Due Diligence in the ASC Feed Standard

Spotlight on Principle 2: Responsible Ingredient Sourcing

Due diligence provides a pathway to understand the origins and potential impacts of the ingredients in aquaculture feed.

The ASC Feed Standard requires any aquafeed ingredient above 1% of the total annual purchased volume to go through a process of due diligence to demonstrate low risk for legal, social and environmental impacts.

Ingredient suppliers must also be risk assessed to ensure they are complying with environmental regulations and monitoring their operational impacts.

The goal? Achieving greater traceability on the origins of the raw materials in feed.

Due Diligence process

Other certifiers may call it a 'risk assessment' and expect feed mills to conduct some form of this. ASC has, with due diligence, a more standardised and stringent process.

Define the risk factors → Assess the risk → Implement appropriate measures → Monitor

Supplier code of conduct

A supplier code of conduct must be met. It covers the same social and environmental criteria listed in Principle 1.

- Signed by ingredient manufacturer (e.g. FMFO factory)
- And passed onto their supplier

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A flexible approach to ingredient Due Diligence

Four different due diligence pathways can be used to assess the different risk factors for legal, social and environmental impacts.

1. Country Risk Scorecard

Traffic light system to assess country risk based on public sources

2. Industry/ Sector/ Fishery Assessment

Assessment conducted by competent persons (feed mill/external)

E.g. Review published reports, collect data from buyers or technical staff (cf. guidance)

3. Ingredient Manufacturer Assessment

Assessment conducted by competent persons (feed mill/external)

Similar to internal audit of suppliers

4. Certifications Recognised by ASC

List based on criteria developed by ASC (standard setting process, assurance, traceability & standard content)

If a pathway does not result in low risk, another pathway shall be chosen. If none of the pathways result in low risk, feed mills will not source from those supply chains until implemented mitigation measures have achieved low risk.

What makes the ASC Feed Standard different?

The due diligence process is completed at the site level, either internally by the feed mill or externally by a third party contracted by the mill.

If following pathway 2 (*Industry/Sector/Fishery Assessment*) or 3 (*Ingredient Manufacturer Assessment*), the person or people conducting the process must meet certain competency requirements, which are outlined in the ASC Feed Standard Interpretation Manual.

Verification of competency will be demonstrated in the certification audit, along with sampling of due diligence reports.

What makes the ASC Feed Standard different?

Only the ASC Feed Standard:

- Requires a supplier code of conduct applicable up to tier 2
- Assesses risks of forced/child labour in supply chains
- Assesses all plant ingredients, not just soy and palm oil
- Has a defined due diligence approach which offers flexibility in risk assessment
- Contains competency requirements for conducting due diligence
- Recognises other robust and transparent certification schemes. No authorisation of credits

Combined holistically, the due diligence, reporting, transparency, stringency of requirements and rigour of auditing/certification process within the ASC Feed Standard provide assurance, credibility, trust and risk mitigation.

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