



ABORIGINAL PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE



Aboriginal Aquaculture Association

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Providing Greater Assurance of Sustainability

The Aboriginal Principles for Sustainable Aquaculture (APSA) Standard is a third-party certification program developed by the Aboriginal Aquaculture Association of Canada (AAA).

The stringent standards of the APSA program can provide greater assurance that aquaculture operations within a traditional territory are achieving the sustainability goals of both the First Nation and the aquaculture operator.

The APSA Standard can be applied to any aquaculture operation – including both wholly owned First Nation operations and First Nation/non-aboriginal partnerships.

APSA certification is a significant achievement for both the First Nation and the aquaculture operator:

- Certification signifies that the First Nation is successfully bringing essential economic revitalization to its community – without sacrificing social or environmental values.
- Certification signifies that the aquaculture operator is respectful of the values and aspirations of their First Nation partner.



Pillars of First Nations Sustainability

First Nations involved in aquaculture development require that operations respect their time-honored sustainability values. The First Nations view of aquaculture sustainability rests upon three pillars:

1) Economic sustainability

Aquaculture operations in a traditional territory should optimize the standard of living for the First Nation communities within that territory.

2) Social Sustainability

Aquaculture operations in a traditional territory should optimize the quality of life for the First Nation communities within that territory.

3) Environmental Sustainability

Aquaculture operations in a traditional territory should not compromise the health of the territory's ecosystem now or in the future.

Applying First Nations principles of sustainability within the context of modern aquaculture raises challenges. For example: How should an aquaculture operation be managed to assure sustainability? What aspects of an operation should be monitored? How should they be monitored? Who should monitor them?

Creating a Sustainability Plan

To address these challenges, many First Nations and their aquaculture partners are seeking guidance in the creation of a structural and operational framework that offers the greatest assurance of sustainability.

As a first step to gaining this assurance, the AAA suggests that each First Nation should form a First Nations Aquaculture Advisory Committee (FNAAC) to determine the specific sustainability goals and values of its community. Once these goals and values have been determined, the FNAAC will be well prepared to work collaboratively with their aquaculture partner to create a FNAAC Sustainability Plan.

The Sustainability Plan will be a concise action plan that stipulates the structural and operational requirements necessary to ensure that the goals of both the First Nation and their aquaculture partner are achieved. Ultimately, the Sustainability Plan establishes the basis for a mutually beneficial relationship in which:

- The aquaculture partner recognizes and respects the First Nation's need for assurances of sustainability
- The First Nation recognizes and respects their aquaculture partner's need for economic viability

Examples of Commitments that Could be in the Sustainability Plan

Transparency

- Transparency in employment issues (e.g. joint First Nation/company employment committee)

Economic

- Financial remuneration for First Nation (e.g. equity interests, royalties, profit shares, or fixed cash amounts)
- Contract allocation policy re: First Nation businesses
- Employment policy re: First Nation job candidates

Social

- Availability of :
 - capacity building initiatives (e.g. technical or professional training programs)
 - scholarships, sponsorships and donations
 - health and social service programs

Environmental

- Decision-making process for:
 - farm site selection and operations
 - environmental impacts and responses

The APSA Standard

Once the Sustainability Plan has been implemented, the First Nation and their aquaculture partner need to compare their achievements to the Plan's goals. The APSA Standard provides a formal, objective evaluation process through which they can monitor their success.

The APSA Standard presents four fundamental responsibilities that guide the management and operation of aquaculture activities within traditional territories:

Transparency and First Nations Inclusiveness

An aquaculture company shall be transparent in its decisions and impacts – and shall incorporate the values of local First Nations into operations.

Social Responsibility

An aquaculture company shall address the social concerns of First Nations within the territory that it operates.

Environmental Responsibility

An aquaculture company shall ensure the environmental sustainability of its operations within the territory that it operates.

Economic Responsibility

An aquaculture company shall consider the economic interest of First Nations within the territory that it operates.

The APSA Standard also provides a comprehensive set of principles that can be used to assess an aquaculture operation's success in meeting each of these four responsibilities. For example:

RESPONSIBILITY	GENERAL PRINCIPLES
Transparency & First Nations Inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency in sharing of information • Open communication & response to First Nation concerns • Incorporation of First Nation values into operations
Social Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worker health & safety • Wage equity • Equal opportunity hiring & advancement • Provision of training & social assistance programs
Environmental Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental policy & performance • Best Management Practices • Environmental emergency preparedness
Economic Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nation wage equality • First Nation economic opportunities

Certification Process

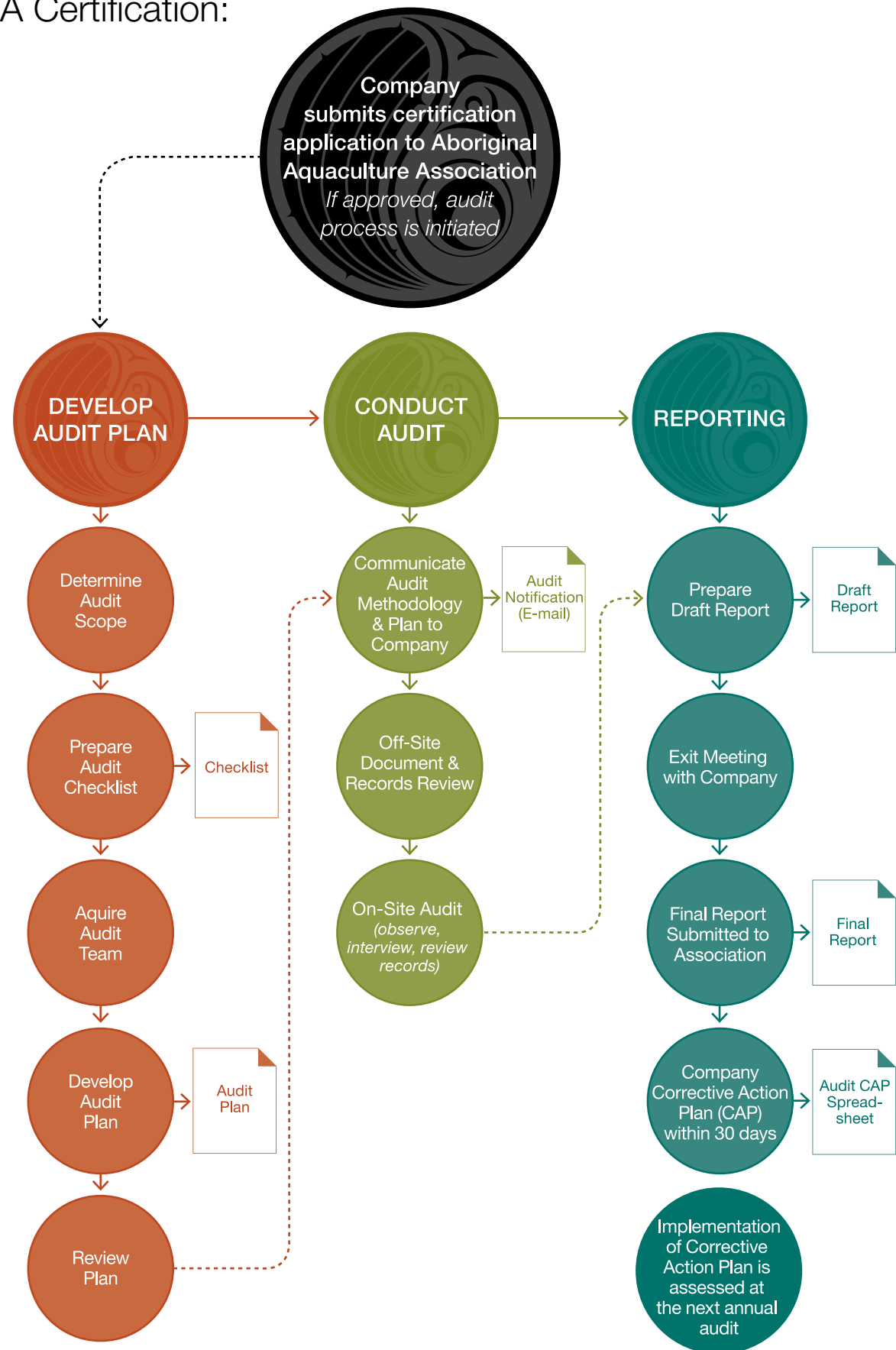
The APSA Standard can be applied to any aquaculture business (e.g. wholly owned First Nation businesses; First Nation/non-aboriginal partnerships) operating within the traditional use areas of First Nations participating in the AAA. Aquaculture operations wishing to certify that they fully conform to the APSA Standard may apply to the AAA to request a certification audit.

The initial certification audit (and subsequent surveillance audits) will be conducted by a qualified third-party Certification Body that is approved by the AAA. A 'third-party' auditor has no relationship or involvement with the aquaculture operation, the local First Nations, or with the AAA. The audit procedure is therefore unbiased and free of any potential conflict of interest.

APSA auditors conduct the audit and report audit results in accordance with International Standard ISO 19011:2011, Guidelines for Quality and/or Environmental Management Systems Auditing. The scope of each audit process is limited to an individual First Nation's traditional territory.



The Route to APSA Certification:



Certified Sustainable

Those aquaculture operations that pass the audit will receive APSA certification. APSA-certified operations and their supply chain companies (e.g. processors, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, and foodservice operators) may then use the APSA Certified Sustainable logo on communication, marketing and /or promotional materials. These may include product packaging, menus, and 'off-product' promotional materials.

The specific terms of use for the logo will be based upon intended usage – and negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

APSA CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE LOGOS



What APSA Certification does...

For First Nation

- Recognizes unique sustainability goals
- Emphasizes importance of economic and social sustainability
- Provides greater certainty that sustainability goals will be achieved
- Ensures strong voice in environmental management of traditional territory
- Improves communication with aquaculture partner

For Aquaculture Company

- Provides greater certainty that operational and sustainability goals will be achieved
- Increases understanding of First Nation values and concerns
- Improves communication with First Nation partner
- Enhances public awareness of company's environmental and social responsibility
- Creates greater product acceptance among environmentally conscious consumers
- Provides potential of novel marketing opportunities for APSA-certified products

For Retailers and Food Service Operators

- Provides greater assurance of environmental sustainability of APSA-certified products
- Provides potential of novel marketing opportunities for APSA-certified products

For Consumers

- Provides greater assurance of environmental sustainability of APSA-certified products



APSA and Aquaculture Regulation

The location and the day-to-day operations of all Canadian aquaculture facilities are strictly regulated by several Government departments, including:

- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Environment Canada
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Health Canada

In addition to government regulation, the Canadian aquaculture industry has developed finfish and shellfish Codes of Practice to meet or exceed international environment, health and safety standards.

Many Canadian aquaculture companies have also implemented internationally recognized aquaculture certification programs, such as:

- Global Aquaculture Alliance: Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP)
- Certified Quality Aquaculture Programs
- GlobalGAP

The APSA Standard has been structured to build upon these existing sustainability frameworks by ensuring the incorporation of uniquely First Nations requirements. Its principles emphasize the importance of the economic and social sustainability of First Nation communities. APSA is unique in its ability to integrate the specific sustainability requirements of individual First Nations into its audit process.



Sustainability Plan and APSA Certification Costs

Costs associated with attaining APSA certification include:

- Sustainability Plan: development costs include meeting and organizational expenses and related travel costs.
- APSA Certification: audit costs range from \$1200 - \$1500 plus auditor travel expenses. The base audit cost is impacted by many factors, e.g., location of operation, size of operation, aquaculture species.
- APSA Certified Logo: Terms of use costs will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

All costs associated with the creation of a Sustainability Plan and an APSA audit are usually assumed by the aquaculture company.

Aboriginal Aquaculture Association

The Aboriginal Aquaculture Association of Canada was established as a federally incorporated company in July 2003 by six founding members representing a cross-section of aboriginal leaders in British Columbia. These leaders came to realize that there were very few opportunities for band members to be involved in the various resource sectors of their local communities. After careful studies, they concluded that, for the benefit of all parties, a significant opportunity existed to better First Nations relations and involvement with the aquaculture industry.

The mission of the Aboriginal Aquaculture Association is: To promote and assist the development of First Nations' Aquaculture that respects and supports First Nation Communities, Culture and Values.

For More Information

For a copy of the complete Aboriginal Principles for Sustainable Aquaculture Standard - please contact:

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