

## Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request Form V1.3

<b>Date submitted to MSC</b>	8th July 2016
<b>Conformity Assessment Body</b>	Acoura Marine
<b>Fishery Name/CoC Certificate Number</b>	ISF Norwegian & Icelandic herring trawl and seine Fishery F-FCI-0039
<b>Lead Auditor/Programme Manager</b>	Jim Andrews / Jason Combes
<b>Scheme requirement(s) to vary from</b>	Fishery Certification Requirements v2.0: § 7.23.13.1.b.i
<b>Is this variation sought in order to undertake an expedited P1 assessment (CR annex CL)?</b>	No

### 1. Proposed variation

Acoura Marine have found the progress with a condition milestone is behind target for a second year. The assessment team now consider that the original condition milestones are not appropriate for the fishery. **To specify remedial action & revised milestones at second instance of falling "behind target"** The CR allows for remedial action & revised milestones to be set at the first instance of falling "behind target" (CR §7.23.13.1.b.i). A variation is sought to allow these options at the second instance of falling behind target.

### 2. Rationale/Justification

The off-site surveillance audit for this fishery took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Two team members met with the client in Iceland (taking advantage of their presence in Iceland), and the third team member took part off-site. This was the second surveillance audit for this fishery.

Whilst auditing progress with the first condition of certification, it became clear that progress with the Year 1 milestone for Condition 1 remained behind target, having been found to be behind target at the first surveillance audit. Condition 1 addresses the lack of a formal management plan for the Icelandic Summer Spawning herring stock UoC under PI 1.2.2.

The Year 1 milestone required that a report reviewing different management options for this stock should be presented to ICES, and in Year 2 there should be consultation on these options.

During discussions of these milestones at the surveillance audit with the client, it became clear that the original milestones were inappropriate. The key reasons for this are to do with the biology of the target species and also the management regime.

The Icelandic Summer Spawning Herring stock is confined to Icelandic waters and is only fished by Icelandic vessels. ICES have identified reference points for the stock biomass and also  $F_{msy}$ . The client and Icelandic Government should therefore follow a different, and more effective, course of

action to that set out in the milestones in order to achieve the goal of the condition by Year 4.

The variation requested would allow Acoura Marine to revise the milestones at this surveillance audit so that they are more appropriate for the fish stock and management regime.

The assessment team consider that the original goal of having a formal management plan in place for this fishery by Year 4 of the certification remains appropriate. The change to the milestones will not alter the overall outcome of the condition.

The assessment team also note that the stock is presently above its target reference point and that fishing mortality is compatible with  $F_{msy}$ . The variation will not affect stock status.

Acoura Marine confirms that the request does not alter the conformity of the certificate holder with the relevant MSC standard.

<b>3. Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)</b>	
N/A	

<b>4. Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)</b>	N/A
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<b>5. Further Comments</b>	
N/A	