

Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request

Date submitted to MSC	16 th February 2018
Name of CAB	Acoura Marine
Fishery Name/CoC Certificate Number	New Zealand Deepwater Group hake, hoki, ling and southern blue whiting
Lead Auditor/Programme Manager	Paul Knapman/Louise Allan
Variation prepared by:	Louise Allan/Paul Knapman
Scheme requirement(s) for which variation requested	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... [and sub-clauses]
Is this variation sought in order to fulfil IPI requirements (FCR 7.4.14)?	No

1. Proposed variation
To submit the Public Comment Draft Report (PCDR) by 16 th April a month later than the date at which 9 months will have been exceeded since full re-assessment announcement, without opening up the assessment to a 30-day stakeholder submission period for new information.
2. Rationale/Justification
<p>A member of the assessment team for these fisheries is also Lead Assessor for another MSC fishery which had a substantial objection lodged against it in September, leading to a lengthy adjudication process which is still ongoing. The complexity and length of the objection, with extensive commentaries submitted by the Objector, has meant that the majority of the assessor's time since September has been taken up dealing with this work load. As such, the MSC process has compromised this assessor's ability to complete the reports for this re-assessment.</p> <p>Given the specialised nature of the expertise being applied to the assessment, and on the assumption that the Objection hearing was going to be held before Christmas (thereby giving sufficient time for the reports to be completed post-Christmas), it was not considered appropriate to replace the team member. Ultimately, the objection hearing took place in mid-January, and has continued to be a drain on the assessment team involved and has adversely affected this project in particular.</p> <p>This re-assessment is a combination of four certified fisheries meaning a substantial amount of work for the team with three reports being produced for the re-assessment. Of the three reports being drafted, one has been submitted to the client with the other two due the week commencing 19th of February 2018 (pending only the work of the compromised team member).</p> <p>Opening up a new stakeholder information period at this stage in the assessment will lead to a delay in the assessment beyond that being proposed. Two of the four certificates for the certified fisheries that are part of this re-assessment have already been significantly extended to enable this combined re-assessment. Acoura's goal in requesting this variation is to avoid the risk of further delays in the re-assessment process.</p>
3. Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)

None.	
4. Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)	No.
5. Further Comments	
None.	

