

Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request Form V1.2

Date submitted to MSC	11 October 2012
Conformity Assessment Body	MRAG Americas, Inc.
Fishery Name/CoC Certificate Number	Southeast US North Atlantic Swordfish
Lead Auditor/Programme Manager	Graeme Parkes
Scheme requirement(s) to vary from	CR 27.22.

Proposed variation
<i>The SE US North Atlantic Swordfish Fishery is due for surveillance in mid-December 2012. The client has undertaken an assessment of the US North Atlantic Swordfish fishery that, if successful, will subsume the SE US North Atlantic fishery. We propose to incorporate the surveillance report for the SE US fishery into the more expansive US fishery. The US North Atlantic Swordfish PCDR will post to the MSC website before the due date of the SE US North Atlantic Swordfish surveillance report and will address the status of the conditions and any substantive changes that have occurred.</i>

Rationale/Justification
<i>MRAG Americas conducted a site visit for the US North Atlantic Swordfish fishery, and obtained updated information relating to the science and management of the fishery, which contains the SE US fishery. Stakeholders were informed that the US North Atlantic fishery would subsume the SE US fishery. The US North Atlantic assessment must consider all of the regions that make up the unit of certification, including the Florida East Coast region of the SE US fishery. The issues that led to conditions for the SE US fishery must be considered in the larger US fishery. The PCDR for the US North Atlantic Swordfish will address these issues in determination of conditions necessary for the US North Atlantic fishery. The assessment team is the same for both fisheries, allowing for consistency and detailed knowledge of both fishery assessments. As the timing of the PCDR generally co-occurs with the due date of the surveillance, combining the surveillance with the PCDR confers the surveillance requirements to the PCDR.</i>

Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)
<i>We do not see any impacts on the assessment or certificate.</i>

Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)	<i>Yes. Concurrent with this variance request, an email to stakeholders sent on October 11, 2012 provided notice of the request for variance and offered an opportunity to comment to both MRAG and the MSC.</i>
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Further Comments
<i>None</i>