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**Sent by email**

Date: 13/01/2023

**Subject: Request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement v2.2 FCP-7.5.5 for FISF Faroe Islands North East Arctic cod, haddock and saithe**

Dear Lucia Revenga,

I write with reference to your submission on 04/01/2023 of a request for variation to the MSC Certification Requirement (CR) to allow:

To allow for the definitions of UoAs and UoCs to be changed after ACDR and before PCDR.

As you are aware, the CR procedures relating to v2.2 FCP-7.5.5 state:

The CAB shall not change the UoA and UoC during the assessment unless the UoA is announced provisionally in the initial announcement and confirmed later in conformity with 7.17.3

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:**

- At the Announcement Comment Draft Report (ACDR), 3 Units of Assessment (UoAs) and 3 Units of Certification (UoCs) were defined for each of the 3 target species. These UoAs and UoCs include both Faroe Islands and Iceland vessels. DNV is requesting to split each of the UoAs and UoCs to separate each country vessels, managed under different domestic regimes.
- The UoAs geographic areas covers the Barents Sea, including Russian Federation waters. DNV informed that before the outbreak of the war in March 2022, Faroe Island and the Russian Federation reached a quota fisheries agreement, while a similar negotiation between Iceland and the Russian Federation was suspended, without an agreement in place. Until there such agreement is signed, Icelandic vessels will not enter Russian waters.
- The proposed change doesn't constitute an expansion of the UoAs.

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

- All stakeholders are informed of changes to the UoAs and UoCs.
- Changes of the UoAs and UoCs are described in the Public Comment Draft Report (PCDR) and subsequent assessment reports so stakeholders can follow the process.
- Ecert is updated to reflect changes in UoAs and UoCs.

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

