

## MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

## Policy Advisory

<b>Policy Advisory 15: Further Guidance on Pre-assessments</b>
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**Documents Supplemented or Modified by this Advisory**

MSC Scheme Document	Status Change
Fisheries Certification Methodology v6.1	Section 1 supplemented

**Background**

In order to ensure all scheme requirements are well defined and clearly identifiable, some older requirements released under various formats are now being re-issued as Policy Advisories. An MSC Certification Body Newsletter (issued in April 2004) contained requirements relating to pre-assessment of a fishery. These requirements are reproduced in this advisory.

Pre-assessments are desirable and recommended. Pre-assessments can identify key issues and the likelihood of meeting the Principles and Criteria or highlight major barriers to achieving certification. There is reasonable evidence that pre-assessments conducted by MSC accredited CBs work as intended. They have prevented fisheries from moving forward and incurring significant expenditure on a full assessment where there was low or no likelihood of success. Similarly, so far, all the fisheries that have moved forward to full assessment, after a pre-assessment, have been successfully assessed. Evaluations carried out by consultants have unknown standing and the MSC does not consider their reports as official pre-assessments. Decisions to follow their recommendations are the client's to make, but the MSC would recommend to clients that they undertake a pre-assessment conducted by an MSC applicant or accredited certification body.

**Intent**

To clarify requirements pertaining to the pre-assessment stage of the Fishery Certification Methodology.

**Direction**

1. The mandatory requirements in the Fisheries Certification Methodology (FCM) Tier 2 Section 1, Pre- Assessment Evaluation, signified by the term "shall", are applicable only to certification bodies (CBs) not certification clients.
2. If a client chooses to have a pre-assessment carried out by a CB, the pre-assessment must consist of everything described in Section 1.4 and shall be based on reviewing documentation and information related to the issues stated in Section 1.5 of the FCM. Two of the objectives of the pre-assessment are to inform the client of the likelihood of achieving certification and planning for the full assessment.
3. A client does not have to have a pre-assessment before proceeding into full assessment.

**Ends**