

FORMAL NOTIFICATION OF THE INTENT TO PROCEED WITH AN ASSESSMENT OF THE U.S. ALASKA POLLOCK FISHERIES

This document serves as the required notification by SCS to the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) that Scientific Certification Systems, Inc., in accordance with the Principles, Criteria and Guidelines established by the MSC, is conducting an assessment of the Alaska pollock fisheries conducted with the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The full certification will be of the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BS/AI) and the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) pollock fisheries.

While only a single project, the assessment will be split in two parts, and each part run simultaneously as many of the documents and information are the same for both. The two parts of the evaluation will be the BS/AI fishery and the GOA fishery. The BS/AI and GOA represent separate management areas and in many scientists eyes different fish stocks. Given these factors, it is appropriate that separate evaluations be conducted so that each fishery can be evaluated to see if it can be considered sustainable under the Principles and Criteria set forth by the MSC.

BS/AI pollock are harvested only with mid-water fishing gear. There are several discrete industry sectors: catcher/processors; shoreside processors; mothership vessels; and catcher vessels that deliver to shoreside processors and motherships. Although all sectors are subject to the same overall fishery management regime, differences in operating modes can, at times, lead to differences in specific management measures applied to different sectors.

The GOA pollock stock harvest is allocated among sub-management areas and fish are harvested in a manner similar to that in the BS/AI management area.

SCS will examine all of the relevant factors pertaining to certification of the BS/AI and GOA fisheries, including examining all methods of harvest, to ensure that all fish harvested in the fisheries will be covered under the certification.