

Marine Stewardship Council

Variation Request Form

Certification Body	<i>Scientific Certification Systems</i>
Fishery Name/CoC Certificate Number	<i>US Pacific halibut/ SCS-MFCP-F-0018</i>
Lead Auditor/Programme Manager	<i>Dr. Sabine Daume/Same</i>
Scheme requirement(s) to vary from	<i>FCMv6.1 Section 5.3.1</i>

Proposed variation
<i>Variance to the maximum period of validity of a fishery certificate of five years to five years and 3 months. Currently the fishery certificate expires after 18 April of 2011; this request would extend the validity of the fishery certificate through 18 July 2011.</i>

Rationale/Justification
<i>The release of the Public Comment Draft report has been delayed due to additional science, management and stakeholder accommodation. The US halibut fishery is a highly regulated and well assessed fishery with more than one management agency and science advisory group. The initial onsite meeting was delayed for some time as the science and management agency was moving offices at the time the 4th surveillance audit and start of re-assessment were originally scheduled to take place. They were not available to meet with the assessment team until the 6th and 7th of July, 2010. A second onsite meeting was conducted on the 18th and 19th of August, 2010 in Juneau, Alaska. This is an area near where the fishery takes place. There are no roads leading to or from Juneau. SCS and the assessment team were available for additional input from local stakeholders, scientists and managers in a locale more easily accessed by persons close to the fishery. Final scoring and negotiations on the subsequent conditions was delayed to accommodate the additional onsite meeting as well as a meeting between relevant management agencies and stakeholders to adopt a "preferred alternative" affecting performance indicators in Principle 2. The assessment team deemed it prudent to wait for the outcome of a vote held in a mutual stakeholder/management meeting regarding additional on-board observer coverage. Without the results of a vote held at the meeting, and the adoption of mandates that govern the level of observer coverage, the Public Comment Draft Report (PCDR) and subsequent conditions would have been out of sync with the fishery stakeholders and relevant management authorities. The preferred alternative was finalized 25th October, 2010. SCS decided to delay the release of the PCDR until all relevant documentation and decisions were finalized and could be incorporated. The results of the stakeholder vote that took place in October substantially changed the outcome of some conditions and performance indicators. Due to the complex nature of the fishery, SCS also offered additional peer reviewers for stakeholder comment and an additional peer reviewer comment period.</i>

Document: CAB Request for variation from MSC requirements

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Approved by: DS

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The fishers are currently fishing. If the certificate lapses, significant losses may be incurred by the client group. For these reasons, SCS requests a 3 month extension of the certificate.

Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)

No substantive impact on the assessment or other requirements other than to improve the integrity of the report. The granting of this variance will simply ensure there is no break in certification status of the fishery between certification cycles.

Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)

A stakeholder distribution list exists for the fishery. Should the variance be granted an email will be sent to this list informing them of the extension of certificate validity date and what, if any, affects this may have on the assessment. The client and MSC Seattle office have been informed.

Further Comments

None at this time.