



Seafood Processing Standard – Animal Welfare Module


Issue 1.0

05-NOV-2025

Global Seafood Alliance Certification Standard

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A Introduction


Animal health and welfare are an essential part of the Global Seafood Alliance (GSA) Seafood Processing Standard. Because the animals within the scope of this module are farmed species, industry is responsible for their whole life cycle. This Animal Welfare Module reflects best industry practices to ensure animal health and welfare are being addressed in a responsible manner. The facility shall be audited against the clauses in this module provided they meet the criteria of the scope listed below. This module shall be audited in combination with the Core Seafood Processing Standard 6.0.

B Scope

The scope of this module is live farm raised aquatic animals and includes transportation, holding, stunning, and slaughtering.


C Clause Requirements

- AW1 Live animals (post-harvest) shall be transported to processing facilities or other markets in a manner that provides a high level of animal welfare and minimizes distress. This shall be documented in a Transport Standard Operating Procedures and contain elements listed in the guidance as relevant to the species transported.
- AW2 The facility shall ensure that a transport log is completed for each transport delivery, including delivery by a contracted delivery service. The log shall include at a minimum:
- Date/times of start and end of each live transport delivery run
 - Origin and destination
 - Estimated biomass transported
 - Dissolved oxygen (as applicable) and temperature at departure and upon arrival at destination
 - Mortality rate
- AW2.1 The transport logbook shall be reviewed at a minimum frequency of weekly, by facility management to identify if welfare of live animal in transport is compromised. In cases where the welfare of live animals is compromised the facility shall investigate to determine root cause and document corrective actions.
- AW2.2 Transport logs shall be signed by the shipping and receiving facilities, including date and time.
- AW3 For facilities holding live animals prior to slaughter there shall be a Live Holding Standard Operating Procedures that states the requirements of holding live animals at the facility. These requirements shall include density, water quality, dissolved oxygen levels, holding duration, crowding methods, and temperature control suitable for the species being held.
- AW3.1 When requirements of the Live Holding Standard Operating Procedures are not met, the root cause and corrective actions shall be documented.
- AW4 Facilities shall have a Slaughter Standard Operating Procedure for slaughtering live animals. The Slaughter Standard Operating Procedure shall require stunning of the live animals (excluding mollusks), quickly rendering them unconscious and remaining unconscious until

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slaughter. The Slaughter Standard Operating Procedure shall also describe procedures for determining effectiveness of stunning.

- AW4.1 Effectiveness of the stunning process shall be evaluated at the beginning of the stunning operation and periodically throughout the stunning process. Farmed aquatic animals exhibiting signs of sensibility or ineffective stunning shall be re-stunned prior to slaughter.
- AW4.2 When requirements of the Slaughter Standard Operating Procedure are not met, the root cause and corrective actions shall be documented.
- AW5 If the stunning and slaughter process is outsourced, the facility shall verify the outsourced processor is following the facility's Slaughter Standard Operating Procedure.
- AW6 All workers that perform transport of live animals, stunning, or slaughtering operational tasks shall be trained by a competent person before performing these tasks. Training shall be documented.

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