

SAI Global

Poland flatfish trawl, gillnet and longline

Notification of switch from on-site to remote 'site visit' in response to COVID-19 travel restrictions

Background

The original plan for this assessment, as outlined in the Fishery Announcement, was to hold an on-site visit from the 07th to the 10th of September 2020; an on-site meeting is ordinarily required as part of all initial assessments.

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing situation with respect to the global COVID-19 pandemic, it is not possible for the assessment team to travel to an on-site visit due to national restrictions against travel into Poland.

Thankfully, on 28th February 2020, in response to the coronavirus outbreak and in consideration of the welfare of all individuals participating in the MSC programme, MSC issued a derogation to allow for remote site visits as part of MSC Fishery assessments (the derogation also applies to Chain of Custody audits). The derogation is included in its entirety in Annex 1 to this notification below.

SAI Global response

Due to the ongoing travel restrictions, and in accordance with the applicable MSC derogation, SAI Global has switched the forum for the site visit portion of the initial assessment of this fishery from on-site audit to a remote 'site visit'; this remote 'site visit' is scheduled to include meetings with fishery stakeholders including the client, industry, management, science and enforcement agencies as well as a number of local and international eNGOs.

SAI Global would like to assure stakeholders that every effort is being, and will continue to be made, to ensure that stakeholders are afforded ample opportunities to input into this assessment as they normally would.

Finally, we would like to thank all stakeholders who have participated to date in this assessment and wish everyone the best at this difficult time.

Comments may be submitted to:

SAI Global Ireland – Client Services:

E: ClientServicesie@saiglobal.com

Annex 1. MSC Coronavirus Derogation

Title:	Coronavirus Announcement, Derogation (FCP v2.1 7.16.1, 7.28.2)
Link:	https://mscportal.force.com/interpret/s/article/Temporary-variation-statement-Chain-of-Custody-Certification-Requirements-and-Fishery-Certification-Process-site-visit-requirements-FCP
Date:	02 March 2020
Question:	Temporary variation statement Chain of Custody Certification Requirements and Fishery Certification Process site visit requirements (FCP v2.1 7.16.1, 7.28.2)
Answer:	<p>In response to the coronavirus outbreak and consideration of the welfare of all individuals participating in the MSC certification system, the MSC is issuing this derogation to allow for scheduling and conducting of remote site visits and audits for Fisheries and Chain of Custody certificate holders.</p> <p>The MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements include the requirement that all audits shall be conducted on-site except in specific circumstances (clause 7.1.6 and clause 11.3.3). The MSC Fisheries Certification Process includes requirements to conduct site visits and on-site surveillance audits (clauses 7.16.1 and 7.28.2).</p> <p>This derogation allows site visits for chain of custody audits and fishery assessments (including initial, surveillance and recertification) to be conducted remotely. The requirements for in-person site visits do not apply during the period of this derogation. This derogation is normative and no variation request is needed for this derogation to apply.</p> <p>This derogation shall be used only as necessary. CABs should retain evidence of any travel restrictions that prevent on-site audits; this can include those directed by government bodies or company policies. The existing timeframes for chain of custody audits and fishery assessments (including initial, surveillance and recertification) shall be followed as required in the normative documents. CABs shall maintain a list of certificate holders where this derogation has been applied and shall make this list available for MSC or ASI on request.</p> <p>Technology should be employed to audit as far as possible. CABs shall note in assessment and audit reports where this derogation has been applied and shall justify any instances where requirements were not evaluated due to remote auditing. The Chain of Custody team will be in touch with CABs with further advice on application of the checklist and evidence requirements during remote audits.</p> <p>Once the travel restrictions and precautions with the coronavirus outbreak have been lifted, site visits and audits shall be conducted as per regular assessment and audit procedures. The MSC will review this derogation in two months, and monthly thereafter, and take a decision on when it shall be revoked.</p> <p>For any other questions please contact the MSC Supply Chain Standards (supplychain@msc.org) and Fisheries Standard (fisheries@msc.org) teams. The MSC will continue to monitor the situation and provide any updates.</p> <p>Date of issue: 28th February 2020 End of validity: 28th May 2020</p> <p>The MSC reserves the right to revoke this derogation if the outbreak is controlled sooner. Equally, the MSC may extend the validity period if the outbreak is not controlled. This letter supersedes the previous letter issued on 3rd February 2020.</p>
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