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Sent by email

Date: 15/07/2021

Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement v2.4.1 GCR 7.4.3 for Finland Baltic herring & sprat

Dear Jim Andrews,

I write with reference to your submission on 05/07/2021 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow:

LR seek a variation from MSC GCR v2.4.1 7.4.3 which requires LR to set the effective date for the fishery certificate suspension 30 days after the CAB's decision to suspend. LR propose that the suspension date aligns across all the Central Baltic herring fisheries; Finland Baltic Herring and Sprat (LR), and Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Sweden Baltic herring and sprat (LR), and NZRO Gulf of Riga herring and sprat trawl fishery (BV).

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to v2.4.1 GCR 7.4.3 state:

If a fishery certificate is suspended, the CAB shall set the effective date for the fishery certificate suspension 30 days after the CAB's decision to suspend, and:

These are integral to ensuring all MSC accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies operate in a consistent and transparent manner. The MSC intends that these requirements be met across all fisheries and CoC certificate holders, except in exceptional, well-justified circumstances, as part of the MSC programme.

MSC notes the factors presented supporting your request, including:

- The recently released ICES stock advice for Central Baltic herring triggers the need for an expedited audit as the stock no longer achieves SG60 for PI1.1.1A.
- Clients have requested to self-suspend.
- A separate fishery that is harmonised with the current assessment has already announced an expedited audit and will reach its suspension date on 15 September
- Unless the timelines are harmonised, the suspension of the BV-certified NZRO fishery will take place after the suspension of the two LR-certified fisheries. LR's variation will align this resulting in a harmonised suspension date of all of the Central Baltic Herring fishery Units of Certification.

Given the rationale provided, the MSC is willing to grant a variation to the CR.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant Fisheries Assessment Manager for this fishery.

Marine Stewardship Council
cc: Assurance Services International