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Sent by email

Date: 13/10/2014

Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement CR v1.3: 27.4.3, 27.4.15 and request to enact annex CL Expedited Principle 1 assessment for PNA Western and Central Pacific yellowfin tuna, as part of the PNA Western and Central Pacific skipjack tuna fishery

Dear Sabine,

I write with reference to your submission on 7/10/14 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow yellowfin tuna to be expedited to a Principle 1 assessment during the 3<sup>rd</sup> surveillance audit of the certified PNA Western and Central Pacific skipjack tuna fishery.

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to expedited P1 audits 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 program.

MSC notes the factors presented in your letter supporting your request, including:

- Yellowfin tuna within the certified PNA Western and Central Pacific skipjack tuna fishery is currently a main retained species and thus meets the requirements for a P1 expedited audit.
- SCS proposes to begin the expedited P1 assessment of yellowfin tuna at the 3<sup>rd</sup> surveillance audit scheduled for November 2014.
- Although no conditions were assigned for retained species performance indicators during the full assessment of the fishery, potential impacts on scoring for Principle 2 could arise from the

reduction in number of elements considered under retained species performance indicators to a single species, the bigeye tuna.

- A recommendation for the certified fishery concerning retained species included both yellowfin and bigeye tuna. Thus, the assessment team will rescore retained species performance indicators 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 during the Expedited audit.
- No material impacts to Principle 3 exist, thus, this will not be rescored as management remains the same as the certified fishery.
- The expedited P1 assessment report will undergo the peer review by at least one reviewer as per CR v 1.3.

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

- If confirmed as meeting the MSC fisheries standard, the PNA Western and Central Pacific yellowfin tuna fishery will be a UoC within the existing PNA Western and Central Pacific skipjack tuna fishery (per CL4.3). Additionally, it will be assessed as its own UoC in any re-assessments.
- For clarity and transparency, and allowing for the longer process requirements, the P1 expedited yellowfin audit report may be reported separately from the skipjack surveillance report.
- The draft P1 expedited yellowfin report shall be peer reviewed by at least 2 reviewers, both of whom shall have P1 qualifications.
- Peer reviews shall take place, as normal, prior to the issuance of the PCDR, and the CAB shall take note of all peer review comments.
- The CAB shall take particular note of the issues raised in the objections to the certified PNA skipjack fishery, and the amendments that were consequently made to that assessment, and shall provide rationale to ensure consistency with these outcomes.
- The CAB will notify stakeholders at least 30 days ahead of the scheduled surveillance audit.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact Adrian Gutteridge, the Fisheries Assessment Manager for this fishery either by email [adrian.gutteridge@msc.org](mailto:adrian.gutteridge@msc.org) or phone +41 7512 089279.

Best regards,



Fisheries Oversight Director  
Marine Stewardship Council  
cc: ASI