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Sent by email

Date: 29 January 2015

Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirements 24.2.3.2 and 7.5.9

Dear Jim Andrews,

I write with reference to your submission on 22 January 2015 of a request for the South Africa hake fishery for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to extend the deadline of the publication of the PCDR and to extend the certificate expiry date.

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to the timing of report submissions and certificate duration 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 in your letter supporting your request, including:

- IFC requests that a 10-day extension be granted to the PCDR publication deadline of 26 January 2015, proposing that the PCDR shall be published on or before 5 February 2015.
- The current certificate for this fishery is due to expire on the 16 March 2015. IFC proposes an extension to the certificate expiry date for a period of 6 weeks (i.e. to 27 April 2015).
- These requests are made because of a number of delays to the assessment process since the site visit that arose in the later part of 2014 that were out of the control of both IFC and the client fishery (i.e., delay due to IFC raising a potential conflict of interest for a peer reviewer and the subsequent investigation).

Given the rationale provided, the MSC is willing to grant a variation to the Certification Requirement in this case subject to the following condition:

- The CAB is not aware of any reasons why the fishery's certificate should not be extended (e.g., concerns about stock status, management, or un-met conditions as reflected in the PCDR).

If you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact Sergio Cansado, the Fisheries Assessment Manager for this fishery at sergio.cansado@msc.org.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Hoyle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marine Stewardship Council

cc: ASI