



# Frequently Asked Questions

## On the Capture Fisheries Standard 2.0.0

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## About Fair Trade USA’s Capture Fisheries Standard (CFS)

### What is the CFS?

The CFS sets the requirements for Fair Trade Certified™ wild-capture fisheries production systems globally. It covers diverse groups of fishers, many different species, gear types, and types of vessels, along with associated land-based facilities all under one standard. We recognize that sustainability is a journey, and our standard focuses on continuous improvement over time to achieve superior social, economic, and environmental practices. Fisheries and land-based facilities are audited against criteria applicable to them.

Fair Trade certification, however, is more than just the standard itself. In addition to our rigorous standards, our model drives impact and value through the investment of Community Development Funds (the Fair Trade Premium) and the provision of producer support services, such as education and training on human rights, leadership, gender equity, and financial resilience.

Please visit our [website](#) to learn more about our model.

### How does the CFS benefit fishers and workers?

The CFS benefits fishers and workers through the third-party verification of its requirements, which safeguard fishers and workers on vessels and at land-based sites by securing safe and fair working conditions, and transparent trading relationships between fishers in the program and their buyers. Furthermore, the Fair Trade Premium is a direct sum of money passed through the supply chain, untouched, to the fishers directly. The fishers democratically decide how to spend this money to meet the needs of the community and the environment.

## About the CFS Major Revision

### Why did you update the CFS?

Fair Trade USA regularly updates all of our standards in order to drive increased benefit and impact to Fair Trade Certified™ supply chains. Following the [ISEAL Code of Good Practice](#), it is best practice in the



sustainability standards community to revisit and revise a standard every 3-5 years, to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness in meeting its stated objectives. Updating our Standards allows us to better enable sustainable livelihoods for producers and workers while creating value for businesses and consumers.

## What were the objectives of the CFS major revision?

The current iteration of the CFS has been in practice for five years now. During this time, Fair Trade USA has gained experience through the implementation of the program and we have identified areas for improvement. In general, the main objectives of the CFS major revision were as follows:

- Streamline existing requirements: Ensure criteria are clear and fit for purpose, and that they are well suited to apply to the diversity of supply chains in the fishing industry.
- Align internally with other Fair Trade USA Standards: Improve the efficiency of resource creation and overall program implementation through alignment with existing, well-established Fair Trade USA programs.
- Categorize criteria to improve applicability and accessibility: Innovate the current model to achieve desired outcomes, improve application of the program and users' experience, and ensure accessibility of diverse types of supply chains in the fishing industry.
- Innovate in response to changes in industry best practices: Best practices in the fishing industry are dynamic and changing quickly. This revision seeks to address new and emerging issues in the fishing industry.
- Increase impact on the ground for producers: Ensure requirements are feasible and meaningful to producers to enable and improve empowerment and fisher/worker well-being.

You can find more information about the CFS Revision in the [Project Plan](#).

## How was the CFS 2.0.0 developed and how were stakeholders involved?

The first part of the major revision process involved collecting information and data internally from the past 5 years of implementation. Key issues were identified and targeted internal and external engagement took place as a key step in the draft development process. During the direct stakeholder engagement phase, participants included environmental NGOs, social NGOs, current Certificate Holders, implementers of Fair Trade, foundation, academics, government, and importers (about 40 individuals total). Once the draft was prepared, it was released for a 60-day public consultation. We received 26 survey submissions from a broad range of stakeholders, including Certificate Holders, environmental NGOs, importers, implementers, and auditors. In addition, during the public consultation, a survey was circulated with fishers and workers. It was the intent of FTUSA to hold a number of workshops in-person, however in the wake of the pandemic, a survey was more reasonable. We received responses from 21 workers and 2 fishers. Before the pandemic started, we also added questions to our ongoing impact surveys to solicit information from fishers and workers as well. Feedback was processed and used to develop the draft version into the final CFS 2.0.0.

## What were the biggest changes in the major revision of the CFS?

While many of the CFS requirements are limited to general language changes, the progress model will now conform to a scoring system similar to Fair Trade USA's Agricultural Production Standard (APS). Where previously all requirements applied to each supply chain uniformly, the CFS has been updated according to operation size based on a number of variables, including the type and size of an operation.



Requirements in the CFS will now differ in timeline for some criteria depending on the type and size of an operation. In addition to Critical Criteria which must be met according to their designated timeline, there are Progress Points assigned to a subset of criteria. Certificate Holders must and must achieve specified thresholds of Progress Points that increase over time, and must all be met by Year 6, in order to be certified. Certificate Holders have the flexibility to pick and choose which criteria to comply with when. The goal is to allow for more flexible implementation of the standard as a Certificate Holder moves through the certification cycle, which can be tailored according to their capacity and open up accessibility to new entrants.

Please review the *CFS Scoring Guidance*, available on our website, for additional details on the new progress model.

Additionally, the structure of the CFS has been updated in order to clarify requirements for different subsets of sites and individuals within scope of the Certificate. The new Module breakdown of the CFS is as follows:

Module 1: Empowerment

Module 2: Fundamental Human Rights at Work

Module 3: Working Agreements Between Registered Fishers and Crew Members

Module 4: Conditions of Employment for Land-based Facility Workers and Hired-labor Fishers

Module 5: Rest Periods and Occupational Health and Safety on Vessels

Module 6: Working Hours and Occupational Health and Safety at Land-based Facilities

Module 7: Resource Management

Module 8: Transparency and Traceability

Module 9: Internal Management System

Additional key issues that have been included or expanded upon are grievance mechanisms, living wage, women's empowerment, and the Internal Management System. Furthermore, we expanded the CFS scope to include wild-capture freshwater species. Please refer to the *Summary of Changes* available on our website to see the detailed changes.

## What happened to the feedback I provided during the public consultation?

Feedback received during the public consultation period was reviewed and used to refine the Draft CFS 2.0.0 into its final version. The feedback was processed and analyzed along with the learnings and data that has been collected since the beginning of the revision to consolidate all inputs appropriately into the final version of the CFS 2.0.0. Fair Trade USA's external Standards Committee – consisting of experts from a variety of industry backgrounds across all of Fair Trade USA's categories – provided support and advise on this revision process, and played a critical role in understanding and reacting to stakeholder feedback on core strategic and technical issues.

A *Summary of Feedback and Response*, which outlines the comments received during the public consultation and Fair Trade USA responses, is available on the [revision website](#). We evaluated all feedback to ensure the CFS is relevant, impactful, and clear, and that Fair Trade USA meets the needs of our partner producers, consumers, and businesses.



## About the Implementation of the CFS 2.0.0

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### When does the CFS 2.0.0 go into effect and how can I learn more about the transition process?

The APS will go into on January 1st, 2021, at which time all audits will be conducted against the requirements of the CFS 2.0.0. We understand that time is needed to comply with requirements that are new or more rigorous in the CFS 2.0.0 than in the previous version. A transition period of one year from publication of the APS will be allowed for new requirements (May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – May 28<sup>th</sup> 2022). This transition process does not change the overall audit process, and for Certificate Holders who are currently certified under the previous Standards, their certification cycle continues to progress based on their year of certification. For further details, please consult the *Transition Policy* published on Fair Trade USA's website.

### Where can I find the supporting documents referred to in the CFS?

Throughout the rest of 2021, Fair Trade USA will be developing and publishing supporting documents to the CFS. Please visit our main [Standards website](#), reach out to your Fair Trade USA representative, or email us directly at [seafoodsc@fairtradeusa.org](mailto:seafoodsc@fairtradeusa.org) to find new and updated documents.

