

# **Lloyd's Register**

## **Eastern Pacific Purse Seine Skipjack and Yellowfin tuna fishery (FSC and FAD set fishery)**

### **MSC Variation Request**

## 1 Marine Stewardship Council variation request

**Table 1 – Variation request**

1	Date submitted to the MSC
	26 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 (amended 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2021)
2	CAB
	Acoura Marine (t/a Lloyd's Register)
3	Fishery name and certificate number
	Eastern Pacific Purse Seine Skipjack and yellowfin tuna fishery (FSC and FAD set fishery) – in assessment
4	Lead auditor or program manager
	Deirdre Duggan – LR Program Manager Jim Andrews – Lead Auditor
5	Request prepared by
	Deirdre Duggan
6	Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested
	Variation request to conduct the initial audit site visit remotely as per MSC Covid-19 Pandemic Derogation V2. (MSC FCP 2.2, 7.16.1 – location = remote)
7	How many times has a variation for this requirement been accepted for the same assessment of the same fishery?
	<b>0</b>

**Table 2 – Variation justification**

1	Proposed variation	
	To carry out the initial site visit for the Eastern Pacific Purse Seine Skipjack and Yellowfin tuna fishery (FSC and FAD set) fishery <u>remotely</u> . Under clause 1.1 of the MSC September 2020 Covid-19 derogation, certain Covid-19 factors prevent an initial onsite assessment for this fishery.	
2	Additional time requested	
	Original deadline date	NA
	Modified deadline date requested	NA
	Length of additional time requested	NA
3	Justification	
	<p>The assessment of the Eastern Pacific Purse Seine Skipjack and yellowfin tuna fishery (FSC and FAD set fishery) would have been conducted in Ecuador under normal circumstances. The LR audit team would have been traveling from the UK, south Africa and Australia to Ecuador. The client and their representatives would be traveling from the US and within Ecuador. It had been intended that the site visit would involve travel to at least two and possibly 3 cities within Ecuador.</p> <p>In view of the risks associated with these travel plans during the pandemic and the travel restrictions currently in place, LR are proposing to hold the initial site visit remotely (i.e. the client group, stakeholders and all team members attend the initial assessment remotely). The factors preventing an onsite assessment are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Certificate holder, stakeholder and CAB company policies LR have suspended all non-critical business travel. This assessment is considered non-critical in terms of the need to be conducted on site and in person. The Ecuadorian government has issued restrictions and requirements for traveling to Ecuador including a requirement to present proof of a negative test result for COVID-19 within 10 days of the flight. The government has also imposed restrictions on in-person meetings, and all government offices are operating with minimum staff. As a result, most government officials are working from home at this time. Private companies are also operating with minimum staff and restrictions on in person meetings. Therefore, it is not feasible or practical to conduct an in-person site visit in Ecuador at this time.</li> <li>2. National or local travel restrictions that impact the assessment team or certificate holder At the time of writing, Ecuador is not on the UK's <a href="#">travel corridor list</a>, meaning UK nationals returning from Ecuador to the UK must isolate for 10 days as well as organising a COVID-19 test. International travellers arriving in <a href="#">Ecuador</a> must present a negative PCR test result for COVID-19 taken up to 10 days before arrival. <a href="#">Australian nationals</a> need an exemption to leave Australia and must quarantine at a designated facility for 14 days upon return to Australia. <a href="#">South African nationals</a> returning to South Africa must present a negative PCR test taken up to 72 hours before arrival. <a href="#">US nationals</a> returning to the US must present a negative PCR test taken within three calendar days before departure.</li> <li>3. Health risks of conducting an in-person audit/assessment to anyone involved in the audit process.</li> </ol>	

	One or more of the audit team members is considered “vulnerable” as per the <a href="#">UK NHS definition</a> and therefore travel would not be advised in that situation.																		
4	Implications for assessment																		
	<p>The planning phase of the audit will be conducted in the same manner as an onsite audit.</p> <p>The “Site visit” phase of the audit may take longer than a traditional onsite audit because meetings will take place over more days to account for the time differences and translation / interpretation during meetings.</p> <p>Translation and interpretation support will be provided during interviews with stakeholders. This will necessarily require additional time for each interview and consequently for the overall duration of the “site visit”.</p> <p>During the time since the Covid-19 derogation was introduced, LR have conducted many remote site visits for both surveillance audits, expedited audits, and new assessments. These include fisheries where translation &amp; interpretation was required, such as the AGAC four oceans Integral Purse Seine Tropical Tuna fishery. This process operated effectively. The AGAC audit also went smoothly in terms of stakeholder involvement and coordination across time zones and LR expects the same for this Eastern Pacific Purse Seine Tropical Tuna fishery assessment.</p> <p>The opportunity for stakeholder engagement will not be compromised by the use of off-site auditing methods. LR’s auditors are very familiar with the tuna fisheries in this area, with two auditors currently involved in a number of ongoing tropical tuna purse seine assessments and the third with experience of South American eastern Pacific pelagic fisheries from previous assessments.</p> <p>For these reasons, LR do not consider that conducting this assessment off-site will compromise the integrity or robustness of the assessment or the extent and effectiveness of stakeholder engagement in the assessment process.</p>																		
5	Mitigation of the implications for assessment																		
	See Table 3 – Risk Assessment that is a requirement of the Sept 28 <sup>th</sup> MSC Covid-19 derogation v2.																		
6	How many conditions does the fishery have and will their progress be affected (positive or negative)?																		
	This fishery is currently under assessment and has no conditions as yet. Conditions will be harmonised where necessary.																		
7	What is the status of the current assessment or audit?																		
	<p>The fishery entered assessment on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 under version 2.2 of the MSC FCP. Stakeholders now have a 60 day consultation period and the site visit is scheduled for the week commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021.</p> <table><tr><th>Milestone</th><th>Timeframe</th><th>Expected deadline</th></tr><tr><td>ACDR</td><td>60 days</td><td>22<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2020</td></tr><tr><td>Stakeholder input on ACDR published on MSC website</td><td></td><td>21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2021</td></tr><tr><td>Site visit</td><td>~3 d</td><td>22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2021</td></tr><tr><td>CPRDR</td><td>60 d</td><td>27<sup>th</sup> Apr 2021</td></tr><tr><td>PCDR</td><td>30 d</td><td>9<sup>th</sup> July 2021</td></tr></table>	Milestone	Timeframe	Expected deadline	ACDR	60 days	22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec 2020	Stakeholder input on ACDR published on MSC website		21 <sup>st</sup> Feb 2021	Site visit	~3 d	22 <sup>nd</sup> Feb 2021	CPRDR	60 d	27 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2021	PCDR	30 d	9 <sup>th</sup> July 2021
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	FDR	15 d	10 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2021	
	PCR	60 d	17 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2021	
8	Further comments			
9	If applicable, additional information added after the MSC's request			

LR Risk assessment for initial assessments conducted remotely following the [MSC COVID-19 derogation, effective 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020](#). This risk assessment shall be completed as part of VRs for initial assessments announced after the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 requesting a switch to a remote initial assessment.

Table 1.

Risk areas	Key risks	LR Mitigation plan
Sufficient information to enable an effective and robust fishery assessment process and comprehensive assessment against the MSC Fisheries Standard	Ability to verify information remotely	<p>The Client has already provided comprehensive information to LR, which has been shared with the audit team. While drafting the ACDR regular teams calls were held between the audit team and the client to discuss the information further. The client is committed to arrange all necessary documentation, reports, evidence and discussion with the team remotely. LR use online platforms to communicate with stakeholders and are available to all enquires via phone and email.</p> <p>The physical aspects of the fishery do not need to be investigated because the audit team are very familiar with the fishery and the client has already provided documentation on gear and deployment methods.</p>
	Ability to engage with stakeholders, deliver a robust stakeholder consultation process and conduct interviews with stakeholder.	<p>LR have an extensive list of potential stakeholders, identified through engagement with other similar tuna fisheries as well as with client input. Stakeholders have been notified of the fishery entering into assessment and that the ACDR is available for comments via MailChimp email notification. All stakeholder enquiries come into the LR fisheries shared email inbox and is responded to within 10 days of receipt. Submissions received in the MSC stakeholder input template will be acknowledged via email and uploaded to the MSC website as required by the process.</p> <p>Private meetings will be offered to interested stakeholders as part of the audit planning. The full assessment team will be available for meetings during the site visit and questions can be prepared ahead of time to help direct the conversation.</p>

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		Due to the remote nature of the site visit, additional meetings can be scheduled if needed. Test calls will be offered to all stakeholders prior to the official audit calls, in case some people are not familiar with the platform used. The various features of interaction on the chosen platform will be explained to stakeholders. Permission to record the calls will be requested and recordings will be provided to those stakeholders who joined the call upon request. A follow-up call will be offered to the stakeholder if the initial allocation of time is too short to complete the discussion.
	Ability to gather information and carry out stakeholder consultations if the Risk Based Framework (annex PF) is being used to assess data-deficient Pis.	The ACDR report has identified RBF triggers, therefore it is expected RBF will be required. The Team Lead is well versed in conducting RBF requirements both in person and remotely as part of surveillance audits. A tested survey monkey stakeholder engagement tool will be used for this assessment.
	Availability of information	The Client has already provided comprehensive information to LR, which has been shared with the audit team. Current information gaps have been identified in the ACDR available on the MSC website and the team are comfortable in addressing these information gaps via a remote assessment. There were no Pis scoring <60 in the ACDR.
	Ability to understand the context, scale, and intensity of the fishery operations.	Two members of the team are very familiar with tropical tuna purse seine fisheries in particular, through prior involvement in the PNA fishery, the AGAC fishery and other fishery assessments with other CABs. The Team Lead also has experience in assessment fisheries that cover wide geographical areas such as this one. Therefore, the team have an understanding of the context, scale and intensity of the fishery operations.

Sufficient communication capability to effectively plan, conduct interviews and facilitate information sharing as per IAF ID 4: 2018.	Availability of information and communication technology (ICT).	<p>The client and audit team members all have experience using LR chosen conferencing platforms and familiar with share screen, and recording function. Meetings are organised by LR HO staff who will confirm the attendees are comfortable using the chosen platform, test calls will be set up if not. Meetings will be held in English but all attendees will be asked to confirm if they need translation support prior to the site visit. Stakeholders do not need an account with these platforms to join the meeting. If stakeholders do not have an internet connection attendees can join a Skype for Business call from a landline or mobile number.</p> <p>The use of ICT for this assessment will be done in accordance with the IAF Mandatory Document for the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Auditing/Assessment Purposes</p>
	Competency of assessment teams, auditees, and stakeholders in using ICT.	As above.
	Ability to clearly exchange information between the assessment team, prospective fishery client and stakeholders and to be understood by all parties when parties speak different languages.	Meetings will be held in English but all attendees will be asked to confirm if they need translation support prior to the site visit. Additional time will be allocated to meetings to accommodate an interpreter when needed. LR have conducted many remote meetings that have required an interpreter since March 2020 and can use this experience to ensure a satisfactory remote audit.
	Ability to schedule remote site visit activities at reasonable mutually convenient times when parties are located across different time zones.	Attendees to remote calls will be asked to confirm their timezones in advance of the site visit, where possible meetings will be organised at mutually convenient times. LR use the following website for scheduling meetings across time zones: <a href="https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/meeting.html">https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/meeting.html</a> This website allows you to see which times are best for all attendees. If needed the audit team are prepared to work

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		outside of normal working hours to accommodate client and stakeholders. This will be kept to an absolute minimum.
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**Annex 1.** LR review of call platforms. MS Teams is the default platform choice by LR unless inaccessible by stakeholders.

Call platform	Risk	Reward
<b>MS Teams – LR default platform to use unless inaccessible by stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New platform, not everyone is familiar</li> <li>• Simultaneous translation feature new and not adequate for MSC audit conversations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can access calls online without downloading desktop app</li> <li>• Chat log remains open after call</li> <li>• Ability to share screen</li> <li>• Invites automatically add to outlook calendar</li> <li>• Approved by LR for use and LR team can control invites and test calls</li> <li>• Can record sessions for sharing with stakeholders later</li> <li>• Can download participant list directly, including their sign in / sign out time</li> <li>• Can adjust settings allowing participants to bypass lobby if needed</li> </ul>
Skype for Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chat log not saved after call ends</li> <li>• Online app support ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021</li> <li>• Call ends after 1.5 hours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can access calls online without downloading desktop app</li> <li>• Invite sender does not need to be present</li> <li>• Ability to share screen</li> <li>• Invites automatically add to outlook calendar</li> <li>• Approved by LR for use and LR team can control invites and test calls</li> </ul>
Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not secure</li> <li>• New platform, not everyone is familiar</li> <li>• No LR subscription and no plan to use it so can not set up meeting</li> <li>• Not approved by overall LR policy for LR staff to initiate calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can access calls online without downloading desktop app</li> <li>• Ability to share screen</li> </ul>

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LR MSC Risk Assessment for initial audits (Sept 28<sup>th</sup> derogation) 18112020

## 2 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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