

## Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request

<b>Date submitted to MSC</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2017
<b>Name of CAB</b>	Acoura Marine
<b>Fishery Name</b>	North West Atlantic Canada Harpoon Swordfish and North West Atlantic Canada Longline Swordfish
<b>Programme Manager</b>	Polly Burns
<b>Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested</b>	GCR V2.1 7.5.6 The CAB shall issue fisheries certificates with a maximum validity period of 5 years from the issue date.
<b>Is this variation sought in order to fulfil IPI requirements (FCR 7.4.14)?</b>	No

### 1. Proposed variation

Both the North West Atlantic (NWA) Harpoon swordfish and longline swordfish fisheries have certificates due to expire on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Acoura would like to extend the certificates until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017, (or when the reassessments have completed if sooner) to allow both reassessments to complete.

### 2. Rationale/Justification

The NWA Canada Harpoon swordfish had a certificate due to expire on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015. Through a variation request accepted by the MSC (VR dated 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014), the certificate was extended by 1 year and 10 months, till the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017, to line up with the expiry date of the NWA Canada longline fishery. During this extra certificate time the Harpoon fishery had 2 extra surveillance audits to ensure continued compliance with the MSC standard.

With an April anniversary date, both fisheries were due to enter reassessment in April 2016. However, the MSC approved an ICCAT harmonisation process in January 2016, with an onsite meeting taking place in August 2016, and the following consultation and reports continuing until 24<sup>th</sup> November when the final report was published on the MSC website. Both fisheries participated in this process to ensure that the assessment findings for both reassessments are in line with the harmonised approach. Both reassessments were announced 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016. Unfortunately, by delaying entry into reassessment, the fisheries will not be able to finish their reassessments by the time their current certificates expire. We request this certificate extension until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017 to allow an unbroken period of certification. If the reassessment concludes earlier the new certificate will be issued prior to the expiry date extended by this variation.

Both fisheries had surveillance audits in October 2016, which confirmed that the fisheries continue to be compliant with the standard and gave stakeholders the chance to provide input on the fisheries.

### 3. Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)

The reassessment timelines are expected to be unaffected by this change. Both fisheries are progressing through reassessment as swiftly as the process will allow. As stated above, the new certificate will be issued as soon as the process concludes, if the fisheries are determined to be recertified.

<b>4. Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)</b>	No – stakeholders will be informed of this request and response when published on the MSC website.
<b>5. Further Comments</b>	
None thank you.	