

MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Policy Advisory

Policy Advisory 2: Sequence of Steps in the Assessment Process

Documents Supplemented or Modified by this Advisory

MSC Scheme Document	Status Change
Policy Advisory 2 v1	Superseded

Background

The instructions contained in this advisory provide supporting guidance and interpretation relating to the Fisheries Certification Methodology (v6), and are considered particularly important for ensuring the transparency and credibility of the MSC programme.

MSC has requested that ASI interpret these instructions as 'Tier 3' documents as defined in FCM v6 (p7), and expects that CBs will implement these instructions as required by the FCM guidance on such documents.

Guidance to CBs

1. All of the steps defined in Section 2 of the FCM (Full Assessment, Step 1 – Prior to Assessing the Fishery) must be completed before commencing with the assessment visit and stakeholder interviews (FCM 3.1.2). Of particular importance is step 2.3.8 and the need for a final assessment tree to be published on the MSC website before the assessment visits and information collection.
2. MSC suggests that Certification Bodies allow enough time between the end of the stated consultation period for the draft assessment tree and their site visits for their expert teams to consider, respond, revise and publish their assessment tree in the light of stakeholder comments (FCM sections 2.3.6-2.3.8). While no minimum period is specified between posting the final assessment tree and conducting the site visits, the MSC has previously requested 30 days. Depending on the nature and extent of changes anything less than 30 days may not be considered to allow sufficient openness and transparency in the assessment process. MSC suggests that any period less than 10 days should be considered insufficient and could be regarded as an accreditation non-conformity.

ENDS