

## Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request

<b>Date submitted to MSC</b>	10.04.18
<b>Name of CAB</b>	Acoura Marine
<b>Fishery Name</b>	New Zealand Deepwater Group hake, hoki, ling and southern blue whiting
<b>Programme Manager</b>	Polly Burns
<b>Variation prepared by:</b>	Polly Burns
<b>Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested</b>	CR V2.0 7.3.4 If the period from full assessment announcement to the receipt of the Public Comment Draft Report by the MSC exceeds 9 months the CAB shall: (7.3.4.1-3)

<b>1. Proposed variation</b>
Acoura Marine would like to request that we don't publish the PCDR by the 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2018 (a deadline previously extended by a month granted by variation request dated 8 <sup>th</sup> March 2018) and don't follow subsequent clauses 7.3.4.1-3. The PCDR will be published by 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2018.
<b>2. Rationale/Justification</b>
<p>The assessment of these fisheries has been set up in a way to streamline the process, by bringing all the fisheries onto the same timeline, using the same certification requirements. The fishery assessment process has been complex due to the number of UoAs involved (18 UoAs and 3 reports) and has therefore been a lengthy process up till this point. A UoA is also being withdrawn which has added some extra time. Previous delays have been caused by team members' availability in other complex fishery assessments, including objections, which the MSC will understand are complex and lengthy by nature.</p> <p>Any submission of new stakeholder information may result in certain PIs within certain UoA scoring to be assessed against CR V2.0, in total contrast to the rest of the PI scoring and reintroducing complexity into the certificates. We believe this to go against what we are trying to achieve for the fishery reassessment – a streamlined and comparable outcome for all four fisheries. Additionally, the Ministry involved in the reassessment process would not be able to provide the required information to rescore against V2.0 in the timescales required by the MSC process, adding further time to the reassessment. The time required to rescore against V2.0 would likely be at least 6 months. The involvement of the Assessment Team, client and stakeholders has been significant so far and this input would be undone by the new scoring. We would therefore like to request an extension to the publication deadline for the PCDR, moving it from 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018. Despite previous delays, Acoura are very close to being able to submit the PCDRs to the MSC. The reports have been reviewed by the client and are with the peer reviewer, however due to other commitments the PR is currently unavailable; a further source of delays. An extension of two weeks will be sufficient for us to publish the reports.</p> <p>Acoura Marine consider the acceptance of this VR to be of no threat to the sustainability of these fisheries. Our findings have determined (subject to public comment) that the remaining UoAs (one UoA does not meet the standard and this will be withdrawn) should be recertified.</p>
<b>3. Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)</b>
<p>The implication of this extension would be an extra two weeks on the timeline to publish the PCDR. Not accepting this variation would mean an additional 30 days on the timeline, plus the extra time required to review any new information and update scoring. A final certificate extension for hoki and southern blue whiting, will be requested via a separate variation request. Rejection of this VR would require a longer certificate extension being requested, which we would like to avoid given the extension already given by the MSC.</p>

<b>4. Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)</b>	No. Stakeholders will be notified on publication of this variation request.
<b>5. Further Comments</b>	
The certificates for the New Zealand hoki and southern blue whiting fisheries have been extended already to allow this reassessment process to complete, as agreed by variation request granted by the MSC. The lives of the hake and ling fisheries are being cut short to bring the fisheries all onto the same timeline.	