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Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request

Date submitted to MSC	29 th June 2016
Name of CAB	Acoura Marine
Fishery Name	NAFO 4R Division Atlantic herring purse seine trawl
Programme Manager	Polly Burns
Is this variation sought in order to fulfil IPI requirements (FCR 7.4.14)?	Yes

1. Proposed variation	
To allow fish or fish products to be considered as coming from IPI stocks to enter into chains of custody, in accordance with CR v2.0 section 7.4.14.2. (See section 6)	
2. Rationale/Justification	
Herring in the NAFO 4R division are split into two components; the spring spawners and fall spawners. the spring-spawners accounted for 1.2% of the total stock composition in the 2015 stock assessment. Owing to their physical similarities and appearance the spring spawning stock and fall spawning stock are inseparable during the normal fishing operation and practically inseparable during processing (CR v2.0 7.4.13.1 a & b). The proportion of spring and autumn spawners in the catches and in the stock is determined from the biological sampling of the landings and the survey catches. Separation of the two spawning components of the stock is principally based on the maturity stage of the fish at the time of capture, differences in the otolith macrostructure or gonadosomatic index. Furthermore, neither stock components are ETP species and the stocks in these areas are not certified separately (CR v2.0 7.4.13.1 d & e).	
3. Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)	
No implications for assessment or certificate.	
4. Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)	No, stakeholders will be notified when this request is published.
5. Further Comments	
Further details in section 6.	



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6. Inseparable or practicably inseparable (IPI) catches

Is this request to allow fish or fish products from IPI stocks to enter into chains of custody?

Yes

The total catch is currently not apportioned to fall and spring-spawners. However, the stock assessment report notes that “too few spring-spawners were available in the commercial catches to reliably estimate the catch at age of this spawning component”. This is as a result of the fishery mainly occurring in November and December and the measures to protect the spring spawning component which have been in place since the end of the 1990s. Furthermore, the spring-spawners accounted for 1.2% of the total stock composition in the 2015 stock assessment.

From this it can be extrapolated that the catch of the spring spawning stock is less than 15% of the total catch so meeting the requirements of CR v2.0 7.4.13.1 c.

We are therefore requesting that spring spawning herring be considered IPI.

Is this request to allow an exemption to detailed requirements for IPI stocks?

Yes

We note that the percentage of spring spawning herring in these UoCs are <2% of the combined stock of spring and fall spawning herring, meeting the requirements of CR v2.0 7.4.13.1 c in lieu of separately defined catches of components.

As the quantity of spring spawning herring taken in these UoCs is less than 2%, we request an exemption to the IPI requirements for spring spawning herring (CR v2.0 7.4.14.2).

Herring are mainly targeted in this area during November and December which results in very few spring spawning herring being captured by the commercial fishery, confirmed by the DFO's 2015 stock assessment.

The small quantities taken and the timing of the fishery does not create a significant impact on the IPI stocks as a whole. There are also strict measures in place to protect the vulnerable spawning stock which minimises the catch of the spring spawning stock.