

# Lloyd's Register

## Canada Northern and Striped Shrimp

### MSC Variation Request

#### 1 Introduction

This form details the information required from Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) to enable the MSC to consider a CAB application to vary from a clause or requirement in any of the MSC program documents (GCR 4.12).

Please complete all unshaded fields. Where instructions are included in *italics*, please delete and replace with your specific information. All grey boxes containing instructions may be deleted, e.g. the 'Introduction' section.

Once this variation form is completed, delete guidance, save it as a PDF file and upload to the MSC database. On receipt, the MSC will consider your request and will usually respond within 14 days.

Please note that all variation request forms and MSC responses to the request will be published on the MSC website along with other assessment documents associated with the specific fishery.

## 2 Marine Stewardship Council variation request

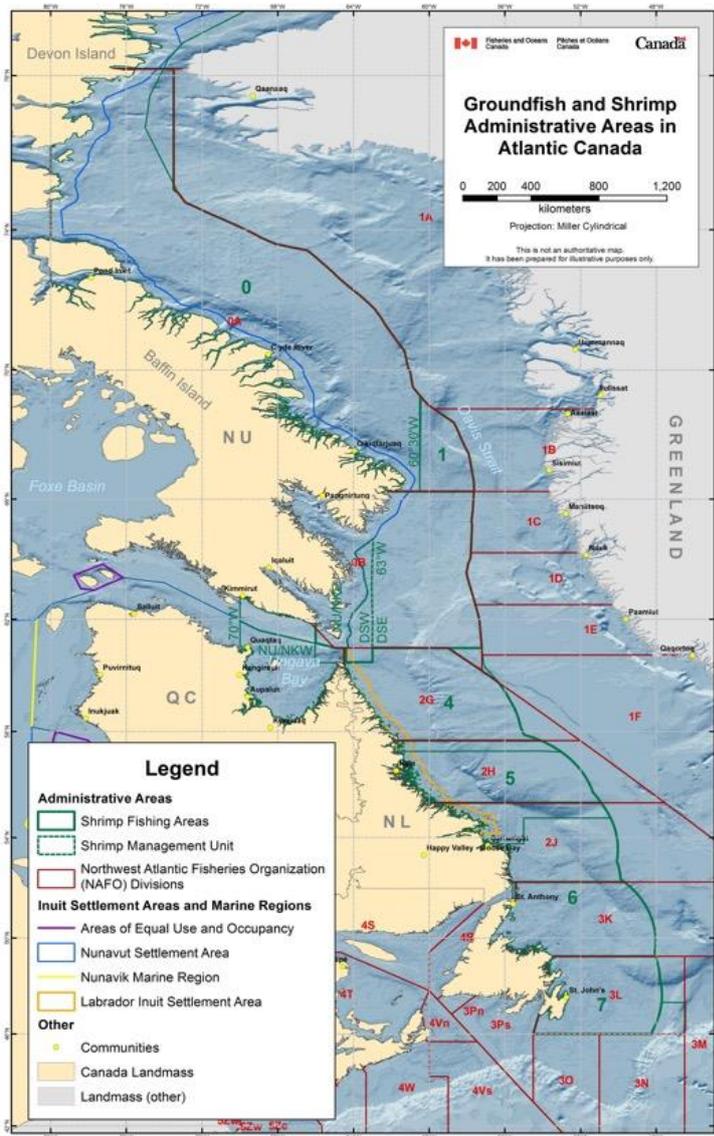
**Table 1 – Variation request**

1	Date submitted to the MSC
	- Please note the MSC will usually respond within 14 days, but for complex variations, longer may be necessary. The MSC will keep you informed if it will take longer than 14 days.
	29.07.2021
2	CAB
	Acoura Marine (t/a Lloyd's Register)
3	Fishery name and certificate number
	Canada Northern and Striped Shrimp MSC-F-31284
4	Lead auditor or program manager
	Paul Knapman
5	Request prepared by
	Tom Lopes Vieira
6	Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested
	FCP 7.28.16.1.b FCP 7.28.16.2 FCP 7.28.16.4
7	How many times has a variation for this requirement been accepted for the same assessment of the same fishery?
	- e.g. Fill in 2 <sup>nd</sup> if a previous extension request on the 60 days requirement for surveillance reports has been accepted, and this request is for an additional time extension on top of that.
	<b>0</b>

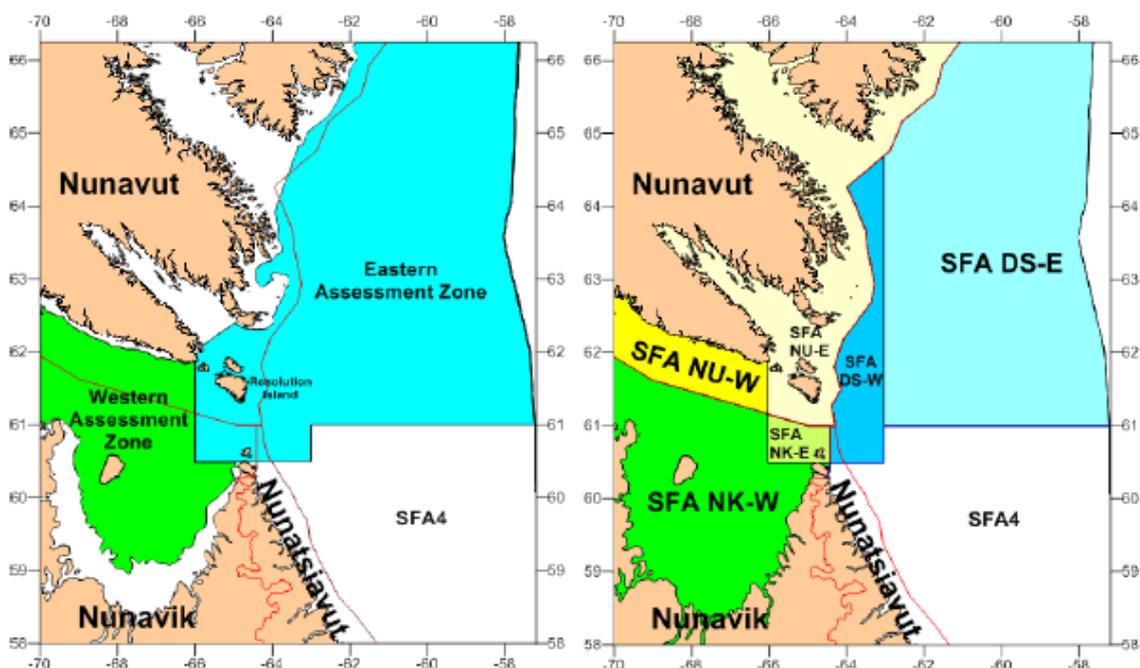
**Table 2 – Variation justification**

1	Proposed variation
	- Please describe how the CAB proposes to vary from the requirement including, where required, any original deadline date, the length of additional time requested and the exact modified deadline date.

Please accept this Variation Request (VR) in relation to the “Canada Northern and Striped Shrimp Fishery”, the Units of Certification of which encompass 100% of harvesting activity by both small and large vessels in Shrimp Fishing Areas (SFA) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, shown in Figures 1 and 2 below:



**Figure 1. Shrimp Fishing Areas (SFAs) 0-7 in the Canadian Atlantic**



**Figure 2.** Location of the Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ) and Western Assessment Zone (WAZ) (left panel) and corresponding Shrimp Fishing Area (SFA) management units (right panel). (Boundaries of the Nunavut (NU), Nunavik (NK) and Nunatsiavut Land Claims Areas are identified with red lines. DS = Davis Strait, E = East, W = West.) Source: DFO (2018).

The VR involves extension to conditions that are otherwise not automatically extended under MSC fisheries derogation 6 – thus conditions 1, 4, 5 & 6. Extensions detailed in section 2. The intent behind the VR is to provide appropriate time to ensure delivery of the conditions, the progress toward which has been significantly affected by the consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada (DFO).

2	Additional time requested	
	Original deadline date	<p><b>Condition 1:</b> 4<sup>th</sup> surveillance audit of current certification.</p> <p><b>Conditions 4, 5 &amp; 6:</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> surveillance audit following re-certification.</p>
	Modified deadline date requested	<p><b>Condition 1:</b> 1<sup>st</sup> Surveillance audit following recertification.</p> <p><b>Conditions 4, 5 and 6:</b> 4<sup>th</sup> Surveillance audit following recertification.</p>
	Length of additional time requested	<p>22 months (<b>Condition 1</b> - 1<sup>st</sup> surveillance audit following certification = June 2023)</p> <p>2 years (<b>Conditions 4,5 and 6</b> - 4<sup>th</sup> surveillance audit following re-certification = June 2026)</p>
3	Justification	
	<p>- Please explain in detail why the variation is requested and why the change is necessary. This helps the MSC decide whether the variation request should be granted.</p>	

The Covid-19 pandemic slowed progress towards meeting conditions 1, 4, 5, and 6, and is the primary reason for this Variation Request to extend the deadline to meet these conditions.

**Current Condition 1 - related to UoC3 (striped shrimp in the Eastern and Western Assessment Zones – EAZ, WAZ – and SFA 4)**

The client shall demonstrate by the Year 4 audit that the SG80 requirements of PI 1.1.2 are met in full for UoC 3 (striped shrimp in Western and Eastern Assessment Zones (WAZ, EAZ) and SFA 4), including for Sla, such that: “Reference points are appropriate for the stock and can be estimated.”

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, especially over its initial 6+ month period, a Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat (CSAS) peer review process was held virtually in May 2020 and successfully established Limit Reference Points (LRPs) for *Pandalus montagui* (striped shrimp) in the WAZ, EAZ. However, following this meeting CSAS experienced publication delays due to Covid-19, with science advice being published in November 2020. This in turn delayed commencement of work towards establishing Target Reference Points (TRP) for these stocks.

Work on Target Reference Points (TRPs) for the EAZ and WAZ commenced in November 2021 through a Northern Precautionary Approach Working Group (NPAWG) - a working group of the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC). Multiple NPAWG sessions occurred through the late Fall and Winter period, entirely through virtual platforms due to travel restrictions related to Covid-19.

Virtual working group meetings presented a number of challenges in terms of participant availability, efficiency of discussions and effective collaboration between working group members. Although support for an Upper Stock Reference (USR) has recently been achieved through NPAWG, these challenges ultimately lengthened the process.

Consistent with land claims obligations, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board will now exercise their decision-making and advisory roles in the establishment of reference points for striped shrimp in the WAZ. Covid-19 may also impact the efficiency of operations of co-management partners in the WAZ and EAZ.

**Current Condition 4 – related to UoC 5 (Northern shrimp in SFA 6)**

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> surveillance audit following re-certification (June 2024), the client shall provide evidence that new limit and target reference points within a Precautionary Approach (PA) framework have been implemented and provide an update on UoC 5 (Northern shrimp in SFA 6) stock status to demonstrate that it is highly likely that the stock is: (a) above the point at which recruitment would be impaired; and, (b) is at or fluctuating around its target reference point.

**Current Condition 5 – related to UoC 5 (Northern shrimp in SFA 6)**

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> surveillance audit following re-certification (June 2024), the client shall demonstrate that the SG80 requirements of PI 1.2.4b are met in full for UoC 5 (Northern shrimp in SFA 6), such that: “The assessment estimates stock status relative to reference points that are appropriate for the stock and can be estimated.”

**Current Condition 6 – related to UoC 5 (Northern shrimp in SFA 6)**

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> surveillance audit following re-certification (June 2024), the client shall demonstrate that the SG80 requirements of scoring issue (b) of PI 1.1.2 is met in full for UoC 5 (Northern shrimp in SFA 6), such that: “There is evidence that the rebuilding strategies are rebuilding stocks, or it is likely based on simulation modelling, exploitation rates or previous performance that they will be able to rebuild the stock within a specified timeframe.”

The initial 6+ months of the pandemic slowed much of the development process as DFO was adjusting to safety and work priorities of its employees, as well as making over 50 in-season adjustments to fisheries to align them better with public health directives.

On top of this, an in-person *Workshop on Fisheries Management Reference Points in Highly Dynamic Ecosystems* had been scheduled for October 2020 at the Marine Institute (Memorial University of Newfoundland), with Northern shrimp as a focused case study. This workshop would have provided an opportunity for DFO Science to collaborate with international experts on the development of appropriate

	<p>reference points and a population model for Northern shrimp in SFAs 4-6. Due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, the October workshop did not proceed as planned. Instead, a virtual meeting was held that focused on general knowledge regarding reference points in dynamic ecosystems, without case studies or dedicated data analyses.</p> <p>This loss of opportunity for collaboration from Fall 2020 has delayed work to advance work on the model and revised reference points. In the meantime, DFO Science has advised that the current reference points for Northern shrimp in SFAs 4-6 should remain in place to continue assessments under a PA Framework in order to protect the stock.</p> <p>The Northern shrimp LRP Technical Working Group is considering an in-person meeting in the Fall of 2021 to coordinate ongoing analyses of the limit reference point and predictive model. This in-person meeting remains dependent on lifting Covid-19 travel restrictions. If it is required that this meeting move to a virtual setting, much of the ability to effectively collaborate on coding and analyses, data exchange and to conduct a thorough review becomes hampered and may further impede the development of the model and LRPs.</p>
4	Implications for assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please include any impacts on the assessment/certificate if the request is accepted referencing any other requirements which may be affected, and the risks these implications could have.</li> <li>- e.g. Timeline delays, stakeholder input.</li> </ul>
	<p>The implications for the assessment are minimal other than delaying the required outcome of condition 1 by a year, and conditions 4, 5 and 6 by two years. Reporting on progress toward meeting the condition will be set out in revised annual milestones, which will also appear in a revised client action plan and will be reported against at annual audits.</p>
5	Mitigation of the implications for assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please include information how risks of the implications for the assessment that have been identified under the previous question are proposed to be mitigated by the CAB.</li> </ul>
	<p>Revised annual milestones will be set out in the 4<sup>th</sup> audit report and the various iterations of the on-going re-assessment report.</p> <p>The client will commit to the annual milestones in their client action plan.</p> <p>Progress toward meeting the conditions will be reported at annual audits.</p>
6	How many conditions does the fishery have and will their progress be affected (positive or negative)?
	<p>There are 4 conditions impacted by this VR (conditions 1, 4, 5 &amp; 6) and impacts are expected to be positive, as the extension of milestones accommodates for ability to successfully deliver condition outputs.</p>
7	What is the status of the current assessment or audit?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please include the latest version and timing of the report that has been prepared, and an indication when the next report is expected (e.g. the Client and Peer Review Draft Report has been sent to the client and the peer reviewers on 7 June 2018. The Public Comment Draft Report is expected to be ready on 1 September 2018).</li> </ul>

	<p>The off-site site visit for the Canada Northern and Striped Shrimp Fishery concluded on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021. The audit team are working on the 4<sup>th</sup> audit report which is expected to be completed by mid-August 2021.</p> <p>The ACDR for the re-assessment was published on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The CPRDR is expected to be finalised by the end of August 2021.</p>
8	<p>Further comments</p> <p>- Please include any further relevant information.</p>
	<p>The CAB notes that the objective of the MSC “Derogation 6: Covid-19 Fishery Conditions Extension” is to provide a reprieve to fishery certificate holders that have the potential to face exceptional difficulties in making progress on conditions as a result of the impacts of Covid-19 on fisheries management systems by extending the existing deadlines on eligible conditions, i.e., conditions related to management decision making, monitoring and compliance.</p> <p>While this derogation does not cover the Performance Indicators (PI) associated with Conditions 1, 4, 5, and 6, it is clear that the client fishery has faced challenges in progressing their outcome as a result of Covid-19 by slowing the ability of the scientific and consultative processes in delivering what are already very technically challenging conditions, i.e., developing robust assessment models with which new and revised reference points will be established for parts of the Northern and striped shrimp population complex.</p> <p>It is also noted that whilst Conditions 1 and 5 on reference points are not technically covered by the derogation because they are under PI 1.1.2 (CR v1.3), had the fishery been certified under v 2.0, then they would have been as they would be under a harvest strategy PI (1.2.4) rather than an output PI. Therefore, within the spirit and rationale of the derogation, it doesn't seem unreasonable to extend the derogation to conditions under PI 1.1.2 for fisheries certified under v1.3.</p> <p>Furthermore, whilst work is ongoing on developing appropriate reference points for Northern shrimp in UoC 5 (Condition 5), it is difficult to assess both the stock status in relation to reference points in UoC 5 (Condition 4) and whether or not the rebuilding strategy has rebuilt the stock back above reference points (Condition 6).</p> <p>The details provided in section 3 of this variation request (i.e., Justification) were provided by the client and, as a follow up to the 4<sup>th</sup> audit site visit, were confirmed as being accurate by DFO.</p> <p>The audit team recognize the challenging conditions and consider the additional time is reasonable and necessary to achieve the required outcomes.</p>
9	<p>If applicable, additional information added after the MSC's request</p>

### 3 Template information and copyright

This document was drafted using the 'MSC Variation Request Form – Fisheries v1.0'.

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#### Template version control

Version	Date of publication	Description of amendment
1.0	25 March 2020	Release alongside Fisheries Certification Process v2.2

A controlled document list of MSC program documents is available on the MSC website ([msc.org](http://msc.org)).

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