

**Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Year 5 Surveillance
Review of Information**

Ben Tre Vietnam Hand-raked Clam Fishery (*Meretrix lyrata*)

On behalf of the Client

**Ben Tre Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
(DARD)**

Prepared by the Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)

ME Certification Ltd

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General Information

Fishery name	Hand-raked Clam fisheries (<i>Meretrix lyrata</i>) in Ben Tre, Vietnam		
Unit of Assessment (UoA)	Hand-raked Clam fisheries (<i>Meretrix lyrata</i>) in Ben Tre, Vietnam		
Date certified	9 th November 2009	Date of expiry	31 st May 2016
Surveillance level and type	Not applicable as this report is outside of normal surveillance cycle. Report a result of the granting of MSC Variation Request to extend the current fishery certificate: https://www.msc.org/track-a-fishery/fisheries-in-the-program/certified/pacific/vietnam-ben-tre-clam-hand-gathered/re-assessment-downloads/20150820_VAR_RES_CLA125.pdf		
Date of surveillance audit	31 st August 2015		
Surveillance stage	1st Surveillance		
	2nd Surveillance		
	3rd Surveillance		
	4th Surveillance		
	Other (expedited etc.)	X 5 th Surveillance audit	
Surveillance team	Lead assessor: Kat Collinson Assessors: Tuong Phi Lai, Jo Gascoigne		
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1 Background

Table 1. TAC and Catch Data

TAC	Year	2015 (January - August)	-	Amount	2248.83 tonnes
UoA share of TAC	Year	(January - August)	-	Amount	2248.83 tonnes
UoC share of TAC	Year	(January - August)	-	Amount	2248.83 tonnes
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (most recent)	(January - August)	-	Amount	2248.83 tonnes
	Year (second most recent)	2014		Amount	4993.70 tonnes

2 Assessment Process

The review process was conducted by team member assessor (Tuong Phi Lai), under remote support from the team leader (Kat Collinson) and other team member (Jo Gascoigne). The team reviewed the level of compliance with Principles 1, 2 and 3 of MSC and the follow-ups of the clients toward to recommendations of the 3rd Surveillance report.

No stakeholder submissions received, including at the site visit in August 2015, which met with a wide range of stakeholders. Further details

This Review of Information was completed using MSC Certification Requirements version 2.0 for process and if, re-scoring had been necessary, this would have been undertaken using version 1.3.

3 Results

The assessment found that the fishery's total landings of clams have decreased since last year but the revenue has not reduced. This is due to the volume of clam seed being sufficient and the sale price remaining high. The commercial volume of clams has had a sharp decline in 2014/15 due to hot weather lead to massive die-off of clams. Climate change is suspected to be the cause.

There were critical recommendations for all three Principles in the first three surveillance reports, and Department Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) Ben Tre have made every effort to meet the requirements. There have been no critical issues or concerns identified at the site visit, except the fact that clam catch volume has reduced due to massive deaths caused by extreme weather.

Furthermore, minor concerns have been raised by the assessment team that many studies required by the first three surveillance reports, were conducted by one single institution, VIFEP (Vietnam Fisheries Economic and Planning). These related to the study of impacts of the clam fishery on marine aquatic community and bird predators, and also the effectiveness of clam fishery management system. This institution is suitable for study related to fisheries economic and management, but does not have strong expertise in natural sciences, for example assessing the impact to ecosystem, and the clam predators. This will be discussed further in the reassessment reports produced by the assessment team.

There has been no changes to the clam fishery area, broodstock, population, fishing efforts or new comers entry clam fishery, which may impact traceability and the ability to segregate MSC from non-MSC products. The reassessment is currently being undertaken and traceability will be discussed in full in public reports when published in 2016.

4 Conclusion

There has been no change of fish stocks, ecosystem impacts or management system which impact traceability and the ability to segregate MSC from non-MSC products.

The assessment team confirm that there have been no significant changes to the fishery and recommends that the fishery remain certified until the certificate expiry of 31st May 2016.