



Chrissie Sieben  
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**Sent by email**

Date: 30/10/2019

**Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement v2.4.1 GCR 7.4.3 for Joint demersal fisheries in the North Sea and adjacent waters**

Dear Chrissie Sieben,

I write with reference to your submission on 18/10/2019 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow:

The fishery certificate suspension will be the same day as the decision to suspend.

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to v2.4.1 GCR 7.4.3 state:

If a fishery certificate is suspended, the CAB shall set the effective date for the fishery certificate suspension 30 days after the CAB's decision to suspend, and:

These 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 supporting your request, including:**

- The variation would remove the 30 day period before a suspension takes affect once the fishery is certified.
- A number of other fisheries certified for North Sea cod and whiting have already been suspended, it is of importance that there is no delay whereby North Sea cod and whiting catch stemming from the JDF can be sold as MSC certified. Therefore, it is proposed that the 30 day notice period for suspension is disregarded and will take immediate effect from the date of publication of the JDF Public Certification Report and certificate.

**Given the rationale provided, the MSC is willing to grant a variation to the CR in this case subject to the following conditions:**

The variation only applies if the fishery is certified following the objection.

The decision to accept this variation request has been made under the specific circumstances described and should not be considered as creating a precedent.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant Fisheries Assessment Manager for this fishery.

Marine Stewardship Council  
cc: Accreditation Services International