

Control Union (UK) Limited

Northeastern Tropical Pacific Seine Yellowfin and Skipjack Tuna Fishery

MSC Variation Request

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1 Marine Stewardship Council variation request

Table 1 – Variation request

1	Date submitted to MSC
	18 th Sept 2020
2	CAB
	Control Union (UK) Limited
3	Fishery name and certificate number or CoC certificate number
	Northeastern Tropical Pacific Purse Seine Yellowfin and Skipjack Tuna Fishery (The PAST Fishery) Certificate Number: MSC-F-31326
4	Lead auditor or program manager
	Dr Rob Blyth-Skyrme (Team Leader) and Dr. Hugh Jones (CU UK Principal Fisheries Assessment Manager)
5	Request prepared by
	Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme
6	Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested
	<p>FCP v.2.1 7.28.16.1.b.i: If progress against the measurable outcomes, expected results or (interim) milestones specified when setting the condition is judged to be behind target, the CAB shall specify the remedial action, and any revised milestones, that are required to bring process back on track within 12 months to achieve the original condition by the original deadline.</p> <p>FCP v.2.1 7.18.1.5: If, at the time of drafting a condition, the CAB determines that there are exceptional circumstances, and the CAB determines that achieving a performance level of 80 may take longer than the period of certification, the CAB may draft conditions to result in improved performance to at least the 80 level within a longer, specified period set by the CAB.</p>
7	How many times has a variation for this requirement been accepted for the same assessment of the same fishery?
	1 st – no other variations have been submitted on this requirement.

Table 2 – Variation justification

1	Proposed variation	
	<p>CU proposes to vary FCP v.2.1 7.28.16.1.b.i by extending the existing timeline for conditions 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-10 and 2-11 (i.e., five conditions) by an additional two years. This would extend the timelines for each condition from 4 years to 6 years.</p> <p>CU would also be required to vary FCP v.2.1 7.18.1.5, based on exceptional circumstances, to allow conditions to be set with a timeline longer than one certificate period subsequent to their original drafting.</p>	
2	Additional time requested	
	Original deadline date	Year 4 Surveillance Audit
	Modified deadline date requested	Year 6 (in Year 1 of a new certificate, if the fishery is recertified)
	Length of additional time requested	2 Years
3	Justification	
	<p>Conditions 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-10 and 2-11 were set with a four-year timeline when the fishery was certified in September 2017; meeting these conditions relies upon the completion of a stock assessment for Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean dolphin populations. All five conditions were deemed to be ‘on target’ at the Year 1 surveillance audit.</p> <p>Work against the conditions in Year 2 has progressed and a 14-day trial survey cruise was undertaken in November 2019. A cruise report was made available to the Audit Team (Oedekoven et al. 2020¹).</p> <p>Several key components of the research plan were tested during the trial survey cruise, including the ability to use the Mexican Research Vessel Dr. Jorge Carranza Fraser as a survey platform, and the ability to use drones to detect dolphin schools directly ahead of the survey vessel to assess trackline detection probability, and to collect data on the dolphin school size and species composition using the video footage and a machine-learning algorithm to calibrate estimates made by the ship-based observers.</p> <p>While the Research Vessel was proven to be appropriate for undertaking the work, contrary to the methodological requirements the drones employed for the survey were not able to provide sufficient endurance, camera image resolution was too low, transmitted video footage was of insufficient quality due to compression and other issues, and there was no on-board back-up video storage capability. Further, one drone was lost and only one pilot was able to fly the drones successfully. Together, these issues meant that whilst some calibration of trackline detection and counts by species could occur, the test was not sufficiently successful to confirm the feasibility of the methodology for undertaking a full survey (120 days) as required for the next stage of the action plan.</p> <p>A further sea trial was proposed by the project team, using a different drone-camera system to provide improved image resolution and endurance capabilities. However, this is not currently possible because the research vessel cannot sail with the limitations posed by Covid-19. Furthermore, the funding of additional survey time to test a different, still untested drone-camera system requires careful consideration.</p>	

¹ Oedekoven, C.S., McMillan, L., Fatima, S., Harris-Birtill, D., Faustino, C., Marshall, L., Buckland, S.T. & C.E. Lennert-Cody (2020). ETP trial survey: Project report. Unpublished

	<p>The availability of specialist personnel to support the project is another important consideration. The Audit Team was informed that it may not be possible to keep the research team together without the ability to proceed with the full survey or other trial elements. Decision-making in this regard is hampered by the situation in the IATTC, where Dr. Guillermo Compean completed his four-year tenure of the IATTC Director’s role in August this year. He cannot be reconfirmed; or a new person voted in until the IATTC meets in-person. With all meetings postponed due to Covid. As such, Dr. Compean is temporarily unable to act as Director, and the Senior Policy Advisor (Jean-Françoise Pulvenis) is temporarily acting in that role.</p> <p>It is important to note that CU is content that the client has made considerable efforts to meet the Year 2 milestones, but events beyond the client’s control have resulted in considerable lost time and now delays to any work going forward.</p> <p>In any case, and because of the failure to conduct the trial survey successfully, or to demonstrate the ability to use the machine-learning algorithm to count dolphins by species reliably. The feasibility of undertaking and then completing the work as proposed, even if the project team is available, must be considered in detail.</p> <p>Given the truly exceptional circumstances now faced by all parties, and the difficulty of undertaking any further survey work at this time, it is considered that a delay of two years is the minimum that may be expected to satisfactorily deliver the project</p> <p>It is noted that revised milestones will be prepared and a revised CAP presented to address the conditions as required.</p>
4	If a fishery assessment, implications for assessment
	The impact for the certificate of granting the request are a two-year delay in completing the five conditions.
5	If a fishery assessment, mitigation of the implication for assessment
	<p>In order to report on progress / completion of the conditions, an additional surveillance audit may be needed at the end of the certificate. It is not thought that this requires a variation to FCP v.2.1 7.28.</p> <p>It is not thought there are any other impacts which require mitigation.</p>
6	If a fishery assessment, how many conditions does the fishery have and will their progress be affected (positive or negative)?
	<p>The fishery was certified (October 2017) with 29 conditions (two on Principle 1, 20 on Principle 2, seven on Principle 3). At the year 1 audit, one condition in Principle 3 was closed, and all other conditions were deemed to be ‘on target’.</p> <p>Conditions 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-10 and 2-11 (i.e., five conditions) will require new milestones to account for the additional two years of time given for their completion, and to account for the results of the initial trial of the dolphin survey methodology.</p>
7	What is the status of the current assessment?
	The year 2 surveillance audit for the PAST fishery is currently being prepared, the fishery having been audited remotely from the 17th – 27th August 2020.
8	Further comments
	None
9	If applicable, additional information added after MSC’s request

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