



FISHERIES CONFORMITY ASSESSOR PROGRAM

for Master's / PhD post-graduate students and other qualified applicants

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is a global not-for-profit organisation with ambitions to end overfishing across the world's oceans.

The MSC operates a third-party certification and verification system for sustainable fishing known as the [MSC Fisheries Standard](#).

All certified fisheries must be assessed according to the MSC Fisheries Standard, that is based on the [UN FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing](#).

The third-party certification and verification system, means that the MSC does not certify fisheries and does not influence the outcome of the certification process.

Certifications are undertaken by experts from independent Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs), which are accredited by [Assurance Services International](#).

In order to expand the current pool of assessors to meet ever increasing demand, the MSC has formulated the **Fisheries Conformity Assessor Program**.

The Course

The **Fisheries Conformity Assessor Fundamentals** course is open to Master's and PhD students, and candidates who hold a university degree in fisheries, marine conservation biology, natural resources environmental management or other relevant fields such as economics, mathematics, or statistics.

This course provides opportunities for early-career postgraduate level professionals by offering the practical knowledge and skills to take the first steps into the assessor space.

The course is of modular design and is comprised of two in-person practical workshops (including a scoring activity with an assessor), nine [MSC Training Platform](#) online learning modules, followed by a final test component.

The Course Plan

Title	What
Online learning modules	Welcome to the course, MSC Fisheries Standard, Fisheries Certification Process, etc.
Live session – introduction to and a comprehensive overview of the MSC Program and assessor role	MSC Fisheries Standard, its three Principles, career opportunities within Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs), the MSC Fisheries or In Transition to MSC (ITM) programs, the MSC Peer Review College (PRC), etc.
Live scoring exercise and Q&A	Scoring an example case study and preparation for test
Test	Qualifying, online final test
Closure	Final summation and distribution of certificates

On completion candidates will have a comprehensive understanding of the MSC certification and ecolabelling program, and a certificate to add to their professional profile.

Learning outcomes include:

- ✓ The MSC scoring process from using Scoring Guideposts (SGs) to score Scoring Issues, Performance Indicators, to calculating the overall score of a Principle.
- ✓ Performance levels required for a fishery to be able to pass an audit against the MSC Fisheries Standard.
- ✓ Differentiation between in scope and out of scope fisheries and recall of the three categories of enhanced fisheries.
- ✓ Distinctions between the fishery, the Unit of Assessment (UoA), the Unit of Certification (UoC), and who is involved in the certification process.
- ✓ The steps in the Fisheries Certification Process and the points of interaction with stakeholders.
- ✓ Ability to recognise scoring terminology used for qualitative and quantitative evaluation.
- ✓ How to use the reporting template for Performance Indicators (PIs), scoring conditions and implementation of a client action plan.
- ✓ Ability to describe harmonised fishery assessments.
- ✓ Identification of key Low Trophic Level (LTL) stocks

Candidates are required to complete all elements of the course and successfully pass the final test. On completion they will receive a CPD accredited **Fisheries Conformity Assessors Fundamentals certificate**.

Holders of the certificate may then have the possibility to initiate a career in MSC assessments on fisheries, those aiming for certification to the MSC Fisheries Standard for sustainability, or Fisheries Improvement Projects evaluations.

For further information please email: fisheries@msc.org

