in place.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

FOS Standard requires the existence of a documented management approach to prevent the accidental catch of endangered species and any significant negative impact on them. Endangered species, by definition, are already adversely impacted at the population level and are susceptible to further adverse impacts from which they need to be protected.

The management system shall address specific outcome indicator(s), consistent with achieving management objectives. The auditor shall review and report all procedures in place and the respective performance indicators.

Other supporting evidences can include evidence of a review by the applicant entity of the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise mortality of endangered species during fishing operations.

Requirement		Level
5.7	<b>The organisation implements a management program to reduce the accidental catch of non-target species, including procedures for the release of live animals under conditions that guarantee high chances of survival.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The standard here requires the existence and implementation of measures that minimise unwanted catch and discards and reduce post-release mortality where incidental catch is

unavoidable. 'Non-target species' refers to species caught other than the stock for which the certification is being sought and includes both fish and non-fish species.

The auditor shall review and report all measures, procedures and protocols adopted by the applicant entity for the reduction of bycatch and discards, and for the release of live animals, and the respective performance indicators. The auditor shall verify the implementation of such protocols and procedures during the inspection, also by means of crew interviews. The management system shall address specific outcome indicator(s), consistent with achieving management objectives.

'Measures' could also be interpreted as alternative fishing gear and/or practices that have been shown to minimise the rate of incidental mortality of non-target species to the lowest achievable levels.

Requirement		Level
5.8	The fleet is equipped with measures that guarantee a quick retrieval of lost fishing devices to avoid 'ghost fishing'.	Essential

'Ghost fishing' refers to abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear and has detrimental effects on fish stocks, endangered species and benthic environments. Ghost gears can in fact continue to catch fish for many years, as they are persistent in the marine environment.

To address this important issue, FOS Standard requires that the applicant entity does not deliberately abandon gears at sea and adopts measures to reduce the risk of losing gears during fishing operations.

The auditor shall review and report all measures, procedures and protocols adopted by the applicant entity to ensure a quick retrieval of lost fishing gears, including gear marking (e.g. tags), gear storage and gear retrieval strategies used.

Permanent gear marking is compulsory in some countries. The auditor is strongly recommended to verify what the applicable regulation prescribes in terms of gear marking and verify compliance during the on-site inspection.

Requirement		Level
5.9	<b>The fleet has a full-time on-board independent observer who reports compliance with Friend of the Sea requirements. In alternative a CCTVs system has been deployed and it is accessible by the auditor to verify compliance with Friend of the Sea requirements.</b>	<b>Important</b>

This requirement is applicable only to large-scale fishing vessels and fleets, and it is not applicable to small-scale artisanal fisheries.

*Large-scale fisheries* are intended as those using fishing crafts with size  $\geq 24$  m, engine  $\geq 375$  kW, vessels with freezing facilities and/or factory vessels, i. e. large ocean-going vessels with on-board facilities for processing and freezing caught fish.

If the applicant entity uses this type of vessels, these shall have either a full-time on-board independent observer who reports compliance with FOS requirements, or on-board CCTVs for monitoring fishing operations.

The auditor shall verify the employment of the observer(s) and review at least one report. In case of CCTVs system, the auditor shall report the monitoring and reporting system in place.

Requirement		Level
5.10	<b>Outcome indicator(s), including target and limit reference points, are defined for all management objectives related to the conservation of the stock under consideration.</b>  <b>Management objectives take into account the best scientific evidence available.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

*Management objectives* are here intended as formally established targets that are actively sought and provide a direction for management action.

Outcome indicators and measures undertaken for achieving the indicators are required for all management objectives for the stock(s) under consideration.

The auditor shall gather evidence that management objectives take into account the best scientific evidence available, and particularly that the management system is designed in such a way that the mechanism by which it commissions science and solicits scientific advice results in it receiving the best scientific evidence available.

The source of scientific evidence does not have to be necessarily an official institution, but it needs to be objectively verified, e.g. through peer-reviewed publication. It can include traditional knowledge, but this shall be collected and analysed through a systematic process.

Criteria to consider when evaluating best scientific information include relevance, objectivity, validation and verification, and peer review.

For this requirement and requirements 5.11, listing the management measures approved by the FMO is not acceptable. The auditor shall list the management objectives, their indicators, and justifications.

See also 'Management objectives and the concept of reference point' (*The development and diversity of reference points*, FAO <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/v8400e/V8400E02.htm>).

Requirement		Level
5.11	There are clear management objectives, outcome indicators and measures defined and periodically reviewed by means of risk assessment to avoid, minimise, or mitigate impacts on:	Essential
5.11.1	<i>Essential habitats</i> for the stock of consideration, and <i>vulnerable ecosystems</i> , including those potentially impacted by Deep-Sea fisheries	



There shall be clear management objectives, outcome indicators and measures for avoiding, minimising or mitigating the impacts of fishing activities on essential habitats for the stock under consideration and on habitats that are vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the unit of certification.

The auditor shall collect evidence that there is a strategy in place that is designed to ensure the applicant entity does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the habitats. There shall be measures in place that are expected to achieve the outcome indicators. The auditor shall provide clear quantitative evidence that the measures are being implemented successfully and are achieving the objectives.

Outcome indicators and measures undertaken for achieving the indicators are required for all management objectives for the stock(s) under consideration. The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives can be or have been effectively achieved for essential habitats and vulnerable ecosystems.

Examples of impacts on habitats that should be avoided include the destruction or severe modification of vulnerable habitats.

In assessing fishery impacts, the habitats in the full spatial range of the stock should be considered, not just that part of the spatial range that is potentially affected by fishing.

Requirement		Level
5.11	There are clear management objectives, outcome indicators and measures defined and periodically reviewed by means of risk assessment to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts on:	Essential
5.11.2	Endangered species	

It is required that management objectives seek to ensure that the fishing activities do not negatively affect endangered species, including recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.

Outcome indicators and measures undertaken for achieving the indicators are required for all management objectives for the protection of endangered species. The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives can be or have been effectively achieved.

This requirement does not refer to the target species, but it refers to any endangered non-target species that may be affected by the fishing activities.

The auditor shall also verify that the FMO regularly reviews and implements measures, as appropriate, to minimise the mortality of endangered species. The auditor shall also take into account whether there are any changes in the catch or mortality of endangered species resulting from the implementation of measures to minimise their mortality.

Requirement		Level
5.11	There are clear management objectives, outcome indicators and measures defined and periodically reviewed by means of risk assessment to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts on:	Essential
5.11.3	Non-target stocks	

It is required that management objectives seek to ensure that the fishing activities do not threaten non-target stocks with recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.

'Non-target stocks' refer to any stock that is not the stock under consideration.

Outcome indicators and measures undertaken for achieving the indicators are required for all management objectives for the protection of non-target stocks. The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives can be or have been effectively achieved.

Requirement		Level
5.11	There are clear management objectives, outcome indicators and measures defined and periodically reviewed by means of risk assessment to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts on:	Essential
5.11.4	Dependent predators and/or preys	

It is required that management objectives, management measures and outcome indicators are in place to avoid severe impacts on dependent predators resulting from fishing on a stock that is a key prey species, and on dependent preys of the stock under consideration.

This requirement refers to objectives for fishing mortality on stocks under consideration that are key prey species, not to fishing mortality on dependent predators/preys themselves.

Outcome indicators and measures undertaken for achieving the indicators are required for all management objectives for the protection of dependent predators and preys of the stock under consideration. The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives can be or have been effectively achieved.

Requirement		Level
5.11	There are clear management objectives, outcome indicators and measures defined and periodically reviewed by means of risk assessment to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts on:	Essential
5.11.5	Ecosystem structure and processes	

Management objectives and measures are set to minimise adverse impacts of the fishery on the structure, processes and functioning of aquatic ecosystems.

Outcome indicators and measures undertaken for achieving the indicators are required for all management objectives for the conservation of ecosystem structure and processes. The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives for impacts on ecosystem structure and functioning can be or have been effectively achieved.

*Ecosystem functioning* is defined by the biogeochemical activities of an ecosystem and the flow of materials, such as nutrients, water, atmospheric gases and processing of energy. It consists of a series of benefits that ecosystems provide to humanity (*i.e.* ecosystem services), including the regulation of processes (*e.g.* nutrient cycling, production of biomass, removal of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, maintaining hydrologic cycles); pools of materials, such as carbon or organic matter, and rates of processes, such as fluxes of materials and energy among compartments (*i.e.* ecosystem properties); and those ecosystem properties that have a direct market value (*i.e.* ecosystem goods).

Any modifications to the habitat imparted by the fishing activities shall not cause serious or irreversible harm to the ecosystem structure and functioning.

The auditor shall verify that the fishery does not cause serious or irreversible harm to the key elements of ecosystem structure and function. There shall be measures in place to ensure the fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ecosystem structure and function. The auditor shall provide clear evidence that the measures are being implemented successfully and are achieving the objectives.

Requirement		Level
5.12	A yearly reviewed ecosystem approach to fisheries is in place.	Recommendation

Ecosystems are complex and dynamic natural units that produce goods and services beyond those of benefit to fisheries. Because fisheries have a direct impact on the ecosystem, which is also impacted by other human activities, they need to be managed in an ecosystem context. The Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) is defined by Ward *et al.* (2002) as “an extension of conventional fisheries management recognising more explicitly the interdependence between human well-being and ecosystem health and the need to maintain ecosystems productivity for present and future generations, *e. g.* conserving critical habitats, reducing

pollution and degradation, minimizing waste, protecting endangered species”. The purpose of the EAF is to plan, develop and manage fisheries in a manner that addresses the needs of societies, without jeopardising the options for future generations to benefit from the goods and services provided by marine ecosystems. Therefore, application of EAF goes beyond monitoring the status of stocks. Variables in the ecosystem should be monitored to assess the impacts of fishing on the ecosystem as well as the effects of ocean variability of fisheries productivity.

This requirement refers to the management of the fishery by the competent FMO. The EAF addresses the following key principles:

- fisheries should be managed to limit their impact on the ecosystem to an acceptable level;
- ecological relationships between species should be maintained;
- management measures should be compatible across the entire distribution of the resource;
- precaution in the decision making and action is needed because the knowledge on ecosystem is incomplete;
- governance should ensure both human and ecosystem well-being and equity.

Many of these key principles of EAF are addressed by other requirements of the FOS Wild Standard. The auditor shall therefore concentrate on the existence of a EAF plan and its yearly review by the FMO. In other words, the auditor shall collect documental evidence that there is a regular review of the potential effectiveness and practicality of the ecosystem approach in place.

Requirement		Level
5.13	<b>Fisheries management approaches, plans and strategies are an integral part of integrated coastal management, and/or ocean management for oceanic fisheries.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>

This requirement looks for fisheries management to be integrated within broader coastal and/or oceanic management, with the aim of protecting ecosystems on which fisheries rely from the impacts of non-fishing activities.

The expectation should be that the fishery managers ensure that they are recognised as important stakeholders in the process of integrated coastal management so that they can safeguard the function of the habitats that support fisheries ecosystems from adverse effects stemming from activities in other sectors.

There are many issues that concern fishery managers that are within the competence of other agencies outside of the fishery management system. These may be highly relevant in an EAF context; they include such issues as the impact associated with human activities on land and sea leading to habitat destruction, eutrophication, contaminants, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, litter, accidental introduction of exotic species through ballast water, etc. While fishery managers cannot be expected to control these issues, they should be expected to be proactive to ensure that the appropriate authorities include all those involved in fisheries as important stakeholders in management planning and decision-making.

The applicant entity should provide evidence that the approaches applied for the management of the fishery under assessment are part of a broader ocean management that takes into account also other issues concerning the fishery.

## **6. Waste management**

<b>Requirement</b>		<b>Level</b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b>The organisation recycles, re-uses or re-processes all materials used during fishing, conservation and transport of the fish up to the selling point, including packaging.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall review protocols and procedures for recycling, reusing, reprocessing all materials used on board and at landing port and describe them briefly.

Requirement		Level
6.2	<b>The organisation implements measures to prevent dispersion of waste at sea (including fuels and lubricants and plastic materials).</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall review protocols and procedures in place for preventing the dispersion of waste at sea and describe them briefly.

Requirement		Level
6.3	<b>The organisation utilises all the chemical non-toxic alternatives available in order to reduce the use of toxic, persistent or bio-accumulating substances.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify and report evidences that the applicant entity actively seeks to replace toxic, persistent and bio-accumulating chemicals with non-toxic alternatives, for example for anti-fouling purposes. Policy, procedures, and list of chemicals on board shall be reviewed.

Requirement		Level
6.4	<b>The organisation does not use CFC, HCFC, HFC or other refrigerants that cause ozone depletion.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify and report evidences that the applicant entity does not use CFC, HCFC, HFC or other refrigerants that cause ozone depletion.

## 7. Energy management

Requirement		Level
7.1	<b>The organisation shall keep a register of all energy sources and their use, updated at least once a year.</b>	<b>Essential</b>

The auditor shall verify and report evidence that the applicant entity keeps records of all energy sources (e.g. fuel) and consumption. These records shall include, as a minimum, the following parameters:

- energy sources used (type, renewable or not), and
- energy consumption rate per process line (fishing, processing, transport)

Requirement		Level
7.2	<b>The organisation should calculate its carbon footprint per product unit and engage to reduce it every year.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>

The auditor shall verify and report evidence that the applicant entity regularly calculates its carbon footprint per product unit and is actively engaged in reducing it every year.

## 8. Social accountability

The requirements included in this section of the FOS Wild Standard are applicable to all the crew operating on board the vessels supplying the applicant entity. If the same organisation employs staff for processing the catch, the social accountability requirements applicable to staff operating on land are assessed within the FOS CoC Standard.

Please see section 3 in 2.2.4 for guidance.



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## Appendix A: Preliminary audit phase planning guidance

The preliminary phase of the assessment stage aims to:

- a) audit the documentation of the applicant's management system;
- b) assess the applicant's site location and characteristics and exchange information with the staff in order to assess whether the audit implementation phase can be started;
- c) review the applicant's understanding of the regulations' requirements, particularly related to the identification of key aspects, processes, objectives and functioning of the management system;
- d) gather the necessary information about areas of interest of the management system, processes, and location(s) of the applicant, including related legal aspects and compliance to the regulation (e. g. regarding quality, environment, legal aspects related to the applicant's activity, associated risks, etc.);
- e) develop the audit plan in agreement with the applicant.

A part of this preliminary audit phase will take place at the applicant's premises, but most of the information can be gathered and reviewed before that. It is necessary to complete this phase before proceeding to the audit implementation phase.

It is advised that the preliminary audit phase is carried out well ahead the on-site inspection, to optimise the on-site audit time.

A list of information and documentation to gather before the audit implementation phase is provided below.

### Preliminary audit phase checklist for FOS Wild Standard

- ✓ Confirmation of fishing vessels in the scope of certification, and respective flag, fishing gear, target species, registration and fishing licence.
  
- 1. Stock Status (requirements 1.1; 1.1.1; 1.1.2; 1.1.3; 1.1.4)
  - ✓ Competent RFMO
  - ✓ most recent stock assessment
  - ✓ limit reference points for biomass and fishing mortality
  - ✓ methodology of assessment of stock status.

2. Ecosystem impact (requirements 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.5.1; 2.5.2)

- ✓ effects of the fishery on ecosystem structure and habitats vulnerable to the fishing gear
- ✓ marine protected areas regulation in force in the Country/area where the company operates
- ✓ documented impacts of the fishing gear on the seabed and benthic communities

4. Legal conformity (requirements 4.4; 4.5 and sub)

- ✓ Dolphin Safe endorsement
- ✓ national and international fishery regulations applicable to the applicant's activities in the Country where the fishing operations take place

5. Fishery management (requirements 5.1 and sub; 5.2 and sub; 5.3; 5.10; 5.11 and sub; 5.12; 5.13)

- ✓ competent FMO, organisation, fishery management plan
- ✓ involvement of small-scale fishing communities to the management
- ✓ management objectives and measures, target reference points
- ✓ monitoring and surveillance measures in place
- ✓ ecosystem approach to fisheries

8. Social accountability (8.1.1; 8.1.2; 8.1.4)

- ✓ Country's laws regarding child labour (e.g. minimum age)
- ✓ Country's minimum legal wage
- ✓ applicable work safety measures