



Billy Hynes

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Sent by email

Date: 18/04/2017

Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement GCR V2.1; 7.5.6 for the North West Atlantic Canada Harpoon Swordfish and North West Atlantic Canada Longline Swordfish

Dear Billy,

I write with reference to your submission on 04/05/2017 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to extend the certificates for these fisheries from the 18 April 2017 until 30 September 2017, (or when the reassessments have completed if sooner) to allow both reassessments to complete.

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to the fishery certificate lengths 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:

- The harpoon certificate had been previously extended, following acceptance of a previous variation request, from 17 June 2015 until 18 April 2017, to line up with the longline certificate.
- With an April anniversary date, both fisheries were due to enter reassessment in April 2016.
- However, the MSC approved an ICCAT harmonisation process in January 2016, with an onsite meeting taking place in August 2016, and the following consultation and



reports continuing until 24th November when the final report was published on the MSC website.

- Reassessments for both the longline and harpoon fisheries were announced on September 1 2016.
- However, by delaying the entry into reassessment the fisheries will not be able to finish their reassessments by the time their current certificates expire.

Given the rationale provided, the MSC is willing to grant a variation to the CR in this case.

- The CAB can confirm that it is not aware at this time of any factor (related to either fishery status, or performance against conditions) that could result in the fishery no longer being in compliance with the MSC Fisheries Standard.
- Stakeholders are informed.
- ECert is updated to reflect changes, including providing a certificate covering the period from the end of the current certificate to the date accepted in the variation response.

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

Marine Stewardship Council

cc: ASI, lead auditor