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Anna Kiseleva
Lead Auditor
DNV GL Business Assurance Norway AS

Sent by email

Date: 24/03/2015

Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement for Faroe Islands North East Arctic cod

Dear Anna,

I write with reference to your submission on 20/03/2015 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow proceeding with the expedited Principle 1 assessment for NEA Saithe as outlined in Annex CL.

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to Annex CL Expedited Principle 1 Assessments 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:

- Saithe was assessed as a main retained species in the initial assessment of the Faroe Island NEA cod /haddock assessments (Certificates issued Aug 2012). The scopes of these fisheries were later extended to include also Icelandic vessels (Nov 2014).
- As Icelandic registered fishing vessels licensed to fish in Norwegian and Russian waters only have an explicit quota for cod, the expedited P1 assessment for NEA saithe will only include the Faroe Islands registered vessels.
- No conditions were assigned for Principle 2 scoring indicators in the initial assessments or in the scope extension reports.
- It is not expected that there will be any material differences to Principle 2 scoring for bycatch, habitat or ecosystem components, but a GAP analysis will be conducted as part of the expedited assessment with rescoring of any relevant Principle 2 PIs.
- The NEA saithe is managed by Norwegian and Russian authorities separately in the individual EEZs. ICES advice applies to the NEA saithe stock. The expedited assessment will include a GAP analysis and, if any GAPS are identified, scoring of those PIs which are different from the assessment conducted for Faroe Islands North East Arctic Cod fishery under Principle 3.

- In addition to scoring of Principle 1 performance indicators, PI 2.1.1, PI 2.1.2 and PI 2.1.3 will be rescored to reevaluate the remaining main retained species.
- GAP analysis will be completed for Principle 2 and 3 performance indicators, and if any GAPs are identified, PIs which are different from the original assessment conducted for Faroe Islands North East Arctic Cod fishery will be rescored.
- The expedited audit will be carried out as an on-site audit and coordinated with the regular annual surveillance audit for the Faroe Islands cod and haddock fisheries, by a team of two or more individuals with the expertise comparable to the members of the original team. The process will follow requirements as set out in MSC CR v1.3 Annex CL.

Given the rationale provided, the MSC is willing to grant a variation to the CR subject to the following condition:

- All stakeholders are made aware that an expedited audit to include NEA Saithe as a P1 species will be conducted
- That the assessment team ensures that specific consideration is given to the traceability aspects relevant to this assessment and makes it clear to stakeholders that the expedited P1 assessment for NEA saithe will only include the Faroe Islands registered vessels and not the whole fishery.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact Robert Lefebure , the Fisheries Assessment Manager for this fishery either by email robert.lefebure@msc.org or phone +44 (0)20 7246 8935.

Best regards,



Marine Stewardship Council
cc: ASI, lead auditor