



UCSL United Certification Systems Limited

1 Anastasi Shoukri Street, Pamelva Court,

Office 003, 3035 Limassol, Cyprus

Mobile phone: +7-981-195-1778

Email: t.pitieva@ucsl.eu

Website: <https://ucsl.eu/>

UCSL United Certification Systems Limited

Lake Chany perch and pike-perch

MSC Variation Request

1 Marine Stewardship Council variation request

Table X – Variation request

1	Date submitted to the MSC
	24 th May 2021
2	CAB
	UCSL United Certification Systems Limited
3	Fishery name and certificate number
	Lake Chany perch and pike-perch – in assessment
4	Lead auditor or program manager
	Geir Honneland
5	Request prepared by
	Tatiana Pitieva, UCSL program manager
6	Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested
	FCP v2.2 - 7.16 / G7.16 Site Visit: Team Attendance March 2021 Derogation 3: Covid-19 Fishery and Chain of Custody Remote Auditing – Normative Requirements - 1.3.b. – Submit a variation request (as per GCR 4.12) to the MSC to conduct initial assessments remotely.
7	How many times has a variation for this requirement been accepted for the same assessment of the same fishery?
	This is the first variation request submitted for this fishery.

Table X – Variation justification

1 Proposed variation	
The CAB proposes that the site visit for this fishery be conducted remotely for the assessment team (with the onsite support of the technical expert and P1 expert), as opposed to conducting an fully onsite visit in the Russian Federation.	
2 Additional time requested	
Original deadline date	N/A
Modified deadline date requested	N/A
Length of additional time requested	N/A
3 Justification	
<p>The updated MSC Covid-19 Pandemic Derogation (effective 28th March 2021) states that “initial assessments and audits that are to be completed without an on-site visit will require CABs to submit a variation request and risk assessment for approval” and that “If national or local Covid-19 restrictions prevent Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs), assessors or certificate holders from carrying out on-site audits and assessments of already certified businesses, these may be undertaken remotely.”</p> <p>The justification for conducting a remote site visit for this assessment is as follows:</p> <p>Travel Restrictions: The fishery takes place in Novosibirsk region, Lake Chany, Russia. The site visit is planned to be held in Novosibirsk, Russia. At the present moment there are significant restrictions between the place of residence of the assessors (United States of America, Norway, Spain) and Russia. Planning of logistics through other means of travelling and countries will lead to extra expenses to the fishery client.</p> <p>According to the current regulation (Regulation of the Governor of the Novosibirsk region from June 26, 2020 № 114 "On Amending the decision of the Governor of the Novosibirsk region from 31.03.2020 № 48", clause 1 https://rg.ru/2020/06/27/novosibirsk-post114-reg-dok.html), citizens in the Novosibirsk region should avoid attending public events (including business, cultural, entertainment and sporting events), refrain from visiting crowded places</p> <p>Three of the team members for this assessment are based abroad. They have been selected as meeting the relevant competence and qualification requirements substitution of whom will not be organized promptly due to no currently available Russian residents meeting the same requirements at the same level.</p>	
4 Implications for assessment	
Remote audit activities with the onsite participation of the technical expert and P1 expert will not have any implications for the assessment, including its timeline. Taking into account our CAB's experience with remote fishery assessments within the derogation period during which the active participation of the stakeholders was provided, there is confidence that a high level of stakeholder interaction will be provided here as well and the team will be able to collect all required information.	
5 Mitigation of the implications for assessment	
See Table 1 Risk assessment	
6 How many conditions does the fishery have and will their progress be affected (positive or negative)?	
This is the initial full assessment for this assessment, no conditions raised at this stage.	

7	What is the status of the current assessment or audit?
	The Announcement Comment Draft Report was published on 13 January 2021. The site visit is planned for 7-12 June 2021.
8	Further comments
	N/A
9	If applicable, additional information added after the MSC's request
	N/A

Table 1 - Risk assessment

Risk areas	Key risks	Mitigation plan
Sufficient information to enable an effective and robust fishery assessment process and comprehensive assessment against the MSC Fisheries Standard	Ability to verify information remotely	Low risk - the team will use different mechanisms to engage with the clients and stakeholders, such as Skype/Zoom calls, email and phone (where appropriate). The mechanisms are determined to be sufficient and effective in the circumstances of this fishery. Fishery reports and other documents are fully available to the team as they have been requested during the ACDR preparation. Such information as logbooks and other hard copy documents in Russian is available to be promptly transmitted electronically (scanned copies) to the team: assistance with interpretation of this information will be provided by a Russian-speaking technical expert attending the assessment onsite. As it's a large-scale fishery, information about it, including the management system, is widely known to the stakeholders via its website and therefore can be easily verified. The physical aspects of the fishery will be verified through the photo and video files made by the client and also will be personally inspected by the technical expert Andrey Vinnikov. Also, a Russian-speaking P1 expert will be on site, which should significantly improve communication between experts, stakeholders, and the expert.
	Ability to engage with stakeholders, deliver a robust stakeholder consultation process and conduct interviews with stakeholder.	Low risk – UCSL will organize the consultation process according to FCP v.2.2 4.2 in a timely manner and allowing different means of communication with the team. UCSL also has an effective internal procedure of stakeholder consultations in place, used by the teams in all assessments
	Ability to gather information and carry out stakeholder consultations if the Risk Based Framework (annex PF) is being used to assess data-deficient PIs.	Low risk – An RBF procedure was conducted for this fishery which showed that bycatch species are in a stable stock state and the fishery being assessed would not be able to affect their populations and bring them to a minimum population at which normal natural recovery of their stock would be impossible. Also, no stakeholder comments were received on this procedure.
	Availability of information	Low risk – during the preparation of the ACDR the team didn't reveal a large number of information gaps. The client has done a lot to gather all possible information in advance, therefore no PIs scored less than 60, 4 PIs preliminarily scored as 60-79, and all other PIs higher than 80.

	Ability to understand the context, scale, and intensity of the fishery operations.	Low risk – the team has a good understanding of the specified aspects of the fishery under assessment. The team leader researched the ACDR preparation materials for this fishery client well. The technical expert (UCSL Director of marine programs Andrey Vinnikov) has wide scientific knowledge of the fisheries in this region which also allows the team to get a clear picture of the specifics of this fishery
Sufficient communication capability to effectively plan, conduct interviews and facilitate information sharing as per IAF ID 4: 2018 .	Availability of information and communication technology (ICT).	Low risk – the team has available a wide range of ICT such as their PCs with required software, teleconference facilities allowing audio, video and data sharing. Video and audio during the opening and closing meetings will be recorded if agreed by all parties, taking into account security and confidentiality issues.
	Competency of assessment teams, auditees, and stakeholders in using ICT.	Low risk – the team, representatives of the CAB and the client has used Skype, Zoom and other ICT during internal communication and during other events, including remote assessments. No problems with using them identified or declared before. The CAB and the assessors understand the risks and opportunities of ICT used and its possible impact on the assessment duration. For this purpose the meetings have been split into a number of shorter sessions to make communication more effective.
	Ability to clearly exchange information between the assessment team, prospective fishery client and stakeholders and to be understood by all parties when parties speak different languages.	Low risk – the basic language of communication with the client and stakeholders will be Russian. The team leader knows a little bit of Russian, during the site visit communication will be maintained by an independent interpreter, for discussion with another team members (English-Russian). Also Dmitry Sendek P1 expert is a native Russian speaker
	Ability to schedule remote site visit activities at reasonable mutually convenient times when parties are located across different time zones.	Low risk – taking into account the different time zones of the places of location of the parties of this assessment (USA, Europe, Russia), the assessment activities have been planned in such a way to make it possible for all parties to participate 3-4 hours each assessment day. All participants have confirmed their availability for these periods.