

**MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL – TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD  
TAB DIRECTIVE SERIES**

<b>TAB Directive number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date of Issue</b>
TAB D-029 v1	Revised Requirements for Stakeholder Consultation in Fishery Assessments	23 February 2010
Decision date: 04 December 2009		
Effective date for all clients and certification bodies: 1 May 2010		

**Documents Supplemented or Modified by this Directive**

<b>MSC Scheme Document</b>	<b>Status Change</b>
Fishery Certification Methodology (FCM v6)	Modifications to sections: 2.1.1.1 2.1.1.3 Appendix 1 Sections 5.4 and 5.5  New sections: 2.1.1.4 2.2.6

**Background**

This directive is designed to improve the quality and consistency of stakeholder consultation in the fishery assessment process without adding significant time or cost. It does so primarily by ensuring that current best-practice among certification bodies (CBs) is consistently applied across all assessments and CBs. The directive responds directly to specific concerns that have surfaced from a variety of stakeholders about their experiences engaging in MSC fishery assessments.

**Intent**

To improve consistency in the way CBs engage stakeholders at various stages in the fishery assessment process to ensure:

- Early identification of all relevant stakeholders, who are provided with adequate opportunities to feed into assessments at all relevant stages;
- Issues raised by stakeholders are acknowledged and reported as early in the assessment process as possible, to provide maximum opportunity for resolution outside of the objections process;
- Comments from stakeholders are targeted and relevant to the given assessment;
- Explicit responses from certifiers are presented such that it is easy to see how, where, and why the comments have (or have not) been considered.

**Directive**

1. For all fisheries in assessment or that subsequently enter assessment<sup>1</sup> against the MSC standard, the requirements specified in this TAB Directive shall come into immediate effect on the 1st of May, 2010.
2. For fisheries already in assessment as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, 2010, those requirements established in paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 of this TAB Directive shall apply only when a Public Comment Draft Report has not been made available for comment by stakeholders pursuant to paragraph 3.8.1 of the Fisheries Certification Methodology by the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, 2010.

<sup>1</sup> Having signed a contract with a certification body for a full assessment.

## Requirements during Initial Full Assessment and Re-assessment

### *Consultation Requirements*

3. Stakeholder interviews shall be conducted to ensure that the assessment team is aware of any and all concerns of relevant stakeholders. Should a stakeholder request a private interview with the assessment team, the Certification Body shall ensure such an opportunity is provided. The use of any information provided in private shall be treated in accordance with the requirements of Policy Advisory 7. Where stakeholders do not wish to be interviewed they shall be advised that they may submit written information to the assessment team.
4. Within two days of the commencement of each stakeholder consultation period within the assessment process, CBs shall send a copy of the respective consultation announcement to all identified stakeholders<sup>2</sup>. Concurrently with announcement of the fishery into full assessment, in addition to this notification, CBs shall distribute to all identified stakeholders an MSC- provided guide and template for participating and submitting comments.
5. CBs shall allow at least 10 days for stakeholders to submit written comments on the selection of proposed members of the assessment team.
6. CBs shall consider any comments or changes to the assessment team suggested by stakeholders, and changes shall be made to the team as appropriate. An announcement defining the final assessment team shall be provided to the MSC, who shall place it on the MSC website for the duration of the assessment.
7. Within 10 days of receipt of any stakeholder comments during the assessment process, certifiers shall acknowledge receipt to the commenter and provide an indication to stakeholders of how and when their comments will be addressed.

### *Reporting Requirements*

8. In addition to current requirements, CBs shall include a proposal for site visit location in the formal Notification Report.
9. CBs shall include the following in a separate section or appendix to the Public Comment Draft Report:
  - a. Written submissions from stakeholders received during consultation opportunities on the announcement of full assessment; proposed assessment team membership; proposed peer reviewers; proposal on the use or modification of the FAM and use of the RBF.
  - b. All written and a detailed summary of verbal submissions received during site visits pertaining to issues of concern material to the outcome of the assessment<sup>3</sup> regarding the specific assessment.
  - c. Explicit responses from the assessment team to submissions described in a. and b. above.
10. CBs shall include the reports of the peer reviewers in full in a separate section or appendix to the Public Comment Draft Report, together with the explicit responses of the assessment team that identify:

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<sup>2</sup> Note publishing this information on the MSC website and email announcements sent by the MSC are not considered to fulfil this requirement.

<sup>3</sup> Issues material to the outcome of the assessment include 1) information that could influence a PI score such that it falls below 60, 2) information that could influence a PI score such that it falls below 80, and 3) information that could influence PI scores within any Principle such that the aggregate score at the Principle level falls below 80.

- a. specifically what (if any) changes to scoring, rationales, or conditions have been made; and
  - b. where changes are suggested but no change is made, a substantiated justification.
11. CBs shall include all written submissions made by stakeholders about the Public Comment Draft Report in full in a separate section or appendix to the Final Report, together with the explicit responses of the assessment team that identify:
- a. specifically what (if any) changes to scoring, rationales, or conditions have been made; and
  - b. where changes are suggested but no change is made, a substantiated justification.

ENDS