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Sent by email

Date: 18/05/2021

Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement v2.2 FCP-7.30.5.2 for Southern Gulf of California Thread Herring

Dear Gabriela Anhalzer,

I write with reference to your submission on 13/05/2021 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow:

SCS proposes to grant a one-year extension to the fishery's condition 1-6 (PI 1.2.4 Sic) at the time of the fourth-year surveillance (9/2021). The condition was set in 2016 during the full assessment and set to close by the 4th annual surveillance. SCS proposes to carry over the condition to the reassessment with its anticipated closure during the first surveillance audit (4/2023). The expiration date of the certificate is 4/14/2022.

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to v2.2 FCP-7.30.5.2 state:

If there are any open conditions, the team shall apply 7.28.16.1, 7.28.16.2.a and 7.28.16.4.a to determine the adequacy of progress against those conditions and milestones

These 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 supporting your request, including:

- Due to COVID-19 the collection of sufficient stock related information and the subsequent development of an improved stock assessment model will not be completed by the fourth-year surveillance.
- The fishery met the third-year surveillance milestones.
- Reassessment will be announced 30-days prior to the fourth-year surveillance audit.

Given the rationale provided, the MSC is willing to grant a variation to the CR in this case subject to the following conditions:

- The PI 1.2.4 condition will have to be closed at the first surveillance audit of the reassessment.
- Stakeholders are informed of the deadline extension for PI 1.2.4 condition.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant Fisheries Assessment Manager for this fishery.

Marine Stewardship Council
cc: Assurance Services International