

## **Control Union (UK) Limited**

### **SFSAG Northern Demersal Stocks**

### **MSC Variation Request**

Control Union (UK) Limited

56 High Street, Lymington, Hampshire,  
SO41 9AH, United Kingdom

Tel: 01590 613007 Fax: 01590 671573

Email: [infofishuk@controlunion.com](mailto:infofishuk@controlunion.com)

Website: <http://uk.controlunion.com>

# 1 Marine Stewardship Council variation request

**Table 1 – Variation request**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Date submitted to MSC</b>  |
|          | 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021   |
| <b>2</b> | <b>CAB</b>  |
|          | Control Union (UK) Limited  |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Fishery name and certificate number</b>  |
|          | SFSAG Northern Demersal Stocks  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Lead auditor or program manager</b>  |
|          | C.M. Seip-Markensteijn  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Request prepared by</b>  |
|          | Hugh Jones  |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested</b>  |
|          | FCP (v2.2) 7.30.1: The CAB shall announce the reassessment of a certified fishery no later than the date 90 days after the fourth anniversary of the existing certificate. Exact timing and planning of the reassessment shall remain the responsibility of the CAB, in consultation with the client. |
| <b>7</b> | <b>How many times has a variation for this requirement been accepted for the same assessment of the same fishery?</b>   |
|          | once  |

**Table 2 – Variation justification**

|          |  |                             |
|----------|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Proposed variation</b>  |                             |
|          | The CAB is proposing an extension on the timeline by 3 weeks 2 days for the publication of ACDR and announcement of the re-assessment. This is a total of 7 weeks 2 days from the original 7.30.1 90 day limit (e.g. including the already accepted VR)  |                             |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Additional time requested</b>   |                             |
|          | <b>Original deadline date</b>  | 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 |
|          | <b>Modified deadline date requested</b>  | 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2021 |
|          | <b>Length of additional time requested</b>   | 3 weeks and 2 days          |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Justification</b>   |                             |
|          | <p>The Covid-pandemic slowed down the collection of additional information in some key governmental departments. The Brexit agreement finalised on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2020, prevented drafting of rationales for a large suite of this fishery prior to 2021. The drafting for the ACDR was thus delayed until the beginning of January 2021, leaving only five weeks before the 90 day deadline associated with clause 7.30.1. In response CU UK issued a previous VR for an extension of 6 weeks to allow completion of the ACDR. Part of the fishery under assessment scoring is heavily influenced by the outcomes of Brexit, and new management procedures relating to fishery-specific regulations and the new relationship between the UK and other coastal states (EU and Norway). The content of an agreement between the UK and the EU, and the UK and Norway has influence on all aspects of the fishery under assessment and the outcomes of all Principles (management structure, Harvest Strategies and control rules). Formal documentation on the rights to reciprocal access of EEZ's, quota shares and future relationships between the 3 coastal states remains incomplete, but are due to be finalised by end of March 2021 having been delayed twice. Evidently the formalisation of these discussions is key to scoring the fishery.</p> <p>In summary, the CAB asks for a little more time to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collect the final pieces of information from the UK-EU-NOR meetings for the ACDR and finalise draft scores.</li> </ul> <p>This extension does not breach the 6-month post certificate anniversary limit for surveillance audits (certificate anniversary is 12<sup>th</sup> November). The stakeholders have been made aware of the year 4 surveillance taking place beyond the year 4 certificate anniversary.</p> |                             |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Implications for assessment</b>   |                             |
|          | The single implication will be that the reassessment report does not reach PCR stage before the current certificate expiry. However, given that the major information overhaul (the new agreement) is being accounted for in the ACDR this is mitigated for and the extension of the announcement deadline by seven weeks, two days (total of both VRs) should still allow the CAB to meet the deadline for re-certification by 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2021.  |                             |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Mitigation of the implication for assessment</b>  |                             |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
|          | <p>See above. Stakeholders will be offered opportunities to make comment or bring new information pertinent to the scoring of the fishery. Stakeholders would be informed of the audit process and timeline directly via the announcements on the assessment timeline, should this variation request be accepted.</p> <p>Rather than publish an ACDR with information that will be superseded with new data after the site visit from Brexit and harmonisation with other CABs the variation would mitigate the publication of obsolete information on the MSC website.</p> |
| <b>6</b> | <b>How many conditions does the fishery have and will their progress be affected (positive or negative)?</b>  |
|          | <p>There are 14 'open' conditions. The progress on these conditions is not expected to be affected by the delayed announcement. None of the 14 conditions must be closed by reassessment, taking into account the MSC derogation 6 on 12 month extension to condition deadlines, all others were raised at scope extension and surveillance audits and are carried across in the reassessment timeline.</p>   |
| <b>7</b> | <b>What is the status of the current assessment?</b>  |
|          | <p>Certified since October 2010, most recent surveillance audit carried out in October 2019, with report published in February 2020. The fourth surveillance audit is set to take place at the same time as the reassessment site visit.</p>  |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Further comments</b>   |
|          | N/A   |
| <b>9</b> | <b>If applicable, additional information added after MSC's request</b>  |
|          | N/A   |