



Billy Hynes  
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Edinburgh, Scotland  
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Sent by email

Date: 04 September 2015

Subject: Request for variation to the MSC General Certification Requirements 7.5.6 for the DFPO Denmark North Sea plaice fishery

Dear Billy,

I write with reference to your submission on 1 September 2015 of a request for variation to the MSC General Certification Requirements (GCR) 7.5.6 to extend the certificates of the DFPO Denmark North Sea plaice fishery 30 September 2017.

As you are aware, the GCR procedures relating to certificate timelines are integral to ensuring all MSC accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies operate in a consistent and transparent manner. The MSC intends that these requirements be met across all fisheries and CoC certificate holders, except in exceptional, well-justified circumstances, as part of the MSC programme.

MSC notes the factors presented in your letter supporting the request, including:

- The certificate expires on the 24 March 2016.
- The CAB wants to extend the certificate to allow for a fifth surveillance audit and enter reassessment in September 2016.
- This extension will allow the fishery to enter reassessment along with the DFPO Denmark North Sea and Skagerrak haddock, DFPO Denmark North Sea sole, and DFPO Denmark North Sea and Skagerrak saithe fisheries. In September 2016, all four fisheries will combine to enter reassessment as one.
- The DFPO Denmark North Sea plaice has four open conditions:
  - PI 1.2.2: At the last surveillance, this condition was determined to be “clearly on target, but cannot yet be closed.”
  - Pls 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 (Demersal trawl UoC): At the last surveillance, this condition was determined to be behind target. “Greater commitment to developing a habitat management strategy in keeping with the detail of the Client Action Plan undertaking needs to be demonstrated at time of fourth surveillance.” Assurances have been given by the client that work has been done to meet this condition at this surveillance audit.
  - Pls 2.3.1, 2.3.2, and 2.3.3 (Set net UoC): At the last surveillance, this condition was determined to be on target. “The client is encouraged to further evaluate the implications for affected populations of the recorded levels of capture/interaction with the input of relevant experts... An evaluation of this would be helpful in determining appropriate levels of management to ensure that no long term harm is



done to populations. This should be done by the fourth surveillance audit in order to close out on the condition.”

- PI 2.4.2 (Danish seine UoC): At the last surveillance, this condition was determined to be on target. “The condition has a five year (life of certificate) application, unless adequate improvements are made in a shorter time frame than this.”

Given the rationale provide, the MSC is willing to grant a variation to the GCR in this case with the following condition:

- The CAB is not aware of any reasons why the fisheries’ certificates should not be extended (e.g., due to concerns on stock status, management conditions that could result in the fishery not being in compliance with the MSC fishery standard).

If you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact Jodi Bostrom, the Fisheries Assessment Manager for this fishery, by email ([Jodi.Bostrom@msc.org](mailto:Jodi.Bostrom@msc.org)).

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Dan Hoggarth".

Dan Hoggarth  
Head of Fisheries Standard  
Marine Stewardship Council

cc: ASI