

# In-Transition to MSC (ITM) Program Requirements and Guidance – Pilot



**Version 1.1, 15 December 2020**

## Marine Stewardship Council

### Vision

Our vision is of the world's oceans teeming with life, and seafood supplies safeguarded for this and future generations.

### Mission

Our mission is to use our ecolabel and fishery certification program to contribute to the health of the world's oceans by recognising and rewarding sustainable fishing practices, influencing the choices people make when buying seafood, and working with our partners to transform the seafood market to a sustainable basis.

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The MSC prohibits any modification of part or all of the contents in any form.

Marine Stewardship Council  
Marine House  
1 Snow Hill  
London EC1A 2DH  
United Kingdom

Phone: +44 (0) 20 7246 8900

Fax: +44 (0) 20 7246 8901

Email: [standards@msc.org](mailto:standards@msc.org)

## Responsibility for these requirements

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is responsible for these requirements.

Readers should verify that they are using the latest copy of this and other documents. Updated documents, together with a master list of all available MSC documents, can be found on the MSC website ([msc.org](https://www.msc.org)).

### Versions published

Version no.	Date	Description of amendment
1.0	30 September 2019	N/A – new document
1.1	15 December 2020	<p>Annexes containing eligibility and progress verification templates removed and reference added to new standalone templates.</p> <p>References updated to reflect new Improvement Action plan template and new version of Benchmarking and Tracking Tool (BMT)</p> <p>In Terms and Definitions, the description of Fishery updated to reflect relationship between Unit of Assessment (UoA) and Unit of Certification (UoC) entry on Ecert.</p> <p>Guidance added about naming a fishery in Ecert and how to record offsite verifications.</p>

## General introduction

### Background

The creation of an In-Transition to MSC (ITM) Program was motivated by the MSC's commitment to improving access for fisheries in the pre-MSC space, with the ultimate intention of preparing them to be ready to enter full MSC assessment at the end of the ITM process.

### Purpose

The ITM program offers a mechanism for third party, independent verification of Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) transitioning to MSC.

This document outlines the procedure for confirming compliance with ITM entry requirements and verifying continuous progress.

The ITM program is in a pilot phase.

### Normative Documents

The documents listed below contain provisions that, through reference in this text, become part of the ITM Requirements:

- a. MSC Pre-Assessment Reporting Template.
- b. MSC Ecert database user manual for CABs: Fisheries.
- c. MSC-MSCI Vocabulary.

### Reference Documents

The documents listed below are referenced in this text and only specific sections apply in the ITM Requirements.

- a. MSC Fisheries Standard.
- b. MSC Fisheries Certification Process.
- c. MSC General Certification Requirements.

### Terms and Definitions

All definitions in the [MSC-MSCI Vocabulary](#) apply in addition to the ones below:

**ITM Applicant Fishery:** Any fishery wishing to enter the ITM program.

**Benchmarking and Tracking Tool (BMT):** The BMT is MSC's Excel-based tool that allows a FIP to track progress against PIs to the  $\geq 80$  draft scoring range level. The current version is the [MSC Benchmarking and Tracking Tool \(BMT\) v3.0](#).

**Closing date:** The expected date on which all Improvement Actions would have been implemented so that a PI will reach a draft scoring range of  $\geq 80$ .

**Draft scoring ranges:**  $<60$ ,  $60-79$ ,  $\geq 80$  for each PI. Previously known as Scoring Level in the MSC Pre-assessment Template v2.0 now referenced in FCP v2.1 Clause 7.10.2.e and FCP Guidance (G7.10.2.e).

**Fishery:** The term fishery used throughout this document differs somewhat from that in the MSC-MSCI Vocabulary in that it refers to the Unit of Assessment (UoA) as identified in the Pre-Assessment of the ITM applicant fishery, not a fishery under assessment or certified. For the purposes of entering the Unit of Certification (UoC) in Ecert the UoA shall be considered equivalent to the UoC.

**Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP):** FIPs are multi-stakeholder initiatives that aim to improve a fishery towards sustainability. The MSC's definition of a credible FIP requires a FIP undergoing an MSC pre-assessment, developing an Improvement Action Plan, implementing actions and tracking progress, transparency, and a commitment to enter full assessment for MSC certification within a pre-determined time, usually 5 years.

**Improvement Action Plan:** A detailed schedule of improvement actions linked to MSC performance indicators and designed to close gaps in the performance of the fishery, including the resources required, the parties responsible, the timescale on which the changes are expected, and how progress is monitored. Before 2020 the MSC has two templates: The MSC Fishery Improvement Action Plan Template and Overview Template, and Fishery Improvement Action Plan Guidance Document. This was replaced in 2020 by the [MSC Fishery Improvement Action Plan Reporting Template v2.1](#).

**ITM start date:** The date on which an applicant fishery is determined to be eligible to enter the ITM and its status is changed on the MSC database to ITM Fishery.

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## In-Transition to MSC (ITM) Program Requirements

### 1 Preparation to enter the ITM Program

#### 1.1 Application

- 1.1.1 On acceptance of an ITM Applicant Fishery, the Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) shall:
- a. Notify the MSC via [globalaccessibility@msc.org](mailto:globalaccessibility@msc.org) of the intention of the fishery to enter the ITM program.
  - b. Enter information regarding the Applicant Fishery on the MSC Database, following the guidance in the MSC Ecert database user manual for CABs (Section 3: Entering assessment).

##### Guidance 1.1.1.b

Ensure that the fishery is named correctly according to the guideline provided in the MSC Ecert database user manual for CABs.

For the duration of the ITM pilot there is only one Certification Status 'In-transition to MSC' available for ITM fisheries. The status for different verification steps will depend on the assessment type (ITM Preparation and Entry, ITM Progress Verification, or ITM Expedited Progress Verification), the Current process stage (Eligibility, Progress Verification), and the Status of the selected stage (In progress or Finished).

- c. The information shall include the following:
  - i. The Unit of Certification (UoC).
  - ii. CAB contacts.
  - iii. A copy of the Pre-Assessment.
  - iv. A copy of the Improvement Action Plan.

#### 1.2 Confirmation of scope

- 1.2.1 The CAB shall confirm that the Applicant Fishery is eligible to enter the ITM program through the following determination:
- a. The following taxa shall not be a target species of the fishery under Principle 1:
    - i. Amphibians.
    - ii. Reptiles.
    - iii. Birds.
    - iv. Mammals.
  - b. The Applicant Fishery shall not use poisons or explosives.
  - c. The Applicant Fishery does not include or associate with an entity that has been successfully prosecuted for forced labour in the last 2 years.
  - d. The fishery should not be operating illegally, or have been implicated in Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing activities.
  - e. If it is an enhanced fishery it conforms to the enhanced fisheries scope criteria in Fisheries Certification Process (FCP) 7.4.6.
  - f. If it is an Introduced Species Based Fishery (ISBF) it conforms to the ISBF criteria in FCP 7.4.7.

- g. The Applicant Fishery should be able to enter full assessment within 5 years based on the CAB's judgement of the Pre-Assessment and Action Plan.

## 1.3 Pre-Assessment

- 1.3.1 The Pre-Assessment should be conducted by an MSC-accredited CAB using an individual or team in conformity with personnel requirements in [General Certification Requirements \(GCR\) Section 6.1](#) and [FCP Annex PC](#).
- 1.3.2 If the Pre-Assessment was not conducted by an entity as described in 1.3.1, the Pre-Assessment shall be verified by an MSC-accredited CAB against the requirements set out in 1.3.3, 1.3.4, and 1.3.5 following the verification process described under Section 2.
- 1.3.3 The Pre-Assessment Report shall conform to one of the following templates:
- The [MSC Pre-Assessment Reporting Template v2.1](#) using the full scoring table to Scoring Issue level (Annex 1).
  - For Pre-Assessments conducted after 28 February 2019, the [MSC Pre-Assessment Reporting Template v3.1](#) using the full scoring tables for Performance Indicators down to Scoring Issue level.
- 1.3.4 The Pre-Assessment Report shall be submitted in English.
- 1.3.5 The Pre-Assessment for a fishery preparing for ITM shall meet the following requirements:
- Shall be no older than 36 months at the time of applying to enter the ITM program.
  - It should have the objective of:
    - Informing the ITM Applicant Fishery of the likelihood of achieving certification.
    - Identifying performance gaps.
    - Enabling the Applicant Fishery to develop an Improvement Action Plan.
  - The Pre-Assessment should include the following activities:
    - Assessment of the extent to which the fishery is consistent with the MSC Fisheries Standard (Annexes SA, SB, SC, and SD).
    - A review of the availability of data.
    - A description of the potential obstacles or problems that may be a barrier to certification.

## 1.4 Improvement Action Plan

- 1.4.1 The Improvement Action Plan ('Action Plan') shall:
- Be prepared after the completion of a Pre-Assessment that meets the criteria set out under Section 1.3.
  - Conform to the MSC Fishery Improvement Action Plan Reporting Template v2.1 found on the MSC website.
  - Include Improvement Actions addressing all Scoring Issues with gaps associated with any Performance Indicator (PI) with a draft scoring range deemed unlikely to achieve an unconditional pass ( $\geq 80$ ).
  - Have the explicit aim of achieving MSC certification, with a planned date to enter Full Assessment within 3 months of concluding the ITM period (see Section 3.4).

### Guidance 1.4.1.d

The planned date for the announcement of entering Full Assessment should be expressed as a month and year.

- e. Provide information on funding and/or resources that are, or will be, in place to implement actions, and action leads.
  - f. Identify a dedicated ITM Fishery Project Manager for the duration of the ITM period.
- 1.4.2 The Improvement Actions included as per 1.4.1.c should:
- a. Aim to reach a draft scoring range that would result in at least a conditional pass for the fishery against the MSC Standard by the end of the ITM period.

#### Guidance 1.4.2.a

The Improvement Action Plan should aim to reach an average score of 80 per Principle with no PI having a draft scoring range of less than 60-79 by the end of the ITM period, which should usually not exceed a period of 5 years.

- b. Define specific milestones that stipulate measurable improvements, and the outcomes (using quantitative metrics) expected each year.
  - c. Stipulate the timeframe over which each milestone should be fully met.
  - d. Indicate the expected outcome and improvement scores that should be achieved for each milestone, expressed as expected draft scoring range and Benchmarking and Tracking (BMT) score calculated using the most recent version of the [MSC BMT Tool](#).
  - e. Be both realistic and achievable in the period specified.
- 1.4.3 The ITM Project Manager identified under 1.4.1.f shall be a natural person fulfilling the following key responsibilities:
- a. Serve as the key contact between CAB and fishery.
  - b. Ensure coordination and implementation of the Action Plan.
  - c. Collate all information necessary for annual progress verification, including filling in the self-reporting section in the ITM Progress Verification Reporting Template v1.1 and updating the Action Plan.

#### Guidance 1.4.3

The ITM Project manager could be any individual with suitable competencies to carry out the responsibilities and tasks, for example, someone working for the FIP implementer or a consultant contracted by the fishery association.

- 1.4.4 The ITM Project Manager cannot be someone employed by the CAB carrying out the verification for the ITM Fishery.

## 1.5 Conflict of interest and safeguarding of impartiality

- 1.5.1 During any verification activities of an Applicant or ITM fishery, the CAB shall conform to all requirements of ISO17065 (Section 5.2) for mechanisms to safeguard impartiality as required by [GCR](#) Sections 4.3 and 5.1.

#### Guidance 1.5.1

CABs should aim to safeguard against conflict of interest arising when involved in both the verification of a fishery in the ITM Program and later during full assessment of the same fishery, or an overlapping Unit of Assessment. CABs need to ensure that their activities are limited to verification only. Evidence of CABs providing advice to ITM fisheries could result in Assessment Findings (i.e., nonconformities) being raised by the Accreditation Body against ISO 17065 if a full assessment is done by the same CAB.

- 1.5.2 If a CAB produced the Action Plan supplied by the Applicant Fishery for entry into the ITM program, that same CAB shall not carry out any verification relating to that fishery.

## 2 Verification of entry

### 2.1 General

- 2.1.1 In cases where 1.3.2 applies, verification of Pre-Assessments and Action Plans of Applicant Fisheries shall be conducted by a CAB meeting the specifications in 1.3.1.

#### Guidance 2.1.1

This is applicable where the Pre-Assessment was done by another entity, for example, an NGO or consultant not working for a CAB.

### 2.2 Pre-Assessment Report verification

- 2.2.1 The CAB shall verify that Pre-Assessments meet the criteria under 1.3.3, 1.3.4, and 1.3.5.

- 2.2.2 Verification of the Pre-Assessment Report shall include:

- a. Checking that the Unit of Assessment is correctly defined.
- b. Checking that the applicant fishery meets the Scope requirements.
- c. Determining if the assigned draft scoring ranges in the Pre-Assessment Report are justified.

#### Guidance 2.2.2.c

The CAB should also check all scores at draft scoring range  $\geq 80$ , not only those scores that require improvement actions.

- d. Confirming the BMT Index of the ITM fishery.
  - e. Checking that traceability and issues relevant to eventual Chain of Custody were considered as required by the Pre-Assessment Template.
- 2.2.3 If any of the verification points under 2.2.2.a-e are not met, the CAB shall notify the fishery and request a response addressing the gap(s) within 30 days.
- 2.2.3.1 If the CAB determines that the draft scoring range for any PI is not justified (see 2.2.2.c), the CAB shall request the fishery to provide further evidence to justify the score.
  - 2.2.3.2 In the absence of additional evidence to justify the draft scoring range, the draft scoring range shall be revised by the CAB before making the final eligibility determination as per 2.4.1.a.

### 2.3 Action Plan verification

- 2.3.1 The CAB shall check that the Action Plan meets the criteria in Section 1.4.

- 2.3.2 Verification of an Action Plan shall include:

- a. Checking that an ITM Project Manager has been identified.
- b. Determining the overall likelihood that the Action Plan and Improvement Actions will lead to the performance improvements specified within a period of 5 years.
- c. Consideration of whether each Improvement Action is realistic and achievable within the given timeframe.
- d. Checking the appropriateness of the metrics proposed for measuring progress against each Improvement Action.

- 2.3.3 If any of the verification points under 2.3.2.a-d are not met, the CAB shall:

- a. Request the fishery to revise the Action Plan and resubmit an updated version of the Action Plan within 30 days.
- b. Determine whether the resubmitted Action Plan has addressed the gap(s) before making the final eligibility determination as per 2.4.1.a.

## 2.4 Eligibility determination and reporting

- 2.4.1 Once the Pre-Assessment Report and/or Action Plan have been verified, the CAB shall:
- a. Determine whether the Applicant fishery is 'eligible' or 'ineligible' to enter ITM and notify the fishery's ITM Project Manager of the result.

### Guidance 2.4.1.b

Eligibility will depend on the presence of both an eligible Pre-Assessment (section 1.3) and Action Plan (section 1.4) and verified as per sections 2.2 and 2.3.

- b. Upload a copy of the Pre-Assessment Report and Action Plan to the MSC Database.
- c. Compile a report of findings using the [ITM eligibility reporting template](#) and upload it to the MSC Database.

### Guidance 2.4.1.c

The Eligibility Report should contain a clear rationale for the chosen eligibility status.

- d. Update the MSC Database with the ITM eligibility status and for a fishery that is eligible, change the status from Applicant fishery to ITM fishery.
- 2.4.2 The date of the status change under 2.4.1.d shall be regarded as the start date of the ITM period.

## 3 Verification of progress

### 3.1 General

- 3.1.1 At the end of every 12-month period, from the start date (2.4.2), the CAB shall verify the ITM fishery's progress against its Action Plan and Improvement Actions, for the duration of the fishery's involvement in the ITM Program.
- 3.1.2 The CAB shall appoint an assessor or assessors who meet the competencies as per 1.3.1 to conduct the verification of progress.
- 3.1.3 The CAB should strive to safeguard impartiality as outlined in Section 1.5 during all progress verification activities.
- 3.1.4 The CAB may choose to carry out either an offsite or onsite verification of progress:
- a. The CAB shall determine the most appropriate means of progress verification each year and include a justification for the choice of verification.

### Guidance 3.1.4

It is recommended that at least one onsite verification is conducted for any fishery engaged in the ITM program for longer than 2 years, and that it takes place around the midway mark of the full ITM period. The decision on whether to undertake an onsite verification shall consider both the possibility of verifying information remotely and the CAB's level of confidence in progress made by the fishery towards entering full assessment.

In the MSC Ecert database in the case of offsite verification, the 'Site visit location' should be recorded as 'remote' or 'offsite'. The start and end dates should be recorded as usual.

## 3.2 Verification activities

- 3.2.1 The CAB shall request the ITM Project Manager to provide evidence in support of progress against the fishery’s Action Plan (‘self-reporting’) 30 days before the anniversary of the ITM start date.
- 3.2.2 Self-reporting shall be done using the [ITM Progress Verification Reporting Template](#).

### Guidance 3.2.2

Self-reporting by the ITM Project Manager should include making any changes to draft scoring ranges and BMT scores and providing supporting evidence for such changes.

- 3.2.3 The ITM Project Manager shall have 30 days to submit the progress report from the day the request was received.
- 3.2.4 The CAB shall review the following provided evidence, noting any of the following:
- a. Changes relating to the fishery and its management.
  - b. Any changes made in the draft scoring ranges for each Performance Indicator.
  - c. Changes to the expected and actual BMT Index.
  - d. Where applicable, any exceptional circumstances that may prevent the fishery from achieving expected outcomes (Section 3.5).
- 3.2.5 The CAB may seek the views of key stakeholders (either remotely or in-person) about changes reviewed as per 3.2.4.a-d.
- 3.2.6 After completing the review of the Progress Report, the CAB shall upload it to the MSC Database.

## 3.3 Progress determination and reporting

- 3.3.1 At each instance of verification, the CAB shall determine the progress at Performance Indicator (PI) level and the overall progress against the expected draft scoring ranges and expected BMT score in the Action Plan.

### Progress at Performance Indicator Level

- 3.3.2 The progress at PI level shall be verified for all PIs with draft scoring ranges <60 or 60-79 and expressed as one of the following progress status categories:
- a. **Ahead of target:** the PI has achieved a draft scoring range higher than the target.
  - b. **On target:** the PI has achieved the target draft scoring range.
  - c. **Behind target:** the PI has not achieved the target draft scoring range.
  - d. **Exceptional circumstances:** the PI is behind target, but the CAB has determined that exceptional circumstances apply as per Section 3.5.

### Guidance 3.3.2

For example, if a PI had a draft scoring range of <60 in the Pre-Assessment, a target of <60 at the next verification, and a score that is <60 at next verification then the progress for that PI shall be ‘on target’. If the draft scoring range were 60-79 at one verification, a target of >80 for the next verification and it did not achieve its target of ≥80 at the next verification, the progress would be ‘behind target’ for that PI.

- 3.3.3 For PIs that reach the ≥80 draft scoring range these shall be considered ‘closed’, unless it is found that a PI has reverted from >80 to a lower draft scoring range, in which case the relevant categories in 3.3.2 shall apply.

### Guidance 3.3.3

The date by which all actions relating to a PI are expected to be closed is referred to as the 'closing date' and expressed as month and year.

## Overall progress

- 3.3.4 The CAB shall determine the overall progress in any given year by:
- a. Identifying those PIs as per 3.3.2 that are due an improved draft scoring range in the year of verification.

### Guidance 3.3.4.a

Therefore, for PIs where the target draft scoring range is the same as the actual scoring range of the year before, these will not be considered for the overall progress determination in that year.

- b. Determine the number of PIs '**behind target**' compared to the total number of PIs due an improved score.

### Guidance 3.3.4.b

PIs that are behind target due to exceptional circumstances will therefore not be considered when determining overall progress.

- c. Checking the actual overall BMT index against the expected BMT index.
- 3.3.5 The CAB shall assign one of two possible categories, '**adequate**' or '**inadequate**', to indicate overall progress status during the year of verification.
- 3.3.6 The CAB shall assign the overall progress as '**adequate**' when:
- a. Less than 50% of the PIs due a change in score are behind target, or

### Guidance 3.3.6.a

Therefore, for adequate progress the sum of PIs that are on target or ahead of target shall be  $\geq 50\%$  of all PIs with a score improvement due in the year of verification.

- b. More than 50% of PIs are behind target but the actual BMT index is at or higher than the expected value.

### Guidance 3.3.6.b

The intent of including the consideration of the BMT index under 3.3.6.b is to avoid penalising a fishery which may not have made progress on PIs where a score improvement is expected but is ahead on other PIs that were not due for a change in score.

- 3.3.7 The CAB shall assign the overall progress as '**inadequate**' when more than 50% of the PIs due for an improved draft scoring range score are behind target.

## Action Plan check

- 3.3.8 The CAB shall check that the Action Plan is updated as appropriate and remains on course to achieve a conditional pass by the specified ITM closing date.
- 3.3.9 For PIs where there is no change in target scoring range due in the year of progress verification the CAB shall assess whether the Improvement Actions relating to those PIs are 'likely' or 'unlikely' to achieve the target score change within the specified ITM period.

### Guidance 3.3.9

The intent of this is to ensure that all PIs are checked, regardless of whether a score chance is expected or not. 'Likely' or 'unlikely' here has no prescribed likelihood but should reflect the CAB's judgement.

- 3.3.10 The timeframe for actions that will lead to a conditional pass of the ITM fishery against the MSC Standard in a full assessment (as per 1.4.2.a) shall not exceed 5 years except when exceptional circumstances apply (Section 3.5).

### Reporting of progress

- 3.3.11 The findings of all progress verifications shall be recorded using the [ITM Progress Verification Reporting Template](#).
- 3.3.12 The report shall include a rationale for the determination which may include supporting evidence as required.
- 3.3.13 The CAB shall update the progress status and upload the progress report on the MSC Database within 30 days of finishing the progress report.

## 3.4 ITM duration

- 3.4.1 The default duration of a fishery's involvement in the ITM shall not exceed 5 years.

### Guidance 3.4.1

A fishery can apply to enter the ITM program even when the expected date for entering full assessment is less than 5 years from the start date.

- 3.4.2 Under exceptional circumstances (Section 3.5) the default duration may be extended by a maximum of 3 years.
- 3.4.3 In cases where a fishery is suspended or withdraws from the ITM program, the total amount of time in the program, starting from the initial start date, shall not exceed 5 years or 8 years, whichever is applicable.

## 3.5 Exceptional circumstances

- 3.5.1 'Exceptional circumstances' shall refer to situations where, even with perfect implementation of the Action Plan and the completion of all Improvement Actions, the expected change in draft scoring range at PI level could not be achieved.

### Guidance 3.5.1

Examples of unforeseen situations that could prevent achieving completion of improvement actions may include: for Outcome PIs, an ecologically harmful incident such as a major oil spill impacting the UoA; and, for Management and Information PIs, factors outside of the control of the ITM fishery such as serious socio-political unrest such e.g. a coup d'état.

- 3.5.2 In situations where exceptional circumstances apply, the CAB may accept an extension to the timeframe of the Action Plan of up to a maximum of 8 years from the ITM starting date.
- 3.5.3 Where an extension has been allowed due to exceptional circumstances the CAB shall instruct the ITM Project Manager to update the Action Plan accordingly, explicitly stating how the action plan will achieve a performance level equal to an unconditional pass over the longer, specified period.
- 3.5.4 The CAB shall review the continued implications of exceptional circumstances during each progress verification.

## 3.6 Decisions resulting from inadequate progress and withdrawal

### Additional progress verification

- 3.6.1 If the CAB determines that a fishery's overall progress status is **'inadequate'** as per 3.3.7 for two consecutive progress verifications, the CAB shall initiate plans for an additional verification within 6 months from the date of the last progress verification.

#### Guidance 3.6.1

This expedited additional verification may be onsite or off-site with the intention of ensuring that actions have been taken to achieve adequate progress by the next scheduled annual progress verification.

- 3.6.2 The CAB shall provide a justification for the choice of the type of verification (on-site or off-site) under 3.6.1.

### Suspension from the ITM program

- 3.6.3 The CAB shall suspend a fishery from the ITM Program if:
- It has been determined that the fishery's overall progress status is **'inadequate'** for 3 consecutive progress verifications, or
  - The closing date of Improvement Actions in the Action Plan (refer to 3.3.10) extends beyond the maximum ITM duration, in line with Section 3.4.
- 3.6.4 The CAB shall update the status of the fishery in the MSC database from ITM Fishery to **'Suspended'**.
- 3.6.5 The CAB may accept the re-application of a suspended ITM fishery to regain its ITM status after:
- Verification of performance and the action plan confirms that the fishery remains in scope, and
  - The fishery has made the required progress and will meet its target of achieving a conditional pass by the previously specified date of completion.

### Withdrawal

- 3.6.6 A fishery may withdraw at any time from the ITM Program by notifying the CAB.
- 3.6.7 A withdrawn fishery will not be eligible to re-apply to enter the ITM Program if the time since the start date exceeds the total ITM duration (3.4.3).
- 3.6.8 Any fishery reaching the end of the ITM timeframe shall be withdrawn from the ITM program, either to continue to Full Assessment or be completely withdrawn from the MSC program.

#### Guidance 3.6.8

The entity (client group) that will eventually enter Full Assessment will depend on the nature of fishery and Unit of Assessment, the FIP implementer, and the overall configuration of the FIP.

- 3.6.9 The CAB shall change the status of the fishery to **'Withdrawn'** in the case of 3.6.6 or **'Completed'** if it has proceeded to Full Assessment under 3.6.8.

## 4 Confidentiality

- 4.1.1 The CAB shall treat the existence, process, and outcomes of the ITM verification activities as confidential.

- 4.1.2 Any pre-assessments relating to applicant fisheries shall be treated as confidential to the fishery, the CAB and MSC, unless otherwise directed by the applicant fishery.

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End of document

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