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Statement by the undersigned members of the Critical Outsiders Alliance on the ASC shrimp standard: **We continue our protest!**

A global alliance of hundreds of NGOs in Asia, Latin America, Africa, North America and Europe have been protesting for several years against WWF, its Shrimp Aquaculture Dialogue and its lack of concern for the environment and local peoples' livelihoods.

From its inception, the so-called dialogue process that **did not involve local resource users** nor the NGOs that work with them. The pro-industry dialogue has created weak standards that have been diluted to suit the shrimp industry's needs rather than promote strong environmental and human rights performance.

The conversion of mangroves and coastal zones into ponds for shrimp cultivation for the export industry has caused **severe environmental destruction, depletion of coastal biodiversity and wild fisheries as well as shoreline erosion**. It greatly increases vulnerability to hurricanes and tsunamis and releases massive quantities of carbon, thus contributing to climate change. The large scale use of fishmeal exacerbates all these problems.

Coastal populations in tropical countries are severely affected by the loss of livelihood, food security and protection from storms. **Protests are often met with human rights abuses. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment concludes that it is an economic loss for a country with shrimp farming in wetlands.**

Open throughput farming methods are destructive and cannot be called "responsible". The feed industry is destructive and more fish is used to feed the shrimp than the amount of shrimp that can be harvested, thus **worsening food security**.

The CO Alliance has just finished an **in-depth analysis of the ASC shrimp standard**. Each principle has been analysed and compared at various levels—what is being claimed, what is being audited to what is certified. The three draft versions of the standard have been compared with the final ASC standard to show the criteria that were deliberately diluted to suit the industry. A draft version of the report can be downloaded from: <http://korta.nu/asc-review>

A few results in summary:

Principle 1. *Comply with all applicable national and local laws:* Despite what the principle states, the ASC standard does not require compliance with all applicable national and local laws or international treaties. The standard-setters do not know or cannot decide which national and local laws are applicable; over eight years and three drafts, they did not bother to find out.

Principle 2. *Site farms in environmentally suitable locations while conserving biodiversity and important natural ecosystems:* Farms are allowed to operate inside the intertidal zone and in natural wetlands, which can never be considered an environmentally suitable location. ASC standards do not adequately protect mangroves from further losses, and their mitigation promises are empty ones; their stated mangrove restoration design is flawed.

Principle 3. *Develop and operate farms with consideration for surrounding communities:* The concerns of thousands of people displaced by shrimp farms are not addressed. Compliance under P3 cannot be verified as it depends on a fair p-SIA, which will not be available with the audit report. The definition of “conflict resolution” is unacceptable.

Principle 4. *Operate farms with responsible labour practices:* The standard only guarantees “minimum wage as applicable.” The list of “benefits” in the ASC Standard are not available to a vast majority of people working in the shrimp value chain like shrimp-hatchling collectors, hatchery-workers, shrimp harvesters, processing factory workers, packers, transporters and so forth.

Principle 5. *Manage shrimp health and welfare in a responsible manner:* The Principle deals with shrimp health and not food safety. It does not require any tests (nor does it search) for pesticide or antibiotic residues. It allows, unaudited, the use of antibiotics in hatcheries, including on-site hatcheries.

Principle 6. *Manage broodstock origin, stock selection and effects of stock management:* Usage of wild-caught Black Tiger shrimp post-larvae is allowed—the misery of a half-million women and children who catch these PL is not addressed by the ASC even though they were fully aware of this issue.

Principle 7. *Use resources in an environmentally efficient and responsible manner:* The ASC standard allows the usage of forage-fish as shrimp feed which nullifies any claim on sustainability. Genetically modified ingredients are allowed in feed. Feed containing soy grown in a previous rainforest area may be used by certified farms.

The CO Alliance will monitor farms certified under the ASC Standard. We will also continue to urge consumers in the EU, Japan and N. America to avoid warm water shrimp whether “certified” or not. We will continue to expose the greenwash in present attempts at shrimp certification by the ASC, GAA, Naturland, GlobalG.A.P and others.

Signed by:



Asia Solidarity against Industrial Aquaculture, <http://www.asiasolidarity.org>
KIARA (People's Coalition for Justice in Fisheries), www.kiara.or.id
Mangrove Action Project, www.mangroveactionproject.org
Nijera Kori, www.nijerakori.org
Stockholm Society for Nature Conservation,
- stockholm.naturskyddsforeningen.se
Indonesia for Global Justice (IGJ)
Traditional Fisherfolks Union of Indonesia (KNTI)
Green Concern for Development (GREENCODE)
Africa Mangrove Network (AMN)
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