

## Marine Stewardship Council

### AAFA North Pacific Albacore pole & line and troll/jig fishery

### AAFA South Pacific Albacore troll/jig fishery

### Request for an assessment timeline revision.

<b>Date submitted to MSC</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2012
<b>Conformity Assessment Body</b>	Intertek Moody Marine (IMM) Ltd.
<b>Fishery Name/CoC Certificate Number</b>	AAFA North Pacific albacore pole & line and troll/jig fishery / 82022- NP. AAFA South Pacific albacore troll/jig fishery / 82022-SP
<b>Lead Auditor/Programme Manager</b>	Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme / Paul Knapman
<b>Scheme requirement(s) to vary from</b>	CR 7.5.9 and CR 24.2.1

#### Proposed variation

IMM proposes to extend AAFA's existing five-year certificates for the North Pacific albacore tuna pole & line and troll/jig fishery and South Pacific albacore troll/jig fishery by an additional 2 months, from the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012 to the 24<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

#### Rationale/Justification

The existing AAFA North and South Pacific albacore fishery certificates were due to expire on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2012. In May 2012, two-month extensions to the existing certificates were granted by the MSC, taking the certificates to the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012. Those extensions were requested because two of the three reassessment team members were affected by significant personal issues, delaying the production of the Client Draft Reports for both fisheries and, therefore, further steps in the reassessment processes.

At the time of requesting the extensions previously, it was envisaged that two additional months would be sufficient to allow the requisite steps in the reassessment process for both fisheries to occur prior to the end of the existing certificates. However, a return to normal for the two affected team members did not occur as quickly as hoped and production of the Client Draft Reports were therefore delayed longer than it was thought likely. An additional delay then occurred as a result of the extended negotiations for the continuation of the US-Canada albacore tuna treaty, which ultimately failed to produce agreement for the 2012 North Pacific albacore tuna season, and which occupied the client and many of the scientists and managers involved with the AAFA albacore fisheries for much of the last 6 months.

A request is therefore now being submitted to extend AAFA's existing North and South Pacific albacore fishery certificates for an additional two months, from the 24<sup>th</sup> October to the 24<sup>th</sup> December. It is anticipated that this will allow sufficient time for the assessment to be completed.

IMM conducted the site visit for the reassessment in October 2011. The information procured at that time, together with information that continues to be obtained during discussions between the Lead Auditor (Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme) and the AAFA fishery representative (Mr. Chip Bissell), has assured IMM that AAFA fishermen will continue to operate in a manner way that is consistent with the AAFA South Pacific and North Pacific albacore certificates, including during the period of the proposed further extension. IMM has no concerns that these extensions will alter the conformity of AAFA as holder of the certificates.

#### Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)

The implication for the assessment is that the process will be delayed by a further 2 months, to the 24<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

<b>Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)</b>	No. As this is a change to the certificate and the assessment schedule, stakeholders will be informed quickly if the variation is granted, in order that their planning processes can be modified if necessary to take account of the expected publication of the Public Comment Draft Report.
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<b>Further Comments</b>
Nothing further to add.