

Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request

Date submitted to MSC	8 th February 2017
Name of CAB	ME Certification Ltd
Fishery Name	Bahamian Spiny Lobster Fishery
Lead Auditor/Programme Manager	Dr Jo Gascoigne / Kat Collinson
Scheme requirement for which variation requested	FCR 7.9 – The team shall carry out the on-site assessment...
Is this variation sought in order to fulfil IPI requirements (FCR 7.4.14)?	No

1. Proposed variation

Not all the assessment team will be onsite for the initial certification site visit.

2. Rationale/Justification

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the P1 assessor, Professor Arana will not be attending the site visit. The team leader, Dr Jo Gascoigne will however be on site and ME Certification is confident that her experience with this type of fishery and MSC fishery assessments is more than sufficient to achieve a successful and comprehensive assessment. Jo's appropriate expertise is summarised below.

In the late 1990s, Jo worked on a management plan for spiny lobster, queen conch and Nassau grouper in the Bahamas; as well as the development of MPAs, spending approximately 6 months working closely with the Fisheries Department. The plan included some initial quantitative assessments of lobster and conch, based on data from Fisheries Department enumerators. From 1999-2003, Jo did her PhD at VIMS with field work in the Bahamas. While she was working on queen conch, she also did quite a lot of field work on spiny lobster, supporting the research of her supervisor and another PhD colleague. While she was not involved in any quantitative modeling as a result of this research, this means that she is very familiar with both the biology and natural history of the species and the nature of the fishery.

Jo was P1 expert for the initial assessment of the Tristan da Cunha rock lobster fishery and has undertaken all the surveillance audits. As MSC knows, although this is a small fishery it is complex, with different assessment models used to respond to different situations at the four islands; including one with two different types of fishery and one where a freak accident

resulted in a huge (and so far unexplained) fluctuations in CPUE.

As MSC knows, Jo also has a strong quantitative fisheries background in general, and is qualified as a P1 expert for some other species (e.g. molluscs and tuna pending some additional experience).

The report will also be reviewed by Dr Johan Groeneveld. He has participated as an assessor in the MSC certified Tristan da Cunha spiny lobster fishery, and in the recent re-assessment of the deep-sea hake trawl fishery in South Africa. He has also conducted MSC pre-assessments, including one on a artisanal spiny lobster fishery in Kenya. Recent peer reviewed scientific publications include phylogeography of the scalloped spiny lobster and growth studies using sensors and modelling. Dr Groeneveld meets the MSC P1 requirements for this assessment.

A revised stakeholder announcement will be published pending a successful Variation Request to notify of the team change.

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

No immediate implications are perceived by ME Certification for this variation.

4. Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)

They will be notified if Variation Request granted.

5. Further Comments

Please include any further relevant information.

