



Gillian Irvine  
Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance GmbH (LRQA)  
Innere Kanalstrasse 15  
Köln  
Germany  
D-50823

**Sent by email**

Date: 11/05/2022

**Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement v2.4.1 GCR-7.5.6 for Northern Ireland Pelagic Sustainability Group(NIPSG) North Sea herring**

Dear Gillian Irvine,

I write with reference to your submission on 09/05/2022 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow:

LRQA seek a variation from MSC GCR v2.4.1 7.5.6 which limits the fishery certificate validity period to 5 years. LRQA request that an extension is applied to the existing certificate for the period detailed below.

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to v2.4.1 GCR-7.5.6 state:

The CAB shall issue fishery certificates with a maximum validity period of 5 years from the issue date

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:**

- There was a delay in the identification of suitable peer reviewers that has pushed the final stages of the reassessment past the certificate expiry date.
- The peer review comments were returned on the 22nd of April 2022 and are currently being addressed by the assessment team.
- This request will ensure that the delay in identifying suitable peer reviewers does not adversely impact the recertification of the fishery, and it has no implications for the assessment outcome.

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

- Extended deadline is until 12 August 2022.
- When requested by MSC, the CAB shall confirm that it is not aware at this time of any factor (related to either fishery status, or performance against conditions) that could result in the fishery no longer being in compliance with the MSC Fisheries Standard after 04 June 2022.
- Ecert is updated to reflect changes, including new timelines as mentioned in the VR and providing a certificate covering the period from the end of the current certificate to the date accepted in the variation response.

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: Assurance Services International