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We are pleased to announce that the MSC fishery assessment process is now commencing for the Australian Mackerel Icefish Fishery in the Antarctic. The assessment will evaluate the fishery for compliance with the MSC's Standard for well-managed and sustainable fisheries. The certification body contracted to assess this fishery is Scientific Certification Systems, Inc., Emeryville, California, USA.

The fishery under assessment, Mackerel Icefish (*Champsocephalus gunnari*), is caught off the coasts of Heard Island and McDonald Islands (HIMI) and is under the direct management of the Australia Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA). The fishery extends from 13 nautical miles offshore to the edge of the 200 nautical mile Australian Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ) around the Islands. The fishery lies in Statistical Division 58.5.2 of the area of application of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), which has a strong influence over the management of the fishery. The area within 13 nautical miles of the islands is protected from fishing. Out to 12 nautical miles the area is listed on the World Heritage List and forms part of the Heard Island Wilderness Reserve. Within the Australian EEZ there is also the largest no-take Marine Protected Area in the World, comprising over 16% of the entire EEZ, with no fishing for icefish permitted within the Marine Park.

The 2002/03 Total Allowable Catch for the fishery was 2,980 tonnes. The client for the assessment is Austral Fisheries Pty Ltd, working on behalf of all holders of statutory fishing rights.

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