

Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request Form V1.3

Date submitted to MSC	27 th April 2015
Conformity Assessment Body	ME Certification Ltd (MEC)
Fishery Name/CoC Certificate Number	Basse Normandy Granville Bay Whelk Fishery
Lead Auditor/Programme Manager	Dr Jo Gascoigne (Team Leader)/Chrissie Sieben (Contact: Gavin Fitzgerald)
Scheme requirement(s) to vary from	27.4.3 The CAB shall note that once defined, the unit of certification cannot be changed during the assessment unless: 27.4.3.1 The CAB submits a variation request to this requirement to MSC by following the procedure set out in Part A clause 4.12, and 27.4.3.2 The MSC accepts the variation request
Is this variation sought in order to undertake an expedited P1 assessment (CR annex CL)?	No

1. Proposed variation

MEC is requesting to change the UoC as follows:

Current UoC:

Species	Whelk, bulot (<i>Buccinum undatum</i>)
Geographical range	i) Basse Normandy coastal waters to the west of the Cotentin peninsula and ii) waters shared between Basse Normandy, Brittany and Jersey under the Granville Bay Treaty
Method of capture	whelk pot / casier bulot
Stock	Granville Bay whelks (NB: precise stock distributions unknown)
Management System/s	Management determined by the Comité Regional des Pêches Maritimes et des Elevages Marins (CRPM) de Basse Normandie, with management of the shared area agreed under the Granville Bay Treaty arrangements.
Client group	Basse Normandy west Cotentin fishermen licensed by the CRPM, targeting whelks in the areas of i) Basse Normandie coastal waters or ii) waters shared between Basse Normandie, Brittany and Jersey under the Granville Bay Treaty.
Other eligible fishers	None

New UoC (see highlights):

Species	Whelk, bulot (<i>Buccinum undatum</i>)
Geographical range	i) Basse Normandy coastal waters to the west of the Cotentin peninsula and ii) waters shared between Basse Normandy, Brittany and Jersey under the Granville Bay Treaty
Method of capture	whelk pot / casier bulot
Stock	Western Channel whelks
Management System/s	Management at French level determined by the Comité Régional des Pêches Maritimes et des Elevages Marins (CRPM) de Basse Normandie, with management of shared areas agreed with Jersey and the Brittany CRPM under the Granville Bay Treaty arrangements. Management at UK level is done through the Southern IFCA and the Devon and Severn IFCA.
Client group	Basse Normandy west Cotentin fishermen licensed by the CRPM, targeting whelks in the areas of i) Basse Normandie coastal waters or ii) waters shared between Basse Normandie, Brittany and Jersey under the Granville Bay Treaty with whelk pots.
Other eligible fishers	None

2. Rationale/Justification

The stock structure of whelks is unclear. Although they have lower dispersal capacity than most marine invertebrates (because they have no planktonic larval phase) there is no evidence of genetic structure over a wide area (the NW European shelf) (Weetman et al., 2006). Evidence collected during the fishery assessment has indicated that defining the stock as just 'Granville Bay' (as per the current UoC) is only administratively convenient (because this is the management unit) and does not allow for the fact that the whelk population is very likely continuous over a much wider area, most of which is unfished. MEC therefore proposes that the best approach is to define the stock unit at a spatial scale intermediate between the two extremes (i.e. Granville Bay and the NW European shelf), and proposes the Western Channel as a suitable 'compromise' stock unit. The majority (about 3/4) of whelk catches in this area is made by the client fishery.

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

Amending the UoC means that Principle 1 and parts of Principle 3 must take account of other fisheries in the Western Channel area, and their management. MEC is confident that in doing so, the integrity of the MSC principles and criteria will be maintained.

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

No. An announcement will be made on the MSC website if the variation request is granted and the UoC amended on eCert. Stakeholders will be emailed directly to notify them of this change.

5. Further Comments

None.