



# Clarifying best practice for reducing impacts on endangered, threatened, and protected species (ETP)

Consultation Summary Report

July 2021



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## Glossary of abbreviations and technical terms

ETP - endangered, threatened or protected

FAO – The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FSR – Fisheries Standard Review

*This is a working paper, and hence it represents work in progress. This report is part of ongoing policy development.*

*The views and opinions expressed in parts of this report are those of stakeholders and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Marine Stewardship Council.*

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# Purpose and scope of this report

Every five years, the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) initiates a [Fisheries Standard Review](#) to help ensure our assessment and certification system remains the leading measure of fisheries sustainability. The current review began in 2018 and will conclude in 2022.

Stakeholders from all sectors are at the heart of our review, helping identify issues, develop solutions and test proposed changes. We have completed research into the topics identified in the Terms of Reference, and will next develop potential options for revisions. One of the topics identified is [clarifying best practice for reducing impacts on endangered, threatened, and protected species \(ETP\)](#). We are holding a series of consultations throughout 2021 and early 2022 for stakeholders to take part in the development of the MSC Fisheries Standard.

This report details the following for the 2021 consultation survey on the topic of clarifying best practice for reducing impacts on endangered, threatened, and protected species (ETP):

- Background to topics discussed
- Participation data
- Next steps in the review process
- Feedback tables

It is the goal of MSC consultations to value authenticity, fairness and inclusiveness, secure strategic insight and build consensus and credibility. To achieve this, the MSC's processes for consultation follow the [ISEAL Standard Setting Code of Good Practice](#) and the [FAO Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries](#).

ISEAL requires that participation is open to all stakeholders, and that the standard setter proactively seeks contributions from disadvantaged stakeholder groups. This is to ensure that contributors represent a balance of interests in the subject matter and in the geographical scope to which the standard applies. Publishing raw consultation feedback is considered 'aspirational good practice' by ISEAL. We publish this feedback as part of our commitment to transparency in our consultation process.

# Background

The MSC Fisheries Standard considers the impact of a fishery on species listed as endangered, threatened or protected (ETP) by certain national or international agreements. These requirements were last substantively updated in 2008. Since then, stakeholders have expressed concern that a lack of clear definitions on ETP interactions has led to ambiguity in the interpretation of scoring for the requirements.

Current methods of categorising what constitutes an ETP species have also been raised as a barrier to consistent assessment of fisheries. Stakeholders have noted inconsistencies caused by the use of varying lists of ETP species in the MSC Fisheries Standard. These lists often vary from country to country with different criteria and quality of data for their ratings. We want to ensure that sensitive populations are consistently assigned as endangered, threatened, or protected so that certified fisheries allow these species to recover and thrive.

The objectives of the Fisheries Standard Review (FSR) with relation to ETP species are to determine whether improvements can be made to streamline the designation, improve the assessment (scoring) of ETP species and ensure requirements adequately reflect widely accepted and adopted science and management best practices. This includes incentivising consistent data collection and implementation of mitigation methods in fisheries.

## Topics covered in the review

This FSR covers the following ETP topics and associated aims:

- **Improved ETP designation:** aimed at streamlining and increasing consistency of ETP designation outcomes.
- **Increased objectivity of ETP impacts:** aimed at improving objectivity of ETP assessments through increased alignment with best practice management.
- **Clarifying requirements for assessing the impacts of multiple MSC certified fisheries on ETP populations:** aimed at ensuring that cumulative impacts from MSC certified fisheries do not hinder the recovery of ETP species.
- **Improved compliance with national and international ETP regulations:** aimed at ensuring that MSC certified fisheries are compliant with ETP regulation.
- **Clarifying the assessment of indirect impacts on ETP species:** aimed at clarifying requirement language to increase consistency and objectivity of indirect impact assessments.
- **Improving assessment of unobserved mortality of ETP species:** aimed at clarifying requirement language and definitions to increase consistency and objectivity for assessments of unobserved mortality.

As part of the review, the MSC has consulted stakeholders on these topics. The consultation activities for 2021 are detailed below.

## Online survey

The MSC consulted stakeholders through an online survey [on clarifying best practice for reducing impacts on endangered, threatened, and protected species \(ETP\)](#) that was open to everyone and available on the MSC website between 29<sup>th</sup> June to 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Comments were submitted both through the survey and via email during the consultation period. The full feedback from the survey,

with individual names and defamatory comments removed, can be found in [Annex II: Feedback tables](#).

## Participation

This section presents participation data for the consultation activities detailed above.

### Online survey participation

There were 76 respondents to the online survey. The full list of respondents, their stakeholder groups and country of work can be found in [Table 3](#) in [Annex I: Participation](#). For respondents that did not consent to their names being published, only stakeholder group and country is available.

A breakdown of stakeholder groups ([Table 1](#)) and geographical regions ([Table 2](#)) can be found below. Participation was sought from varied stakeholder groups. The sectoral representation was broad, with a slight weighting towards non-governmental organisations. The majority of respondents were based in Europe and North America, however we do see representation from stakeholders across the globe. 74 respondents participated via the online survey, and 2 submitted responses via email based on a pdf version of the survey.

**Table 1: Number of individual survey respondents representing each stakeholder group.**

Stakeholder group	Count
Academic/Scientific	4
Commercial wild harvest fisheries	10
Conformity assessment and/or accreditation	6
Consumer	1
Cultural/recreational/artisanal	1
Governance/management	3
Non-governmental organisation	25
Seafood supply chain	14
Other (please specify)	8
Unknown	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>

**Table 2: Number of individual survey respondents representing each geographical region.**

Geographical region	Count
Africa	4
Asia	5
Europe	26
North America	21
South America	2

Oceania	13
Unknown	5
Total	76

## Next steps

We are currently reviewing all feedback received from the consultation survey as well as independent research and our own internal data analysis. This will help us to better understand whether stakeholders consider our proposed changes effective in resolving our key ETP issues.

Following this consultation we will finalise impact testing and standard changes (e.g. to requirements and guidance) to be subject to review by our governance bodies at the end of 2021. If they agree with these, the new requirements and guidance will be subject to further public review in early 2022 alongside the rest of the revised standard.

Following this consultation, the next opportunity to comment on proposed changes will be during the 60-day public consultation on the draft Standard in early 2022.

The new MSC Fisheries Standard will be released in 2022 subject to approval from the MSC governance bodies.



# Annex I: Participation

Table 3: List of respondents to the online survey. For those respondents who consented to this, their names and organisations are included.

Name	Organisation	Stakeholder group	Country
Douglas Stuart Butterworth	University of Cape Town (but not as their "representative")	Academic/Scientific	South Africa
Mustafa Md Golam	Ecosystem Conservation Society	Academic/Scientific	Bangladesh
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Academic/Scientific	Germany
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Academic/Scientific	New Zealand
Austin Estabrooks	At-sea Processors Association	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	USA
Catherine Boyd	Clearwater Seafoods Limited Partnership	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	Canada
Isadora Moniz	AGAC	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	Spain
Phillip Ravanello	Tuna Australia	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	Australia
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	Australia
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	Australia
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	Australia
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	Australia
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	Norway
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	USA
Steve Devit	Atlantic Groundfish Council	Commercial wild harvest fisheries	Canada
Lisa Borges	FishFix	Conformity assessment and/or accreditation	Portugal
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Conformity assessment and/or accreditation	UAE

Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Conformity assessment and/or accreditation	Spain
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Conformity assessment and/or accreditation	Australia
Richard Banks	MRAG Americas	Conformity assessment and/or accreditation	Australia
Stewart Norman	Capricorn Marine Environmental	Conformity assessment and/or accreditation	South Africa
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Consumer	New Zealand
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Cultural/recreational/artisanal	Fiji
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Cultural/recreational/artisanal	Unknown
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Governance/management	Germany
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Governance/management	USA
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Governance/management	France
Adrian Meder	Australian Marine Conservation Society	Non-governmental organisation	Australia
Alex Hofford	Shark Guardian	Non-governmental organisation	UK
Dr. Iris Ziegler	Sharkproject International	Non-governmental organisation	Germany
Francine Kershaw	Natural Resources Defense Council	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Gabriela Mc Lean	CeDePesca	Non-governmental organisation	Panama
Hirmen Syofyanto	Marine Stewardship Council	Non-governmental organisation	Indonesia
Jennifer Olbers	WILDTRUST	Non-governmental organisation	South Africa
Julie Decker	Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF)	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Karin Bilo	WWF	Non-governmental organisation	Netherlands
Kate O'Connell	AWI	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Kristina Guldbæk	Sustainable Fisheries Greenland	Non-governmental organisation	Greenland



Michelle Cho	Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life NEA	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Non-governmental organisation	Canada
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Non-governmental organisation	Malaysia
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Non-governmental organisation	Malaysia
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Rich Lincoln	Ocean Outcomes	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Rita Sá	ANP WWF	Non-governmental organisation	Portugal
Rory Crawford	BirdLife International	Non-governmental organisation	UK
Sarah Dolman	Whale and Dolphin Conservation	Non-governmental organisation	UK
Stephanie Borrelle	BirdLife International	Non-governmental organisation	New Zealand
Susan Jackson	International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF)	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Te Aomihia Walker	Te Ohu Kaimoana	Non-governmental organisation	New Zealand
Tessa Gonzalez	Aquatic Life Institute	Non-governmental organisation	USA
Bryan Wallace	Ecolibrium, Inc	Other (please specify)	USA
Igor Debski	Seabird Bycatch Working Group of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels	Other (please specify)	New Zealand
José Truda Palazzo Jr.	Divers for Sharks	Other (please specify)	Brazil

Kortney Opshaug	Blue Ocean Gear	Other (please specify)	USA
Mike Bergh	OLSPS Marine	Other (please specify)	South Africa
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Other (please specify)	Australia
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Other (please specify)	Canada
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Other (please specify)	Germany
		Seafood supply chain	
Adam Townley	New England Seafood International	Seafood supply chain	UK
Anders Barsøe	LETZ SUSHI	Seafood supply chain	Denmark
Benjamin Kock	EDEKA	Seafood supply chain	Germany
Florian Rohner	Federation of Migros Cooperatives	Seafood supply chain	Switzerland
Linda Wood	Marks and Spencer	Seafood supply chain	UK
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Seafood supply chain	UK
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Seafood supply chain	UK
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Seafood supply chain	Germany
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Seafood supply chain	Switzerland
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Seafood supply chain	Germany
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Seafood supply chain	Switzerland
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Seafood supply chain	USA
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Seafood supply chain	UK
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Unknown	Unknown
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Unknown	Unknown
Redacted at request of individual	Redacted at request of individual	Unknown	Unknown

## Annex II: Feedback tables

[The feedback tables](#) provide raw responses to the consultation. Please read the [consultation document](#) to get the full context.