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# MRAG Americas, Inc.

## DFPO Limfjord Mussel and Cockle Fishery

### MSC 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.
	09 March 2020
2	CAB
	MRAG Americas
3	Fishery name and certificate number or CoC certificate number
	DFPO Mussel, Cockle, and Oyster Fishery
4	Lead auditor or program manager
	Julian Addison/Amanda Stern-Piriot
5	Request prepared by
	Amanda Stern-Piriot
6	Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested
	FCP 7.30.8.b
7	How many times has a variation for this requirement been accepted for the same assessment of the same fishery?

0

**Table 2 – Variation justification**

1	Proposed variation	
	The CAB proposes to vary from the requirement by carrying out a reduced reassessment for the Limfjord mussel and cockle fishery, which will be part of a newly combined fishery (Limfjord mussels and cockles, Danish Inner Waters mussels, and Limfjord oyster dredge) even though the cockle UoA has an open condition on PI 3.2.4 following its third surveillance audit. Both other fisheries have no open conditions, and all other requirements for a reduced re-assessment are met.	
2	Additional time requested	
	Original deadline date	N/A
	Modified deadline date requested	
	Length of additional time requested	
3	Justification	
	<p>Regarding progress against the open condition, research was done to deliver information needed for management, and this has led to the Fishery Agency considering alternative ways of managing the cockle fishery. If or how this might be changed is not yet decided, but more information on this would be given at re-assessment in talking with the appropriate management authorities. Currently, DTU Aqua is drafting a stock assessment for cockles in the Limfjord and will be getting input from the Fishery Agency on other possible management scenarios. This might lead to specific licenses to fish for cockles, which would mean that cockles would likely not be considered bycatch in the mussel fishery but rather a target species with agreed-upon catch limits for each fishing season. Therefore, information for management needs is being provided and research for management purposes is expected to be consistent with the condition's rationale.</p> <p>Further, the specific research plan PI 3.2.4 that was in CV v1.3 was removed from FCR v2.0. The presence and merit of a research plan are now considered in the information PIs, notably PI 1.2.3 at the SG100 level, and PI 3.2.4.</p> <p>Therefore, it is expected that this single condition can be closed during the 4<sup>th</sup> audit. In addition, for the sake of efficiency, this fishery is being combined with two other Danish bivalve fisheries into a single re-assessment. The other two fisheries have no open conditions.</p>	
4	If a fishery assessment, implications for assessment	
	The primary implication for the reassessment is that the time and cost involved in will be reduced through eligibility to combine these previously separate fisheries into one assessment, to have only two team members, and to use the reduced reassessment reporting template. There are no negative implications for the assessment or the rigor of the process.	
5	If a fishery assessment, mitigation of the implications for assessment	
	As stated above, there are no negative implications for the assessment or the rigor of the process.	
6	If a fishery assessment, how many conditions does the fishery have and will their progress be affected (positive or negative)?	
	Cockle UoA – 1; progress toward closing the condition will not be affected All other UoAs – 0	

7	What is the status of the current assessment or audit?
	<p>DFPO Inner Danish Waters blue shell mussels – recertified in May 2017; second surveillance audit report submitted in July 2019</p> <p>DFPO Limfjord mussel and cockle fishery – certified in December 2015; third surveillance audit report submitted in July 2019</p> <p>DFPO Limfjord oyster dredge – recertified in March 2017; second surveillance audit report submitted in August 2019</p> <p>The announcement of the combined fishery along with the release of the Announcement Comment Draft Report is expected in early May, 2020.</p>
8	Further comments
	Please include any further relevant information.
9	If applicable, additional information added after the MSC's request