GLOBAL BENCHMARK TOOL

GSSI Benchmark Report

Scheme: Marine Stewardship Council

Scope: Fisheries Standard (version 2.01, 2018)

Date: 30th January 2024

STATEMENT OF RECOGNITION

Scheme	Marine Stewardship Council
Scope	Fisheries Standard (version 2.01, 2018)
Date	30th January 2024

The Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) Steering Board recognizes the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) to be in alignment with all applicable essential components of:

A	Section A. Governance of Seafood Certification Schemes
B	Section B. Operational Management of Seafood Certification Schemes
C	Section C. Aquaculture Certification Standards
D	Section D. Fisheries Certification Standards

Thereby, GSSI considers the above seafood certification scheme to be in alignment with the FAO Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine/Inland Capture Fisheries.

This Report lists evidence of alignment with applicable GSSI Essential Components and GSSI Supplementary Components, where implemented.

CONTENTS

SCHEME OVERVIEW

Scheme name	Marine Stewardship Council
Standard	Fisheries Standard (version 2.01, 2018)
Headquarters location	London, UK

FROM APPLICATION TO RECOGNITION

	1 ↓	Application Received	The Benchmark Process begins once a Scheme Owner decides to apply for recognition and contacts the Secretariat, who provides an overview of the process.
	2 ↓	Desktop Review	This step helps to assess the Scheme Owner's capability to proceed and successfully complete the Benchmark Process within the expected timeframe.
	3 ↓	Office Visit	The Office Visit may be conducted by the Process IE or both IEs, depending on the outstanding issues of the Desktop Review.
	4 ↓	Benchmark Committee Meeting	The Benchmark Committee acts as the 'Quality Assurance' for the work undertaken by the IE team in the Desktop Review and Office Visit.
	5 ↓	Public Consultation	If recognition is recommended by the Benchmark Committee, the Scheme Owner's approval is required to publish the Benchmark Report for a four-week Public Consultation.
	6 ↓	Recognition Decision by Steering Board	The Steering Board is briefed by the Steering Board Liaison on the Benchmark Report and the Benchmark Committee's recommendation for recognition.
	7	Monitoring of Continued Alignment	GSSI ensures continued alignment of recognized schemes with GSSI Essential Components through an annual reporting process of relevant changes.

Read more about the steps to recognition *here*.

WHO IS INVOLVED

Scheme Representative	Billy Hynes
Independent Expert (Process)	Bruno Sechet
Independent Expert (Technical)	Carlos Sonderblohm
Steering Board Liaison	Sonia Cordera
GSSI Secretariat Representative	Georgia Armitage

Steering Board Members	Angel Matamoro Irago Annika Mackensen Sonia Cordera Han Han Ingrid Kelling Jason Clay Laurent Develle Nianjun Shen Trent Hartill Marcelo Hidalgo Judy Panayos Adriana Sanchez Jennifer Kemmerly
Benchmark Committee Members	Christian von Dorrien Sally Surangpimol Jose Crespo

EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

A	Section A. Governance of Seafood Certification Schemes
B	Section B. Operational Management of Seafood Certification Schemes
C	Section C. Aquaculture Certification Standards
D	Section D. Fisheries Certification Standards

SECTION A. GOVERNANCE OF SEAFOOD CERTIFICATION SCHEMES

A.1 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

A.1.01 Legal Status	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner is a legal entity, or an organization that is a partnership of legal entities, or a government or inter-governmental agency.	Scheme Owner is an entity which could be held legally responsible for its operations. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - an official document showing registration with legal authorities and current legal status of organization. Examples include incorporation papers, statutes, business licenses and registration with tax authorities. For government Scheme Owners, clear lines of responsibility and authority on decision making should be identified. Pre-application to require scheme to identify legal registered entity or lead government agency/department.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because MSC is a legally incorporated body, registered with the UK Companies House (registered company number: 3322023) and the Charity Commission (registered charity number: 1066806)	• *Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association*

A.1.01.01 Legal Status	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has insurance or reserves to cover the operations of the scheme. Note: This does not apply to government-run schemes as they are self-insured.	The Scheme Owner shall be able to demonstrate that it has evaluated the risks arising from its activities and that it has adequate arrangements (e.g. insurance and/ or reserves) to cover liabilities arising from its operations in each of its fields of activities and the geographic areas in which it operates. (adapted ISO 17021 5.3 and ISO 17065 4.3) Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - system for business risk assessment, insurance policy, - clauses in accreditation body and/or certification body contracts addressing liability.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because it has evaluated the risks and the Board of Trustees requires (as policy) that the MSC holds unrestricted reserves of a minimum of £12 million or (if higher) nine months of the following years budgeted expenditure. The MSC holds Directors professional indemnity insurance (and standard Directors insurance) to cover Directors' liabilities. Potential liabilities evaluated within MSC Risk Register, evaluated by MSC Senior Executive, and reviewed by the MSC Board. Conformity Assessment Bodies liability and financing arrangements are covered by their adherence to ISO 17065 clause 4.3 which states that they have to have to be able to cover liabilities arising from their operations and have the necessary financial stability and resources required for their operations. This is verified by the accreditation body ASI as part of the accreditation process.	• Consolidated Accounts (pdf) • Indemnity document (pdf on request)

A.1.02 Impartiality	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner is not directly engaged in the operational affairs (auditing or certification) of the certification or accreditation program.	Scheme Owner is not directly engaged in auditing, certification or accreditation activities in order to ensure freedom of commercial or financial pressure of assurance processes and decision making. This does not include complaint resolution or performance reviews. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - impartiality policy, impartiality clauses in certification body and accreditation body contracts, management control procedures

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because auditing and certification are undertaken by independent, impartial, competent and transparent certification bodies, which are recognized and accredited by an independent, impartial, competent and transparent accreditation body to conduct conformity assessments using the specific standards of the ecolabelling scheme being assessed. The General Certification Requirements (GCR), Fisheries Certification Requirements (FCR) and Chain of Custody Certification Requirements (CoCCR) detail the procedures for certification bodies to follow; MSC has a separate agreement with Accreditation Services International (ASI) to cover the provision of accreditation services. The MSC does provide Technical Oversight of selected fishery assessments as part of its process to ensure the consistent application of the standard. The confidential Technical Oversight Strategy document defines MSC's role in the Technical Oversight process and confirms that MSC is not involved in the final decision of the assessment.	• *MSC Governance*

A.1.03 Operating Procedures

GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner operates to a documented set of governance policies and procedures specifying at least the following: - Board or governance body election or appointment process, - Process to facilitate participation of stakeholders - Board or governance body representation and Terms of Reference, - Member categories (where applicable), - Income generation or funding processes, - An organizational structure, - The decision making processes of each governance body, - Key personnel roles (responsibility and authority), - Managing conflict of interest, and - quality assurance program.	The Scheme Owner has policies/procedures available covering all aspects in this Essential Component except Member categories if not applicable. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - statutes and by-laws, organizational chart, internal procedures, job descriptions, conflict of interest statements, quality assurance procedures or manual. - online process document for submission of input, governance body selection process and stakeholder composition, review of previous stakeholder inputs and verify if/how this reached top governance.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because 1) board appointments are specified within the MSC Articles of Association and through a process overseen by the MSC Governance Committee, which comprises up to 5 trustees plus the Chief Executive and Board Chair as ex-officio members; 2) member categories are outlined in the Articles of Association (AoA), and the AoA also requires the Terms of Reference (ToR) to be held by other governance bodies (Stakeholder Council (STAC) and Technical Advisory Board (TAB)). The STAC provides the MSC Board with advice, views, guidance and recommendations from a variety of informed perspectives about the operations of the MSC in pursuit of its mission. The TAB advises the MSC Board on technical and scientific matters relating to the MSC Standards, including developing methodologies for certification and accreditation and reviewing the progress of fisheries certifications. Terms of Reference for the governance bodies, which include details of the decision-making processs for the bodies, are publically available on the MSC website. MSC has a suite of governance policies and procedures including: Code of Conduct, Managing Conflict of Interest, Anti-Trust Statement, Whistleblowing Policy etc.	• Annual Assurance Review (pdf) • Conflict of Interest Policy (pdf) • *MSC Governance*

A.1.03 Operating Procedures	
The MSC doesn't have a Quality Assurance "Program". We have an Assurance Team that forms part of the Science & Standards team which also includes the Fisheries and Chain of Custody teams. The Assurance team handles complaints, oversees objections to Fisheries Assessments, conducts the Annual Assurance Review, owns the General Certification Requirements, and manages the relationship with the Accreditation Body. The 21-2022 Assurance Review is also attached.	

A.1.03.01 Operating Procedures	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The top governance body of the Scheme Owner carries out a regular performance review of the scheme with results that are made publicly available.	Scheme owner ensures continuous improvement of its operations by undertaking an annual performance review by its governance body. Results are made publicly available to ensure transparency and accountability. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment on the Scheme owner website: - performance review findings and defined actions, - annual report which includes summary of review.
Conclusion	References

The MSC is partially in alignment. It conducts an annual review of scheme performance in the Assurance Review which is submitted to the board. It's not made public.	• Annual Assurance Review 2021 (pdf)
	• Conflict of Interest Policy (pdf)
	  • MSC policy for the management of conflicts of interests by members of MSC governance bodies and MSC employees
	• *MSC Governance*
	  ▪

A.1.04 Transparency	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner makes information freely available about the scheme's ownership, governance structure, the composition, operating procedures and responsibilities of its governance bodies, standard-setting procedures and standards.	All applicable listed governance documents are easily accessible online, free or at cost of any printing and handling costs. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - applicable documents posted on website, easy to find and free to download.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the MSC communicates transparently on its website about the governance structure, composition, operating procedures and responsibilities of its governance body and its standard-setting procedures and standard. Available information includes details of all MSC's governance bodies, including the Terms of Reference for the most senior bodies, and the MSC Articles of Association. The MSC also communicates clearly and transparently about its standards - the Fisheries Standard and the Chain of Custody (CoC) standard and setting procedures for both, and the joint Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) / MSC Seaweed standard.	• *MSC Governance* ▪

A.1.05 Scheme Scope	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has a	The Scheme Owner clearly defines the scope that the standard covers, for example which species, production systems/gear type, geographical locations, company structures (single units,

A.1.05 Scheme Scope	
defined scope for certification under its standard.	groupings of sites/boats, smallholder groups/small-scale fisheries, subcontractors, product categories, certifiable units in the chain of custody etc.). Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - explicit scope definition in standards, certification methodology/requirements, objectives. - contracts with accreditation bodies, certification bodies and/or certified operations

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the scope criteria for certification is made clear in both the fisheries standard (FCR section7.4) and chain of custody standard (CoCCR sections 6.1 and 6.2)	• *MSC CoC Certification Requirements* • *MSC Fisheries Certification Requirements*

A.1.06 Scheme Objectives	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has defined objectives for its scheme that aim for responsible use of the resource and has publicly available performance indicators related to scheme objectives.	Objectives for the scheme are defined and documented. The defined objectives cover all environmental resources covered in the standards; this would normally be for example fish populations, habitats and ecosystems, water, possibly energy, endangered species and biodiversity within the impact zone. Indirect use of resources for e.g. feed production may also be addressed. For each objective and associated resources, performance indicators are defined, documented and publicly available. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - standard document with objectives and thresholds.

A.1.06 Scheme Objectives

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment. The MSC's high level objectives are defined in the Theory of Change. The Fisheries Standard clearly defines the objectives of the scheme (see General Introduction p.7 and default assessment trees in Annexes SA-SD). The MSC's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) programme defines the indicators for the scheme (in Annex A section 2 of the M&E report) and publishes progress in relation to the Theory of Change.	• *Monitoring & Evaluation 2022* • *MSC Annual Report* • *MSC Certification Requirements 2.0*

A.1.06.01 Scheme Objectives

GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has a documented monitoring and evaluation system through which it collects data on its performance indicators, and uses this to inform the revision of its standard.	The Scheme Owner has a documented system to monitor and assess its defined performance indicators. Monitoring information is shared with the standards committee. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - monitoring system including data collected - previous monitoring information has been assessed and documented inputs developed for the next standard revision process.

Conclusion	References
The MSC has recently updated the Monitoring and Evaluation framework. This outlines the performance indicators used to evaluate the MSC program and the purpose and scope of the MSC Monitoring and Evaluation system.	• *Monitoring & Evaluation Report*

A.1.06.01 Scheme Objectives	
The research team provided monitoring information to the Fisheries team throughout the recent development of V3 of the Fisheries standard revision process. More information on this can be found in "Section D - Fisheries std" of this document.	

A.1.06.02 Scheme Objectives	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner can demonstrate it has delivered against its scheme objectives through outcome and impact evaluations of its scheme.	The Scheme Owner has a system to periodically conduct in-depth assessments of its performance. The number, regularity and extent of outcome or impact evaluations should be commensurate with the maturity, scale and intensity of the activities of the standards system. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - documented outcome or impact evaluations, - requirement for full ISEAL members.
Conclusion	References
A table of outcome and impact evaluations commissioned, undergone and conducted by the MSC between 1999 and 2021 is provided in section 2.2 of the MSC Performance monitoring and impact evaluation document. These evaluations aim to assess a variety of impacts of the MSC program. Links to full reports and papers can be found in this table. The 2022 Monitoring and Evaluation Report was published on the 16th May 2022, which reports on indicators that are outlined in the MSC Monitoring and Evaluation framework.	• *M&E Framework* • *Monitoring & Evaluation Report*

A.1.07 Non-Discrimination	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures that all types of fishery/aquaculture operations within the scope of its scheme can apply for certification, regardless of their scale, size or management arrangements, and has not set an upper limit on the number of operations that can be certified.	The Scheme Owner application process ensures equal access within the defined standard scope whether directly, sub-contractors or outsourcing (i.e. to certification body). Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - application process selection criteria do not discriminate on factors such as size, scale, management, minimum number of operators. - review declined applications are due to other non-discriminatory issues (i.e. incomplete, out of scope)
Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because the certification bodies are required to comply ISO/IEC 17065. ISO 17065 Clause 4.4 covers Non-discriminatory Conditions and how the CAB must comply	• *MSC General Certification Requirements*

A.1.07.01 Non-Discrimination	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has procedures for taking into account the special	The Scheme Owner processes and policies reduce barriers or promote access of small scale enterprises. This may include specific small scale standards or exemptions that do not lower the requirements of the standards themselves.

A.1.07.01 Non-Discrimination	
circumstances of data deficient and/ or small-scale fishery/ aquaculture operations.	Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - separate specific standard for small scale enterprises or programs such as capacity building and access to finance targeted to small scale enterprises. Policies may include sliding scale fees or simplified reporting templates.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the MSC has a Risk-Based Framework which is applicable to data-deficient fisheries. It also has a Benchmarking Tool and Fisheries Improvement Action Plan tool to help fisheries monitor progress towards meeting the Fisheries standard prior to formally entering the assessment process. The MSC has also developed a Capacity Building toolkit to further assist fisheries in progressing towards certification.	• *MSC Capacity Building Toolkit* • *MSC FCP* • Annex PF describes the RBF process

A.1.08 Non-Discrimination	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner does not have mandatory requirements that require a fishery / aquaculture operation to be certified in order to access any markets.	Application selection process and certification methodology/ requirements do not include mandatory requirements for access to markets. Absence of such requirements indicates alignment.

Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because MSC has no such mandatory requirements	N/a

A.1.09 Internal Review	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner undertakes a fully documented annual management review of scheme performance, including its assurance program, and the performance of certification and accreditation bodies. The results of the review are used to revise its operating procedures and practices, where necessary.	System exists for an annual documented management review that covers scheme performance, assurance program, accreditation bodies and certification bodies as applicable. A documented system to use the results of the review to revise operating procedures and systems is available.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because management reviews take place on an on-going basis by the MSC's Executive Committee and Board. The Stakeholder Council at its annual meetings is requested to provide inputs to the strategic direction of the MSC and encouraged to highlight areas of concern which the MSC should address. These proposals are then fed into the policy development cycle. The annual Tripartite meeting between MSC, ASI and CABs provides a further opportunity for directly affected stakeholders to input to the review. The Technical Advisory Board reviews proposals for technical improvements to the scheme to ensure greater consistency in its application.	• EXCO Minutes Excerpts (pdf) • MSC Annual Assurance Review 21-22 (pdf) • *MSC Governance*

A.1.09.01 Internal Review	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures the management review is carried out with the	Directly affected stakeholders are defined by the Scheme Owner. A system exists to ensure sufficient time and opportunity for all directly affected stakeholders to provide input. Submissions are reviewed and addressed transparently.

A.1.09.01 Internal Review	
involvement of directly affected stakeholders and addresses any issues of concern raised by stakeholders.	Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - documented stakeholder identification, - examples of invite and information system to inform stakeholders how to submit issues of concern or general input, - documented process for handling, reviewing and responding to issues raised.

Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because stakeholders are involved in the stakeholder council meetings and requested to provide inputs into the strategic direction of the MSC.	• *MSC Governance* • *STAC ToR* • *Stakeholder Engagement* • Tripartite 2022 Agenda (pdf)

A.2 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

A.2.01 Logo Use and Claims	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has a publicly available policy governing use of symbols, logos and claims. This policy includes the provision of written authorizations or licenses to use the scheme's mark/claim/logo only when the facility and products have been certified to the relevant standard. Any misleading use or statement by the certified entity regarding the status or scope of its certification, shall be prohibited.	Scheme Owner has a policy that covers use of symbols, logos and claims if applicable to its system. The policy is public, easily accessible and available in languages appropriate to geographic scope. Contracts or formal agreements with the certified entity specify legal responsibility for the use of the scheme's mark/claim/logo only when the facility and/or product are certified. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - publicly available Logo Use and Claim statement which is explicitly referenced in formal arrangement with certified entity. - other examples include: direct logo agreements, licensing or membership agreements with the Scheme Owner or its commercial partner or indirect contracts/agreements through the certification body. - in the latter case the requirements to include this in contracts/ agreements should be outlined in certification requirements/ methodologies or similar contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the MSC's Ecolabel User Guide clearly describes the rules governing the use of the MSC logo. The guide is translated into German and Dutch . Additional translations into Mandarin, Spanish, Danish, Finnish, French, Italian, Japanese and Swedish will take place over the coming months, as the Guide was only published in	• *MSC ecolabel User Guide (French)*

A.2.01 Logo Use and Claims	
April this year. The previous version of the Guide was translated into Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, German and Swedish. The new users guide has been translated into French.	• *MSC Label Guidelines*

A.2.02 Logo Use and Claims	
GSSI Component	Guidance
Through the claims policy, the Scheme Owner ensures copyright is protected and that symbols, logos and claims are only applied to activities that are within the scope of certification, do not overstate or mislead users relative to the defined scope, and are relevant to that scope.	Claims policy (see A.2.01), contracts and MoUs ensure that logo use and claims are copyright protected and are restricted to activities within the scope of certification. This includes symbols, logos and claims on and off product, such as marketing materials, consumer brochures and the internet. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - legal registration of logos and seals with applicable agents. - claims policy covers clear scope for on and off product use, claims and statements including policy for misuse. - contractual relationships specify explicitly adherence to claims policy. - records of applications for use of claims, records of complaints or violations.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the content of this GSSI Essential Component is covered by the Ecolabel User Guide. MSC also has an internal process whereby license holders are required to present us with an artwork file of their use which would include claim wording. MSC has a defined approval process for this, clients should not use the trademark and claims without our prior knowledge. Allowed claims are outlined in the EUG, we do allow variations of this upon request but our	• *MSC Label User Guidelines*

A.2.02 Logo Use and Claims	
trained approvers ensure the alternative claim is not misleading to consumers. There is also an Incident Log which details complaints. Legal registration of the logo has been undertaken in countries where labelled product is sold.	

A.2.02.01 Logo Use and Claims	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has data to substantiate claims about meeting its scheme objectives, e.g. with impacts data or monitoring and evaluation results.	The Scheme Owner ensures claims (e.g. in a publications or on a website) are accurate and supported by data such as through outcome or impacts reports. This could be through a system and/or assignment of responsibility to check claims or statements made by the scheme itself. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - Review claims by schemes of meeting its objectives (this may be in the form of an annual update, 10 year success booklets, internet news, presentation materials for fairs, or other advertising materials). - For such claims, a documented assessment of the publicly available in the form of outcome or impact reports supporting the claim/results. - ISEAL Improvement criteria
Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because this is covered through the M&E program and the annual publication of the Global impacts Report. MSC meets the ISEAL Improvement criteria for the Impacts Code as evidenced by the successful independent evaluation of the Impacts Code in 2015. The current evaluation in underway.	• *MSC Global Impacts 2019*

A.2.03 Logo Use and Claims	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires certificates to include, at a minimum: - the identification of the Scheme Owner; - identification of the accreditation body; - the name and address of the certification body; - the name and address of the certification holder; - the effective date of issue of the certificate; - scope of certification - the term for which the certification is valid; - signature of the issuing officer.	The issuer of the certificate ensures that minimum information enables identification and contact information of assurance process parties (accreditation body, Scheme Owner and certification body), unique name and address of certified entity, date and validity, scope and signature of issuing officer. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - mandatory normative documents such as certification requirements/methodologies with certification bodies that cover all points listed. - mandatory certificate template includes all points listed. - review examples of certificates.
Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because The General Certification Requirements section 7.5 covers the information needed on fishery and CoC certificates. Note that all MSC certificates have the MSC's website address on them which has been confirmed by the GSSI Secretariat as a legitimate substitute for the name and address of the scheme owner.	• *MSC General Certification Requirements*

A.2.04 Logo Use and Claims	
GSSI Component	Guidance
Where a seafood ingredient can be certified, the Scheme Owner requires that at least 95% of the total seafood	The Scheme Owner specifies minimum percentages for use of logo and claims in mixed products. This states that at least 95% of the total seafood ingredient that can be certified, for unqualified

A.2.04 Logo Use and Claims	
ingredient within a product is of certified origin in order for the scheme's logo or certification mark to be used. Where there is less than 95%, the scheme requires that the percentage must be stated and the logo or certification mark cannot be used.	claims and for lower percentages, a qualifying statement of the percentage must be used in conjunction with the logo or claim. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - normative documents such as scope definition, certification requirements/ methodologies or other agreements between the Scheme Owner and certification body that define these percentage claims. - logo use and claims policy which is explicitly referenced in formal contracts and agreements with certification bodies and/or certified entities. - review examples of issued certificates where these are public or product information in online databases of certified products where these are available. - if the Scheme Owner does not allow mixed product, then this Essential Component is aligned.
Conclusion	**References**
The MSC is in alignment because CoCCR 8.2.15 makes reference to MSCI's Ingredient Percentage Rules which specify the maximum of 5% non-certified seafood in the total seafood content.	• *MSC CoC CR*

A.3 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

A.3.01 Standard Setting Body	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner shall have a process and governance structure in place for standard setting, reviewing, revising, assessing, verifying and approving. The process shall be carried out with the participation of technically competent persons (e.g. independent experts, and open to suitably qualified representatives of all key stakeholders). The information about the process and organization for standard development and revision shall be made publicly available. It is the Scheme Owners responsibility to ensure a balanced participation by stakeholders.	The Scheme Owner clearly identifies the responsible person for assigning the management of the standard setting process. In addition, the procedure, organizational chart or related TORs/contracts with external bodies identifies where each of the tasks (setting, reviewing, revising, assessing, verifying and approving standards) are assigned to. This documentation clearly indicates where the overall responsibility for the standard setting process lies. Procedures defining the process of standard development and revision are easily available for the public, such as online, in appropriate languages.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because as per the standard setting procedure MSC-PRO-001-Standard Setting-v5.0 the MSC board has responsibilities for organising the standard setting procedures including consultation with the Technical Advisory Board and the Stakeholder Advisory Council, and the drafting of appropriate Terms of Reference for the standard review (see clause 5.4).	• *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.02 Standard Setting Body	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner identifies a central point of contact for standards-related enquiries and for submission of comments. The Scheme Owner makes contact information for this contact point readily available on its website.	Contact details for standard related enquiries and comments are easily available for the public, including online. This can be the same as a general contact point, but should explicitly identify standard related scope. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - review website and verify that point of contact responds to enquiries. - review past enquiries and submitted comments
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment as the Standards@msc.org is used widely, notably in the Developing Our Standards page on the MSC Website. It is also the contact mail given on the MSC standards documents.	• *MSC Fisheries Standard*

A.3.03 Decision Making Process	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner strives for consensus decisions on the content of the standard. Where consensus cannot be achieved, the Scheme Owner defines criteria in advance to determine when alternative decision-making procedures should come into effect and what the decision-making thresholds will be.	A mechanism is in place to assure a consensus decision is found where possible. In addition, the mechanism describes how decisions shall be made when a consensus is not possible. The mechanism assures that stakeholders are informed about this mechanism. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedures and/or quality handbook for standard setting and maintenance outlines decision making. - meeting minutes/email correspondence.

A.3.03 Decision Making Process	
	Standard setting archives and draft standards and meeting minutes could verify that this mechanism was implemented during previous decision-making.

Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because The MSC Board has procedures in its Articles of Association to determine how decisions should be made. The standard setting procedure (decision making) also specifies the path to follow when consensus is not achieved. The Standard Setting Procedure covers Decision Making in section 10.	• *MSC Governance* • Articles of Association included • *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.03.01 Decision Making Process	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner's decision-making process for standards development or revision ensures that no category of stakeholders has a majority vote in decision-making.	Standard owner voting procedure process ensures balance in decision making where no single category of stakeholder has a majority in decision making. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedures and/or quality handbook, - previous voting from minutes if available.

Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because The MSC Board has procedures in its Articles of Association to determine how decisions should be made.	• *MSC Governance* • Articles of Association

A.3.03.01 Decision Making Process	
Decision making isn't based on voting. The combination of consultations and the Governance structure ensure a broad cross-section of expert input which is informs decision making.	

A.3.04 Complaints	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has a transparent process to assess and handle complaints based on a publicly available procedure for resolving complaints related to governance, scheme management, executive functions and standard setting. Decisions taken on complaints are disclosed at least to the affected parties.	Complaints procedure is documented and clearly outlines steps, timelines and responsibilities to address and resolve complaints. The process for submitting a complaint - how and to whom - is public and easily understood. A process is in place to identify when and if the complaint is addressed and resolved. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - easily found complaint process and submission form online. - documentation of existing complaints and their resolution. - possibly request accreditation and certification bodies for previous submissions of complaints and resolution. - request and cross check with any complaints from stakeholders.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because a complaints procedure is available on the MSC website. (see attachments) ASI and the Certification Bodies also have complaints procedures as required by ISO 17011 and ISO 17065 respectively.	• *ASI Complaints Procedure* • *MSC Complaints* • *MSC Complaints Procedure*

A.3.05 Standards Review and Revision	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner reviews standards at least every five years for continued relevance and for effectiveness in meeting their stated objectives and, if necessary, revises them in a timely manner.	The Scheme Owner has a process in place for reviewing all standards to ensure continued relevance and meeting stated objectives. Relevance can include market uptake, stakeholder scope and support. Outcome and assessment reports can identify progress towards objectives. Review should be at least every five years after the publication of the current version. Example of evidence of alignment: - internal procedure, quality handbook, public work program. - monitoring and evaluation system. - public comments and consideration of reports for standard revisions.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because fisheries standards are reviewed at least every 5 years and CoC standards every 3 years (see 5.2 of Standard setting procedure	• *MSC Standard Review* • *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.06 Standards Review and Revision	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner allows for comments on the standard to be submitted by any interested party at any	The Scheme Owner has a permanent publicly available point of contact defined online for the submission of comments on the standard. This is not just during the development or revision process. A general point of contact online is acceptable for small schemes, as long as it explicitly states that all stakeholders can submit comments on the standard at any time. All comments on standards are considered in subsequent revision process.

A.3.06 Standards Review and Revision		
time and considers them during the subsequent standards revision process.	Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - scheme's website with form for submitting comments on standards. - internal procedure, quality handbook describing the receiving, filing and incorporation of submissions during the subsequent revision process. Review ongoing submissions by interested parties on file.	
Conclusion		References
The MSC is in alignment as the Standards@msc.org is used widely, notably in the Developing Our Standards page on the MSC Website. It is also the contact mail given on the MSC standards documents. Issues raised by any stakeholders are recorded on the Issues Log which is reviewed as part of policy review.		• Issue Log (excel)

A.3.07 Record Keeping	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner keeps on file for a period of at least one full standards revision the following records related to each standard development or revision process: – policies and procedures guiding the standard setting activity; – lists of stakeholders contacted; – interested parties involved at each stage of the process; – comments received and a synopsis of how those comments were taken into account; and	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism is in place to assure all records outlined remain on file for at least one full standards revision period. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedure, quality handbook describing records to be kept, document and retention policy.

A.3.07 Record Keeping	
– all drafts and final versions of the standard.	Review the full range of records for the most previous standard development and revision process.
Conclusion	**References**
This is documented in the Standard setting procedure (see section 13)	• *Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.07.01 Record Keeping	
GSSI Component	**Guidance**
The Scheme Owner makes records in A.3.07 available to interested parties upon request.	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism to ensure records described in A.3.07 are provided to stakeholders on request for the last revision process. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - policy/procedure describing system and process to provide information, - online form for request, past actual requests and action taken, - possibly request records through online contact.
Conclusion	**References**
Earlier standard versions are available on the MSC website. The other information mentioned in A.3.07 is available on request. The new draft Standard Setting Procedure covers this under clause 13: Publication and record keeping.	• *MSC Fisheries Scheme Docs*

A.3.08 Participation and Consultation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
At the outset of a standard development or revision process, the Scheme Owner makes publicly available a summary of the process that includes: – contact information and information on how to contribute to the consultation; – summary of the terms of reference for the standard, including the proposed scope, objectives and justification of the need for the standard; – steps in the standard-setting process, including timelines and clearly identified opportunities for contributing; and – decision-making procedures, including how decisions are made and who makes them.	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism in place assuring that a summary of the process is made easily available for the public online at the outset of the process. This includes Who and How to contribute, timeline, summary ToR and decision making (who and how). Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedure/quality handbook describing elements and process of public summary. - examples of availability of past or current information.
Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment per the MSC Standard Setting Procedure v5.0 . The 2022 completed Fishries Standards Review page on the MSC site is an example of the implementation of this policy.	• *Fisheries Standard Review* • *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.09 Participation and Consultation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner or delegated authority ensures participation by	The Scheme Owner, or delegated authority, has mechanism to ensure participation of necessary technical experts and balance of different stakeholder perspectives in standard development and maintenance. A balanced participation of stakeholders would include: fisheries/aquaculture management authorities, the fishing/aquaculture industry, fish workers organizations, fishing/

A.3.09 Participation and Consultation	
independent technical experts and enables balanced participation by stakeholders in the standard development, revision and approval process.	aquaculture communities, the scientific community, environmental interest groups, fish processors/traders/retailers, aquaculture input providers such as feed providers, hatcheries/nurseries and possibly treatment providers, as well as consumer associations. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedure/quality handbook for standard development - revision and approval processes that describe how balance is achieved, such as through stakeholder mapping, announcements and invitation. Draft documents and meeting minutes/email correspondence indicate that during standard development, revision and approval processes of the past, independent technical experts participated, and a balanced participation by stakeholders was encouraged.

Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because MSC's Technical Advisory Board comprises independent technical experts who provide input to the standard development. The Stakeholder Council provides stakeholders with an opportunity to participate in these processes as does the stakeholder workshops and public consultations which can be accessed through the Improvements microsite.	• *MSC STAC ToR* • *MSC TAB ToR*

A.3.10 Participation and Consultation

GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner allows a period of at least 60 days for the submission of comments on the draft standard.	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism is in place to assure a minimum of 60 days for comments on major changes of the draft standard. A Standard is considered to be a set of documents that provide rules and guidelines to achieve results and that include all normative documents used for the certification process. The Scheme owner shall define which documents are part of the standard. This may include standard governance and setting procedures, requirements for certification bodies and certified entities Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedure/quality handbook defining public comment period, what are considered major changes and what constitutes the standard - ToR Review previous comments and dates for submission on draft standards.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because MSC completes at least two rounds of public consultations for new standard development (Clause 9.5). The first round of consultation on a proposed draft shall include a period of at least 60 days for the submission of comments and the second round no fewer than 30 days.	• *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.10.01 Participation and Consultation

GSSI Component	Guidance

A.3.10.01 Participation and Consultation	
The Scheme Owner requires at least two rounds for comment submissions on the draft standard by stakeholders, with one round of at least 60 days and the other of at least 30 days.	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism in place to ensure comment periods as per Supplementary Component. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedure/quality handbook defining public comment periods in line with Supplementary Component. - terms of reference review previous comments and dates for submission on draft standards.
Conclusion	**References**
As per A.3.10	• *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.11 Participation and Consultation	
GSSI Component	**Guidance**
No later than the start of the comment period, the Scheme Owner publishes a notice announcing the period for commenting in a national or, as may be, regional or international publication of standardization activities and/or on the internet.	Timely announcements are made regarding the public comment period in appropriate channels so that they are easily available to relevant stakeholders. This can be online and/or in an appropriate publications. Dates should be clearly stated. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedure defining process. - previous announcements are dated and were published before the beginning of the comment period. - newsletters - record of publication on SO's website

A.3.11 Participation and Consultation	
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because MSC announces public consultations on its website when consultation opens. The time of consultation is previously outlined in the timelines of the project also published. In addition, notifications of consultation announcements are sent to stakeholders who have registered their interest in MSC policy development.	• *Example SH notification*

A.3.12 Participation and Consultation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner identifies all impacted stakeholders and ensures proactively that all can participate in the standard-setting process through a consultation forum or are made aware of alternative mechanisms by which they can participate. This includes stakeholders that are not well represented in consultations and disadvantaged stakeholders (small-scale operations and vulnerable groups).	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism is in place to identify all impacted stakeholders. It makes sure that, when needed, alternative tools are in place to leverage potential barriers to participate. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - Stakeholder mapping including past participation - internal procedure/quality handbook defining public consultation process. - ToR. Review participation, communication and mechanisms/tools of past or current consultation. - meeting minutes, announcements, publications and or email communication indicate that the Scheme Owner is proactively seeking the input of specific stakeholder groups.
Conclusion	References

A.3.12 Participation and Consultation

The Standard Setting Procedure states that: 9.3 "Key stakeholders shall be proactively approached to contribute to the consultation, in particular those who are typically under-represented such as small producers and developing country stakeholders, and those who will be directly affected or disadvantaged by any change." 9.4 Organisations that have developed related standards shall be encouraged to participate, and this engagement shall be documented (6.3.6). Reaching under-represented SHs is achieved across the organisation with regional MSC Outreach offices playing a key role in engagement. The email advising of the FSR consultation was sent to 1500+ registered SHs with 500+ opens and 60 detailled submissions The annual Tripartite meeting with ASI and CABs ensures those organisations have direct input into the standard setting process. The Stakeholder Council provides stakeholders with an opportunity to participate in these processes as do the stakeholder workshops and public consultations.	• *Fisheries Standard Review* • *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.13 Participation and Consultation

GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner makes publicly available all comments received in the consultation respecting personal data protection.	All comments received during the public comment period are made publicly available without attribution or identifier. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment:

A.3.13 Participation and Consultation	
	- internal procedure/quality handbook describing policy, current or past public comment comments posted online.
Conclusion	**References**
The scheme MSC is in alignment because this is part of the Standard setting procedure. The Standard Setting Procedure covers these points in clause 9.8.	• *MSc Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.14 Participation and Consultation	
GSSI Component	**Guidance**
The Scheme Owner takes into account in further processing of the standard, comments received during the period for commenting.	The Scheme Owner has a process for considering all comments received during the public consultation on the standard. Comments which are integrated into the standard should be clearly identified. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - some sort of system (e.g. excel) for organizing, categorizing and responding to comments. - review past consultation system, comments and response taken.
Conclusion	**References**
The MSC is in alignment because The MSC responds to each non-attributed comment in the consultation feedback document and justifies whether changes will be made. This is underway for the Fisheries Standards Review (resulting in version 3.0 of the fisheries standard)	• *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.14.01 Participation and Consultation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner makes publicly available a synopsis of how these comments were addressed and sends the synopsis to all parties that submitted comments.	The Scheme Owner develops a summary of how comments were addressed, makes publicly available as well as sends to everyone who submitted comments. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - system, internal procedure/quality handbook that describes how comments are summarized and made available publicly and to commenters, - review of current and past standard public consultation information flow including synopsis.
Conclusion	References
As per A314	• *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.15 Standards Content	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures that the standard is consistent with the following requirements: – only includes language that is clear, specific, objective and verifiable; – is expressed in terms of process, management and / or performance criteria, rather than design or descriptive characteristics; (ISO 59)	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism in place to review standards in respect to the listed requirements. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedure/quality handbook defining all list requirements. Some standards state these in their preamble as principles or references. - review that this list was checked for the current standards

A.3.15 Standards Content	
– does not favor a particular technology, patented item or service provider; and (ISO 59) – attributes or cites all original intellectual sources of content.	- review standards and if available mandatory checklists/audit manuals in respect to the listed requirements. - review any available complaints relating to this requirement.
Conclusion	**References**
The MSC is in alignment because MSC Standard Setting Procedure covers this (Section 11) and examples can be seen throughout the MSC scheme documents. There is also an internal training available to MSC staff on standard setting language.	• *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.16 Standards Content	
GSSI Component	**Guidance**
As part of the standard development process, the Scheme Owner assesses the feasibility and auditability of requirements in the draft standard.	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism in place to test the feasibility (cost, time) and auditability (interpretation, consistency) of requirements prior to finalization of the standards. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedure, quality handbook, standard setting work plan. - review assessment outcomes of past processes including revisions based on findings.
Conclusion	**References**
The MSC scheme is in alignment because our standard setting procedure includes requirements on feasibility. (8.2 The plan should be developed with the following objectives: a. Validating if the presumed outcomes of the Standard can be achieved. b. Testing the Standard's feasibility, applicability, and auditability). For the current Fisheries Standard Review, ASI and CABs were contracted to undertake auditability reviews.	• *MSc Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.17 Standards Content	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner demonstrates that all criteria in the standard contribute to the standard's defined objectives.	Criteria are related to how the Scheme Owner's objectives are met by identifying the acceptable performance. Often they are logically grouped around principles and objectives. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - comparison of the Scheme Owner performance indicators with the standard's criteria. - monitoring and evaluation system of the performance indicators. - criteria that are not monitored and not evaluated may be surplus to the objective of the standards.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the Global Impacts Report documents the changes achieved by MSC fisheries against the different performance indicators in the standard.	• *MSC M&E report*

A.3.18 Standards Content	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures that the standard is locally applicable. Where the Scheme Owner adapts the standard for direct application at the national or regional level, the Scheme Owner	The Scheme Owner has mechanisms in place to ensure local applicability and relevance. For national or regional standards, the Scheme Owner has a process to take into account local environmental and regulatory conditions through guidance and policies. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment:

A.3.18 Standards Content	
develops interpretive guidance or related policies and procedures for how to take into account local environmental and regulatory conditions.	- policies, internal procedures and quality handbook documenting process to consider environmental and regulatory aspects. - compare geographical scope of standard and implementation (certificates) with available documented interpretation guidance. - assessment or monitoring reporting indicating where locally specific guidance is required.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because The MSC requirements are globally applicable, as evidenced by the wide geographic spread of certified fisheries and supply chain companies. In the Fishery Standard, guidance is provided on how the standard may be met in situations with different types of management frameworks, including informal arrangements.	• *MSC Fisheries Standard*

A.3.19 Standards Accessibility	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner promptly publishes adopted standards, and makes them available for free on its website, and on request, to anyone expressing interest.	Standards are published in a timely fashion and are freely available online and on request. Validity dates coincide with publication dates of standards (taking transition periods into account) and the public work program on standard setting and maintenance.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Standards are promptly published on the advertised date on the MSC website for both fisheries and CoC.	• *CoC Scheme Docs* • *Fisheries Scheme Docs*

A.3.20 Standards Accessibility	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner shall makes translations of the standard into English and in the most relevant/appropriate languages, to ensure access and transparency, freely available and authorizes translations into other languages where necessary for credible implementation of the standard.	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism in place to identify the applicability and need for translations based on geographical scope of certification, as well as the geographical range of certified entities and products. The process includes an assessment in order to ensure accurate translation. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedure, quality handbook, current language availability, work plan of translations, process for ensuring accuracy of translations.
Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because Fisheries Standard and Annex SA have been translated into French, Spanish, and Japanese. CoC Standard currently translated into Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Mandarin, Spanish, Swedish and Vietnamese.	• *MSC Translated Docs*

A.3.21 Transition period	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures that certified entities are informed of the revised	The Scheme Owner has a mechanism in place assuring that certified entities are informed of standard revision and transition periods. This can be done directly or through other assurance bodies.

A.3.21 Transition period	
standard and transition period, either directly or through their certification bodies.	Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - internal procedures, quality handbook, contracts/agreements or formal arrangements with certification bodies. - review process of previous revisions if applicable.

Conclusion	References
The scheme MSC is in alignment because GCR #7.3.2 requires CABs to inform their clients of changes to the requirements and include a summary of changes with this communication (as provided by MSC); implementation timelines are clearly communicated via the MSC website, within the scheme documents, and through specific communications to CABs and clients. Additionally, MSC Outreach is in communication with many clients directly about changes.	• *MSC General Certification Requirements*

A.3.22 Transition period	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that the certified entities are given a period of at least three years to come into compliance with revised fishery standards and at least one year for revised aquaculture standards	Certified entities are given sufficient time to come into compliance with revised standards, for fisheries – minimum three years and at least one year for revised aquaculture standards. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - standards, certification requirements/methodologies which state minimum transition period for revised standards

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because section 12 in MSC Standard Setting Procedure. Implementation timelines published on the MSC website make this clear.	• *Fisheries 2.0*

A.3.22 Transition period	
Implementation timelines from v2.0 can be taken as an example.	• *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

A.3.23 Transition period	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner notes in the standard the date of a revision or reaffirmation of the standard along with a transition period after which the revised standard will come into effect.	Standards include date of version and any transition period for the certified entity to come into compliance. If there are normative documents other than the standard and certification requirements/ methodologies which affect compliance of fisheries/aquaculture, these similarly should contain the described validity dates.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Dates are included in the fisheries and CoC standards documents.	• *MSC Fisheries 2.0*

SECTION B. OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF SEAFOOD CERTIFICATION SCHEMES

B.1 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

B.1.01 ISO-17011 compliance	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has a contractual, enforceable arrangement or formal understanding that requires accreditation bodies to be compliant with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 in its applicable version.	The Scheme Owner has a contract, memorandum of understanding or enforceable arrangement with a certification body or accreditation body that require the accreditation bodies to be compliant to ISO/ IEC 17011. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contracts, - memorandums of understanding and/or memorandum of agreements between scheme and accreditation bodies or certification bodies that specify accreditation bodies to be compliant with ISO/IEC 17011. - accreditation bodies' certificate of accreditation (on website). - rules for accreditation bodies in standard.
Conclusion	References
ASI has established, implemented and maintains QMS designed to support, satisfy and demonstrate consistent achievement of the requirements established in ISO 17011. The MSC has a contract with ASI to provide accreditation to ISO 17065 and ISO 17011	• *ASI QMS Docs*

B.1.02 Non-discrimination	
GSSI Component	Guidance

B.1.02 Non-discrimination	
The Scheme Owner ensures that accreditation services are available to certifying bodies irrespective of their country of residence, size, and of the existing number of already accredited bodies, within the scope of the scheme.	The Scheme Owner ensures that access to accreditation is open to qualified certification bodies without consideration of size, country or number of existing accredited certification bodies. This could be through contracts/agreements, in referenced policies or certification equirements/methodologies. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - application process/forms, - review list of accredited certification bodies

Conclusion	References
ASI accreditation is non-discriminatory and accepts applications from CABs operating anywhere in the world. Accreditation is accessible to all CABs whose operations include ASI accredited services, irrespective of size, location or affiliations See: ASI Quality Manual (clause 6.4)	• ASI Application Form • ASI Quality Manual • *ASI Quality Policy*

B.1.03 Specified requirements	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner specifies the requirements for certification bodies that the accreditation body is required to verify, including the respect of the scope of the scheme	The Scheme Owner defines requirements for certification bodies to ensure accurate and consistent implementation. These are verified as part of the accreditation process by the accreditation body. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - requirements are specified in certification requirements/ methodologies or a separate certification body and/or accreditation manual. - reference to requirements in contracts or formal agreements with certification bodies or accreditation bodies.

B.1.03 Specified requirements	
Conclusion	References
ASI Accreditation is only granted and maintained if the CAB continually fulfil the Accreditation Requirements provides evidence of such fulfilment. ASI verifies both the ASI Accreditation Requirements and the SO Accreditation Requirements. As per ASI public procedures (requirements) and also its service agreements with CABs, the CAB shall comply with both SO and ASI accreditation requirements.	• *ASI Accreditation Procedure* • *ASI Quality Docs* • *MSC General Certification Requirements*

B.1.04 Transition period	
GSSI Component	Guidance
Subsequent to any changes in the requirements for assessing certification bodies, the Scheme Owner ensures certification bodies are given a defined time period within which to conform to the changes. Special considerations should be given to certification bodies in developing countries and countries in transition.	The Scheme Owner specifies transition periods for any changes to certification requirements (B.1.03) for certification bodies to come into compliance with changes. For certification bodies in developing countries consideration is given that may include a longer transition period, capacity building or other measures. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - see B.1.03 reference to transition period and/or special consideration for developing country certification bodies.
Conclusion	References
Changes to CAB assessment process are driven by ASI in agreement with the MSC. For ASI Accreditation Requirements, CABS are informed of any changes as well as the effective date for	• *ASI Accreditation Procedure* • *Ref Section 26*

B.1.04 Transition period	
such changes to apply. ASI normally conducts public consultation on major changes to its requirements and once the document if finalized the effective date may vary.	• *MSC General Certification Requirements*

B.1.05 Competencies	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner only works with accreditation bodies that have personnel with the necessary education, training, technical knowledge and experience for performing accreditation functions in fisheries and aquaculture operations.	The Scheme Owner ensures personnel competency through contracts or enforceable arrangements with accreditation bodies. Personnel competency incudes education, training on the standard, technical knowledge and experience and can be defined by the Scheme Owner. Examples of objective evidence: - Agreement/contract between the Scheme Owner and certification body to use national accreditation bodies which are IAF members and signatories to the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for ISO 17065. - Contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the accreditation body if applicable, certification/accreditation manuals. - Requirements for Accreditation Bodies and personnel mentioned in the standard
Conclusion	References
ASI is committed to recruiting, developing and retaining the best team available. ASI has defined competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) and qualifications required to perform accreditation activities and ensures that its team members are competent to conduct their tasks. Short CVs of ASI MSC fisheries lead assessors are available on the ASI website	• *ASI Quality Policy*

B.1.06 External review	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures that external audits are carried out on the accreditation body to assess performance.	The Scheme Owner ensures accreditation bodies undergo external/ independent performance assessments. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - assessment process and requirements of IAF, ISEAL or other membership organization. - Scheme Owner accreditation manual or requirements, contracts or agreements, assessment reports.

Conclusion	References
ASI undergoes external audits as an ISEAL accreditation Body member. ISEAL accreditation body members are required to show compliance with ISO/IEC 17011:2004 as a prerequisite for their membership. Evaluations are conducted every four years. ASI was evaluated in 2017 and in 2021. Reports belong to ISEAL and are not available online. The report from 2021 still has not been delivered to ASI. ASI also conducts internal audits every year to review its QMS. The last external audit was done in 2021. Reports belong to ISEAL and are not available online. The report from 2021 still has not been delivered to ASI.	• *ISO review of ASI*

B.1.07 Transparency	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures that the accreditation body is transparent about ist its organizational structure and the financial and other kinds of support it receives from public or private entities.	Scheme owner ensures accreditation body transparency regarding organizational structure and financial support. The Scheme Owner requires disclosure of this information directly from the accreditation body. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - accreditation body website with information, certification/ accreditation manuals, contracts and/or agreements. - agreement/contract between the Scheme Owner and certification body to use national accreditation bodies which are IAF members and signatories to the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for ISO 17065; - annual or periodic reports.

Conclusion	References
ASI team is all documented on its website. The entire ASI Accreditation Process and requirements are also publicly available. Information of CABs working with ASI is also available online In terms of finance, ASI maintains up-to-date documentation of its business operations, financial resources and general activities. Furthermore, ASI accounts are audited annually by a recognized public auditing firm.	• *ASI Accreditation Requirements* • *ASI Find a CAB* • *ASI Team*

B.1.08 Office Audit	
GSSI Component	Guidance

B.1.08 Office Audit	
The Scheme Owner ensures that the accreditation process includes an on-site audit of the certification body.	The Scheme Owner specifies that accreditation includes an on-site audit of the certification body. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - accreditation/certification requirements/methodologies, accreditation body office audit reports, audit schedule. - specified in accreditation body or certification body contracts/ agreements. - agreement/contract between the Scheme Owner and certification body to use national accreditation bodies which are IAF members and signatories to the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for ISO 17065.

Conclusion	References
ASI surveillance programs includes onsite assessments. Please note that since COVID more remote assessment are done.	• *Accreditation Procedure (ASI-PRO-20-101)* • *Surveillance Procedure (ASI-PRO-20-105)* • *Witness and Compliance Assessments (ASI-PRO-20-111)*

B.1.09 Field audit	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures that the accreditation process includes a review of the performance of certification bodies and	The Scheme Owner specifies that accreditation includes a performance review of certification bodies and auditors, that may include desktop reviews, office visits, witness audits. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - accreditation/certification requirements/methodologies, accreditation body audit reports, audit schedule, specified in accreditation body or certification body contracts/agreements.

B.1.09 Field audit	
auditors, using witness audits.	- agreement/contract between the Scheme Owner and certification body to use national accreditation bodies which are IAF members and signatories to the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement for ISO 17065.
Conclusion	References
ASI conducts a series of different assessment to evaluate compliance from CABS against Accreditation Requirements. Normally the ASI sampling rate includes one head office assessment per year plus a representative number of witness, affiliate office and compliance assessments.	• *Accreditation Procedure (ASI-PRO-20-101)* • *Surveillance Procedure (ASI-PRO-20-105)* • *Witness and Compliance Assessments (ASI-PRO-20-111)*

B.2 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

B.2.01 ISO-17065 compliance	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that certification bodies operating in the scheme are accredited to conduct certifications for the scope of their respective standards in conformance with ISO/IEC 17065 in its applicable version.	The Scheme Owner has a contract, memorandum of understanding or enforceable arrangement with certification body that require to follow the principles of ISO/ IEC 17065 for the scope of the respective standard of the scheme. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contracts, memorandums of understanding and/or memorandum of agreements between Scheme and accreditation bodies or certification bodies that specify certification bodies be accredited with ISO 17065 - accreditation manual or certification requirements/methodologies; certification bodies certificate of accreditation.
Conclusion	References
ASI verifies during its assessments compliance with Accreditation Requirements (both from the scheme and from ASI) and this includes compliance against ISO 17065. The GCR specifies the requirement for compliance to ISO 17065. 4.3.1 The CAB shall conform to the requirements of ISO 17065 and all other MSC requirements relevant to the scope of accreditation applied for or held.	• *ASI Accreditation Requirements* • *General Certification Requirements*

B.2.02 Fee structure	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires certification bodies to maintain a written fee structure that is available on request and is adequate to support accurate and truthful assessments commensurate with the scale, size and complexity of the fishery, fish farm or chain of custody. The fee structure is non-discriminatory and takes into account the special circumstances and requirements of developing countries and countries in transition.	The Scheme Owner defines this requirement in the contract, memorandum of understanding or enforceable agreement with the accreditation body and/or certification body. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - accreditation manual/certification requirements/methodologies. - possibly also review accreditation body audit reports that this requirement is verified, and for compliance of certification bodies on this requirement. - policy or procedure which outlines how fee structures of certification bodies could address special requirements of developing and in transition countries in a non-discriminatory manner; certification body fee structure and policy (online or request).
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because MSC GCR v2.4.1 section 4.3.5 includes requirements of what is expected for CABs for both Fisheries and CoC to conform with the ISO 17065 clause 4.6 c) on making available on request "general information on the fees charged to applicants and clients."	• *General Certification Requirements*

B.2.03 Certification cycle	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner defines that the validity of a certification cycle does not exceed 5 years in the case of fishery or 3	The Scheme Owner defines this requirement in the contract, memorandum of understanding or enforceable agreement with the accreditation body and/or certification body.

B.2.03 Certification cycle	
years in the case of aquaculture certification and 3 years in the case of chain of custody certification.	Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - accreditation manual/certification requirements/methodologies. Issued certificates with validity (online database or on request)
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the fisheries standard states that the validity of a certificate is a maximum of five years and the CoC standard states that it should be three years. ASI audits of the CABs verify that this is the case. Certificates also have an expiry date of 5 or 3 years respectively. GCR section 7.5.6 states that 'CABs shall issue fisheries certificates with a maximum validity period of 5 years from the issue date.' GCR section 7.5.3 states, 'The CAB shall issue Coc certificates with a maximum validity period of 3 years from the issue date.'	• *MSC General Certification Requirements*

B.2.04 Surveillance	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that certification bodies carry out periodic surveillance and monitoring at sufficiently close intervals to verify that certified operations continue to comply with the certification requirements. For aquaculture operations, this shall be on an annual basis.	The Scheme Owner defines this requirement in the contract, memorandum of understanding or enforceable agreement with accreditation body and/or certification body. Scheme owner risk assessment system should identify “sufficient close intervals”. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - accreditation manual/certification requirements/methodologies. - Scheme Owner internal risk assessment system with assessment reports. - Audit reports, schedules and issued certificates.

B.2.04 Surveillance	
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because surveillance requirements are detailed in the FCP 7.28.	• *Fisheries Certification Process*

B.2.05 Assessment methodology	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures that certification bodies apply a consistent methodology to assess compliance with the standard.	The Scheme Owner defines the methodology to assess compliance with the standard. An internal assessment (updated regularly) with clear outcomes, identifies if the methodology is consistent between certification bodies or if the methodology needs revising. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - certification requirements/methodologies, - contracts and agreements with the certification body, - guidance interpretation documents, - Scheme Owner internal assessment system with assessment reports, - training and calibration records.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the FCP and Fishery Standard detail the requirements for fisheries assessments. Accreditation audits by ASI and Technical Oversight comments by MSC help to ensure consistent interpretation of the requirements. In addition, calibration meetings for fishery team members are held regularly in addition to Tripartite	• Calibration Workshop Agenda (pdf) • *MSC Fisheries Certification Process* • *MSC Fisheries Standard* • MSC Technical Oversight

B.2.05 Assessment methodology	
meetings which bring together MSC, CABs and ASI to specifically highlight areas of concern in consistent implementation of the requirements.	• A report prepared prior to tripartite with CABs' specific info circulated to them before the meeting • MSC Tripartite Agenda (pdf)

B.2.05.02 Assessment methodology	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has defined requirements for sampling methodology and frequency that certification bodies are required to follow during the audit.	The Scheme Owner defines the requirements for certification bodies for sampling methodology and frequency of audits. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract, memorandum of understanding or enforceable agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body. - accreditation manual, certification requirements/ methodologies - audit reports - guidance specifying sampling methodology (including what issues to focus on) and sampling frequency, in order to support consistency between certification bodies.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the FCP 2.3 7.29.2 outlines audit levels and the criteria under which they're applicable	• *CoC Certification Requirements* • *FCP 2.3*

B.2.06 Termination, suspension, withdrawal	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner ensures that certification bodies have consistent documented procedure(s) that specify the conditions under which certification may be suspended or withdrawn, partially or in total, for all or part of the scope of certification.	For accurate and consistent implementation of the standard, the Scheme Owner ensures that certification bodies have documented procedures that specify the conditions under which certification may be suspended or withdrawn, partially or in total, for all or part of the scope of certification. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract, memorandum of understanding or enforceable agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body; accreditation manual, certification requirements/methodologies, - audit reports, - guidance documents specifying the conditions under which certification may be suspended or withdrawn.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the GCR section 7.4 details the conditions under which certification may be suspended or withdrawn, partially or in total, for all or part of the scope of certification. This is controlled through accreditation visits by ASI to each CAB, and signed contracts in place for each CAB, stating that they will at all times operate within the scope of accreditation.	• *MSC General Certification Requirements*

B.2.07 Multi-site Certification	
GSSI Component	Guidance

B.2.07 Multi-site Certification	
The Scheme Owner requires that certification bodies follow procedures and guidance for multi-site certifications as written in the standard or other scheme documents, if allowed under the scheme.	If the Scheme Owner explicitly does not allow multi-site certification (prohibits, not that it is not yet developed or exists) requirement is "Not applicable". Otherwise, the Scheme Owner requires certification body to follow have documented procedures and guidance for multi-site certification, detailed in the agreement or in the standards Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - memorandum of understanding or enforceable agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body; - requirements and guidance for multi-site certification - audit reports.
Conclusion	**References**
This Component is not applicable to MSC because they do not carry out multi-site fisheries certification audits.	N/a

B.2.08 Audit reports	
GSSI Component	**Guidance**
The Scheme Owner requires certification bodies to ensure consistency in audit report formats and	The Scheme Owner defines this requirement for certification bodies and has some system for quality control. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, certification requirements/methodologies; - guidance specifying formats for audit reports and reporting, mandatory audit templates; - review online audit reports for consistency of report format and reporting, Scheme Owner quality management system for review of audit reports.

B.2.08 Audit reports	
in how the reports are completed.	
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because for fisheries, there are various reporting templates available on the MSC website for the different reporting stages of the fishery assessment process.	• *Fisheries Reporting Templates*

B.2.09 Participation and Consultation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that certification bodies have in place consistent procedures for stakeholders to provide input during the certification process.	The Scheme Owner defines this requirement for certification bodies to have a documented procedure to enable input from all stakeholders during the certification process. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, certification requirements/methodologies specifying requirements for mechanism for stakeholder input during certification process. - guidance specifying procedures. - review certification body process for input: - publicly available information for stakeholder input, public announcements, audit work plans, requests for input. - audit reports with stakeholder input.
Conclusion	References

B.2.09 Participation and Consultation	
The MSC is in alignment because the stakeholder consultation requirements are included in the FCP. For example, Stakeholder consultation periods are required at publication the earliest publication of a report (ACDR), participation at Site Visit, on publication of a PCDR (Public Comment Draft Report) and after the Final Report.	• *Fisheries Certification Process*

B.2.09.01 Participation and Consultation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that the certification body solicits stakeholder input during the audit process.	The Scheme Owner defines this requirement for certification bodies to solicit input from all stakeholders during the certification process. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, certification requirements/methodologies specifying requirement for mechanism for stakeholder input during certification process, - guidance specifying procedures, - review certification body process for input: publicly available information for stakeholder input, public announcements, audit work plans, requests for input, - audit reports with documented stakeholder input.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the stakeholder consultation requirements are included in the FCP. Stakeholder consultation is required at surveillance audits and expedited audits.	• *MSC Fisheries Certification Process*

B.2.10 Non-compliances	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that certification bodies follow its requirements for determining non-compliances, verifying corrective actions arising from non-compliances and allowing for appeals of non-compliances.	For accurate and consistent implementation of the standard, the Scheme Owner ensures that certification bodies follow non-compliances, verifying corrective actions arising from non-compliances, and allowing for appeals of non-compliances. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract, memorandum of understanding or enforceable agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body. - accreditation manual, certification requirements/methodologies. - guidance documents, determining non-compliances, verifying corrective actions arising from non-compliances and allowing for appeals of non-compliances, in order to support consistency between certification bodies. - audit reports. - standards.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because CABs have to conform with ISO 17065 7.13, FCP sections 7.15-7.16 (scoring and setting conditions).	• *MSC Fishery Certification Process*

B.2.11 Site Audit	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that the scope of the (re-)certification audit includes a visit to locations pertinent to the scope of the certification.	The Scheme Owner requires that the scope of the audit (initial, annual or re-assessment) includes on-site assessment of premises covered by the scope of the standards and within which one or more key activities are performed. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract, memorandum of understanding or enforceable agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, - accreditation manual, certification requirements/methodologies, - guidance documents specifying procedures for determining site visits including sampling, - review audit reports.
Conclusion	References
Site visit locations are determined by stakeholder engagement and the operation of the fishery as defined in the Units of Certification (defined in FCP v2.2, Section 7.5	• *MSC Fisheries Certification Process*

B.2.11.01 Site Audit	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that CBs conduct unscheduled audits.	'Unscheduled' means without significant advance warning. The Scheme Owner defines this requirement for certification bodies to conduct unscheduled (without significant advance warning) or surprise audits. The Scheme Owner defines process for determining audits and methodologies to ensure consistent implementation.

B.2.11.01 Site Audit	
	Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, - certification requirements/methodologies specifying requirement and conditions for unscheduled audits (e.g. risk, context, complaints received), - guidance specifying procedures and process to ensure consistency, - audit reports.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the Fisheries standard details expedited audits in section 7.29. Expedited Audits in Fisheries are triggered by emergent issuues that could impact certification. The requirement for Stakeholder inclusion precludes unannounced audits in Fisheries. CoCR 11.3.2 details the process for Unannounced Audits in the Chain Of Custody standard	• *MSC CoC Certification Requirements* • *MSC Fishery Certification Process*

B.2.12 Transparency	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that a list of certified entities is made publicly available.	The Scheme Owner makes publicly available a list of certified entities either directly or requires of certification bodies/accreditation bodies. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - system to show the certification status of entities is publicly available online (e.g. database or online certificate list). If this system is outsourced to the accreditation bodies or certification bodies, this is required and the system described in the

B.2.12 Transparency	
	contract/ agreement between the Scheme Owner and the accreditation body/certification body, in a separate accreditation manual or certification requirements/methodologies.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because MSC has a find a supplier function for CoC-certified companies and a list of certified fisheries on the MSC website. All MSC fishery information is available on the MSC Track-A-Fishery page	• *CoC Find a supplier* • *Track-a-fishery*

B.2.13 Transparency	
GSSI Component	Guidance
For fisheries, the Scheme Owner requires certification bodies to make full audit reports available on request after certification has been granted, while excluding commercially sensitive information.	Applicable only to fisheries, for Aquaculture "Not Applicable". The Scheme Owner defines this requirement for certification bodies to make full audit reports, after certification has been granted, available online or upon request. Commercially sensitive information is excluded. Contracts with certified entities should clearly give notice of this requirement. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, contract with certification body and certified entity with this requirement, - certification requirements/methodologies specifying requirement, - guidance specifying that making reports available to stakeholders happens in a timely manner, - review certification body website for posted reports or process for responding to requests.

Conclusion	References

B.2.13 Transparency	
All fisheries Assessment and Audit reports are available on the MSC Track-A-Fishery page	• *MSC Track A Fishery*

B.2.14 Transparency	
GSSI Component	Guidance
For aquaculture, the Scheme Owner requires certification bodies to make summary audit reports publicly available (excluding commercially sensitive material information) after certification has been granted.	Applicable only to Aquaculture. For Fisheries "Not Applicable". The Scheme Owner defines this requirement for certification bodies to make summary audit reports, after certification has been granted, publicly available. Commercially sensitive information is excluded. Contracts with certified entities should clearly give notice of this requirement. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, contract with certification body and certified entity with this requirement. - certification requirements/methodologies specifying requirement. - guidance specifying that making reports available to stakeholders happens in a timely manner. - certification body website for posted reports.
Conclusion	References
This Component is not applicable to the MSC because it relates to Aquaculture only.	N/a

B.2.15 Notification of changes

GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner notifies accreditation bodies, certification bodies and certified entities of any change in management procedures which affects scheme rules and procedures for accreditation or certification.	The Scheme Owner has a system to ensure that accreditation bodies, certification bodies and certified entities are notified in a timely manner of any substantive change in management procedures. This is defined as changes which affect scheme rules and procedures for accreditation and/or certification. Where the scheme outsources responsibility of notification to accreditation bodies or certification bodies, there is a requirement for certification bodies to have a procedure for this notification and guidance on how this should take place (timeframe, manner, channel, etc.). Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contracts/agreements with accreditation bodies and certification bodies regarding notification of changes, internal procedure/qualityhandbook for change management, ring information flow.

Conclusion	References
Any changes to relating to accreditation and certification requirements (GCR) come under the scope of the General Certification Requirements which follow the Standard Setting Procedure in terms of consultation. Relevant sections of the MSC GRC: 6) 6.4 The decision to develop an MSC international Standard along with the approved ToR shall be officially announced and made publicly available. 11) 11.1 Once the final draft Standard receives the approval of the Board, the MSC shall promptly: a. Inform stakeholders of the new or revised Standard and implementation timeframe, in particular certification bodies and, where feasible, other stakeholders. Accreditations Bodies are not specifically mentioned 2:42	• *General Certification Requirements (GCR)* • *6.4 and 11.1* • *MSC Standard Setting Procedure*

B.2.16 Corrective action	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner clearly defines the criteria relating to the classification of non-conformities. Where the Scheme Owner allows for certification of an entity with non-compliances, the Scheme Owner requires that: - only non-conformities on minor, non-critical issues are allowed; - a timeline for closing out corrective actions must be defined; - a system to verify that corrective actions have been closed out is in place.	The Scheme Owner defines the criteria related to rating the severity of non-conformities for certification bodies. If Scheme allows for certified entities with non-compliances, these can only be (All must be met): minor/non-critical, with a defined timeline for closing out and a mechanism defined to verify resolution. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, certification requirements/methodologiesspecifying classifications of non-conformities and conditions for allowing certification with non-compliances. - guidance specifying procedures and process for classifying nonconformities and conditions for issuing certification, audit reports.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the FCP section 7.16 details the requirements for CABs to set conditions and the timeframe within which they should be closed. While conditions aren't classified as Minor and Major, all non-conformities are defined as needing to have a minimum score of 60 on individual PIs as well as an average score of 80 across all PIs. This means an accumulation of too many Conditions will fail a fishery. A score below 60 on individual PIs is considered a major non-conformity and will not allow for certification. FCP clause 7.15 states that, “The CAB shall draft conditions to result in improved performance to at least the 80 level within a period set by the CAB but no longer than the term of the certification”. Progress against the defined corrective actions is checked at surveillance audits. Section 7.28.15 states, 'At each on-site or off-site surveillance audit the team shall evaluate progress against conditions.	• *Fisheries Certification Process*

B.2.17 Auditor competence	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has defined the qualifications and competence criteria required by auditors and audit teams, employed by certification bodies, and it makes this information publicly available.	The Scheme Owner defines the requirement for certification body auditor and audit teams qualifications and competency and these requirements are publicly available. Competencies and qualifications include knowledge in the standard, education, experience and personal attributes. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the accreditation body/certification body, accreditation/certification requirements/methodologies specifying criteria for each function, - auditor assessment and training records, - auditor CVs.
Conclusion	References
Auditor competency is detailed in Table 1 of the General Certification Requirements and tables PC1-3 in the Fishery Certification Process	• *Fisheries Certification Process* • *MSC General Certification Requirements*

B.2.18 Auditor competence	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires certification body auditors to have successfully completed training in the	The Scheme Owner defines the requirement for certification body auditor training in the standard including initial and ongoing development. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment:

B.2.18 Auditor competence	
scheme to the satisfaction of the Scheme Owner.	- contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the accreditation body/certification body, accreditation/certification requirements/methodologies specifying criteria for each function. - auditor assessment and training records.

Conclusion	References
Auditor competency is detailed in Table 1 of the General Certification Requirements and tables PC1-3 in the Fishery Certification Process. The MSC provides a training platform which record auditor scores and certificates related to the MSC.	• *MSC Fisheries Certification Process* • *MSC General Certification Requirements*

B.2.19 Auditor competence	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that certification body auditors successfully complete auditor training based on ISO 19011. This does not include technical experts seconded to audit teams.	The Scheme Owner defines the requirement for certification body auditors to have successfully completed (passed) training based on ISO 19011 Guidelines for auditing management systems) and that the audit team includes at least one auditor. Technical experts can supplement auditor expertise, but are not formally auditors and do not count as an auditor. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the accreditation body/certification body, accreditation/certification requirements/methodologies specifying criteria for each function. - auditor assessment and training records. - auditor CVs. - audit Reports.

B.2.19 Auditor competence	
Conclusion	References
General Certification Requirement GCR (version 2.4.1), section 6.1.3, Table 1 - includes the requirement that lead auditors shall: "c. Pass a course on auditing based upon ISO 19011 with a minimum duration of 3 days.1 i. The course shall be delivered by a training provider recognised by CQI/IRCA or Exemplar Global."	• *MSC General Certification Requirements*

B.2.20 Auditor competence	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that certification bodies include the following in their competence assessment of auditors: - an assessment of knowledge and skills for each fundamental area the auditor will be expected to be working, - an assessment of knowledge of pertinent fishery and /or aquaculture Programs and the ability to access and be able to apply relevant laws and regulations, - an assessment of the personal attributes of the auditor, to ensure they conduct themselves in a professional manner, - a period of supervision to cover the assessment fishery and/or aquaculture principles, specific audit techniques and specific category knowledge, - a documented sign off by the certification body of the satisfactory completion of assessment requirements.	The Scheme Owner defines the requirement for certification bodies to include all of the elements in the Essential Component in the management of personnel competence (ISO 17065 clause 6.1.2). Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, accreditation/certification requirements/ methodologies specifying requirement, - guidance outlining the system and criteria for competencies, training, etc. (see B.2.17-B2.19, 21-22), - auditor assessment and training records, - auditor CVs, - accreditation body reports.

B.2.20 Auditor competence

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because CABs are required to do this under ISO 17065 6.1.2 (which is checked by ASI during accreditation audits under GCR section 4.3) and ISO 19011 section 7 which they are also required to follow. Auditor competency requirements are detailed in Table 1 of the General Certification Requirements and tables PC1-3 in the Fishery Certification Process. The MSC hosts a training platform including scored exams. Assessors are required to have successfully (>70%) completed the training in order to work on an assessment. All three principles are included and required. Team Composition requires expertise on gears, stocks, habitats, management etc demonstrated by professional experience in those areas. Team Leaders are required to undertake an assessment witnessed by the accreditation body. Team Leaders are also required to have passed a course on ISO19011 There is no requirement for a documented sign-off by CABs as the MSC owns the Training Database and the team requirements are explicit.	• *Fisheries Certification Process* • *Fisheries Certification Process v2.2* • *Table PC3 includes competencies* • *General Certification Requirements* • *General Certification Requirements v2.4.1*

B.2.21 Auditor competence

GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that certification body	The Scheme Owner defines the requirement for certification body lead auditors to have and maintain the necessary training, technical knowledge and experience to ensure consistent and accurate audits.

B.2.21 Auditor competence	
lead auditors maintain category and scheme knowledge.	Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, accreditation/certification requirements/ methodologies specifying requirement, - guidance outlining the system and criteria for lead auditors, - lead auditor assessment and training records, - lead auditor CVs, - accreditation body reports.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because The Fishery Team Leader Qualification and Competency criteria listed in Annex PC of the FCP, include the requirement for Team Leaders to undertake training on updates to the fisheries requirements, and to pass the Team Leader training course every 3 years.	• *Fisheries Certification Process* • *General Certification Requirements*

B.2.22 Auditor competence	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that certification bodies have a continuing professional development program in place that provides auditors with current best practice for fishery and/or aquaculture.	The Scheme Owner defines the requirement for certification body auditor ongoing professional development to maintain current best practice in sector. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the accreditation body/certification body, accreditation/certification requirements/methodologies specifying criteria for continuous professional development, - auditor training, assessment and training records.

B.2.22 Auditor competence

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because this is covered in ISO 19011 7.6 which CABs are required to comply with (see GCR section 4.4). FCR annex PC Table PC1 Row 2 detail the training on updates to requirements which needs to be undertaken by fishery team leaders. Verification of alignment was evidenced in auditor CVs and training logs seen for 3 fisheries auditors, and one scheme manager across three CABs.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0* • *General Certification Requirements*

B.3 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

B.3.01 Segregation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that all certified products are identified and segregated from non-certified products at all stages of the supply chain.	The Scheme Owner requires clear identification and separation of certified from non-certified product at all stages of the supply chain. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - Chain of Custody standards, audit checklists, certification requirements/methodologies specifying requirement. - Chain of Custody audit reports.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because MSC CoC Default Standard v4.0 Principle 2 (clause 2.1) requires all certified products to be identified as certified at all stages of purchasing, receiving, storage, processing, packing, labelling, selling and delivery. MSC CoC Default Standard v4.0 Principle 3 (clause 3.1) requires that all certified products are segregated and that there is no substitution of certified products with non-certified products. Mandatory checklist templates are available on the MSC website for the CoC Default Standard v4.0 and the Group CoC and Consumer-Facing Organisation (CFO) Standard versions. The CoC CR v2.0 further supports identification and segregation in clauses 8.2.7 "Auditors shall establish that appropriate measures are taken by the client to segregate, identify and prevent mixing[…]" which also applies to subcontractors under CoC CR v2.0 8.2.8, 8.3.6 and 8.4.3.	• *CoC Certification Requirements* • *CoC Standard*

B.3.02 Entities to be audited	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires all entities that are physically handling the certified product to undergo a Chain of Custody audit by an accredited certification body if the product can be destined for retail sale as a certified, labelled product. Exceptions: No audit is required for storage and distribution of tamper-proof, packaged products.	The Scheme Owner requires all entities in a supply chain that physically handle the product and where there is the possibility of mixing undergo a Chain of Custody audit if the product will be claimed as certified or carry a label. Entities in the supply chain which do not take physical control or only handle storage and distribution in tamper proof packaging need to be identified, but do not require a Chain of Custody audit. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the accreditation body/certification body, certified entity, certification requirements/methodologies defining types of operations and activities that require auditing according to these requirements, - Chain of Custody reports.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because for product to be sold as MSC certified, all companies in the supply chain must be certified against the CoC Default Standard and are audited by a third-party accredited certification body and subject to periodic surveillance audits over the three year period of a CoC certificate. The Chain of Custody Standard v4.0, Certification Requirements v2.0 and the MSC-MSCI Vocabulary documents provide details of audit requirements and definitions of activities. The CoC CR v2.0 requires CoC certification for all legal owners of certified product, with limited exceptions (6.1.1) and also requires any subcontracted company that is processing or repacking certified products to be audited by the certification body (8.4.2). In addition, some categories of high risk storage subcontractors also require audits if they do not have their own CoC certificate. Companies handling only Consumer-Ready-Tamper Proof packaged products do not require certification (and therefore audits). The CoC CR v2.0 7.1.5 requires CABs to ensure that audits are	• *CoC Certification Requirements* • *CoC Standard*

B.3.02 Entities to be audited	
carried out on-site, except for cases described in 7.1.5.1 (initial audits) and 11.3.3 (surveillance audits), which refer to special cases when audits are still required but may be carried out remotely.	

B.3.03 Records for traceability	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires certification bodies to verify that all entities within the chain maintain accurate and accessible records that allow any certified product or batch of products to be traceable from the point of sale to the buyer.	The Scheme Owner defines the requirement for certification bodies that all entities within the supply chain, including those which may not undergo a Chain of Custody audit (see B.3.02), maintain up to date, complete and accessible records that allow for full traceability of the product along the entire supply chain. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - Chain of Custody standard. - contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, accreditation/certification requirements/ methodologies specifying criteria for document control and maintenance. - auditor checklists.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because MSC CoC Default Standard v4.0 Principle 4 (clauses 4.1) requires certified organisations to have a traceability system that allows any product or batch sold as certified to be traced back from the sales invoice to a certified supplier, and any products identified as certified upon receipt to be traced forward from point of purchase to point of sale. Clause 4.2 requires that traceability records shall be able to link certified product at every stage between purchase and sale, including receipt, processing, transport, packing, storage, and dispatch; and 4.3 requires that records of certified products shall be accurate, complete, and unaltered. Mandatory checklist templates are available on the MSC website for the CoC Default Standard v4.0 and the Group CoC and CFO Standard versions. CABs are required to verify company records at audits using the audit checklist reporting template (CoC CR	• *Chain of Custody Default Standard* • *CoC Certification Requirements*

B.3.03 Records for traceability	
v2.0 8.1.1). CABs are required to collect and review evidence at audits to verify clients meet the requirements of the CoC Default Standard v4.0 (8.2.3), including requirements to keep traceability records, review records relating to receipt, sale and physical handling of products (8.2.5). CABs must conduct record-verification exercises (8.2.9) including traceability tests (8.2.9.1), cross-checks of purchase and delivery records (8.2.9.2) and input-output reconciliations (8.2.9.3).	

B.3.04 Sub-contractors	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that entities are able to demonstrate that these Chain of Custody requirements are met by the enterprise's subcontractors.	The Scheme Owner ensures that certified entity takes full responsibility that all subcontractors fully meet Chain of Custody requirements and has a system to demonstrate this. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - sub-contract agreements, internal audits. If the Scheme Owner does not allow sub-contracting then this is aligned (as opposed to Not Applicable)
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the MSC CoC Default Standard v4.0 and CoC CR v2.0 require certified organisations to ensure their subcontractors also meet MSC CoC requirements. This is specified in the CoC Default Standard v4.0 clause 5.3.1, "The organisation shall be able to demonstrate that all subcontractors handling certified product comply with the relevant requirements of this standard." This requirement is further supported by clauses 5.3.2 to 5.3.8 which relate to subcontractor requirements. The CoC CR v2.0 further describes requirements for subcontractors in clauses 6.3.4-6.3.5, 8.2.8, 8.3.6 and section 8.4. Consideration of subcontractors is included the mandatory audit checklist templates.	• *CoC CR* • *CoC Standard*

B.3.05 Auditing methods and frequency	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner has or requires certification bodies to have documented procedures for auditing methods and frequency of audits that meet the following requirements: - certificate validity does not exceed 3 years; - periodicity depends on risk factors - changes to an entity's traceability system that are deemed to affect the integrity of the Chain of Custody result in a re-audit (onsite).	The Scheme Owner has or ensures certification bodies have documented Chain of Custody audit methodologies including: validity of certificate cannot exceed 3 years, frequency of audits takes into consideration risk factors and an onsite audit is required when substantive changes to the certified entities traceability system take place. These are instances where the integrity of the Chain of Custody could be affected such as company mergers, major new markets. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - requirements in the contract/agreement between the Scheme Owner and the certification body, in a separate accreditation manual or for example in certification requirements/methodologies. - guidance interpretation specifying frequency, auditing methods and risk factors, in order to support consistency between certification bodies.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because companies certified against the MSC CoC Default Standard v4.0 are audited by a third-party accredited Certification Body (CB) and are subject to periodic surveillance audits over the three year period of a CoC certificate. Certificates are valid for a maximum of three years (CoC CR v2.0 11.4.1), with a possible extension of up to 90 days in order to accommodate audit scheduling (CoC CR v2.0 11.4.1.1). The frequency of audits depends on risk factors. CoC CR v2.0 section 11.3.1 describes how CABs shall determine audit frequency. Risk factors considered include whether 100% of the product handled at all sites is certified, the types of activities conducted and whether certified product is only handled in sealed boxes or containers. Changes to an enterprise's operations such as new suppliers, activities, or	• *CoC Certification Requirements* • *CoC Standard*

B.3.05 Auditing methods and frequency	
subcontractors, must be notified to the CB within specified timeframes (refer to CoC Standard section 5.2 Reporting Changes). CoC CR v2.0 section 11.2 Changes to the Certificate outlines actions required by CABs when such changes occur, including reviewing the new information and checking potential impacts of the changes on the organisation's certification status. CoC CR v2.0 11.2.5.5 requires the CAB to decide whether an onsite audit is required before the change can be allowed. If the change is to add a new subcontractor, the CAB shall visit the subcontractor if required under section 8.4.	

B.3.06 Non-conformity/ Corrective Actions	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires the certification body to record all identified breaches of the chain of custody, including: - an explanation of the factors that allowed the breach to occur; - an explanation of the corrective actions required to ensure that a similar breach does not re-occur; - the time frames for the corrective actions to be completed; and - the date of closing out of the corrective actions and how the problem was solved.	The Scheme Owner requires of certification bodies to document all breaches of Chain of Custody with explanation of contextual factors, corrective actions, and timeframes for corrective actions, date of closing and resolution. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - certification requirements/methodologies defining requirements of reports, contract or agreement specifying requirements, mandatory template reports. - Chain of Custody audit report.
Conclusion	References

B.3.06 Non-conformity/ Corrective Actions	
The MSC is in alignment because MSC CoC Standard clause 5.4 outlines processes for non-conforming product, including that records must be kept of notifications to customers. CoC CR v2.0 11.3.6.4 describes that MSC will require an unannounced audit in cases where there is a risk of a breach in CoC but there is inadequate information available to raise a complaint against a specific CoC holder. Under Section 7.4 of the MSC General Certification Requirements, CoC certificates can be suspended or withdrawn for contractual or administrative reasons (7.4.1), when there has been a demonstrable breakdown in CoC caused by the client (7.4.9.1), when products are sold as certified which are shown not to be certified (7.4.9.2) or certified status cannot be demonstrated (7.4.9.3), if there are issues with major non-conformities (7.4.9.4 to 7.4.9.7), when audits are not held in required timeframes (7.4.9.8) or when there are issues with the MSCI license agreement (7.4.9.9). 7.4.11 describes the process for CABs when a certificate is suspended. The certificate holder is required to keep records of when customers are informed of the suspension [7.4.11.2(e)]. If the certificate holder has had their certificate suspended under 7.4.9.2 for a second time within the period of validity of the certificate, the CAB is required to withdraw the certificate and record the cause of the certificate withdrawal in the scheme database. 7.4.12 requires the CAB to record the certificate suspension on the scheme database within 4 days of the suspension, and instruct the certificate holder to provide a documented corrective action plan, including a binding timeframe, for addressing the cause of suspension. 7.4.15 requires the CAB to record a withdrawal of a certificate within 4 days of the decision in the scheme database.	• *CoC Certification Requirements* • *CoC Standard* • *General Certification Requirements*

B.3.07 Audit Report	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that certification body audit reports include: - the date of the inspection/audit; - the name(s) of the person(s) responsible for the audit and report; - the names and addresses of the sites inspected/audited;	The Scheme Owner requires of certification bodies that all Chain of Custody audit reports include all of the elements in the Essential Component.

B.3.07 Audit Report	
- the scope of the inspection/audit; - the non-conformities identified; - the result of at least one mass balance assessment for each product covered by the Chain of Custody audit; and - a conclusion on the conformity of the client with the Chain of Custody requirements.	Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - certification requirements/methodologies defining requirements of reports, mandatory template reports. - Chain of Custody audit report.
Conclusion	**References**
The MSC is in alignment because MSC has mandatory audit checklist templates which require that CABs report on each of the items specified in the GSSI requirement in the list in cell F47 (CoC CR v2.0 8.1.1 by using the online checklists in the forms and templates section of the MSC website. Within 10 days of the certification decision, the CAB must submit the final audit report checklist to the client (9.1.2), upload specific details from the report in the scheme database and upload the finalised CoC report itself also into the database (CoC CR v2.0 11.1.5).	• *CoC Certification Requirements* • *CoC Forms & Templates*

B.3.08 Audit Reports	
GSSI Component	**Guidance**
The Scheme Owner requires certification bodies to file reports at their office and to make these reports available to relevant parties upon request.	Certification bodies are required to maintain files of Chain of Custody audit reports (paper or electronic) and make these available upon request to relevant parties, within contractual arrangements with certified entities. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - contracts, agreements, certification requirements specify Chain of Custody reports are filed and process for making them available.
Conclusion	**References**

B.3.08 Audit Reports	
The MSC is in alignment because the CB must submit the final audit report checklist to the client (9.1.2), upload specific details from the report in the scheme database and upload the finalised CoC report itself also into the database (CoC CR v2.0 11.1.5). This report is available to MSC's accreditation body, ASI, (see section 9.2 of ASI's accreditation procedure document) and the MSC as standard setter.	• *ASI Accreditation Procedure* • *CoC Certification Requirements*

B.3.09 Record Keeping	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme Owner requires that an enterprise certified entity keeps records that demonstrate conformity with the Chain of Custody requirements for a period that: - exceeds the shelf life of the certified product; and - exceeds the periodicity between audits	Certified entity must keep records documenting compliance with Chain of Custody standard requirements at a minimum time that is longer than a. the shelf life of the product and b. time between audits. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - Chain of Custody standard, guidance interpretation and audit checklist that specify document retention policy.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because MSC Chain of Custody Standard v4.0 clause 5.1.3 requires CoC certificate-holding organisations to maintain records that demonstrate conformity with MSC CoC Standard for a minimum of 3 years, or for the full duration of the certified products' shelf life if longer than 3 years. Audit frequency for lower risk organisations can be 18 months, otherwise surveillance audits are required every 12 months, therefore records are kept for a period that exceeds the periodicity between audits.	• *CoC Standard*

B.3.10 Multi-site CoC	
GSSI Component	Guidance
Where a scheme allows for Chain of Custody certification of multiple sites managed under the control of a single entity, the Scheme Owner defines specific audit procedures that ensure all sites comply with the Chain of Custody certification requirements. Control can include direct ownership, franchises, or where the entity has a signed agreement or contract with each site.	If the Scheme Owner does not allow Chain of Custody of multi-sites (prohibits not that it is not yet developed or exists)- requirement is "Not applicable". Otherwise, the Scheme Owner defines audit procedure for multi-sites (under control of one entity) and requirements for internal control management system. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - Chain of Custody standard, guidance or checklist specifying procedure and internal control system.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the MSC has a version of the CoC Standard specifically for Group organisations, which consists of a central office and associated individual sites that collectively apply for certification against the Group CoC standard v1.0. The organisation designates a central office function that establishes internal controls and is responsible for making sure every site complies with the CoC Standard (CoC CR v2.0 6.2.1.1). The Group's central office must be a legal entity with whom a contract can be made. The central office shall demonstrate its control over sites in one of the following ways: 6.1.3.1 The sites are fully owned by the central office; or 6.1.3.2 The sites are franchises of the central office; or 6.1.3.3 The central office has a signed agreement or contract with each of the sites requiring the site to a. Conform to the MSC Group CoC Standard and b. Abide by decisions made by the central office, certifier, and accreditation body, including issuing of non-conformities and corrective actions. CoC CR v2.0 6.2.2 defines eligibility for Group CoC certification. Principle 6 in the Group version of the MSC CoC Standard outlines specific additional requirements for Group CoC certification, including group controls in 6.1, internal audits in 6.4 and internal group reviews in 6.5. Section 10 of the CoC CR v2.0 covers additional requirements that only apply for Group CoC clients, such as stratification of the group and determining the sample size of sites to be audited. All Group CoC holders require annual surveillance audits.	• *CoC Cetifcation Requirements* • *CoC Standard*

B.3.11 Multi-site CoC

GSSI Component	Guidance
Where the Scheme Owner allows for multisite certification, they require that all sites are assessed as part of the internal audit during the period of validity of the certificate.	The Scheme Owner does not allow Chain of Custody of multi-siterequirement is "Not applicable". Otherwise, the Chain of custody standard requires all sites are assessed as part of the internal audit during the validity period of the certificate. Examples of evidence for scheme alignment: - standard, guidance interpretation and audit checklist.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the MSC CoC Standard Group version v1.0 requires the organisation to designate a central office (group management) function which can ensure that all sites on the group certificate conform with the MSC CoC Standard Group version v1.0. 6.1.2 states the organisation shall be able to demonstrate that procedures covering the MSC CoC Standard Group version v1.0 are implemented across all sites on the group certificate. The CoC Standard Group version v1.0 section 6.4 requires annual internal audits for sites in a group, with the exception of any sites handling only 100% certified seafood (as these are considered extremely low risk sites). Internal audit requirements are also included in the mandatory CoC audit checklists and are compliance is verified by CABs during audit.	• *CoC Standard*

SECTION D. FISHERIES CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

D.1 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

D.1.01 Designated Authority	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of a fishery management organization or arrangement that manages the fishery of which the Unit of Certification is a part.	A "fisheries management organization or arrangement" is defined by FAO (see Glossary). This term is used throughout the benchmarking framework and is intended to represent the "designated authority" mentioned in paragraphs 29.2 (36.2) and 29.4 (36.5) of the FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines. In this context it is essentially an entity holding the legal and generally recognized mandate for establishing fisheries management measures and taking management decisions such that those measures and decisions are legally enforceable. Where the stock under consideration is a transboundary fish stock, straddling fish stock, highly migratory fish stock or high seas fish stock it might also encompass a Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO) - see Essential Component D.1.07. The fisheries management organization or arrangement may also be part of relevant traditional, fisher or community approaches to the management of the stock under consideration, provided their performance can be objectively verified (i.e. the knowledge has been collected and analyzed though a systematic, objective and well-designed process, and is not just hearsay).
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, Principle 3 of the MSC standard requires that the fishery is subject to an effective management system. PI 3.1.1 - 3.1.3 capture the broad high-level context of the fishery management system while PI 3.2.1 - 3.2.4 focuses on the management system directly applied to the fishery. Furthermore, under Principle 1 (PI 1.2.1 and 1.2.2) and Principle 2 (all management PIs) the standard requires that there is management in place to manage the impact of the fishery on species, habitats and the wider ecosystem.	• *Fisheries Standard*

D.1.01 Designated Authority	
Within PI 3.1.1, requirements (e.g. SA4.3.4.2) focus on international cooperation required for the effective management of a stock (e.g. RFMO level). The MSC considers UNFSA Article 10 and the UNCLOS requirements as a basis for MSC requirements relating to cooperation for UoAs that are subject to international cooperation for management of the stock. These requirements to cooperate should apply to UoA participants even if cooperation is not formally required by the relevant RFMO/RFMA or if an RFMO/RFMA does not exist. These requirements should also apply to UoAs in the high seas even if the target species are not HMS or shared or straddling stocks and are not formally covered by the UNFSA requirements. The requirement is further elaborated in SA4.3.1-SA4.3.4.	

D.1.01.01 Designated Authority	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the fishery management organization or arrangement provides advice that contributes to the attainment of objectives for the management of the deep-sea fishery (DSFs) in the high seas under consideration and the prevention of significant adverse impacts on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) from fishing.	To meet the parent Essential Component, the fishery management organization or arrangement is expected to be fit for purpose. This is tested through the other Essential Components that assess the performance and content of the management system. This Supplementary Component looks more specifically at the advice provided by the fishery management organization or arrangement with respect to the management of DSFs in the high seas. The fishery management organization or arrangement must be required to provide specific advice on the prevention of significant adverse impacts on VMEs arising from fishing by the Unit of Certification. The FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep Sea Fisheries in the High Seas provide detail on what is regarded as a VME and what is a significant adverse impact in this context.
Conclusion	References

D.1.01.01 Designated Authority	
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the MSC standard seeks to ensure that the fisheries do not cause undue impacts on habitats (PI 2.4.1), that appropriate management is in place to ensure this (PI 2.4.2), and that appropriate information is available to verify this (PI 2.4.3). The key consideration of the impact is upon the structure and function of the habitat in question and whether or not the impact can be described as "serious or irreversible harm". With regard to VMEs, PI 2.4.1 SI b deals specifically with VME habitat status, requiring for SG80 that the UoA is highly unlikely to reduce structure and function of the VME habitats to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. Serious or irreversible harm is defined in SA3.13.4 as "reductions in habitat structure and function (as defined in Table SA8) such that the habitat would be unable to recover at least 80% of its structure and function within 5-20 years if fishing on the habitat were to cease entirely." VMEs are defined in SA3.13.3.2 as in paragraph 42 subparagraphs (i)-(v) of the FAO Guidelines7 (definition provided in GSA3.13.3.2). This definition is applied both inside and outside EEZs and irrespective of depth, potentially covering DSFs where included in the UoA. Additionally, with regards to fisheries in the high seas FCR clause SA 4.1 requires that assessors state the jurisdictional categories that apply to the management system of the UoA when assessing performance of the UoA under Principle 3, with specific requirements given (in SA4.3.2.2. and elsewhere) for UoAs subject to international cooperation to manage stocks.	• *Fisheries Certification Process* • *Fisheries Standard*

D.1.01.03 Designated Authority	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the fishery management organization or arrangement is able to coordinate and integrate its activities with other relevant	To meet the parent Essential Component, the fishery management organization or arrangement is expected to be fit for purpose. This is tested through the other Essential Components that assess the performance and content of the management system. This

D.1.01.03 Designated Authority	
institutions that have mandates for or are active in the ecosystem in which the fishery of which the unit of certification is part is operating (e.g. other relevant ministries), and that respective roles and responsibilities are clarified.	Supplementary Component looks more specifically at the requirement for the fishery management organization or arrangement to coordinate and integrate its activities with other relevant institutions that have mandates for or are active in the ecosystem in which the fishery of which the unit of certification is part is operating. The standard must require that their respective roles and responsibilities are clarified.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 3.1.1 SI(a) deals explicitly with the issue of an effective legal framework for cooperation being in place. In particular, clauses SA4.3.2-8 lay out in more detail what is required at each scoring level both for UoAs that do and do not require international cooperation for management. Additionally PI 3.1.2 focuses on consultation, roles and responsibilities, requiring that the management system has effective consultation processes, and that the functions, roles and responsibilities of organisations and individuals who are involved in the management process are explicitly defined and well understood for key areas of responsibility and interaction. An example of the scoring of PI 3.1.2 showing the consideration of a wide range of relevant institutions across different states is available in the RFMO-managed Ross Sea Toothfish fishery (see also Section 6.3).	• *Fishery Standard*

D.1.02 Designated Authority	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that in order for the fishery management organization or arrangement to receive and respond to in a timely manner the best scientific	The focus of this Essential Component is the capacity of the fishery management organization or arrangement to receive and respond to in a timely manner the best scientific evidence available. The FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines do not specify a requirement for any specific frequency or type of meetings of the fishery management organization or arrangement. Paragraph 29.3 refers to the requirement for timely scientific advice on the likelihood and magnitude of identified impacts of the fishery on the ecosystem.

D.1.02 Designated Authority	
evidence available (D.1.03-D.1.05) the fishery management organization or arrangement convenes regularly, as needed, to manage the integrated process of information collection, stock assessment, planning, formulation of the management objectives and targets, establishing management measures and enforcement of fishery rules and regulations.	Principle 2.10 of the Guidelines requires that schemes be based on the best scientific evidence available. Best scientific evidence available is defined in the Glossary as a process by which scientific advice is commissioned and solicited by the management system. The wording of this Essential Component is intended to ensure that the Standard requires that this is done in a timely and organized way that is properly documented. The CCRF also uses the word "timely" in many places in describing requirements for responsible fisheries management, e.g. Article 6.13 "timely solutions to urgent matters"; Article 7.4.4: "timely, complete and reliable statistics on catch and fishing effort are collected and maintained in accordance with applicable international standards and practices and in sufficient detail to allow sound statistical analysis. Such data should be updated regularly and verified through an appropriate system."; Article 12.3 requires that States should ensure that data generated by research are analyzed, that the results of such analyses are published, respecting confidentiality where appropriate, and distributed in a timely and readily understood fashion, in order that the best scientific evidence is made available as a contribution to fisheries conservation, management and development.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, Principle 3 of the MSC standard requires that the fishery is subject to an effective management system. PI 3.1.1 (a) requires that there is a framework for cooperation with other parties to deliver outcomes consistent with MSC Principles 1 and 2. PI 3.1.2 requires that the management system has effective consultation processes to inform the management system and that the roles and responsibilities of organisations and individuals are clear and understood by all relevant parties. PI 3.1.3 requires that long term objectives are formulated. PI 3.2.1 requires that the fishery-specific management system has clear objectives. PI 3.2.2 requires that the fishery specific management system includes effective decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve objectives. Additionally decision making processes are required to be responsive to issue identified in relevant research monitoring, evaluation and consultation. PI 3.2.3 requires that MCS mechanisms ensure the management measures in	• *Fisheries Standard*

D.1.02 Designated Authority	
the fishery are enforced and complied with. In PI3.1.1 the focus of cooperation as laid out in SA4.3.2.3, is that it shall at least deliver the intent of UNFSA Article 10 relating to the collection and sharing of scientific data, the scientific assessment of stock status, and the development of scientific advice. Additionally, the multiple information PIs in Principle 1 and 2 also ensure that the management system collects and analyses information necessary for management to be effective, including research planning. Finally, MSC notes that it does not specifically require formal Management Plans to be produced for each fishery. Guidance to GSSI D.3.01 however, confirms that "There is no uniform way that management approaches need to be documented (for example they do not have to be all within one overarching Fishery Management Plan)". D.3.01 is scored as in alignment for the "documented management approach", without the existence of such plans. The elements normally covered in such plans are included in the requirements listed	

D.1.03 Best Scientific Evidence Available	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the fishery management organization or arrangement receives and responds to in a timely manner the best scientific evidence available regarding the status of the stock under consideration and the likelihood and magnitude of adverse impacts of the unit of certification on the	This essential component is about the taking into account of the best scientific evidence available by the Fishery Management Organization in a timely manner. This relates to both stock status and fishery impacts, hence all are mentioned in the component language. Best scientific evidence available is described in the Glossary. For the stock under consideration it can derive from assessments of stock status outside of what is regarded as a traditional “stock assessment”, accommodating techniques for data limited fisheries and including traditional knowledge, providing its validity can be objectively verified. The actions of the fishery management organization or arrangement in both receiving and responding to the best scientific evidence available must be in

D.1.03 Best Scientific Evidence Available		
stock under consideration and the ecosystem.	accordance with the Precautionary Approach (D.1.06). This Essential Component is also linked to those in D.3 that cover the collection and handling of data and information.	
Conclusion		References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PIs 1.2.1 and 1.2.2, various PIs 2.x.2, and PI 3.2.2 all require timely intervention in order to ensure that the management organisation responds in a timely manner to advice. The MSC surveillance processes (CR 7.23) also ensure ongoing auditing of management organisation performance in response to status changes. Adaptive management is at the core of the MSC, from the annual auditing system of the MSC assessment process to the specific PIs related to Principle 1, including the requirements that environmental variability is a considered (FCR clause SA 2.2.7), that there be a robust and precautionary harvest strategy that is subject to evaluation, monitoring and review (PI 1.2.1), defined and effective harvest control rules (PI 1.2.2) and relevant information to support the harvest strategy through monitoring (PI 1.2.3). Principle 2 information PIs require that information is adequate to assess the impacts of the fishery on ecological components and that there is adequate information to inform the management strategy. PI 3.2.2 requires that the fishery-specific management system includes effective decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve the objectives and has an appropriate approach to actual disputes in the fishery. PI 3.2.2 scoring issue (b) at SG80 requires that decision-making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions. Annex PF also details requirements around the use of data-limited approaches (RBF) to assess Principle 1 and 2 outcome PIs. Guidance on how to use and interpret traditional approaches to management and local knowledge is also included under Principle 1 and 3. It is important to note that the level of adaptive management will depend on the characteristics of the species, the management system and risks, and the available resources. Clause SA 2.2.2 requires that the team shall consider the biology of the species and the scale and intensity of both the UoA and management system and other relevant issues in determining time periods over which to judge fluctuations.		• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.04 Best Scientific Evidence Available

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that management objectives take into account the best scientific evidence available.	This Essential Component applies to all management objectives referred to in Essential Components under Performance Area D.2. Best scientific evidence available is described in the Glossary. It can come from assessments of stock status outside of the typical "stock assessment", accommodating techniques for data limited fisheries and including traditional knowledge, providing its validity can be objectively verified (i.e. the knowledge has been collected and analyzed though a systematic process, and is not simply hearsay). Note that the requirement for the management system to take into account the best scientific evidence available is not inconsistent with the Precautionary Approach (see Essential Component D.1.06), which requires inter alia that the absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures. Both of these requirements apply.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because for the management objectives stated above, Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance states that PI 1.2.3 requires information and monitoring to support the management objectives including sufficient relevent information related to stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition and other data. It requires that stock abundance and fishery removals are regularly monitored, as well as good information on removals from the stock by other fisheries. Furthermore, the Standard requires that the method used to assess stock is appropriate to the stock, takes uncertainty into account, and that it is subject to peer review.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.04 Best Scientific Evidence Available	
PI 3.1.3 requires that "Clear long term objectives that guide decision-making, consistent with MSC fisheries standard and the precautionary approach, are explicit within management policy". SA4.5.2 confirms the interpretation of the precautionary approach in this clause consistent with the GSSI guidance for this supplementary component. PI 3.2.2 further requires that the fishery specific management system include effective decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve objectives and has an appropriate approach to actual disputes in the fishery. Scoring issue (b) requires that decision-making processes response to issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation, consultation in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take into account the wider implications of decisions.	

D.1.05 Best Scientific Evidence Available	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that management measures implemented through the management system to achieve the management objectives are based	This Essential Component applies to all management measures referred to in Essential Components under Performance Area D.5. Best scientific evidence available is described in the Glossary. Note that it includes traditional knowledge and can come from assessments of stock status outside of a typical stock assessment, accommodating techniques for data limited fisheries, providing their validity can be objectively verified (i.e. the knowledge has been collected and analyzed though a systematic process, and is not simply hearsay). Note also that the requirement for the management system to take into account the best scientific evidence available is not inconsistent with the Precautionary Approach (see Essential Component D.1.06), which requires inter alia that the

D.1.05 Best Scientific Evidence Available	
on the best scientific evidence available.	absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures. Both of these requirements apply.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the application of the precautionary approach in fisheries management systems is explicitly scored in PIs 3.1.3 and 3.2.2. PI 3.1.3 requires that clear long term objectives that guide decision-making, consistent with MSC Fisheries Standard and the precautionary approach, are explicit within management policy. PI 3.2.2 requires that the fishery specific management system includes effective decision-making processes that use the precautionary approach and are based on the best available information. The MSC also intends the precautionary approach to be applied implicitly throughout the Certification Requirements. To capture this intent, the MSC system has been designed to give higher scores where there is more	•

D.1.05 Best Scientific Evidence Available	
certainty about the outcome, or where management systems appropriately apply precaution under conditions of uncertainty. Where limited information is available, teams should be more precautionary in their assessment of information adequacy to support an Outcome PI score (Box GSA1 in FCR v2.0). Finally, MSC's expectations for use of the best available information are further explained in guidance section GSA 3.3 which applies to all information PIs. As stated there: "The requirements in the Information PIs are framed in terms of information adequacy…. The assessment team will need to be satisfied that information is objective, has been generated through acceptable scientific methods, and can be independently verified." Guidance section GSA3.6.3 further explains how a process of triangulation may be used to ensure that the information is adequate and represents the best scientific evidence available to the fishery.	

D.1.06 Precautionary Approach	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the precautionary approach is applied widely through the management system to the conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in order to protect them and preserve the aquatic environment.	The General Principles and Article 6.5 of the CCRF prescribe a precautionary approach to all fisheries, in all aquatic systems, regardless of their jurisdictional nature, recognizing that most problems affecting the fishing sector result from insufficiency of precaution in management regimes when faced with high levels of uncertainty. The precautionary approach referred to in this Essential Component is that elaborated in the FAO Document: Precautionary approach to capture fisheries and species introductions, FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries. No. 2. Rome, FAO. 1996. To meet this Essential Component, the standard must require inter alia that the management system uses a suitable method of risk management to take into account relevant uncertainties in the status of the stock under consideration and the impacts of the unit of certification on that stock and the ecosystem, including those associated with the use of introduced or translocated species. Where the application of less quantitative and data demanding approaches results in greater uncertainty, the management system should apply more precaution, which may necessitate lower levels of utilization of the resource. The FAO Guidelines (Paragraph 29.6) state that the absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures. The FAO Guidelines (Paragraph 31) note that much greater scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks. This issue can be addressed by taking a risk assessment/risk management approach (see also D.4.07). The FAO Guidelines (Paragraph 32) also note that a past record of good management performance could be considered as supporting evidence of the adequacy of the management measures and the management system.

D.1.06 Precautionary Approach

	The suitability of the method of risk management applied should be assessed by the technical team undertaking the assessment for certification.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, Box GSA 1 explains MSC's intent on the precautionary approach. International and customary law requires the use of the precautionary approach in fisheries management. The MSC uses as its baseline definition for the precautionary approach the definitions included in the FAO International Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1995) and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (1995), Article 6 of which states: The precautionary approach shall be interpreted to mean being cautious when information is uncertain, unreliable or inadequate and that the absence of adequate scientific information shall not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures (The UN Fish Stocks Agreement, 1995). In the MSC standard the application of the precautionary approach in fisheries management systems is explicitly scored in PIs 3.1.3 and 3.2.2. However the MSC also intends the precautionary approach to be applied implicitly throughout the Certification Requirements. To capture this intent, the MSC system has been designed to give higher scores where there is more certainty about the outcome, or where management systems appropriately apply precaution under conditions of uncertainty. Where limited information is available, teams should be more precautionary in their assessment of information adequacy to support an Outcome PI score.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0* ▪

D.1.07 International Management

GSSI Component	Guidance
Where the stock under consideration is a transboundary fish stock, straddling fish stock, highly migratory fish stock or high seas fish stock, the standard	This Essential Component is intended to build on D.1.01 to provide greater specificity in the event that the stock under consideration is a transboundary fish stock, straddling fish stock, highly migratory fish stock or high seas fish stock. In this case, as well as the national authority with the legal and generally recognized mandate for establishing fisheries management measures and taking

D.1.07 International Management	
requires the existence of a bilateral, subregional or regional fisheries organization or arrangement, as appropriate that is concerned with the management of the whole stock unit over its entire area of distribution.	management decisions, there is expected to be an international institution or arrangement established (usually between two or more States) to be responsible for coordination of activities related to fisheries management over the entire area of distribution of the stock. This is to make sure that management of these stocks and fleets that fish on them is coordinated at the international level. Activities of the international institution or arrangement may include consultation between parties to the agreement or arrangement, formulation of fishery regulations and their implementation, allocation of resources, collection of information, stock assessment, as well as monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS). (e.g. a Regional Fisheries Management Organization – RFMO). See also CCRF Article 7.1.3 et seq. See also D.1.11, D.1.12 and D.1.13.
Conclusion	References
"The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, clause SA 4.1 requires that assessors state the jurisdictional categories that apply to the management system of the UoA when assessing performance of the UoA under Principle 3. FCR clause SA 4.1.3 requires that the performance of other fisheries management bodies where they are also subject to international cooperation to manage stock shall not be individually assessed expect where they impact directly on P1 and P2 outcomes and/or P3 implementation. This is accompanied by following critical guidance FCR clause GSA 4.1.3 that states that ' under international law, as set out in the UNCLOS and related instruments, the States concerned, including relevant coastal States in the case of shared stocks, straddling stocks and highly migratory species are required to cooperate to ensure effective conservation and management of the resources. MSC considers UNFSA Article 10 and the UNCLOS requirements as a basis for MSC requirements relating to cooperation for UoAs that are subject to international cooperation for management of the stock. These requirements to cooperate should apply to UoA participants even if cooperation is not formally required by the RFMO/RFMA or if an RFMO/RFMA does not exist. These requirements should apply to UoAs in high seas even if the target species are not HMS or shared or straddling are not formally covered by the UNFSA requirements.'	• Ross Sea Toothfish (pdf)

D.1.07 International Management	
More specifically, PI3.1.1a at SG80 requires that ""There is an effective national legal system and organised and effective cooperation with other parties, where necessary, to deliver management outcomes consistent with MSC Principles 1 and 2."" SA4.3.3.2 confirms the expectations for cooperation in management for a ""UoA subject to international cooperation in managment of the stock"". An example of such regional international cooperation is given in PI 3.1.1 scoring of the Ross Sea Toothfish fishery (see pages 97-99)." Additionally, the AGAC Atlantic Ocean component of the AGAC Four oceans fishery reflects a best practice scoring of this PI. In contrast, Indonesian and Philipines WCPFC fisheries have conditions on this PI, reflecting their lack of coperation and linkages to effective harvest control rules (for exmple the Indonesia pole and line and handline skipjack and yelowfin tuna fishery.'	

D.1.07.01 International Management	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that where transboundary fishery resources exist, States should work together to ensure that the tenure rights of small-scale fishing communities that are granted, are protected.	In addition to the requirement for the existence of a bilateral, subregional or regional fisheries organization or arrangement, this Supplementary Component is seeking the inclusion in the standard of a requirement for the tenure rights of small-scale fishing communities to be protected.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, clause SA 4.1 requires that assessors state the jurisdictional categories that apply to the management system of the UoA when assessing performance of the UoA under Principle 3. Additionally, PI 3.1.1 SI c requires that the management system respects the legal rights of people dependant on fishing for food or livelihood in a manner consistent with the objectives of MSC principles 1 and 2. At a minimum, the legal rights created explicitly or established by custom of people dependent on fishing for food or livelihood, and their long term interests, are considered within the legal and/or customary framework for managing fisheries (SA4.3.6). At the 80 Scoring Guidepost there must be formal legal arrangements that	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.07.01 International Management	
make explicit the requirement to consider the legal rights created explicitly or by custom of people dependent on fishing for food or livelihood (SA4.3.7.1); and that those peoples' long-term interests are taken into account within the legal and/or customary framework for managing fisheries (SA4.3.7.2).	

D.1.08 Participatory Management	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the governance and fisheries management system under which the unit of certification is managed to be both participatory and transparent, to the extent permitted by national laws and regulations.	Participatory is described in the Glossary. Principle 2.4 (2.5) of the FAO Guidelines requires ecolabelling schemes to be transparent, including balanced and fair participation by all interested parties. Requiring the standard also to require that the governance and management system being assessed is participatory and transparent (i.e. not just the scheme/ standard itself) is consistent with paragraph 6.13 of the CCRF, which states that: States should, to the extent permitted by national laws and regulations, ensure that decision making processes are transparent and achieve timely solutions to urgent matters. States, in accordance with appropriate procedures, should facilitate consultation and the effective participation of industry, fishworkers, environmental and other interested organizations in decision–making with respect to the development of laws and policies related to fisheries management, development, international lending and aid. To meet this Essential Component, the standard must require the fisheries management organization or arrangement to make information and advice used in its decision-making publicly available, to the extent allowed by national laws and regulations. While it is possible for an organization to be separately participatory or transparent, being one without the other is regarded as of much less value, hence both are needed to meet this Essential Component. A participatory approach to fisheries management requires there to be an opportunity for all interested and affected parties to be involved in the management process. This does not mean that stakeholders are necessarily required to have specific decision rights in the fishery, or that participatory mechanisms must be included in National laws, but there should be a consultation process that regularly seeks and accepts relevant

D.1.08 Participatory Management	
	information, including traditional, fisher or community knowledge and there should be a transparent mechanism by which the management system demonstrates consideration of the information obtained.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the consultation element of PI 3.1.2 requires that the management system has effective consultation processes that are open to interested and affected parties. PI3.1.2 SIc requires that the consultation process provides opportunity for all interested and affected parties to be involved, and at SG100 that it facilitates parties' effective engagement, while SIb requires that the management system obtains, and regularly seeks and accepts relevant information from parties, and demonstrates consideration of the information obtained from consultation processes. Additionally PI 3.1.1 requires that there is a effective legal framework that has a transparent mechanism for dispute resolution. Finally, Section SA4.4.1 confirms in relation to the scoring of PI 3.1.2 that "Teams shall focus scoring on the effectiveness and transparency of the consultation processes implemented by fishery managers to obtain and consider information from a wide range of sources, including local knowledge, for input into a broad range of decisions, policies and practices within the management system." Transparency in management and consultation applies to the overall system, not just to the dispute resolution process specifically covered in PI 3.1.1.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.08.04 Participatory Management	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the involvement of small-scale fishing communities in the design, planning and, as appropriate, implementation of management measures, including protected areas, affecting their livelihood	In addition to the governance and fisheries management system being participatory and transparent, this Supplementary Component is seeking the inclusion in the standard of a requirement for the specific facilitation of the

D.1.08.04 Participatory Management

options is facilitated. Participatory management systems, such as co-management, should be promoted in accordance with national law.	involvement of small-scale fishing communities in the management process, where their livelihood options are affected.

Conclusion	References
"The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 3.1.1 SI(c) deals specifically with consideration of people dependent on fishing for food or livelihood, and PI 3.1.2 provides for consultation with all relevant interested and affected parties.The FCRv2.0 effectively requires the involvement of all interested parties on all aspects of relevance to the UoC and its impact. At the SG80 level, PI 3.1.2 (c) requires that ""The consultation process provides opportunity for all interested and affected parties to be involved"" PI 3.1.2(b) further requires that ""The management system includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information, including local knowledge""; and that ""The management system demonstrates consideration of the information obtained"". As stated in Guidance Section GSA4.4 relating to this PI, ""The main point of scoring issue (b) is that the management system is open to stakeholders and that any information that is viewed as important by those parties can be fed into and be considered by the process in a way that is transparent to the interested stakeholders"", i.e. that their involvement ... in management... is facilitated. MSC also provides specific guidance on the scoring of several PIs for fisheries that are managed using 'informal and traditional approaches"" such as often used in small scale fisheries (see e.g. GSA4.4 and GSA4.4.5)."	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.09 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance

D.1.09 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries	
The standard is applicable to governance and management systems for small scale and/or data limited fisheries, with due consideration to the availability of data and the fact that management systems can differ substantially for different types and scales of fisheries.	Being data limited is not necessarily synonymous with being small scale (hence the and/or in the Essential Component text), but the issues for fishery management may be similar. The scheme and standard should be applicable to any fishery that falls within the scheme's geographic scope, i.e. different types and scales of fisheries, including potentially small scale and/or data limited fisheries. If a scheme has a part of its standard that applies only to a subset of fisheries, such as small scale and/or data limited fisheries, then it needs to explain under what circumstances that part of the standard would be invoked. This same logic would apply to other potential subsets of fisheries such as deep sea, low trophic level, salmon etc. This should not mean, however, the standard for these subsets of fisheries is fundamentally different (e.g. lowered) compared to the standard applicable to other fisheries. Being applicable to small scale and/or data limited fisheries relates to being able to take into consideration different kinds of information and utilize different fishery management approaches in a risk management context. In order to be applicable to governance and management systems for small scale and data limited fisheries, the standard should also be applicable to relevant traditional, fisher or community approaches used by the fisheries management organization or arrangement to manage the unit of certification, provided their performance can be objectively verified. Evidence to verify the performance of the relevant traditional, fisher or community approaches would need to be established by the certification body implementing the standard and could be derived, for example, from the assessment of conformance with other GSSI Essential Components, in particular those covering the Stock and Ecosystem Status and Outcomes (D.6). If the scheme is generally applicable to all types of fisheries, (i.e. including small scale and/or data limited fisheries), then there is no need to explain the specific applicability, but in this case it may be harder for the scheme to demonstrate that the standard is indeed applicable to governance and management systems for small scale and/or data limited fisheries. In this context, it is important to recognize the great diversity of small-scale and/or data limited fisheries, as well as the fact that there is no single, agreed definition of these terms (see the Glossary). Small-scale fisheries represent a diverse and dynamic subsector, often characterized by seasonal migration. The precise characteristics of the subsector vary

D.1.09 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries	
	depending on the location. Accordingly, GSSI does not prescribe a specific definition of small-scale fisheries or data limited fisheries.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the MSC Standard was developed to be applicable to all types of fisheries regardless of scale or location. In 2009 the MSC Risk-based framework (RBF) was introduced in the MSC certification to allow data-limited fisheries to be assessed against the standard. Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance describes the RBF methodology in Annex PF and uses a precautionary approach to determine the risk that a UoA is having an unsustainable impact on any of the outcome PIs (1.1.1, 2.1.1, 2.2.1, 2.3.1, 2.4.1, 2.5.1). Clause GPF 1 states that '. MSC is aware of the existence of other risk-based analysis tools as well as the facet that the development of these tools is a continuous process. MSC has not calibrated any alternative risk-based approaches against the default assessment tree, but would encourage interested parties to consider calibration of such equivalent risk-based approaches against the SGs in the default assessment tree. Additionally, the Principle 2 information PIs (2.1.3, 2.2.3, 2.3.3, 2.4.3) include requirements on the information adequacy where the RBF is used to score associated information PIs. In recognition of the fact that developing country and small-scale fisheries may not have formal management strategies and systems guidance has been developed in Principle 1 and 3 to ensure that informal and traditional management approaches can be considered in assessments. FCR clause SA 4.1.4 states that 'where scores are based on the consideration of informal or traditional management systems, the team shall provide, in the rationale, evidence demonstrating the validity and robustness of conclusion by: a. using different methods to collect information; b. cross- checking opinions and views of different segments of the stakeholder community.'	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.09.01 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries	
GSSI Component	Guidance

D.1.09.01 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries	
The standard recognizes that the knowledge, culture and practices of small scale fisheries communities may inform responsible governance and sustainable development processes including co-management.	This Supplementary Component expands on the concept in the parent Essential Component requiring specific recognition of the contribution of the knowledge, culture and practices of small scale fishing communities to responsible governance and sustainable development processes. Co-management is mentioned specifically.

Conclusion	References
"The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 3.1.2 requires that the management system includes consultation processes that obtain relevant information including local knowledge. The management system also is required to demonstrate consideration of the information and at SG100 an explanation of how the information is or isn't used. Clause SA 4.4.5 states that teams shall interpret 'local knowledge' to mean qualitative, and/or anecdotal and/or quantitative information and/or data that come from individuals or groups local to the fisheries managed under the UoA's management system. Guidance is included in GSA 4.4.5 elaborates the importance of this local knowledge. In recognition of the fact that developing country and small-scale fisheries may not have formal management strategies and systems guidance has been developed in Principle 1 and 3 PIs to ensure that informal and traditional management approaches can be considered in assessments. In addition, in P2 it is recognised that qualitative information, if triangulated, can be used to determine the impact of a UoA on a species or habitat (PI 2.x.3 SI a; GSA 3.6.3). In guidance co-management is explictly mentioned as an activity that can generate information to estimate impact on a species (GSA3.6.3.1, Table GSA5). Table GSA8 (under GSA 3.14.2.3) describes how co-management can be used to manage impacts on habitats."	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.09.02 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the Management System, in accordance with national legislation, recognizes and respects all legitimate tenure right holders and their rights, particularly in small scale fishing communities, and takes reasonable measures to identify and record legitimate tenure right holders and their rights, whether formally recorded or not.	This Supplementary Component expands on its parent Essential Component by focusing specifically on the need to recognize and protect legitimate tenure rights in small scale fisheries, including the taking of reasonable steps to identify those tenure rights in small scale fishing communities where they may not already be formally recorded.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment as the standard requires that rights are respected, but doesn't go as far as requiring that tenure rights are identified if they haven't already been	

D.1.09.05 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Scheme makes available to fisheries management organizations or arrangements information about and communication links to international, regional, national or private funding agencies to encourage funding for small-scale fisheries research and collaborative and participatory data collection analysis and research.	This Supplementary Component is looking for action by the Scheme itself to be proactive in the sharing of information on funding for small scale fisheries research and collaborative and participatory data collection analysis and research.
Conclusion	References

D.1.09.05 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries	
The MSC is in alignment because MSC provides information about funding opportunities on its website www.msc.org. The website (link provided by MSC) addresses funding, providing some examples and inviting prospective clients to contact MSC to discuss. There is no formal strategy to link funding for small-scale fisheries and work is done on an ad hoc basis, but the MSC has 16 regional offices which include a number of outreach staff. Additionally these offices and staff have relationships with other organisations that staff can refer and assist fisheries with to obtain funding where possible e.g. Sustainable Fisheries Foundation (SFF). MSC also provides funding itself for such research through its Global Fisheries Sustainability Fund, with £400,000 available in the initial two years (see link).	• *Fishery Certification Guide*

D.1.10 Management System compliance	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the fisheries management system under which the unit of certification is managed operates in compliance with local, national and international laws and regulations, including the requirements of any regional fisheries management organization that exercises internationally recognized management jurisdiction over the fisheries on the stock under consideration.	Under this Essential Component the standard requires that the fisheries management system must operate legally (locally, nationally and internationally); the legality of the fishery (i.e. compliance with applicable fishing regulations) is covered under other requirements in this Performance Area. The term "fisheries management system" is distinct from the "fishery management organization or arrangement" Both of these terms are defined in the glossary. For the purposes of clarity, this Essential Component includes compliance with the rules and regulations of any RFMO/A that exercises internationally recognized management jurisdiction over fisheries on the stock under consideration in the high seas and implementation of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 61/105, paragraphs 76-95 concerning responsible fisheries in the marine ecosystem.

D.1.10 Management System compliance

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance PI 3.1.1 requires that there is an effective national legal system and at a minimum a framework of cooperation with other parties to deliver management outcomes consistent with MSC Principles 1 and 2. Guidance section GSA 4.3 outlines the features that would be expected to show that the operational framework could be said to be compatible with local, national or international laws or standards. Further to the above requirements for the assessment of the fishery, the MSC scope requirements in FCR 7.4.1.3 require that "The fishery shall not be conducted under a controversial unilateral exemption to an international agreement".	• *Fisheries Certification Process*

D.1.10.01 Management System compliance

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the management system to include national policies, legal and institutional frameworks for the effective management of bycatch and the reduction of discards, including those measures agreed at an international level, for example by RFMOs in which they are members or participate as cooperating non-members.	This Supplemental Component puts a greater emphasis on the legal and institutional treatment within the management system of bycatch and reduction of discards. Specifically there is a need to see explicit policies and frameworks for their effective management, and incorporation within domestic legislation of bycatch and discard measures agreed internationally.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, while not providing an explicit requirement for the management system to include policies, legal and institutional frameworks for effective management of bycatch or reduction of discard, the issue is covered effectively at the various management PIs for Principle 2, referring to management strategy for primary and secondary species and ETP. The requirements are for strategies, which might include any, some or no policies, legal and institutional frameworks, etc. The	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.10.01 Management System compliance	
FCR v2.0 tests for effectiveness and seeks evidence but does not explicitly specify each input component. MSC does require that where catches are classified as unwanted in 1.2.1, 2.1.2 and 2.2.2 or as ETP species (2.3.2) the fishery review the effectiveness of alternative measures to minimise mortality of these species and implement the alternative measures as appropriate. Where there is legislation to manage bycatch or reduce discards this would be considered under 3.2.3 (c) and require evidence that fishers comply with the management system requirement.	

D.1.11 Fishery compliance	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the fishery of which the Unit of Certification is a part is managed under an effective legal framework at the local, national or regional (international) level as appropriate.	Legal framework is described in the Glossary. An effective legal framework is one that is shown to be fit for purpose, such that the fishery seeking certification proceeds in an orderly and well controlled manner. An effective legal framework should enable the fisheries management organization or arrangement to perform its functions without hindrance from systemic and repeated illegal activity. An effective legal framework can be one that incorporates traditional, fisher or community approaches (e.g. co-management under community approaches) provided their performance can be objectively verified. With respect to fisheries in the high seas, the legal obligations of UNCLOS and UNFSA have particular relevance. See also Essential Component D.1.12 regarding the need for effective and suitable monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement of the fishery of which the unit of certification is a part. Evidence of the performance of the legal framework can be derived from the assessment of conformance with other Essential Components, in particular D.1.12 and D.1.13 covering compliance and enforcement.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 3.1.1 requires that the management system exists within an appropriate and effective legal and/or customary framework. The introductory section to the Principle 3 requirements, FCR SA 4.1 requires that assessors	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.11 Fishery compliance	
shall determine and state the jurisdictional categories that apply to the management system of the UoA when assessing its performance under Principle 3. For the management system thus determined, SA4.3.1 confirms that ""The team shall focus scoring [of PI 3.1.1] on whether or not there is an appropriate and effective legal and/or customary framework that is capable of delivering sustainability in the UoA(s) in accordance with P1 and P 2."" The specific requirements by which the team must interpret compatibility with laws and standards are given in Sections SA4.3.2-4.3.5 for categories of fisheries subject to different levels of international cooperation.	

D.1.12 Fishery compliance	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires effective and suitable monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement of the fishery of which the unit of certification is a part.	Effective and suitable monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement is described in the Glossary. Evidence of high levels of compliance in the fishery of which the Unit of Certification is a part with all applicable local, national and international laws and regulations (as appropriate, per Essential Component D.1.10) would be indicative of effective monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement. The suitability of monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement for the fishery of which the Unit of Certification is a part should be assessed by the technical team undertaking the assessment for certification relative to the standard. Both this Essential Component and Essential Component D.1.11 (effective legal framework) derive from Paragraph 29.5 (36.6) of the Ecolabelling Guidelines which refers to “the fishery”. It is, therefore, the effective and suitable monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement of the "fishery" (see Glossary) that is the subject of this Essential Component, and this may extend beyond the unit of certification (as per paragraph 25 of the Guidelines, the unit of certification could encompass: the whole fishery, where a fishery refers to the activity of one particular gear-type or method leading to the harvest of one or more species; a sub-component of a fishery, for example a national fleet fishing a shared stock; or

D.1.12 Fishery compliance	
	several fisheries operating on the same resources). If the stock under consideration is not transboundary, then the Standard need only be concerned with the effectiveness and suitability of the monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement activities at the national level for the fishery of which the Unit of Certification is a part. For transboundary stocks, however, there are several Essential Components that apply such that the Standard must be concerned with fishery management and compliance at the international level and the status of the whole stock across its entire range. Essential Component D.1.11 covers the need for an effective legal framework at the local, national or regional (international) level as appropriate and Essential Component D.1.13 covers the need for the Unit of Certification to be operating in compliance with the requirements of local, national and international law and regulations. Under Essential Component D.1.07, where the stock under consideration is a transboundary fish stock, straddling fish stock, highly migratory fish stock or high seas fish stock, the standard must require the existence of a bilateral, subregional or regional fisheries organization or arrangement (e.g. an RFMO), as appropriate, covering the stock under consideration over its entire area of distribution. This is to make sure that management of these stocks and fleets that fish on them is coordinated at the international level. RFMOs are not generally responsible directly for monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement; this is done by national authorities (i.e. of vessels operating within their waters of national jurisdiction and also of vessels flying their flag when they are fishing outside of those waters). If the Unit of Certification is part of a national fleet fishing on a transboundary stock, then it is still likely to be the effectiveness and suitability of the monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement activities at the national level which is of prime importance for certification. If the Unit of Certification covers all the fishing on the stock under consideration, then the monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement all of the national fleets is of concern. Note also that under Essential Component D.4.02 (assessment of the stock under consideration), the Standard must require assessment of the current status and trends of the stock under consideration to consider total fishing mortality on that stock from all sources, and under Essential Component D.6.01, the stock under consideration must not be overfished. Hence any deficiencies in the monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement of fleets fishing on a stock under consideration that is a transboundary fish stock, straddling fish stock, highly migratory fish stock or high seas fish stock that compromise the effective assessment of the status of that stock would need to be of concern for certification.

D.1.12 Fishery compliance	
	Article 7.7.2 of the CCRF requires states to ensure that laws and regulations provide for sanctions applicable in respect of violations which are adequate in severity to be effective. Article 7.7.3 of the CCRF requires states, in conformity with their national laws, to implement effective fisheries monitoring, control, surveillance and law enforcement measures including, where appropriate, observer programs, inspection schemes and vessel monitoring systems. Standards may refer to these mechanisms as appropriate.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 3.2.3 requires that there must be a monitoring control and surveillance (MCS) system in place as evidence that fishers comply with the requirements of the management system and there is no evidence of systematic non-compliance. GSA 4.9 confirms that this is scored at the 'fishery-specific management system' level, which may extend beyond the limit of the defined UoC. It also provides additional guidance including that assessments may consider the likelihood of infractions in a particular fishery as the basis for determining the suitability of the MCS system for the fishery. Evaluation of effectiveness of MCS in fisheries where a less formalised MCS system exists may consider the role and effectiveness of a range of factors in deterring illegal activity (e.g. prevailing norms, self-monitoring etc.). For scoring issue (b), in some fisheries management systems, or for particular types of fisheries, it may be difficult to demonstrate an ability to enforce relevant management measures, strategies and/or rules if violations are rare. However, an absence of violations (or absence of a record of sanctions and penalties for violations) does not necessarily indicate that compliance and enforcement are effective; it could mean that MCS is in fact ineffective and what is happening is an absence of detection.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.13 Fishery compliance	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the	This requirement covers the compliance of the Unit of Certification with all applicable laws and regulations. Paragraph 28 (35) of the Ecolabelling Guidelines requires compliance both by the fishery and the management system. The

D.1.13 Fishery compliance	
Unit of Certification operates in compliance with the requirements of local, national and international law and regulations.	requirement for the management system to be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations is addressed in Essential Component D.1.10. Conformance with this Essential Component should be considered alongside Essential Component D.1.12 - the requirement for effective and suitable monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement. Conformance with this Essential Component requires there to be no evidence of systematic (methodical, regular, organized) or systemic (universal, throughout the system) non-compliance by fishers in the unit of certification with the requirements of local, national and international law and regulations. However, a lack of evidence of non-compliance by itself may not be sufficient if the monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement is not effective and suitable for the fishery. Evidence of non-compliance may come from a variety of sources, including local and national monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement programs, regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs), and third party bodies such as industry organizations and non-governmental organizations. The Standard should require all of these sources to be consulted and taken into consideration.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 3.1.1 requires that there is an effective national legal system and at a minimum a framework of cooperation with other parties to deliver management outcomes consistent with MSC Principles 1 and 2. PI 3.2.3 requires that there must be a monitoring control and surveillance (MCS) system in place as evidence that fishers comply with the requirements of the management system and there is no evidence of systematic non-compliance. GSA4.1 confirms that the PIs in the 'fishery-specific management component' (PIs 3.2.*) focus on the fishery of which the Unit of Certification is a part'. GSA 4.9 provides additional guidance including that assessments may consider the likelihood of infractions in a particular fishery as the basis for determining the suitability of the MCS system for the fishery. Evaluation of effectiveness of MCS in fisheries where a less formalised MCS system exists may consider the role and effectiveness of a range of factors in deterring illegal activity (e.g. prevailing norms, self-monitoring etc.). For scoring issue (b), in some fisheries management systems, or for particular types of fisheries, it may be difficult to demonstrate an ability to enforce relevant management measures, strategies and/or rules if violations are rare. However, an absence of violations (or absence of a	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.13 Fishery compliance	
record of sanctions and penalties for violations) does not necessarily indicate that compliance and enforcement are effective; it could mean that MCS is in fact ineffective and what is happening is an absence of detection.	

D.1.14 Management Documentation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of documented management approaches or other management framework covering the unit of certification and the stock under consideration, including management measures consistent with achieving management objectives for the stock under consideration.	A documented management approach or other management framework is an important component of the Management System. It provides clarity and transparency with respect to how the system is intended to function. The establishment of management approaches for the stock under consideration may not be entirely within the purview of the fishery management organization or arrangement that manages the fishery of which the Unit of Certification is a part. The stock's distribution may extend beyond its area of jurisdiction and there may be other fisheries targeting the stock under consideration that fall under a separate administrative jurisdiction (potentially in another country). Nevertheless the management measures that apply to the unit of certification should be consistent with achieving management objectives for the stock under consideration. There is no uniform way that management approaches need to be documented (for example they do not have to be all within one overarching Fishery Management Plan), but the standard must require the various elements of the management system to be present and identifiable and in use by the fishery management organization or arrangement (D.1.01) , including the constitution and rules and procedures of the Fisheries Management Organization or Arrangement and the compliance regime (D.1.01-D.1.03; D.1.07); the legal framework (D.1.11); the management objectives (D.2); methodologies (D.4) although not necessarily all within one overarching Fishery Management Plan. It should be expected that the documentation would be current. The frequency of updates should be consistent with the requirements of meeting the management objectives and implementing management measures.
Conclusion	References

D.1.14 Management Documentation

The MSC is in alignment because Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance states that PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. PI 1.1.1 SG80 requires that it is highly likely that the stock is above PRI (highly likely = 80% probability that the true status of the stock is high than the point at which there is an appreciable risk of recruitment being impaired) and that the stock is at or fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY. PI 1.2.2 requires that there are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place that reduce the exploitation rate as the PRI is approached. Such HCRs should be regarded as 'well-defined' in the sense required to achieve an 80 score when they exist in some written form (i.e. 'documented') that has been agreed by the management agency, ideally with stakeholders, and clearly state what actions will be taken at what specific trigger reference point levels (GSA2.5). Further, Principle 3 of the MSC standard requires that the fishery is subject to an effective management system. PI 3.1.1 - 3.1.3 capture the broad high-level context of the fishery management system while PI 3.2.1 - 3.2.4 focuses on the management system directly applied to the fishery. FCR clause SA 4.1 requires that assessors state the jurisdictional categories that apply to the management system of the UoA when assessing performance of the UoA under Principle 3. FCR clause SA 4.1.3 allows that the performance of other fisheries management bodies where they are also subject to international cooperation to manage stock shall not be individually assessed expect where they impact directly on P1 and P2 outcomes and/or P3 implementation. SA4.1.4 states that where scores are based on the consideration of informal or traditional management systems, the team shall provide rationale, evidence demonstrating the validity and robustness of conclusions by using different methods and cross-checking opinions and views from different segments of the stakeholder community. SA 4.1.5 states that teams shall consider the scale and intensity of the UoA in determining the appropriateness of the management system. MSC further notes that the MSC requirements allow some flexibility in the nature of the 'documentation' of the management system, consistent with the different types of fisheries. Fisheries managed by RFMOs and agencies in the developed world would normally be able to cite documented evidence for the different aspects of management. GSA4.1.4 notes that ""A key characteristic of management mechanisms and measures in traditionally managed or	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.14 Management Documentation	
self-governing UoAs is that they may be undocumented or may not be formally ratified"". Even in these cases, the harvest control rules are expected to be 'well-defined' in some written form, as scored in PI 1.2.2, and guidance is given for several PIs about the potential means of verification in such informally managed approaches. It is noted that the GSSI requirements expect that the standard requires ""documented management approaches or other management framework"" implying some flexibility in approach here.	

D.1.14.01 Management Documentation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the documented management approaches or other management framework covering the unit of certification and the stock under consideration includes the provision of advice that contributes to the attainment of objectives for the management of bycatch and reduction of discards in the fishery of which the Unit of Certification is a part.	This Supplementary Component is seeking to ensure that the documented management approach or other management framework for the fishery of which the Unit of Certification is a part specifically includes management of bycatch and reduction of discards.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance states that PI 1.2.1 (f) requires that fisheries continually review alternative measures to encourage the development and implementation of technologies and operational methods that minimise mortality of unwanted catch, taking into account the practicality of the measures, their potential impact on other species and habitats and on the overall cost of implementing the measures. Box GSA8 clarifies MSC's intent on unwanted species and habitats, which is summarised here: Prior to the release of CR v2.0, the MSC Certification Requirements did not adequately take into account the MSC Principles & Criteria in relation to bycatch, namely that fisheries should ""make use of fishing gear and practices designed to avoid the capture of non-target species; minimise mortality of this catch where it cannot be avoided, and reduce discards of what cannot be released alive"" (Criterion 3B.12). The MSC definition of unwanted catch has been adapted from part of the	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.14.01 Management Documentation

description of 'bycatch' in FAO (2011); it is the part of the catch that a fisher did not intend to catch but could not avoid, and did not want or chose not to use. Changes in the have been made to motivate fishers to continually ""think smart"" about their impact on the environment (species and habitats); both in delivering the sustainable impact most efficiently, and continuing to reduce their impact beyond that and to balance this desire with efficiency by not spending a lot of money and time generating only marginal improvements. Fisheries need to either review alternative measures that are shown to minimise mortality of the species or species group in question (SA3.5.3). Fisheries need also to consider alternative measures to reduce impacts on habitats. Fisheries should take account of the potential for both positive and negative impacts of alternative measures on species and habitats (refer to GSA3.14.2) when considering whether such measures should be implemented. Alternative measures should avoid capture of the species in the first place or increase its survivability if released. Alternatively, in the case of in-scope species, they could utilise the unwanted catch in some way so that it would no longer be 'unwanted'. MSC further notes that GSA3.5 includes the following guidance which confirms the MSC expectation for some documented evidence. Scoring issue (e) Review of alternative measures, When assessing this scoring issue, CABs are expected to review evidence to determine whether the client (UoA) has undertaken a review of the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise mortality of unwanted catch of main species, in order to achieve the SG60 level. This evidence could be, for example, a summary document listing information and measures reviewed along with an analysis of the measures and their appropriateness for the UoA, or the minutes of a meeting which has considered alternative measures.	

D.1.14.02 Management Documentation

GSSI Component	Guidance

D.1.14.02 Management Documentation	
The standard requires the incorporation of bycatch management planning into broader fisheries management plans, providing the fishery of which the unit of certification is part requires bycatch management action. This planning should include objectives, strategies, standards and measures directed at managing bycatch and reducing discards.	This Supplementary Component is looking for an integration of bycatch management planning within broader fisheries management plans.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the MSC Fishery Standard, Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing include the operational criteria that fishing operation shall make use of fishing gear and practices designed to avoid the capture of non-target species (and non-target size, age, and/or sex of the target species); minimise mortality of this catch where it cannot be avoided, and reduce discards of what cannot be released alive. In Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, new scoring issues have been added to the P1 Harvest Strategy (PI 1.2.1) and P2 Species Management PIs (PI 2.1.2, 2.2.2, 2.3.2) requiring fisheries to continually review alternative measures to encourage the development and implementation of technologies and operational methods that minimise mortality of unwanted catch or ETP species, taking into account the practicality of the measures, their potential impact on other species and habitats and on the overall cost of implementing the measures.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.14.03 Management Documentation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard for the management system requires the existence of a current and regularly updated Fishery Management Plan (FMP), incorporating management objectives and management measures to achieve those objectives, for the stock under consideration and pertinent aspects of the ecosystem effects of fishing.	A Fishery Management Plan is required. This Supplementary Component relates to the process by which that plan is maintained.
Conclusion	References

D.1.14.03 Management Documentation	
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PIs 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 2.1.2, 2.2.2, 2.3.2, 2.4.2, 2.5.2 require that there are measures/strategy in place to manage the impact of the fishery on ecological components. These PIs require that the measures/strategy are in place, evaluated, implemented and reviewed (with some caveats). Additionally, PI 3.2.1 requires that the fishery specific management system has clear, specific objectives designed to achieve outcomes expressed by MSC principle 1 and 2. While there are no explicit requirement to have a Fishery Management Plan this is implicit in the aforementioned PIs and requirements. Further, MSC notes that The MSC Standard does not explicitly require a written FMP document. Each of the normal components of such plans are required by MSC, but it is not a requirement for them to be presented jointly as one single plan document. The parent clause D.3.01 states: ""There is no uniform way that management approaches need to be documented (for example they do not have to be all within one overarching Fishery Management Plan)"", hence the rationale provided shouch be adequate.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.15 Management Documentation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Standard requires that the methodology and results of assessments of the current status and trends of the stock under consideration are made publicly available in a timely manner, respecting confidentiality where appropriate.	This Essential Component is included under the Element of Management Documentation, but is essentially about transparency. It is linked with Essential Component D.1.08 that addressed Participatory Management. To meet that Essential Component, the standard must require the fisheries management organization or arrangement to make information and advice used in its decision-making publicly available. The methodology and results of assessments of the current status and trends of the stock under consideration is part of the information and advice used in this

D.1.15 Management Documentation	
	decision-making. The publication of this information may be constrained by legitimate rules governing confidentiality .

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI3.2.2 SIb focuses on the responsiveness of decision-making processes, requiring that at minimum (SG60) they respond to serious issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take some account of the wider implications of decisions. At the SG80 & SG100 levels, increasing levels of responsiveness (ie to all issues at SG100) are required. Additionally PI 3.2.2 (d) relates to the accountability and transparency of the management system and decision-making process, requiring that information (increasing levels of information required moving up the SGs) on the fishery's performance and management action is available on request to stakeholders (or formally reported on in SG100), and from SG80 that explanations are provided for any lack of action (or description of management response at SG100) related to findings and relevant recommendations emerging from research, monitoring, evaluation and review activity. In addition, PI 1.2.4 requires that there is an adequate assessment of the stock status. PI 1.2.4 (d) requires that the assessment has been tested and shown to be robust. Alternative hypotheses and assessment approaches have been rigorously explored. PI 1.2.4 (e) at SG100 requires that the assessment has been internally and externally peer reviewed. At SG100 PI 3.1.2 (b) requires that the management system includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information including local knowledge and that the management system demonstrates consideration of the information and explains how it is used or not used. Further to the above, FCR section 4.4.1 requires that ""The CAB shall ensure that un-published key information, which is necessary for stakeholders to be able to properly review the logic used by the team to score a PI, are made available"". Sub-section 4.4.1.1 further confirms that ""The CAB shall make unpublished key information available before the posting of the Public Comment Draft Report, and shall ensure that the information is available throughout the subsequent stages of	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.15 Management Documentation	
the assessment process until such time as a certification decision is made."" Section 4.5 provides for confidentiality agreements to be put in place, where any such information is of a sensitive nature.	

D.1.16 Management Documentation	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Standard requires that the methodology and results of the analysis of the most probable adverse impacts of the unit of certification and any associated culture and enhancement activity on the ecosystem are made publicly available in a timely manner, respecting confidentiality where appropriate.	This Essential Component is included under the Element of Management Documentation, but is essentially about transparency. It is linked with Essential Component D.1.08 that addressed Participatory Management. To meet that Essential Component, the standard must require the fisheries management organization or arrangement to make information and advice used in its decision-making publicly available. The methodology and results of the analysis of the most probable adverse impacts of the unit of certification and any associated culture and enhancement activity on the ecosystem is part of the information and advice used in this decision-making. The publication of this information may be constrained by legitimate rules governing confidentiality.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard, PI 3.1.2 requires the management system to have effective consultation processes that are open to interested and affected parties, with the roles and responsibilities involved clearly defined and understood. Additionally PI 3.2.2d requires transparency of management decisions and reporting to interested stakeholders.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.17 Consultation and Review

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the efficacy of management measures and their possible interactions is kept under continuous review, taking into account the multipurpose nature of the use patterns in inland and marine waters.	The purpose of consultation and review regarding the efficacy of conservation and management measures and their possible interactions is to ensure that there is a well based expectation that management will be successful, taking into account uncertainty and imprecision. "Management measures" in this Requirement are the measures referred to in the other Essential Components in this Performance Area. They are regarded as being synonymous with the "conservation and management measures" referred to in CCRF Article 7.6.8. The expression "taking into account the multipurpose nature of the use patterns in inland and marine waters" refers to the uncertainty arising from other (non-fishery) impacts on the fishery. For example, if there are other users from other sectors, fishery management, although not being able to control those sectors, should take their impacts into account when devising the strategy for achieving management objectives. This is akin to taking into account all sources of mortality on the fish stock, from fishing and non-fishing sources. For example, if water is abstracted from rivers at certain times of the year and this has an adverse impact on the fish stock, management of the fishery should address that fact (perhaps by reducing fishing or having a closed season at this time), although not being able to influence when and to what extent the water is abstracted. In a coastal context, the fishery management should be integrated with coastal zone management to the extent necessary to account for non-fishing impacts.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, Principle 3 of the MSC standard requires that the fishery is subject to an effective management system. PI 3.2.4 requires that there is a system for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the fishery-specific management system against its objectives and that there is effective and timely review of the fishery-specific management system. This includes consideration of the coverage of the management system evaluation, and whether it's subject to internal and external review. GSA 2.2.7 looks at the consideration of environmental variability and human-induced impacts. The guidance elaborates that MSC recognizes the multipurpose nature of use patterns particularly in coastal and inland waters. Examples include the clearance of mangrove swamps affecting fish nursery areas, dam construction for water supply and power, channelization for navigation and flood control,	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.17 Consultation and Review	
land drainage and wetland reclamation for agricultural uses etc. Such uses are generally fundamental to the functioning of modern society and outside of the management control of the fishing sector. Where users from other sectors (non-fishery) have impacts on the fishery, management should take into account these impacts when devising a strategy for achieving management objectives.	

D.1.17.01 Consultation and Review		
GSSI Component	Guidance	
The standard requires a regular assessment through periodic review of plans and management measures addressing bycatch, reduction of discards and reduction of post-released mortality to ensure that they continue to meet goals and objectives and for adjustment, as appropriate.	To meet this Supplemental Component, the standard must require review of all plans relating to bycatch management and discard reduction measures.	
Conclusion		References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, new scoring issues have been added to the P1 Harvest Strategy (PI 1.2.1) and P2 Species Management PIs (PI 2.1.2, 2.2.2, 2.3.2) requiring fisheries to continually review alternative measures to encourage the development and implementation of technologies and operational methods that minimise mortality of unwanted catch or ETP species, taking into account the practicality of the measures, their potential impact on other species and habitats and on the overall cost of implementing the measures.		• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.1.17.02 Consultation and Review	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires a review of the systems for the regular monitoring of the effectiveness of management measures for bycatch management and reduction of discards, assessed against the management objectives.	To meet this Supplementary Component, the standard must require review of the systems for the regular monitoring of the effectiveness of management measures for bycatch management and reduction of discards. This review must be relative to the management objectives for bycatch management and reduction of discards.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 3.2.4 requires that there is a system for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the fishery-specific management system against its objectives and that there is effective and timely review of the fishery-specific management system. GSA 4.10 states that 'relevant parts' of the fishery-specific management system may include, data collection, scientific research, MCS, monitoring systems as required by the management strategy and information PIs in P1 and P2.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

D.2.01 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management objectives that are applicable to the unit of certification and the stock under consideration and seek outcomes consistent with the long term sustainable use of the fisheries resources under management.	The Standard must show evidence of requiring the existence of clearly stated management objectives that meet the description in the Glossary. The appropriateness of those objectives is tested through the assessment of conformance with Essential Components in other Performance Areas, including, the actions (management measures, monitoring etc.) taken to meet them and the outcomes for the stock under consideration and the ecosystem. The "fishery" referred to in Paragraph 28 of the Guidelines encompasses both the unit of certification and the stock under consideration (as per paragraph 28.1), as do the management objectives referred to in this Essential Component.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because the MSC Standard requires management objectives in terms of maximum sustainable yield (MSY) or other proxies/ indicators with similar intent and outcome. For an unconditional pass, a fishery must demonstrate biomass at this level and that the accompanying harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and that its elements work together towards achieving stock management objectives (MSY). Management objectives for the system are described inVersion 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance in the sections addressing PI 3.1.3 and for the UoC at PI 3.2.1. Management objectives are also referred to at PI 1.2.1 but only 'as reflected in PI 1.1.1'.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.02 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the management objectives clearly define target and limit reference points, or proxies for the stock under consideration on the basis of the best scientific evidence available and in accordance with the Precautionary Approach. Target reference points must be consistent with achieving Maximum Sustainable Yield, MSY (or a suitable proxy) on average and limit reference points (or proxies) must be consistent with avoiding recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	The Glossary provides descriptions of target and limit reference points. Reference points must be set at levels consistent with achieving maximum sustainable yield (MSY) (or a suitable proxy) on average, or a lesser fishing mortality if that is optimal in the circumstances of the fishery (e.g. multispecies fisheries) or to avoid severe adverse impacts on dependent predators. To be effective, reference points must be incorporated within a framework of decision rules (See D.5.02) to ensure that the stock does not fall below a limit, Blim, at which recruitment could be significantly impaired, or lead to average recruitment that is significantly lower than it would be with a higher stock biomass. The level of Blim should be set on the basis of historical information, applying an appropriate level of precaution according to the reliability of that information. In addition, an upper limit should be set on fishing mortality, Flim, which is the fishing mortality rate that, if sustained, would drive biomass down to the Blim level. A proxy is a surrogate or substitute approach that results in acceptable outcomes consistent with the primary approach. In the context of reference points, when data are insufficient to estimate reference points directly other measures of productive capacity can serve as reasonable substitutes or “proxies”. Suitable proxies may be, for example, standardized cpue as a proxy for biomass or specific levels of fishing mortality and biomass which have proven useful in other fisheries and can be used with a reasonable degree of confidence in the absence of better defined levels. It is important to note that the use of a proxy may involve additional uncertainty, and if so, should trigger the use of extra precaution in the setting of biological reference points. The words “or proxies” are a consideration for small scale and/or data limited fisheries, This should not be interpreted to mean that small scale and/or data limited fisheries do not require target and limit reference

D.2.02 Certified Stocks	
	points, but that the methods used to develop them and monitor the stock status in relation to them may be less data intensive than for large scale fisheries. See also Essential Components D.1.09 and D.3.07.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance is comprehensive in measuring and providing guidance on reference points both as measures of outcome (PI 1.1.1) and for use within decision rules (PI 1.2.2). The distinction is clear in FCR version 2.0. Scoring is well-defined in relation to probabilistic outcomes which are clearly precautioary. PI 1.1.1, Stock Status, requires management objectives as defined by the acheivement of MSY and avoiding the Point of Recruitment Impairement (PRI). Clause SA2.2.3 allows for proxy indicators and reference points, but assessment teams must justify their use as reasonable proxies for the PRI/MSY. There is substatnial guidance on what are acceptable proxies and how to score them within MSC. PI 1.2.4, Assessment of stock status, requires that the assessment estimates stock status relative to reference points that are appropriate to the stock and can be estimated.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.02.01 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance
In requiring management objectives consistent with avoiding adverse impacts on the stock(s) under consideration that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible, the standard recognizes that many marine resources exploited in DSFs in the high seas	In requiring management objectives consistent with avoiding adverse impacts on the stock(s) under consideration that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible, to meet this Supplementary Component the standard is expected to include explicit recognition of the characteristics of marine resources exploited in DSFs in the high seas that create specific challenges for their sustainable utilization and exploitation.

D.2.02.01 Certified Stocks	
have low productivity and are only able to sustain very low exploitation rates. Also when these resources are depleted, recovery is expected to be long and is not assured.	These include: (i) maturation at relatively old ages; (ii) slow growth; (iii) long life expectancies; (iv) low natural mortality rates; (v) intermittent recruitment of successful year classes; and (vi) spawning that may not occur every year.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance states: PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. PI 1.1.1 SG80 requires that it is highly likely that the stock is above PRI (highly likely = 80% probability that the true status of the stock is high than the point at which there is an appreciable risk of recruitment being impaired) and that the stock is at or fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY. PI 1.1.2 requires that where the stock is reduced, there is evidence of stock rebuilding within a specified timeframe. Explicit reference is made in GSA2.2.3.1 to low productivity stocks (such as exist in DSFs) and the use of higher default reference points. Such species require very low exploitation rates to meet the MSC standard, whether they live in the deep sea or not. Low productivity stocks are also treated in a more precautionary manner in the RBF with clear scoring guidance based on various life history characteristics. The intent of this supplementary component is met through the comprehensive general guidance provided in the MSC scheme including that in GSA2.2.3.1. Reference points in the 2015 Ross Sea Toothfish assessment were reported in the scoring of PI 1.1.2 to be estimated specifically for the characteristics of this DSF stock. The target reference point set in the harvest control rule is 50% of the unexploited level, B0. This is relatively precautionary, and higher than the 40%B0 MSC default applicable to stocks with 'average productivity'. The limit reference point in the fishery is only set at a default level 20%B0 level, but the additional precaution built into the harvest strategy (see D2.03.02 above) should ensure that such level is avoided. Such scoring of the stock reference points would apply to PIs 1.1.1 and 1.2.2 as appropriate in FCR 2.0. Auditors are clearly aware of the need for special scoring of such deep water species and the application of a precautionary approach in this situation.	• Ross Sea Toothfish PCR (pdf)

D.2.02.02 Certified Stocks

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that fishery management plans for DSFs in the high seas include biological reference points for the stock under consideration set at levels that ensure, at a minimum, that fish stocks are harvested at levels that are sustainable in the long term. Appropriate biological reference points for stock assessment and management need to be set in a precautionary manner and determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the different target stocks, fishery characteristics, and the state of knowledge about the species and fishery.	To meet this Supplementary Component, standards are expected to recognize the specific characteristics of marine resources exploited in DSF in the high seas in setting suitable biological reference points.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance states in PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. PI 1.1.1 SG80 requires that it is highly likely that the stock is above PRI (highly likely = 80% probability that the true status of the stock is high than the point at which there is an appreciable risk of recruitment being impaired) and that the stock is at or fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY. PI 1.1.2 requires that where the stock is reduced, there is evidence of stock rebuilding within a specified timeframe. Extensive guidance is given in FCR v2.0 section GSA2.2.3 relating to the use of precaution in setting default and proxy levels of reference points. The application of the precautionary approach is also expected in setting the objectives of management in PI 3.1.3, which states at the SG80 level ""Clear long term objectives that guide decision-making, consistent with MSC Fisheries Standard and the precautionary approach, are explicit within management policy."" Implicit precaution is also required at the SG60 level.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.03 Enhanced Fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires, in the case of enhanced fisheries, the existence of management objectives consistent with avoiding significant negative impacts of enhancement activities on the natural reproductive stock component of the stock under consideration and any other wild stocks from which the organisms for stocking are being removed..	All Essential Components that address Enhanced Fisheries can be "not applicable" to schemes that do not cover these fisheries. However, it is incumbent on the scheme to explicitly exclude enhanced fisheries (rather than explicitly include them) in order for these requirements to be not applicable. If the scheme remains silent on the issue of enhanced fisheries, then the standard could potentially be applied to fisheries that include enhanced components, but if these are not properly dealt with by the standard (i.e. as per GSSI Essential Components) then the scheme would be deficient when being used to certify such fisheries. In essence, the default position is that a scheme/standard can be applied to enhanced fisheries unless it excludes them explicitly. The term "significant negative impacts" is used in the FAO Inland Guidelines. This was not intended to be equivalent to "severe adverse impacts" (on dependent predators). The FAO consultation that resulted in the drafting of the Inland Guidelines considered that avoidance of "severe adverse impacts" only would not be consistent with a management obligation to manage enhancement in ways that would not impact the productivity and abundance of the natural reproductive stock component of the stock under consideration. Any displacement of the naturally reproductive stock components of enhanced stocks must not reduce the natural reproductive stock components below abundance-based Target Reference Points or their proxies. Note that the Target Reference Points are for the natural reproductive stock component. For example, in the case of salmon fisheries, if the spawning stock is comprised of fish both from enhanced and natural origins, the escapement goal considers only the natural origin component. An example Target Reference Point would be an escapement target based on the natural reproductive stock component.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance addresses enhanced fisheries with modified assessment trees have been developed specifically for enhanced fisheries and they function as a supplement to the Default Assessment Tree (Annex SA).	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.03 Enhanced Fisheries

Annex SB (Enhanced Bivalves) under Principle 1 requires that teams evaluate whether there is evidence that and enhanced catch-and -grow (CAG) bivalve fishery negatively impacts the parent stock. Bivalve fisheries involving hatchery enhancement assessed as hatch-and-catch (HAC) have to be scored against 'genetics PIs' (1.1.3, 1.2.5, 1.2.6). PI 1.1.3 requires that the fishery has unlikely impact on the genetic structure of wild populations to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. PI 1.2.5 requires that there is a strategy for managing the hatchery enhancement activity such that it does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the genetic diversity of the wild population.

Annex SC (Salmon) includes three additional PIs, as well as added scoring issues within other PIs, that specifically assess enhancement issues, The 'enhancement PIs'; 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3. These three PIs require that enhancement activities do not negatively impact wild stocks (1.3.1), that effective management strategies are in place to address the effects of enhancement activities on wild stocks (PI 1.3.2) and that relevant information is collected and assessments are adequate to determine the effect of enhancement activities on wild stocks. At SG80 PI 1.3.1 requires that it is highly likely that the enhancement activities do not have significant negative impacts on the local adaptation, reproductive performance or productivity and diversity of wild stocks.

Additionally, salmon fisheries also have specific requirements on harvest strategy (PI 1.2.1) to ensure that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy is in place that is expected to achieve stock management unit (SMU) management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80 including measures that address component population status issues. Clause SC 2.2.2 clarifies that in an enhanced fishery, the team shall assess status based solely on the wild salmon in the SMU. SC 2.2.2.1 Artificially-produced fish shall not be counted toward meeting spawning escapement goals, or other surrogate reference points.

This component is only required, as explicitly stated in the wording ""in the case of enhanced fisheries"". The MSC response confirmed the coverage of the standard to the common types of enhanced bivalve and salmonid fisheries (in the specially adapted trees in Annexes SB and SC respectively). Assessments of other types of

D.2.03 Enhanced Fisheries	
enhanced fishery are also expected to cover the impacts of their enhancement activities on both the associated wild stock, and P2 components, as outlined in FCR section 7.7.4. A recent example of the application of these requirements in the v2.0 Annex SB is the VA Kamchatka salmon fishery - see PIs 1.3.1-1.3.3. In this case the fishery was confirmed as having no hatchery or other enhancement activities, and hence scored highly for this component. For FAD fisheries, these fall under scope C (within the Fisheries Certification Process) of when habitat enhancement has taken place. This means the CAB would then need to consider if the default tree was suitable to assess the fishery, or if they need to modify the tree to include specific PIs. The process for deciding if a fishery is enhanced, and the process for modifying the assessment tree are set out in FCP v2.3 Section 7.4 and 7.7.1 respectively.	

D.2.04 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires management objectives that seek to ensure that catches and discards by the unit of certification of stocks other than the stock under consideration and any associated culture and enhancement activity do not threaten those stocks with recruitment overfishing or other	This Essential Component covers "non-certified catches" which is everything other than the stock under consideration. This Essential Component is explicitly and deliberately confined to the effects of non- certified catches and discards by the unit of certification on those non-certified species/stocks. Cumulative effects on non-certified species/stocks are not included in the Ecolabelling Guidelines. They are not part of the Essential Components, but they are covered in the Supplemental Components. The part of the component relating to enhancement activity may be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover enhanced fisheries.

D.2.04 Non-Certified Catches	
impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	Examples of irreversible or very slowly reversible effects on bycatch species include excessive depletion of very long-lived organisms (see Glossary). To mitigate effects that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible requires those effects to be made less severe such that they are no longer likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.

Conclusion	References
Stock status of non-certified catches is covered in Primary species (managed species) (PI 2.1.X), Secondary species (non-managed species) (PI2.2.X) and Endangered, Threatened & Protected species (PI2.3.X). For each, the outcome, information and management are considered. For primary species, at PI 2.1.1 it is required that The UoA aims to maintain primary species above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI) and does not hinder recovery of primary species if they are below the PRI. There also needs to be a management strategy in place for these species designed to maintain or to not hinder rebuilding of primary species; and the UoA regularly reviews and implements measures, as appropriate, to minimise the mortality of unwanted catch (PI 2.1.2). For secondary species, the requirement is that The UoA aims to maintain secondary species above a biologically based limit and does not hinder recovery of secondary species if they are below a biologically based limit (PI 2.2.1). There also needs to be a strategy in place for managing secondary species that is designed to maintain or to not hinder rebuilding of secondary species; and the UoA regularly reviews and implements measures, as appropriate, to minimise the mortality of unwanted catch (PI 2.2.2). The requirements for ETP species are that where international or national limits apply, these species are within that and where there aren't any, the UoA is not hindering recovery of the species (through direct or indirect impacts). The UoA also must have a management plan in place to ensure that limits are not being breached, or that hindering of recovery does not occur (PI 2.3.2). For ETP management scoring the following applies: SA3.11.1.1 All sources of direct mortality shall be considered, including, but not limited to, direct deaths and injuries leading to death. For all three components, information is required to support the effective management and understanding of the species under consideration. Enhanced fisheries have the same requirements.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.04.01 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management objectives for the use and management of that portion of the full catch of which bycatch and discards are subsets, and that such plans are consistent with the CCRF.	Management objectives required by the standard should include, inter alia, reduction of post-harvest losses and waste, and encouragement for those involved in fish processing, distribution and marketing to improve the use of by-catch, to the extent that this is consistent with responsible fisheries management practices. The over-riding aim should be to minimize waste including, where appropriate, loss of productivity to the marine ecosystem.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, for primary species (PIs 2.1.x) the UoA is required to aim to maintain primary species above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI) and does not hinder recovery of primary species if they are below the PRI. Secondary species are those that are not managed according to reference points and out-of-scope species (birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals) that are not ETP. For PI 2.2.1 the UoA is required to aim to maintain secondary species above a biological based limit and does not hinder recovery or rebuilding below a biological based limit. At an overarching, fishery-wide level, PI 3.2.1 requires at SG80 that ""Short and long term objectives, which are consistent with achieving the outcomes expressed by MSC's Principles 1 and 2, are explicit within the fishery-specific management system"". FCR v2.0 also includes scoring issues for both P1 and P2 species (in PIs 1.2.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.2, 2.3.2) requiring fisheries to continually review alternative measures and encourage the development and implementation of technologies and operational methods that ""minimise mortality of unwanted catches"" of any species. The adoption of such measures in MSC fisheries will minimise waste as far as reasonably practicable (as defined in FCR v2.0 SA 3.5.3).	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.04.02 Non-Certified Catches

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management objectives, including reference points, that seek to ensure non-certified catches (i.e. stocks/species in the catch that are other than the stock under consideration) are not threatened with recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	This Supplementary Component requires that management objectives for non-certified catches (i.e. stocks/species in the catch that are other than the stock under consideration) that consider their overall status, similar to the objectives for the stock under consideration. This takes into account the impacts of all fishing on those stocks that might give rise to recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible . This Supplementary Component has a cumulative element similar to that for stock(s) under consideration in Essential Component D.2.03. To meet this Supplementary Component the standard would require the specification of reference points for non-certified stocks.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, for primary species (PIs 2.1.x) the UoA is required to aim to maintain primary species above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI) and does not hinder recovery of primary species if they are below the PRI. Secondary species are those that are not managed according to reference points and out-of-scope species (birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals) that are not ETP. For PI 2.2.1 the UoA is required to aim to maintain secondary species above a biological based limit and does not hinder recovery or rebuilding below a biological based limit. The MSC Fisheries Certification Requirements has introduced the concept of primary and secondary species where the distinction is on whether or not the point of recruitment can be determined, reference points set and the stock/fishery actively managed. Primary and secondary species might be retained bycatch or discards. 'Main' primary species are subject not just to a UoC test but also to a cumulative impact test across all MSC UoC. For secondary species, the RBF scores can be used as highly precautionary reference points. In addition, RBF consultation processes may incorporate empirical reference points as additional evidence for risk assessment.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.04.02 Non-Certified Catches	
As noted in the guidance to D.2.05, the GSSI ""Non-target catches"" refers to everything other than the stock under consideration. In the MSC system, such species are scored in the Primary, Secondary and ETP compoments in Principle 2. The rules for identifying the different P2 species are given in FCR section SA3.1, with guidance also in section GSA3.1. In simple terms, Primary Species are managed in some way to achieve defined reference levels, Secondary Species are not managed to the same extent and include any birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians (that are out of scope of the standard), and ETP species are those that are formally recognised by management as Endangered, Threatened or Protected.	

D.2.05 Endangered Species	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management objectives that seek to ensure that endangered species are protected from adverse impacts resulting from interactions with the unit of certification and any associated culture or enhancement activity, including recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	The context of this Essential Component is Endangered Species. Endangered species are defined in the Glossary. These species are already adversely impacted at the population level, by definition, and are susceptible to further adverse impacts at this level from which they need to be protected. Where "adverse impacts" is used in the FAO Guidelines ("adverse impacts of the fishery on the ecosystem") there is no further qualification provided (i.e. no "significant" or "severe"). Elsewhere in the Guidelines, the term "adverse impacts" is qualified, but in each case this is in a very specific context. For example. the term “significant negative impacts” is used in the FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines only in relation to enhanced fisheries and “severe adverse impacts” is used only in relation to dependent predators. The term "significant adverse impacts" occurs only in the Deep Sea Guidelines with respect to VMEs. The FAO Guidelines acknowledge that much greater scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks (paragraph 31

D.2.05 Endangered Species	
	(41)), hence the management objectives to protect endangered species should take into account risk and uncertainty.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species are addressed in Principle 2 in three PIs; PI 2.3.1, 2.3.2, and 2.3.3. In the outcome requirements the combined effects of MSC UoAs and any associated enhancement activities are within national and/or international set limits and that the fisheries activited don't hinder the recovery of ETP species. The management PI requires that there is a management strategy in place designed to meet national and international requirements, ensure the UoA does not hinder recovery, and that its is evaluated and implemented as well as reviewing alternative measures to minimise UoA moortality of ETP speacies. Finally, there are information requirements to support the status and management requirements.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.05.01 Endangered Species	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management objectives that seek to reduce interactions with particularly vulnerable bycatch (e.g. juveniles and rare, endangered, threatened or protected species).	Under this Supplemental Component the standard must require objectives for the reduction of interactions with a range of particularly vulnerable bycatch, including juveniles and rare, endangered, threatened or protected species. This is in addition to objectives to ensure that endangered species are protected from adverse impacts as in the parent Essential Component. Endangered and threatened are described in the Glossary. "Protected" refers generally to any plant or animal that a government declares by law to warrant protection; most protected species are considered either threatened or endangered; also a species that is recognized by national legislation, affording it legal protection due to its population decline in the wild. The decline could be as a result of human or other causes.
Conclusion	References

D.2.05.01 Endangered Species

The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.3.2. requires that the UoA either has a precautionary management strategy in place designed to meet national and international requirements for protection of ETP species (scoring issue (a)) or that there are measures that are expected to ensure that the UoA does not hinder the recovery of ETP species (scoring issue (b)). Scoring issue (e) requires that the UoA regularly reviews and implements measures, as appropriate, to minimise the mortality of ETP species. As described in FCR v2.0 Box GSA8, ""Alternative measures should avoid capture of the species in the first place or increase its survivability if released"". They may thus either ""reduce interactions with particularly vulnerable bycatch"" as required by this GSSI Supplementary Component, or reduce the harm caused where interactions do still occur. At an overarching, fishery-wide level, PI 3.2.1 requires at SG80 that ""Short and long term objectives, which are consistent with achieving the outcomes expressed by MSC's Principles 1 and 2, are explicit within the fishery-specific management system"". This includes in relation to ETP species in P2. Table GSA3 in the P2 guidance also notes that ""Measures"" (as expected in the management of each P2 component) ""could include the closure of an area that was primarily been put in place to avoid the catch of juvenile target species and enhance target species sustainability, but also has a beneficial effect on the unwanted catch of sensitive species such as other juvenile finfish."" The particular vulnerability of juveniles in the bycatch is thus recognised.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.06 Habitat

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management objectives seeking to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts	Essential habitats are described in the Glossary. The CCRF (Article 6.8) refers to "critical fisheries habitats in marine and fresh water ecosystems" which can be regarded as substantively the same as essential habitats for the purposes of the practical application of this Essential Component. Critical fisheries habitats in marine and fresh water ecosystems include wetlands, mangroves, reefs, lagoons, nursery and spawning areas.

D.2.06 Habitat	
of the unit of certification on essential habitats for the stock under consideration and on habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the unit of certification.	Examples of impacts on habitat that should be avoided include those listed in the CCRF: destruction, degradation, pollution and other significant impacts. In accordance with Paragraph 28.2 of the Ecolabelling Guidelines, in assessing fishery impacts, the full spatial range of the relevant habitat should be considered, not just that part of the spatial range that is potentially affected by fishing. The purpose of this is to consider both the degree to which the habitat is rare, or common, and also that there may be impacts on the same habitat in other parts of its spatial range.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.4.2 requires that there is a strategy in place that is designed to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to habitats. MSC distinguishes between three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. These categories are also used in the management strategy. At SG80, a partial strategy is in place that is expected to achieve habitat outcome 80 level of performance or above, that there is objective basis of confidence that the partial strategy will work based on information about the UoA or habitats involved, that there is some quantitative evidence that the partial strategy is being implemented successful, that there is some quantitative evidence that the UoA complies with both its management requirements and with protection measures afforded to VMEs by other MSC UoAs/non-MSC fisheries where relevant. The 80 level for habitat in PI 2.4.1 requires that it is highly unlikely that the UoA reduces the structure and function of commonly encountered habits and VME habitats to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. Teams interpret serious and irreversible harm as reductions in habitat structure and function such that the habitat would be unable to recover at least 80% of its structure and function within 5-20 years if fishing on the habitat were to cease entirely. In the case of VMEs, teams interpret serious and irreversible as reductions in the habitat structure and function below 80% of the unimpacted level. Clause SA 3.13.5 states that when assessing the status of habitats and the impacts of fishing, the team shall consider the full area managed by the local, regional, national, or international governance body(s) responsible for fisheries management in the area(s) where the UoA operates.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.06 Habitat

MSC further notes that PIs 2.4.1-3 focus on the 'main' habitats at the 60 and 80 levels including both 'commonly encountered' and VME habitats. As noted in guidance section GSA3.13.3.1, ""Commonly encountered habitats would likely include those that the target species favours, that the UoA's gear is designed to exploit, and/or that make up a reasonable portion of the UoA's fishing area"", i.e. they would be regarded as 'essential habitats' to the stock under consideration. The requirement for a 'partial strategy' at SG80 in PI 2.4.2a refers back to the achievement of the Habitat Outcome 80 level of performance or above, as defined in PI 2.4.1., i.e. to avoid serious or irreversible harm to the structure and function of such habitats. Management 'objectives' are required as part of the partial strategy to ensure such avoidance of harm.

D.2.06.01 Habitat

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management objectives for preventing significant adverse impacts of the unit of certification on VMEs in the high seas.	To meet this Supplementary Component the standard must require management objectives specifically for preventing significant adverse impacts of the unit of certification on VMEs in addition to management measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts of the unit of certification on essential habitats for the “stock under consideration” and on habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the unit of certification. The FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep Sea Fisheries in the High Seas provide detail on what is regarded as a VME and what is a significant adverse impact in this context.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.4.2 requires that there is a strategy in place that is designed to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to habitats. MSC distinguished between three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. These categories are also	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.06.01 Habitat	
used in the management strategy. At SG80, a partial strategy is in place that is expected to achieve habitat outcome 80 level of performance or above, that there is objective basis of confidence that the partial strategy will work based on information about the UoA or habitats involved, that there is some quantitative evidence that the partial strategy is being implemented successful, that there is some quantitative evidence that the UoA complies with both its management requirements and with protection measures afforded to VMEs by other MSC UoAs/non-MSC fisheries where relevant. The 80 level for habitat in PI 2.4.1 requires that it is highly unlikely that the UoA reduces the structure and function of commonly encountered habits and VME habitats to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. Teams interpret Serious and irreversible harm as reductions in habitat structure and function such that the habitat would be unable to recover at least 80% of its structure and function within 5-20 years if fishing on the habitat were to cease entirely. In the case of VMEs, teams interpret serious and irreversible as reductions in the habitat structure and function below 80% of the unimpacted level.	

D.2.07 Dependent Predators	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management objectives that seek to avoid severe adverse impacts on dependent predators resulting from fishing on a stock under	This Essential Component is about objectives for fishing mortality on stocks under consideration that are key prey species, not about fishing mortality on Dependent Predators themselves. Where the stock under consideration is a key prey species, the standard must require that fishing mortality on that species/stock is managed so as not to result in severe adverse impacts on Dependent Predators. The FAO Guidelines require that all sources of fishing mortality on the stock under consideration are taken into account (whether or not it is a prey species) in assessing the state of the stock under consideration, including discards, unobserved mortality, incidental mortality, unreported catches and catches in other fisheries. Management measures to meet these objectives are required under D.5.08. Severe adverse impacts are mentioned in the Essential Components only in relation to dependent predators. This is in line with the Ecolabelling Guidelines. The severity of adverse impacts is related to their potential reversibility.

D.2.07 Dependent Predators

consideration that is a key prey species.	Severe adverse impacts can be regarded as those that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible, which is described in the Glossary.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance incorporates requirements for 'key low trophic level' species in PI 1.1.1 Table SA2. Clause SA 2.2.8 requires that the team consider the trophic position of target stock to ensure precaution in relation to their ecological role, in particular for species low in the food chain and determine whether they are key LTL. Where a species is categorised as key LTL they shall score PI 1.1.1A (Table SA2) which requires that the stock is at a level which has low probability of serious ecosystem impacts and that the stock is fluctuating around a level consistent with ecosystem needs. PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place expected to achieve management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. Additionally PI 2.5.2 requires that there are measures in place to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ecosystem structure and function so as to achieve the Ecosystem outcome 80 level of performance. PI 2.5.1 SG80 requires that the UoA is highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. MSC further notes that the definition of ""serious and irreversible harm…"" as given in GSA3.1.9 confirms the intent of PI 2.5.1 , that: ""Serious or irreversible harm to the ecosystem … includes trophic cascade, depletion of top predators and key prey species in 'wasp-waisted' food webs, severely truncated size composition of the ecological community to the extent that recovery would be very slow due to the increased predation of intermediate-sized predators, permanent changes in the species diversity of the ecological community caused by direct or indirect effects of fishing….	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.08 Ecosystem structure, processes and function

GSSI Component	Guidance

D.2.08 Ecosystem structure, processes and function

The standard requires the existence of management objectives that seek to minimize adverse impacts of the unit of certification, including any associated enhancement activities if applicable, on the structure, processes and function of aquatic ecosystems that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	This Essential Component covers adverse impacts on the structure, processes and function of aquatic ecosystems. Ecosystem structure, processes and function are described in the Glossary. The Guidelines do not extend consideration of these impacts to all fisheries operating in the ecosystem where the unit of certification is operating and therefore this is not included in this Essential Component. This language is in accordance with Section 4.1.4.1 of the FAO Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries, which suggests one of the broad management objectives for a fisheries could be to keep impact on the structure, processes and functions of the ecosystem at an acceptable level. An earlier version of the requirements included an Essential Component on the conservation of biodiversity. Conservation of biodiversity is not mentioned separately in the Guidelines, but it is included in the CCRF Article 7.2.2 (d), which requires that States and sub-regional or regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements should adopt appropriate measures, based on the best scientific evidence available to provide that inter alia biodiversity of aquatic habitats and ecosystems is conserved. The structure, processes and function of aquatic ecosystems includes biodiversity, hence this is considered to be included in this Essential Component. Examples of irreversible or very slowly reversible indirect effects on the ecosystem include genetic modification and changed ecological role.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.5.2 requires that there are measures in place to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ecosystem structure and function so as to achieve the Ecosystem outcome 80 level of performance. PI 2.5.1 SG80 requires that the UoA is highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. In the case of enhanced fisheries, modified assessment trees have been developed and they function as a supplement to Annex SA. Annex SB (Enhanced Bivalves) requires that bivalve fisheries involving hatchery enhancement assessed as hatch-and-catch (HAC) have to be scored against 'genetics PIs' (1.1.3, 1.2.5, 1.2.6). PI 1.1.3 requires that the fishery has unlikely impact on the genetic structure of wild populations to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. PI 1.2.5 requires that t there is a strategy for managing the hatchery enhancement	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.08 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
activity such that it does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the genetic diversity of the wild population. Annex SC (Salmon) includes three PIs that look at enhancement 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3. These three PIs require that enhancement activities do not negatively impact wild stocks (1.3.1), that effective enhancement and fishery strategies are in place to address the effects of enhancement activities on wild stocks (PI 1.3.2) and that relevant information is collected and assessments are adequate to determine the effect of enhancement activities on wild stocks. Additionally, salmon fisheries also have specific requirements on harvest strategy (PI 1.2.1) to ensure that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy is in place that is expected to achieve stock management unit (SMU) management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80 including measures that address component population status issues. In Annex SC, PI 2.5.1 was modified (from default tree) to account for enhancement as well. Scoring issue (b) at SG80 requires that enhancement activities are highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be a serious or irreversible harm.	

D.2.08.03 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard recognizes that scientific uncertainty coupled with natural variability may make it difficult to set realistic reference points for some ecosystem properties. In such cases, indicators and associated reference points should be based on parameters that can be measured or estimated with acceptable certainty; and that the property is known to be modified or could be modified by the fishery and therefore that it can be influenced by controls on the fishery. If it is not appropriate to set a target reference point, then at least a limit reference point should be set.	This Supplementary Component is linked to D.2.08.02. The recognition that scientific uncertainty coupled with natural variability may make it difficult to set realistic reference points for some ecosystem properties is part of the prioritization described for that Supplementary Component. This Supplementary Component requires the standard to focus on parameters that can be measured or estimated with acceptable certainty and properties of the ecosystem that are known to be modified or could be modified by the fishery. Limit reference points must be required at a minimum.

D.2.08.03 Ecosystem structure, processes and function

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the impact of the fishery on the ecosystem is considered under PI 2.5.1 which requires that the fishery does not cause serious or irreversible harm to the key elements of ecosystem structure and function. Serious or irreversible harm to the ecosystem includes trophic cascade, depletion of top predators and key prey species in 'wasp-waisted' food webs, severely truncated size composition of the ecological community to the extent that recovery would be very slow due to the increased predation of intermediate-sized predators, permanent changes in the species diversity of the ecological community caused by direct or indirect effects of fishing, and change in genetic diversity of species caused by selective fishing and resulting in genetically determined change in demographic parameters. PI 2.5.2 requires that there are measures in place to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ecosystem structure and function. Clause SA 2.2.8 requires that the team consider the trophic position of target stock to ensure precaution in relation to their ecological role, in particular for species low in the food chain and determine whether they are key LTL. Where a species is categorised as key LTL they shall score PI 1.1.1A (Table SA2) which requires that the stock is at a level which has low probability of serious ecosystem impacts and that the stock is fluctuating around a level consistent with ecosystem needs. PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place expected to achieve management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. PI 1.2.2 (a) at SG80 requires that well defined HCRs are in place that ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, are expected to keep the stock fluctuating around a target level consistent with (or above) MSY, or for key LTL species a level consistent with ecosystem needs.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.2.09 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance

D.2.09 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

The standard requires that management objectives for the unit of certification and the stock under consideration take into account the interests of fishers engaged in subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fisheries, where applicable.	This Essential Component derives from paragraphs 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 of the CCRF. It cuts across the other components covering management objectives and looks for the requirement to take into account the interests of fishers engaged in small scale and artisanal fisheries in the development of these objectives. Section 7.2 of the CCRF is titled "Management Objectives". Paragraph 7.2.1 of the CCRF calls for the adoption of appropriate measures (not objectives), based on the best scientific evidence available, which are designed to maintain or restore stocks at levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield, as qualified by relevant environmental and economic factors, including the special requirements of developing countries. Paragraph 7.2.2 states that such measures should provide that the interests of fishers, including those engaged in subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fisheries, are taken into account. While this language refers specifically to "measures", the need for objectives for those measures is implied, particularly given the text is in section 7.2 which is titled "Management Objectives".

Conclusion	References
The MSC in conformance as subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fisheries, are implicitly under the scope of the MSC PI 3.2.1 ("The fishery specific management system has clear, specific objectives designed to achieve the outcomes expressed by MSC's Principles 1 and 2."). They are also explicitly considered in GSA2.2.7: "Where users from other sectors (non-fishery) have impacts on the fishery, management should take into account these impacts when devising a strategy for achieving management objectives" and GSA4.8: "This means the processes take account of, for example, the consequences of decisions on management objectives for target species on the ecosystem, and of the impacts on those who depend on the fishery for their livelihoods."	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

D.3.01 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information about the state and trends of the stock under consideration in accordance with applicable international standards and practices.	Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information are those which are commensurate with the development and delivery of the best scientific evidence available. In this case, the requirement for data collection is focused on the assessment of the status and trends of stock under consideration (see Essential Components D.4.01-D.4.03). Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information can include relevant traditional, fisher or community knowledge, provided its validity can be objectively verified. Some fisheries and/or fish stock are hard to monitor for various reasons, including remoteness of operation/distribution and complexity of fishing operations, posing particular challenges with the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information. To meet this Essential Component the standard must require the fishery to acknowledge and explain these challenges and data collection and maintenance to cover all stages of fishery development, in accordance with applicable international standards and practices. Applicable international standards and practices include the output of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) and the FAO Guidelines for the routine collection of capture fishery data (1998) FAO Fisheries Technical Paper. No. 382.
Conclusion	References

D.3.01 Certified Stocks	
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 1.2.3 requires that relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy such as stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition, stock abundance, UoA removals and other data. SA 2.6.1 states that the team should identify which information from the information categories in SA2.6.1.1 is relevant to both the design and effective operational phases of the harvest strategy, Harvest Control Rules and tools, and their evaluation should be based on this information.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.02 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information about the effects of the unit of certification, including any associated	Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information is described in the Glossary. In general these are data which are commensurate with the development and delivery of the best scientific evidence available. The requirements for data collection are focused on the effects of the unit of certification on the ecosystem, including direct and indirect effects. The adequacy of data relates primarily to the quantity and type of data collected (including sampling coverage) and depends crucially on the nature of the systems being monitored and purposes to which the data are being put. Some analysis of the precision resulting from sampling coverage would normally be part of an assessment of adequacy and reliability. The currency of data is important inter alia because its capacity for supporting reliable assessment of current status and trends declines as it gets older. Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information can include relevant traditional, fisher or community knowledge, provided its validity can be objectively verified (i.e. the knowledge has been collected and analyzed though a systematic, objective and well-designed process, and is not just hearsay).

D.3.02 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
enhancement activities, on ecosystem structure, processes and function in accordance with applicable international standards and practices.	The requirements for data collection are focused on the effects of the unit of certification on the ecosystem structure, processes and function. The component relating to enhancement activities may be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover enhanced fisheries. Ecosystem structure, processes and function are described in the Glossary. This language is in accordance with Section 4.1.4.1 of the FAO Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries, which suggests one of the broad management objectives for a fisheries could be to keep impact on the structure, processes and functions of the ecosystem at an acceptable level. Applicable international standards and practices include the output of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) and the FAO Guidelines for the routine collection of capture fishery data (1998) FAO Fisheries Technical Paper. No. 382.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.5.3 requires that there is adequate knowledge of the impacts of the UoA on the ecosystem. Information includes information to identify and broadly understand the key elements of the ecosystem, the main impacts or interactions between the UoA and the ecosystem, the main functions of components (target, primary, secondary, etp, habitats) in the ecosystem. Additionally the adequacy of information to infer consequences on ecosystem is key and as well as the requirements that adequate data continue to be collected. Additionally, Annex SC PI 2.5.3 was modified (from the default tree) to account for enhancement. PI 2.5.3 scoring issue (b) at SG80 requires that the main impacts of the UoA and associated enhancement activities on these key ecosystem elements can be inferred from existing information, and some have been investigated in detail.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.02.01 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the management system collects and analyses data necessary to ensure that all operational objectives, indicators and reference points required for implementation of EAF can be assessed and monitored.	This Supplementary Component creates a blanket requirement for the data and analyses necessary to determine the extent to which operational objectives for implementing EAF have been met.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, while there are no explicit requirement to develop and maintain a EAF management plan, more importantly, Principle 1 and 2 management PIs require that there is/are measures/strategies to manage the impact of the fishery on ecological components - there is an implicit requirement for management to consider and cover all ecological components impacted by the fishery. Principle 1 and 2 information PIs requires that the information is adequate to determine the impact of the fishery on the ecological component and that information is adequate to inform the management strategy. All of the data needed to assess and manage the fishery using a EAF is available in the P1 and P2 PIs and requirements.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.02.02 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the management system to ensure that available traditional, fisher and community knowledge about the ecosystem and the fishery of which the unit of certification is part is collected and validated to contribute to implementation and monitoring of EAF. Further, information about the local situation	The focus of this Supplemental Component is the broad data and information needs of EAF. In countries where these needs cannot be met through reports and statistics from various research institutes, agencies and ministries, there is often extensive traditional knowledge about the ecosystem and the fishery. The standard must require, where

D.3.02.02 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
should be complemented by information from ecologically similar situations elsewhere.	appropriate, the collection and validation of traditional fisher and community knowledge to support implementation of EAF.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, threre is the requirement for the collection of traditional fisher and community knowledge where appropriate. It is noted however that there are no explicit requirement to develop and maintain a EAF management plan, but this supplemental requirment does not specifically require an EAF plan, it only requires the collection of data to support a plan. It is also noted that in the MSC standard, all data needed to assess and manage the fishery using a EAF is available. FCR clause SA 4.1.4 states that ' where scores are based on the consideration of informal or traditional management systems, the team shall provide, in the rationale, evidence demonstrating the validity and robustness of conclusion by: a. using different methods to collect information; b. cross- checking opinions and views of different segments of the stakeholder community. In PI 3.1.2 (b) the management system is required to includes consultation processes that regularly seek and accept relevant information, including local knowledge. The management system demonstrates consideration of obtained information.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.03 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data	Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information is described in the Glossary. In general these are data which are commensurate with the development and delivery of the best scientific evidence available. The requirements for data collection are focused on the need to assess the effects of the unit of certification on non-target stocks. Non-certified catches and discards refers to species/stocks that are taken by the unit of certification other than the stock for which certification is being sought (see Glossary).

D.3.03 Non-Certified Catches	
and/or other information on non-certified catches and discards in the unit of certification.	The adequacy of data relates primarily to the quantity and type of data collected (including sampling coverage) and depends crucially on the nature of the systems being monitored and purposes to which the data are being put. Some analysis of the precision resulting from sampling coverage would normally be part of an assessment of adequacy and reliability. The currency of data is important inter alia because its capacity for supporting reliable assessment of current status and trends declines as it gets older. Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information can include relevant traditional, fisher or community knowledge, provided its validity can be objectively verified (i.e. the knowledge has been collected and analyzed though a systematic, objective and well-designed process, and is not just hearsay). The requirements for data collection in this Essential Component are focused on the effects of the unit of certification on non-certified species/stocks. Non-certified catches/stocks are described in the Glossary. Catches of Endangered species are covered in Essential Component D.3.04. Applicable international standards and practices include the output of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) and the FAO Guidelines for the routine collection of capture fishery data (1998) FAO Fisheries Technical Paper. No. 382.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, non-target catches in MSC terms are covered by Primary and Secondary Components. PI 2.1.3 requires that information on the nature and amount of primary species taken is adequate to determine the risk posed by the UoA and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage primary species. PI 2.2.3 requires that information on the nature and amount of secondary species taken is adequate to determine the risk posed by the UoA and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage secondary species.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.03.01 Non-Certified Catches		
GSSI Component	Guidance	
The Standard requires, where necessary, a level and scope of observer programs sufficient to provide quantitative estimates of total catch, discards, and incidental takes of living aquatic resources.	This Supplemental Component identifies observer programs as an important means to provide quantitative estimates of total catch, discards, and incidental takes of living aquatic resources. To meet this Supplemental Component the standard would need to explicitly state that, where necessary, a suitable level and scope of observer programs is needed for this purpose.	
Conclusion		References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.1.3 requires that information on the nature and amount of primary species taken is adequate to determine the risk posed by the UoA and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage primary species. PI 2.2.3 requires that information on the nature and amount of secondary species taken is adequate to determine the risk posed by the UoA and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage secondary species. Additional requirements include that the team need to consider the following when determining the 'adequacy' of information: That higher quality information shall be required to demonstrate adequacy as the importance, or difficulty, of estimating the true impact of the UoA on a species in relation to its status increases; and that in determining the adequacy of the methods used for data collection, the team shall consider: the precision of the estimates (qualitative or quantitative), the extent to which the data are verifiable (on their own or in combination with other data sources), potential bias in estimates and data collection methods, comprehensiveness of data and the continuity of data collection (SA3.6.3.1 and SA3.6.3.2). Observer programmes are one of several approaches that may be used to assess fishery impacts, as described in Guidance Section GSA 3.6.3.1. Guidance section GSA3.6.3 provides more detail on scoring the adequacy of information on these approaches at SG60, 80 and 100 including ensuring that the assessment team consider the validity of the data, whether qualitative or quantitative. The section concludes with a special section on the factors to be considered in evaluating observer programmes such that they are 'sufficient to provide quantitative estimates...' in GSSI terms, or 'adequate' in MSC terms. Observer data is also discussed under Risk-Based Framework information gathering (PF2.2.1.b).		• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.04 Endangered Species

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information about the effects of the unit of certification, including any associated enhancement activities, on endangered species in accordance with applicable international standards and practices.	Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information is described in the Glossary. In general these are data which are commensurate with the development and delivery of the best scientific evidence available. The requirements for data collection are focused on the effects of the unit of certification on the ecosystem, including direct and indirect effects. The adequacy of data relates primarily to the quantity and type of data collected (including sampling coverage) and depends crucially on the nature of the systems being monitored and purposes to which the data are being put. Some analysis of the precision resulting from sampling coverage would normally be part of an assessment of adequacy and reliability. The currency of data is important inter alia because its capacity for supporting reliable assessment of current status and trends declines as it gets older. Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information can include relevant traditional, fisher or community knowledge, provided its validity can be objectively verified (i.e. the knowledge has been collected and analyzed though a systematic, objective and well-designed process, and is not just hearsay). The requirements for data collection are focused on the effects of the unit of certification on endangered species. The component relating to enhancement activities may be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover enhanced fisheries. Endangered species are described in the Glossary. Applicable international standards and practices include the output of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) and the FAO Guidelines for the routine collection of capture fishery data (1998) FAO Fisheries Technical Paper. No. 382.
Conclusion	References

D.3.04 Endangered Species	
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.3.3 requires that relevant information is collected to support the management of UoA impacts on ETP species, including: - information for the development of the management strategy; - information to assess the effectiveness of the management strategy; and - information to determine the outcome status of ETP species PI 2.3.3, scoring issue (a) requires teas to consider whether the information is adequate to assess the fishery-related mortality (including unobserved mortality, as confirmed by FCR v2.0 SA3.1.8) and impact and to determine whether the fishery may be a threat to protection and recovery of ETP species (SG80). Additional requirements include that the team need to consider the following when determining adequacy of information: That higher quality information shall be required to demonstrate adequacy as the importance, or difficulty, of estimating the true impact of the UoA on a species in relation to its status increases; and that in determining the adequacy of the methods used for data collection, the team shall consider: the precision of the estimates (qualitative or quantitative), the extent to which the data are verifiable (on their own or in combination with other data sources), potential bias in esimates and data collection methods, comprehensiveness of data and the continuity of data collection (SA3.6.3.1 and 3.6.3.2). Guidance GSA3.6.3 provides more detail on adequacy of information at SG60, 80 and 100 including ensuring that the assessment team consider the validity of the data, whether qualitative or quantitative. Annex SC (Salmon) includes specific requirments for ETP species encountered by salmon fisheries. scoring issue (a) requires that at SG80 where national and/ or international requirements set limits for ETP species, the combined effects of the MSC UoAs and associated enhancement activities on the population/stock are known and highly likely to be within these limits AND direct effects of the UoA including enhancement activities are highly likely to not hinder recovery of ETP species AND indirect effects have been considered for the UoA including enhancement activities and are thought to be highly unlikely to create unacceptable impacts.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.05 Habitat	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that there is knowledge within the fishery management system of the essential habitats for the stock under consideration and habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the unit of certification. This includes knowledge of the full spatial range of the relevant habitat, not just that part of the spatial range that is potentially affected by fishing.	The level of knowledge of the essential habitats for the stock under consideration and habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the unit of certification should provide sufficient understanding to enable impacts of the unit of certification on those habitats to be avoided, minimized or mitigated; i.e. for the management objective with respect to habitat (D.2.06) to be achieved. The achievement of this Essential Component should be considered alongside D.4.08 and D.6.07. In particular, the FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines acknowledge the importance of a "risk assessment/risk management approach" to address the issue of greater scientific uncertainty associated with ecosystem impacts; also that the most probable adverse impacts should be considered, taking into account available scientific information, and traditional, fisher or community knowledge provided that its validity can be objectively verified. The knowledge of the habitats in question can therefore include relevant traditional, fisher or community knowledge, provided its validity can be objectively verified (i.e. the knowledge has been collected and analyzed though a systematic, objective and well-designed process, and is not just hearsay).
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, MSC distinguishes between three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. These categories are also used in the information PI. PI 2.4.3 requires that information is adequate to determine the risk posed to the habitat by the UoA and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage impacts on the habitat. This includes: - information on the nature, distribution and vulnerability of the habitats in the UoA area. - information to assess impacts of the UoA on the habitats - monitoring to detect any increase in risk to the habitats. Where a habitat is defined as data-deficient and it is scored using the Consequence Spatial Analysis (CSA), scoring issue (a) and (b) include specific requirements that assess the adequacy of information to score consequence and spatial attributes under the CSA.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.05 Habitat	
MSC further notes that As stated in SA3.13.5.3 , "In cases where a habitat's range overlaps the "managed area", the team shall consider the habitat's range both inside and outside the "managed area".	

D.3.05.02 Habitat	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information about the effects of the unit of certification on VMEs in accordance with standards and practices in the FAO Guidelines on Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas.	The focus of this Supplementary Component is on the collection of data about the effects of the unit of certification on VMEs. To meet this Supplementary Component, the standard would need to take into consideration the standards and practices in the FAO Guidelines on Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, MSC distinguishes between three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. These categories are also used in the information PI. PI 2.4.3 requires that information is adequate to determine the risk posed to the habitat by the UoA and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage impacts on the habitat. This includes: - information on the nature, distribution and vulnerability of the habitats in the UoA area. - information to assess impacts of the UoA on the habitats - monitoring to detect any increase in risk to the habitats. Where a habitat is defined as data-deficient and it is scored using the Consequence Spatial Analysis (CSA), scoring issue (a) and (b) include specific requirements that assess the adequacy of information to score consequence and spatial attributes under the CSA.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.05.03 Habitat

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires, where appropriate, mapping of seabed habitats, distributions and ranges of species taken as bycatch, in particular rare, endangered, threatened or protected species, to ascertain where species taken as bycatch might overlap with fishing effort.	This Supplementary Component requires mapping of distributions of ranges of species taken as bycatch, including what can be inferred from habitat mapping, to assess the likely overlap with fishing effort. This is a particular type of analysis that can fill gaps in bycatch data taken directly from the fishery. To meet this Supplementary Component, the standard would need to specifically require such a mapping approach to assessing bycatch. Endangered and threatened are described in the Glossary. “Protected” refers generally to any plant or animal that a government declares by law to warrant protection; most protected species are considered either threatened or endangered. A species that is recognized by national legislation, affording it legal protection due to its population decline in the wild. The decline could be as a result of human or other causes.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. These categories are also used in the information PI. PI 2.4.3 requires that information is adequate to determine the risk posed to the habitat by the UoA and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage impacts on the habitat. This includes: - information on the nature, distribution and vulnerability of the habitats in the UoA area. - information to assess impacts of the UoA on the habitats - monitoring to detect any increase in risk to the habitats. In scoring PI 2.4.3, FCR Clause SA3.15.6 confirms that ""For UoAs encountering VMEs, scoring issue (b) at the SG80 level should, at least, include the following information:	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.05.03 Habitat	
a. Maps and specific position information relating to the UoA's footprint b. Position of closed areas to protect VMEs. c. Position of closed areas that were established by the UoA, other MSC UoAs, and non-MSC fisheries fishing in the area as a precautionary measure Where a habitat is defined as data-deficient and is scored using the Consequence Spatial Analysis (CSA), scoring issue (a) and (b) require some quantitative information to be available and adequate to estimate the types and distribution of the main habitats; and specific requirements that assess the adequacy of information to score consequence and spatial attributes under the CSA. PF4.4.6 allows the team to score areal overlap between habitats and fishing activities using different types of mapping approaches, as per the following requirements: PF4.4.6.5 For species with good distribution maps, availability areal overlap shall be scored using detailed mapping analysis: the amount of overlap between fishing effort and species stock distribution. PF4.4.6.6 For species without good distribution maps, stakeholder generated maps may be used	

D.3.06 Dependent Predators	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that data and information are collected on the role of the stock under consideration in	The data and information collected must be sufficient to provide adequate knowledge of the role of the stock under consideration in the food-web to determine whether it is a key prey species and, if so, whether fishing on that stock under consideration might result in severe adverse impacts on dependent predators. Where the stock under consideration is a key prey species, the standard must require that fishing mortality on that

D.3.06 Dependent Predators	
the food-web to enable determination of whether it is a key prey species in the ecosystem, and if so whether fishing on that stock might result in severe adverse impacts on dependent predators.	species/stock is managed so as not to result in severe adverse impacts on Dependent Predators. The FAO Guidelines require that all sources of fishing mortality on the stock under consideration are taken into account (whether or not it is a prey species) in assessing the state of the stock under consideration, including discards, unobserved mortality, incidental mortality, unreported catches and catches in other fisheries. Data and information on the role of the stock under consideration in the food-web can include relevant traditional, fisher or community knowledge, provided its validity can be objectively verified (i.e. the knowledge has been collected and analyzed though a systematic, objective and well-designed process, and is not just hearsay).

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, Clause SA 2.2.8 requires that the team consider the trophic position of target stock to ensure precaution in relation to their ecological role, in particular for species low in the food chain and determine whether they are key LTL. Where a species is categorised as key LTL they shall score PI 1.1.1A (Table SA2) which requires that the stock is at a level which has low probability of serious ecosystem impacts and that the stock is fluctuating around a level consistent with ecosystem needs. PI 1.2.3 requires that relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy of that species. Additionally PI 2.5.3 requires that there is adequate knowledge of the impacts of the UoA on the ecosystem. Trophic level of species is also considered in the data-limited Risk-Based Framework, under Productivity Susceptibility Analysis (PSA). MSC further notes that SA2.2.9 requires that Teams recognise a species as 'key LTL' or not. The assessment of the criteria in SA2.2.9 must consider the existence of dependent predators as part of the 'higher tropic levels' and provide evidence for the overall ecosystem structure in that assessment. MSC's treatment of key LTL stocks is explained in detail in guidance sections GSA2.2.8-15 and Box GSA6.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.07 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that any traditional, fisher or community knowledge used within the management system can be objectively verified.	The methods by which traditional, fisher or community knowledge can be objectively verified will vary between fisheries, and will need to be assessed by the auditors. Elsewhere in the Benchmark there is the general suggestion that the knowledge should be collected and analyzed though a systematic, objective and well-designed process, and is not be just hearsay. Scientific uncertainty associated with the use of traditional, fisher or community knowledge can be assessed using a risk assessment/risk management approach, as specified in the Guidelines. In all cases, the management measures implemented by the management system must be based on the best scientific evidence available (Essential Components D.1.03 to D.1.04).

Conclusion	References
The MSC Standard is compliant because within Principle 3 there is direct reference to traditional management systems within SA4.1.1 Teams shall determine and state which jurisdictional category or combination of jurisdictional categories apply to the management system of the UoA, including consideration of formal, informal and/or traditional management systems when assessing performance of UoAs under Principle 3, including...' There are further requirements of the consideration of scoring traditional management systems at SA4.1.4, and relevant guidance at GSA4.1.4. Within PI 3.1.1 (Legal and/or customary framework) there is guidance provided on scoring this PI when considering traditional management methods (GSA4.3). More specifically at PI 3.1.2 (Consultation, roles and responsibilities) it is expected that assessors consider the guidance at GSA4.4 for when the management is traditional/informal to inform how to score appropriate, and that they should consider local knowledge (SA4.4.1). Traditional management is also considered under evaluation of the effectiveness of consultation processes, with specific guidance at GSA4.4.3 - 4.4.4. For fisheries that have triggered the use of the Risk Based Framework, this allows for qualitative interviews with stakeholders to gether local knowledge and feed directly into scoring. The RBF gives the assessment team a structured outline to assess the risk that a data-limited fishery is having an impact on species, habitats and the surrounding ecosystems. The RBF relies on consultation with fishery stakeholders through information-gathering workshops, as well as any data that is currently available from the fishery. There are four methods used to assess different aspects of the fishing activity:	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.07 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

Consequence Analysis (CA) - uses any available data to assess trends in the target stocks of a fishery using any data available.
Productivity Susceptibility Analysis (PSA) - assesses how likely a stock is to recover when depleted, as well as how likely a species is to interact with fishing gear
Consequence Spatial Analysis (CSA) - aims to identify how habitats may be affected by fishing activity
Scale Intensity Consequence Analysis (SICA) - assesses the likelihood that a fishery has an effect on the wider ecosystem

The RBF has detailed clauses on what is required in the form of information-gathering exercises (PF2.2) and stakeholder consultation (PF2.3), as well as a supporting document on with best practice methods 'Toolbox for stakeholder participation in RBF assessments'. Available Online at: https://www.msc.org/documents/get-certified/stakeholders/toolbox-for-stakeholder-participation-in-rbf-assessments/view.

Each of the methods above produces a score, which is then converted to allow comparison with the default assessment method. Due to the precautionary set-up of the RBF - in that high risk scores are always selected in the absence of triangulated data from fisher, stakeholder or community knowledge - the standard for this subset of fisheries is never lower than the default assessment method.

In addition to the general framework provided by the RBF, and the associated guidance, FCR v2.0 clause SA4.1.4 requires that:
""When scores are based on the consideration of informal or traditional management systems, the team shall provide, in the rationale, evidence demonstrating the validity and robustness of the conclusions by:
a. Using different methods to collect information.
b. Cross checking opinions and views from different segments of the stakeholder community.

D.3.07.01 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the establishment of fisheries data collection systems, including bioecological, social, cultural and economic data relevant for decision-making on the sustainable management of small-scale fisheries, where appropriate.	This Supplementary Component builds on its parent Essential Component by looking for the requirement to establish data collection systems specifically for decision-making on the management of small scale fisheries. The relevance of this to the Benchmark is the benefit of a well-informed decision-making process on the orderly and effective management of the resource, including responsible governance and sustainable development of small scale fisheries. a of applicability.

Conclusion	References
The MSC may be in alignment as P1 information requirements and some parts of P2 do require (or imply) the existence of a fisheries data collection system (with emphasis on biological).	▪ *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.3.08 Enhanced Fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance
In the case of enhanced fisheries, the standard requires the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information about enhanced components of the stock under consideration in accordance with applicable international standards and practices.	Collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information about enhanced components of the stock under consideration is necessary to assess whether Enhanced Fisheries meet the criteria specified in the Inland Guidelines (starting with paragraph 38) necessary for them to be within scope. Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information are those which are commensurate with the development and delivery of the best scientific evidence available. In this case, the requirement for data collection is focused on any enhanced components of the stock under consideration. Adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information can include relevant traditional, fisher or community knowledge, provided its validity can be objectively verified. Applicable international standards and practices include the output of the Coordinating Working

D.3.08 Enhanced Fisheries

	Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) and the FAO Guidelines for the routine collection of capture fishery data (1998) FAO Fisheries Technical Paper. No. 382.

Conclusion	References
PIs 1.3.3 and others in Annex SC The MSC is in alignment because requirements around enhanced fisheries are included in both the MSC Fisheries Certification Process (FCP) and the Fisheries Standard. According to the FCP, assessors must determine whether enhanced fisheries are within scope of the MSC program (7.4.2.12, Table 1) by reviewing linkages to and maintenance of a wild stock (Table 1, A), feeding and husbandry systems (Table 1, B), and impacts on the habitat and ecosystem (Table 1, C). Once the fishery is determined to be within scope, enhnaced fisheries usually fall within one of two categories for fisheries in the MSC program. Annex SB includes requirements for enhanced bivalve fisheries, while Annex SC includes requirements for salmon fisheries. Section SB2.1 assesses the impacts that catch-and-grow (CAG) and hatch-and-catcch (HAC) bivalve fisheries have on the parent stock, whilse section SB2.2 reviews the genetic impacts that enhancement activities have. Section SB3.2 includes requirements on the impacts of translocation on the ecosystem. Requirements for salmon fisheries are included in Annex SC. Sections SC2.8-SC2.11 assesses the impacts that enhancement activities have on wild salmon stocks, while sections SC3.10-SC3.18 assesses the impacts that enhancement activities have on the environment (ETP species, habitats, and ecosystems). Sections SC4.4-SC4.10 assesses the management in place for enhancement activities.	▪ *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT

D.4.01 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires management decisions by the Designated Authority (D.1.01) to be based on an assessment of the current status and trends of the stock under consideration, using adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information. Other information may include generic evidence based on similar stocks, when specific information on the stock under consideration is not	This is a partner Essential Component to D.3.01 which covers the collection and maintenance of the data to be used in the stock assessment referred to in this Essential Component. The purpose of the stock assessment is to contribute to the best scientific evidence available which is used by the fishery management organization or arrangement (D.1.03 - D.1.05) to establish management objectives for the stock under consideration (D.2), management measures (D.5) to meet those objectives and evidence regarding outcome status (D.6) - i.e. whether the objectives have been met. The Ecolabelling Guidelines provide additional guidance on the use of data in the stock assessment. Specifically, in the absence of specific information on the stock under consideration, generic evidence based on similar stocks can be used for fisheries with low risk to that stock under consideration. The language of the Essential Component aligns with this text, however, it raises a concern that this approach could be used inappropriately in cases where the risk to the stock under consideration is not "low". The greater the risk, the more specific evidence is necessary to assess sustainability. In principle, 'generic evidence based on similar stocks' should not suffice, but it may be adequate where there is low risk to the stock under consideration. In general, "Low risk to the stock under consideration" would suggest that there is very little chance of the stock becoming overfished, for example where the exploitation rate is very low and the resilience of the stock is high (see Essential Component D.4.03). However, the Standard should make it clear that the evidence for low risk and the justification for using surrogate data must come from the stock assessment itself. The aim of this Essential Component, in conjunction with Essential Component D.4.04, is to avoid the use of less elaborate methods of stock assessment automatically precluding fisheries from potential certification. Nevertheless,

D.4.01 Certified Stocks		
available, providing there is low risk to the stock under consideration in accordance with the Precautionary Approach.	to the extent that the application of such methods results in greater uncertainty about the state of the stock under consideration, more precaution must be applied in managing fisheries on such stocks. This may, for example, necessitate lower levels of utilization of the resource than would be possible with lower levels of uncertainty, in accordance with the Essential Components covering the Precautionary Approach (D.1.06) and the Best Scientific Evidence Available (D.1.03 - D.1.05).	
Conclusion		References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 1.2.4 requires the assessment to be appropriate for the stock and for the harvest control rule, to estimate stock status relative to reference points that are appropriate to the stock and can be estimated and to take uncertainty into account. In addition, PI 1.2.3 requires that relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy such as stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition, stock abundance, UoA removals and other data. SA 2.6.1 states that the team should identify which information from the information categories in SA2.6.1.1 is relevant to both the design and effective operational phases of the harvest strategy, Harvest Control Rules and tools, and their evaluation should be based on this information. In PI 1.2.4.b it requires, at a minimum, that the assessment estimates stock status relative to generic reference points appropriate to the species category and thus allows use of 'other information'.		• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.02 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the assessment of the current status and trends of the stock under	This is a partner Essential Component to D.5.01. Management measures for the stock under consideration must be based on an assessment of that stock which takes account of all removals from the stock over its entire area of distribution, i.e. not just by the unit of certification but by all fisheries that utilize that stock,

D.4.02 Certified Stocks	
consideration considers total fishing mortality on that stock from all sources including discards, unobserved mortality, incidental mortality, unreported catches and catches in all fisheries over its entire area of distribution.	including bycatch, discards, unobserved mortality, incidental mortality, unreported catches, and catches taken outside of the unit of certification. Note that these terms are not defined here, or in the Glossary. They are used collectively in this context to cover all possible descriptions of fishery removals of the stock under consideration. See also Essential Component D.1.12 covering the effective and suitable monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement of the fishery of which the unit of certification is a part. Area of Distribution is described in the Glossary based on a CITES reference for species, but in the context of fish and fisheries, this can be used for stocks.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 1.2.3 requires that relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy such as stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition, stock abundance, UoA removals and other data. PI 1.2.4 requires the assessment to be appropriate for the stock and for the harvest control rule, to estimate stock status relative to reference points that are appropriate to the stock and can be estimated and to take uncertainty into account. In addition, Guidance GSA2.6.1 describes the types of mortality that need considerations for stock assessment: Fishery removals could incorporate information describing the level, size, age, sex and genetic structure of landings, discards, illegal, unreported, unregulated, recreational, customary and incidental mortality of the target stock by location and method of capture. Information is required for the stock as a whole, but better information would usually be expected from the fishery being assessed. The distinction between scoring issues (b) and (c) for PI 1.2.3 at SG80 relates to the relative amount or quality of information required on fishery removals. Scoring issue (b) relates to fishery removals specifically by those vessels covered under the unit of assessment which need to be regularly monitored and have a level of accuracy and coverage consistent with the harvest control rule. The reference to 'other' fishery removals in scoring issue (c) relates to vessels outside or not covered by the unit of assessment. These require good information but not necessarily to the same level of accuracy or coverage as that covered by the second scoring issue.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.03 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the assessment of the current status and trends of the stock under consideration takes into account the structure and composition of that stock which contribute to its resilience.	Resilience is described in the Glossary. Understanding the resilience of a stock (i.e. it's ability to recover from a disturbance) is an important part of assessing that stock's status and trends and contributes to an assessment of the level of risk to that stock (see Essential Component D.4.01).
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the term resilience is used in MSC context when dealing with non-target stocks and ecosystems. However, the concept of resilience is embedded in several PIs (stock should be above point of recruitment impairment therefore ensuring self-replenishment, stock assessment should consider a wide range of information including stock structure, productivity, abundance, removals and fleet dynamics). PI 1.2.3. SA2.6.1.1 The team shall determine a combined score for this PI on the quality of data available, weighted by information category on the relevance to the harvest strategy, HCR and management tools. Information categories include: a. Stock structure; b. Stock productivity; c. Fleet composition; d. Stock abundance; e. UoA removals. SA2.2.2 The team shall consider the biology of the species and the scale and intensity of both the UoA and management system and other relevant issues in determining time periods over which to judge fluctuations. SA3.2.2 The team shall consider both the current outcome status and the resilience of historical arrangements to function adequately and deliver low risk under future conditions when scoring outcome PIs. The resilience concept is also implicit in the RBF approach, where it's particularly important because the Susceptibility Attributes in the PSA are in fact aiming to identify, in the absence of adequate reference points, the risk related to the susceptibility of the species.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.04 Enhanced Fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance
In the case of enhanced fisheries, the standard requires that the assessment of current status and trends of the stock under consideration includes an evaluation of whether there are significant negative impacts of enhancement activities on the naturally reproductive component of the stock under consideration.	This Essential Component addresses the need for standards to require an assessment to support the achievement of management objectives specified in Essential Component D.2.05. It refers to Enhanced Fisheries, hence it may be regarded as not applicable if the Scheme/Standard explicitly excludes enhanced fisheries (see also Guidance for D.2.05) The term natural reproductive stock components is explained in the Glossary. The term "significant negative impacts" is used in the Inland Guidelines. This was not intended to be equivalent to severe adverse impacts (on dependent predators). The consultation that resulted in the drafting of the Inland Guidelines considered that avoidance of "severe adverse impacts" only would not be consistent with a management obligation to manage enhancement in ways that would not impact the productivity and abundance of the natural reproductive stock component of the stock under consideration. The Guidelines specifically require that naturally reproductive components of enhanced stocks are not substantially displaced by stocked components. In particular, displacement must not result in a reduction of the natural reproductive stock component below abundance-based target reference points (or their proxies). With respect to aquaculture production of organisms for stocking, there should be an advance evaluation of the effects of aquaculture development on genetic diversity and ecosystem integrity, based on the best scientific information available.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, modified assessment trees have been developed for enhanced fisheries and they function as a supplement to Annex SA. Annex SB (Enhanced Bivalves) under Principle 1 requires that teams evaluate whether there is evidence that and enhanced catch-and -grow (CAG) bivalve fishery negatively impacts the parent stock. Bivalve fisheries involving hatchery enhancement assessed as hatch-and-catch (HAC) have to be scored against 'genetics PIs' (1.1.3, 1.2.5, 1.2.6). PI 1.1.3 requires that the fishery has unlikely impact on the genetic structure of wild populations to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. PI 1.2.5 requires that there is a strategy for managing the hatchery enhancement activity such that it does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the genetic diversity of the wild population. Annex SC (Salmon)	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.04 Enhanced Fisheries	
includes three PIs that look at enhancement 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3. These three PIs require that enhancement activities do not negatively impact wild stocks (1.3.1), that effective enhancement and fishery strategies are in place to address the effects of enhancement activities on wild stocks (PI 1.3.2) and that relevant information is collected and assessments are adequate to determine the effect of enhancement activities on wild stocks(PI 1.3.3).	

D.4.05 Enhanced Fisheries	
GSSI Component	Guidance
In the case of fisheries that are enhanced through aquaculture inputs, the standard requires that the stock assessment of the stock under consideration must consider the separate contributions from aquaculture and natural production.	This is a technical requirement applicable to stock assessments of fisheries that are enhanced through aquaculture inputs. If fisheries that are enhanced through aquaculture inputs are explicitly out of scope for the scheme, then this Essential Component is not applicable. The glossary entry for Enhanced Fisheries explains that enhancement may entail stocking with material originating from aquaculture installations, translocations from the wild and habitat modification. Accordingly, aquaculture inputs refers to any stocking with material originating from aquaculture installations.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, modified assessment trees have been developed for enhanced fisheries and they function as a supplement to Annex SA. FCR clause 7.4 sets out the MSC scope criteria for enhanced fisheries which are broadly described as having linkages to and maintainance of a wild stock, feeding and husbandry and habitat and ecosystem impact - most of which are bivalve and salmon which is one of primary reason MSC has created modified tree to account for those specific fishery charecteristics. One of the categories of enhancement in scope of the MSC program is Hatch-and-Catch which means that the production system has some form of hatchery enhancement. Annex SC (Salmon) includes three PIs that	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.05 Enhanced Fisheries	
look at enhancement 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3. These three PIs require that enhancement activities do not negatively impact wild stocks (1.3.1), that effective enhancement and fishery strategies are in place to address the effects of enhancement activities on wild stocks (PI 1.3.2) and that relevant information is collected and assessments are adequate to determine the effect of enhancement activities on wild stocks. Clause SC 2.2.2 in an enhanced fishery, the team shall assess status based solely on the wild salmon in the stock management unit - which clearly distinguishes the natural production from the aquaculture production.	

D.4.06 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires an assessment of the extent to which catches and discards by the unit of certification of stocks other than the stock under consideration and any associated culture and enhancement activities threaten those stocks with recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	This is the partner Essential Component of D.3.03 that requires the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information on non-target catches and discards in the unit of certification. Non-target catches and discards refers to species/stocks that are taken by the unit of certification other than the stock for which certification is being sought (see Glossary). This Essential Component addresses the need for standards to require an assessment to support the achievement of management objectives specified in Essential Component D.2.06. This Essential Component is explicitly and deliberately confined to the effects of non-target catches and discards by the unit of certification on those non-target species/stocks. Cumulative effects on non-target species/stocks are not included in the Ecolabelling Guidelines. They are not part of the Essential Components, but they are covered in the Supplemental Components. The component relating to enhancement activity may be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover enhanced fisheries. Non-target catches/stocks are described in the Glossary.

D.4.06 Non-Certified Catches

	Examples of irreversible or very slowly reversible effects on bycatch species include excessive depletion of very long-lived organisms (see Glossary).

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the MSC requirements on non-target species are divided in Primary (PIs 2.1.X) and Secondary (PIs 2.2.X). For primary, at SG80, it is required the species are highly likely (> 80th%ile)to be above the PRI OR If the species is below the PRI, there is either evidence of recovery or a demonstrably effective strategy in place between all MSC UoAs which categorise this species as main, to ensure that they collectively do not hinder recovery and rebuilding. For secondary, at SG80, species are required to be highly likely (>70th%ile) above biologically based limits OR If below biologically based limits, there is either evidence of recovery or a demonstrably effective partial strategy in place such that the UoA does not hinder recovery and rebuilding AND Where catches of a main secondary species outside of biological limits are considerable, there is either evidence of recovery or a, demonstrably effective strategy in place between those MSC UoAs that have considerable catches of the species, to ensure that they collectively do not hinder recovery and rebuilding.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.06.02 Non-Certified Catches

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the management system addresses in bycatch management planning all significant sources of fishing mortality in the fishery of which the unit of certification is part and that such planning is based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries.	The parent Essential Component requires an analysis of the effects of the unit of certification, including any enhancement activities, on ecosystem structure, processes and function. This Supplementary Component focuses on the requirement to address all significant sources of fishing mortality.

Conclusion	References

D.4.06.02 Non-Certified Catches	
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 1.2.3 requires that relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy such as stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition, stock abundance, UoA removals and other data. PI 1.2.4 requires the assessment to be appropriate for the stock and for the harvest control rule, to estimate stock status relative to reference points that are appropriate to the stock and can be estimated and to take uncertainty into account. In addition, Guidance GSA2.6.1 describes the types of mortality that need considerations for stock assessment: Fishery removals could incorporate information describing the level, size, age, sex and genetic structure of landings, discards, illegal, unreported, unregulated, recreational, customary and incidental mortality of the target stock by location and method of capture. Information is required for the stock as a whole, but better information would usually be expected from the fishery being assessed. The distinction between scoring issues (b) and (c) for PI 1.2.3 at SG80 relates to the relative amount or quality of information required on fishery removals. Scoring issue (b) relates to fishery removals specifically by those vessels covered under the unit of assessment which need to be regularly monitored and have a level of accuracy and coverage consistent with the harvest control rule. The reference to 'other' fishery removals in scoring issue (c) relates to vessels outside or not covered by the unit of assessment. These require good information but not necessarily to the same level of accuracy or coverage as that covered by the second scoring issue.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.07 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires an analysis of the effects of the unit of certification,	This is the partner Essential Component of D.3.02 that requires the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information about the effects of the unit of certification, including any enhancement activities, on ecosystem structure, processes and function. The component relating to enhancement activity may be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover enhanced fisheries. Ecosystem structure, processes and function are

D.4.07 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
including any associated enhancement activities where applicable, on ecosystem structure, processes and function to develop timely scientific advice on the likelihood and magnitude of impacts.	described in the Glossary. This language is in accordance with Section 4.1.4.1 of the FAO Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries, which suggests one of the broad management objectives for a fisheries could be to keep impact on the structure, processes and functions of the ecosystem at an acceptable level. This requirement is about the analysis of these data to develop the best scientific evidence available regarding the ecosystem effects of fishing, which is used by the fishery management organization or arrangement (D.1.03 - D.1.05) to establish management objectives (D.2) and management measures (D.5) to meet those objectives.. The data and analysis may include local, traditional or indigenous knowledge and research, providing its validity can be objectively verified. As expressed in the Guidance relating to the Essential Component on the precautionary approach (D.1.06), much greater scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks. This issue can be addressed by taking a risk assessment/risk management approach. Note that some ecosystem impacts such as those on bycatch species are often more readily quantifiable than others, such as those on habitat. While a risk assessment approach may mitigate a lack of quantitative information, the management system must still ensure adequate mitigation of adverse impacts.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, analysis of data to assess the effects of the fisheries in associated ecosystems is evident through all three PIs in 2.5. PI 2.5.3 requires that there is adequate knowledge of the impacts of the UoA on the ecosystem. Information includes information to identify and broadly understand the key elements of the ecosystem, the main impacts or interactions between the UoA and the ecosystem, the main functions of components (target, primary, secondary, etp, habitats) in the ecosystem. The adequacy of information to infer consequences on ecosystem is key and as well as the requirements that adequate data continue to be collected. Where information is limited, certifiers can use the RBF (SICA) to score 2.5.1. Additionally, Annex SC PI 2.5.3 was modified (from the default tree) to account for enhancement. PI	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.07 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
2.5.3 scoring issue (b) at SG80 requires that the main impacts of the UoA and associated enhancement activities on these key ecosystem elements can be inferred from existing information, and some have been investigated in detail. PI 3.2.2 (b) at SG80 requires that decision-making processes respond to serious and other important issues identified in relevant research, monitoring, evaluation and consultation, in a transparent, timely and adaptive manner and take account of the wider implications of decisions.	

D.4.08 Habitat	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires an assessment of the impacts of the unit of certification, including any associated enhancement activities where applicable, on essential habitats for the stock under consideration and on habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the unit of certification. The assessment should consider the full spatial range of the relevant habitat, not just that part of the spatial range that is potentially affected by fishing.	This is the partner Essential Component of D.3.05 that requires knowledge within the fishery management system of the essential habitats for the stock under consideration and habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the unit of certification. Under this Essential Component the standard must require and assessment of the impacts of the unit of certification on these habitats. The component relating to enhancement activity may be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover enhanced fisheries. The results of the assessment should provide sufficient understanding of the relevant habitats and fishery impacts on them to enable those impacts to be avoided, minimized or mitigated; i.e. for the management objective with respect to habitat (D.2.06) to be achieved. The achievement of this Essential Component should be considered alongside D.3.05 and D.6.07. In particular, the FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines acknowledge the importance of a “risk assessment/risk management approach” to address the issue of greater scientific uncertainty; also that the most probable adverse impacts should be considered, taking into account available scientific information, and traditional, fisher or community knowledge provided that its validity can be objectively verified.
Conclusion	References

D.4.08 Habitat

The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, MSC distinguishes between three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. These categories are also used in the information PI. Definitions (at SA3.1.3) cover all habitat types, including, by default, essential and highly vulnerable. At SA3.13.5.3 it is clear that the standard covers the full spatial ranges of relevant habitats, even where it is beyond that of the UoC. PI 2.4.3 requires that information is adequate to determine the risk posed to the habitat by the UoA and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage impacts on the habitat. This includes: - information on the nature, distribution and vulnerability of the habitats in the UoA area. - information to assess impacts of the UoA on the habitats - monitoring to detect any increase in risk to the habitats. Where a habitat is defined as data-deficient and it is scored using the Consequence Spatial Analysis (CSA), scoring issue (a) and (b) include specific requirements that assess the adequacy of information to score consequence and spatial attributes under the CSA.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.09 Dependent Predators

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that data and information on the role of the stock under consideration in the food-web are assessed to determine whether it is a key prey species in the ecosystem, and if so whether fishing on that stock might result in severe adverse impacts on dependent predators.	The purpose of assessing the data and information is to provide adequate knowledge of the role of the stock under consideration in the food-web. Adequate knowledge means there is enough understanding of the role of the stock under consideration in the food-web to determine whether it is a key prey species and, if so, whether fishing on that stock under consideration might result in severe adverse impacts on dependent predators.

D.4.09 Dependent Predators

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, Clause SA 2.2.8 requires that the assessment team consider the trophic position of target stock to ensure precaution in relation to their ecological role, in particular for species low in the food chain and determine whether they are key LTL. Where a species is categorised as key LTL they shall score PI 1.1.1A (Table SA2) which requires that the stock is at a level which has low probability of serious ecosystem impacts and that the stock is fluctuating around a level consistent with ecosystem needs. PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place expected to achieve management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. Additionally PI 2.5.2 requires that there are measures in place to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ecosystem structure and function so as to achieve the Ecosystem outcome 80 level of performance. PI 2.5.1 SG80 requires that the UoA is highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.10 Endangered Species

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires an assessment of the impacts of the unit of certification, including any associated enhancement activities where	This is the partner Essential Component of D.3.04 that requires the collection and maintenance of adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information about the effects of the unit of certification, including any enhancement activities, on endangered species. Under this Essential Component the standard must require and assessment of the impacts of the unit of certification on these species. The component relating to enhancement activity may be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover enhanced fisheries. The results of the assessment should provide sufficient understanding of the relevant endangered species and fishery impacts on them to enable their protection from those impacts; i.e. for the management objective with respect to endangered species (D.2.05) to be achieved.

D.4.10 Endangered Species

applicable, on endangered species.	The achievement of this Essential Component should be considered alongside D.3.04 and D.6.06. In particular, the FAO Guidelines acknowledge the importance of a "risk assessment/risk management approach" to address the issue of greater scientific uncertainty associated with ecosystem impacts; also that the most probable adverse impacts should be considered, taking into account available scientific information, and traditional, fisher or community knowledge provided that its validity can be objectively verified.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.3.1. requires that, where national and/or international requirements set limits for ETP species, the combined effects of the MSC UoAs on the population /stock are known and highly likely to be within these limits (scoring issue a). If no national or international requirements set limits, the direct effects of the UoA shall be highly likely to not hinder recovery of the ETP species (scoring issue b). In both cases indirect effects are also considered at SG80 and are though to be highly likely to not create acceptable impacts. In addition, PI 2.3.3 requires that Relevant information is collected to support the management of UoA impacts on ETP species, including: - information for the development of the management strategy; - information to assess the effectiveness of the management strategy; and - information to determine the outcome status of ETP species Where the status of ETP species cannot be analytically determined, the team should trigger the use of the Risk-Based Framework to score PI 2.3.1. Where the fishery is enhanced, Annex SC will be used to score 2.3.x and there is specific issue to assess the effects of UoA and associated enhancement activities on ETP species.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.11 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance

D.4.11 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

The standard does not preclude small scale fisheries from possible certification for ecolabelling due to the use of less elaborate methods of stock assessment.	This Essential Component derives from paragraph 32 of the Marine Ecolabelling Guidelines. Specifically, that paragraph deals with the ways in which certification standards address the use of less elaborate methods of stock assessment in small scale fisheries, noting that with higher uncertainty more precautionary approaches to managing fisheries on such resources will be required which may necessitate lower levels of utilization of the resource.

Conclusion	References
MSC is in alignment as the Risk Based Framework (RBF) provides the opportunity for Data Deficient fisheries to be assessed using expert judgement and stakeholder input to substitute for an elaborate stock assessment (FCP 2.2, Annex PF). Risk-Based Framework can be used for different performance indicators across the MSC Fisheries Standard. This includes a precautionary approach to estimating stock status for fisheries that do not have data to assess their impact on target species, and on factors like bycatch and habitats. The RBF can be used in the assessment of fisheries impacts when conventional data, including reference points derived from models such as analytical stock assessments, doesn't exist. Risk-based approaches are key in the assessment of out-of-scope species (those that cannot be targeted, such as birds and marine mammals) as there is often less data available to determine the impact that fishing has on those populations.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4.01.01 Certified Stocks

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires management decisions by the Designated Authority (D.1.01)) to be based on an assessment of the current status and trends of the DSF stock in the high seas under consideration, using adequate, reliable and current data and/or other information. In light of data limitations regarding many deep-sea species, lower cost or innovative methods based on simpler	This Supplementary Component is similar to its parent Essential Component, except it is specific to the assessment of DSF stocks in the high seas. These might be expected to be covered by the parent Essential Component by default, but the Supplementary Component requires an explicit recognition that DSF stocks in

D.4.01.01 Certified Stocks	
forms of monitoring and assessment need to be developed. Such techniques should quantify uncertainty in stock assessments, including that resulting from such data limitations and simplified approaches.	the high seas represent a special case, and carry with them particular challenges with respect to undertaking assessments in data limited situations.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 1.2.4 requires the assessment to be appropriate for the stock and for the harvest control rule, to estimate stock status relative to reference points that are appropriate to the stock and can be estimated and to take uncertainty into account. In addition, PI 1.2.3 requires that relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy such as stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition, stock abundance, UoA removals and other data. SA2.6.1 states that the team should identify which information from the information categories in SA2.6.1.1 is relevant to both the design and effective operational phases of the harvest strategy, Harvest Control Rules and tools, and their evaluation should be based on this information. These requirements take into account the particular challenges of assessments in data limited situations, such as encountered in DSFs. In the example Ross Sea Toothfish DSF, the scoring of PI 1.2.4 describes how the stock assessments are based on a statistical catch-at-age model implemented in well-developed and well tested software designed to use the catch, age and size compositions, and tag-recapture data. The approach is reported as particularly suited to model this sort of fishery, and accounts for some detail in the life characteristics of toothfish, such as growth and mortality rates. The scoring of PI 1.2.4c, confirms that the stock assessment identifies and takes into account major sources of uncertainty, including observation and process error (stock recruitment variation), as well as structural error in testing various model assumptions. The assessment team are clearly looking for consideration of the type of uncertainties inherent in such DSFs. Clearly, the MSC scheme follows the intent of this GSSI component.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.01 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance

D.5.01 Certified Stocks	
The standard requires that management measures for the stock under consideration consider the impacts on the stock under consideration of all the fisheries utilizing that stock under consideration over its entire area of distribution.	This Essential Component addresses cumulative impacts of fishing mortality from all sources on the stock under consideration as specified in the Ecolabelling Guidelines. Management measures for the stock under consideration must be based on an assessment of that stock which takes account of all removals from the stock over its entire area of distribution, i.e. not just by the unit of certification but by all fisheries that utilize that stock and all other sources of fishing mortality, including (but not limited to) bycatch, discards, unobserved mortality, incidental mortality, unreported catches, recreational fisheries, catches taken for research purposes and catches taken outside of the unit of certification. These terms are not defined here, or in the Glossary. They are used collectively in this context to cover all possible descriptions of fishery removals of the stock under consideration. Area of Distribution is described in the Glossary based on a CITES reference for species, but this can apply to stocks in a fisheries context.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the stock under consideration is equatable to the Unit of Assessment. Clause SA 2.1.1 states that in Principle 1, teams shall score the whole of the target stock(s) selected for inclusion in the Unit of Assessment. Principle 1 applies to the whole of the fish stock(s) exploited by the fishery seeking certification, and this may include fleets fishing on that stock which are outside the Unit of Assessment. Thus when assessing the measures for stock under consideration in 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 that the harvest strategy and harvest control rules should manage the impact of all fisheries targeting the stock. Additionally GSA 2.1 states that when considering the management PIs under P1 in fisheries that target shared stock, straddling stocks or highly migratory stock, CABs should consider all national and international management systems that apply to the stock and the capacity of these systems to deliver sustainable outcomes for P1. PI 1.2.3 also requies that good information is known on all other fishery removals from the stock under assessment.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.01 Certified Stocks	
MSC also notes that in SA2.1.1 , the reference to ""the whole of the target stock(s) selected for inclusion in the Unit of Assessment (UoA)"" clearly means over their entire area/s of distribution and is always interpretated this way by CAB Assesssment Teams. As an example, the Iceland Golden Redfish fishery (UoA) is located within Iceland's EEZ, but the Principle 1 assessment also considered the catches and management in the other locations where the stock occurs, particularly in Greenland and the Faroe Islands (see Section 3.2 of the report and scoring of PI 1.2.1).	

D.5.02 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that management measures specify the actions to be taken in the event that the status of the stock under consideration drops below levels consistent with achieving management objectives, that allow for the restoration of the stock to such levels within a reasonable time frame. This requirement also pertains to species introductions or translocations that have occurred historically and which have become established as part of the natural ecosystem.	This requires the specification in advance of decision rules that mandate remedial management actions to be taken if target reference points are exceeded and/or limit reference points are approached or exceeded or the desired directions in key indicators of stock status are not achieved. For example, decreasing fishing mortality (or its proxy) if the stock size approaches its limit reference point. This is a central component of the Precautionary Approach (see D.1.06).
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80 (fluctuating around MSY and highly likely above the PRI). PI 1.2.2 requires that there are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place that reduce the exploitation rate	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.02 Certified Stocks	
as the PRI is approached. There is also guidance to the requirements that differentiate between status reference points and triggers such as those that trigger a management action. Annex SD (introduced species) sets out that CABs may make modifications to PI 1.1.1 scoring issues for fisheries that include setting target reference points at levels which may be lower than MSY as a deliberate measure to allow for reduced biodiversity impact but a CAB shall not accept limit reference points set at levels below which there is an appreciable risk of impairing reproductive capacity. Annex SB (Enhanced Bivalves) Clause SB 3.1.4 states that if an enhanced catch-and-grow (CAG) bivalve fishery in assessment involves the translocation of seed or adult shellfish, the assessment team shall score the fishery against Translocation PISG 2.6.1, 2.6.2, 2.6.3. These PIs require that the translocation activity has negligible discernible impact on the surrounding ecosystem, that there is a strategy in place for managing translocations such that the fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the surrounding ecosystem and that information on the impact of the translocation activity on the environment is adequate to determine the risk posed by the fishery. MSC also notes that requirements for stock rebuilding are given in PI 1.1.2. Rebuilding is expected within the shorter of 20 years or 2 times the generation time of the stock. For cases where 2 generations is less than 5 years, the rebuilding timeframe is up to 5 years. Further clarifications are provided in the guidance in GSA 2.3 and in Box GSA4.	

D.5.02.01 Certified Stocks	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that management measures specify the actions to be taken in the event that the status of the DSF stock in the high seas under consideration drops below levels consistent with achieving	This Supplementary Component is seeking decision

D.5.02.01 Certified Stocks	
management objectives, that allow for the restoration of the stock to such levels within a reasonable time frame. The standard requires specific management and operational precautionary actions before and after the establishment of regional management arrangements and during the development phase of a fishery as well as once it established.	rules specifically applicable to DSF stocks on the high seas.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, although not explicitly addressing DSF as mentioned in the GSSI requirment and guidance, the MSC version 2.0 does have adequate decision rules in place so this requirement is essentially met with the exception of specifically addressing DSF. The MSC standard clearly applies to all fisheries including DSF and includes sufficient guidance to be wholly effective. PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. PI 1.1.1 SG80 requires that it is highly likely that the stock is above PRI (highly likely = 80% probability that the true status of the stock is high than the point at which there is an appreciable risk of recruitment being impaired) and that the stock is at or fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY. PI 1.2.2 requires that there are well defined and effective harvest control rules (HCRs) in place that reduce the exploitation rate as the PRI is approached.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.03 Enhanced Fisheries	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires, in the case of enhanced fisheries, management measures designed to	This Essential Component addresses the need for standards to require management measures to achieve the management objectives in Essential Component D.2.05. It refers to Enhanced Fisheries, hence it may be regarded as not applicable if the Scheme/Standard explicitly excludes enhanced fisheries (see also Guidance for D.2.05) The term natural reproductive stock components is explained in the Glossary. The term "significant negative impacts" is used in the Inland Guidelines. This was not intended to be equivalent to severe adverse impacts (on dependent predators).

D.5.03 Enhanced Fisheries	
achieve management objectives (see D.2.05) seeking to avoid significant negative impacts of enhancement activities on the natural reproductive stock components of the stock under consideration and any other wild stocks from which the organisms for stocking are being removed.	The consultation that resulted in the drafting of the Inland Guidelines considered that avoidance of "severe adverse impacts" only would not be consistent with a management obligation to manage enhancement in ways that would not impact the productivity and abundance of the natural reproductive stock component of the stock under consideration. In the case where organisms for stocking originate from wild stocks other than the stock under consideration, those stocks should be managed according to the provisions of Article 7 of the CCRF. In particular, those stocks should be within biologically based limits , or if outside those limits, the removal of organisms for stocking purposes does not hinder recovery and rebuilding of those stocks Standards that apply to enhanced components of the stock under consideration require that stocking of enhanced fisheries, whether sourced from aquaculture facilities or wild stocks, is undertaken in such a way as to maintain inter alia: i) The integrity of the environment; ii) The conservation of genetic diversity; iii) Disease control; and iv) Quality of stocking material v) The donor wild stocks

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, modified assessment trees have been developed for enhanced fisheries and they function as a supplement to Annex SA. Annex SB (Enhanced Bivalves) under Principle 1 requires that teams evaluate whether there is evidence that and enhanced catch-and -grow (CAG) bivalve fishery negatively impacts the parent stock. Bivalve fisheries involving hatchery enhancement assessed as hatch-and-catch (HAC) have to be scored against 'genetics PIs' (1.1.3, 1.2.5, 1.2.6). PI 1.1.3 requires that the fishery has unlikely impact on the genetic structure of wild populations to a point	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.03 Enhanced Fisheries	
where there would be serious or irreversible harm. PI 1.2.5 requires that there is a strategy for managing the hatchery enhancement activity such that it does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the genetic diversity of the wild population. Annex SC (Salmon) includes three PIs that look at enhancement 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3. These three PIs require that enhancement activities do not negatively impact wild stocks (1.3.1), that effective enhancement and fishery strategies are in place to address the effects of enhancement activities on wild stocks (PI 1.3.2) and that relevant information is collected and assessments are adequate to determine the effect of enhancement activities on wild stocks. Additionally, salmon fisheries also have specific requirements on harvest strategy (PI 1.2.1) to ensure that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy is in place that is expected to achieve stock management unit (SMU) management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80 including measures that address component population status issues.	

D.5.04 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that management measures are designed to achieve management objectives (see D.2.04) seeking to ensure that catches and discards by the unit of certification of stocks other than the stock under consideration and any associated culture and enhancement activity do not threaten those stocks with recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	This is the partner Essential Component of D.2.04. Non-target catches and discards refers to species/stocks that are taken by the unit of certification other than the stock for which certification is being sought (see Glossary). Examples of irreversible or very slowly reversible effects on bycatch species include recruitment overfishing or excessive depletion of very long-lived organisms. Management measures should mitigate effects that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible by making those effects less severe such that they are no longer likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.

D.5.04 Non-Certified Catches	
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, ensuring that non-target catches and discards by the unit of certification of stocks other than the stock under consideration and any associated culture and enhancement activity do not threaten those non-target stocks with recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible, is covered in the species management PIs in Principle 2, namely PI 2.1.2, 2.2.2 and 2.3.2. Non-Target species in MSC terms are divided into two categories: Primary and Secondary species. Both require the UoA to have a strategy in place for managing the species that is designed to maintain or to not hinder rebuilding; and the UoA to regularly review and implement measures, as appropriate, to minimise the mortality of unwanted catch.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.04.02 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Standard requires a review of the effectiveness of existing initiatives that address bycatch and discard problems in ensuring that non-target stocks (i.e. stocks/species in the catch that are other than the stock under consideration) are not threatened with recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	The bycatch and discard problems referred to in this Supplementary Component would be identified through a risk assessment to identify the specific nature and extent of bycatch and discard problems in the fishery as a basis for prioritization and planning. This could be undertaken, for example, as part of the analysis of the effects of the unit of certification, including any enhancement activities, on ecosystem structure, processes and function, as per Essential Component D.4.07. The existing initiatives that address the bycatch and discard problems would include the management measures designed to achieve management objectives (see D.2.04) referred to in the parent Essential Component D.5.04.
Conclusion	References

D.5.04.02 Non-Certified Catches	
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.1.2 requires that there is strategy in place that is designed to maintain or to not hinder rebuilding of primary species at/to levels which are likely to be above the PRI and the UoA regularly review the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch and they are implemented as appropriate. PI 2.2.2 requires that there is a strategy for managing secondary species that is designed to maintain or to not hinder rebuilding of secondary species at/to levels which are highly likely to be above biologically based limits; and the UoA regularly reviews potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch and they are implemented as appropriate.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.04.03 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Standard requires a review of the potential effectiveness of alternative methods that address the bycatch and discard problems identified in the risk assessment (see D.4.06.01).	This Supplementary Component considers the potential effectiveness of alternative methods that address the bycatch and discard problems. It is a companion Supplementary Component to D.5.04.02, which addresses the effectiveness of existing initiatives. The risk assessment is required under D.4.06.01.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.1.2 requires that there is strategy in place that is designed to maintain or to not hinder rebuilding of primary species at/to levels which are likely to be above the PRI and the UoA regularly review the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch and they are implemented as appropriate. PI 2.2.2 requires that there is a strategy for managing secondary species that is designed to maintain or to not hinder rebuilding of secondary species at/to levels which are highly likely to be above biologically based limits; and	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.04.03 Non-Certified Catches	
the UoA regularly reviews potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of unwanted catch and they are implemented as appropriate.	

D.5.04.04 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The Standard requires an assessment of the impacts of bycatch management and discard reduction measures on fishing operations and, in the case of States, on livelihoods to ascertain the potential effects of their implementation and the support necessary to facilitate their uptake.	This is related to Supplementary Component D.5.04.02. It addresses the issue of uptake of initiatives (measures) that address bycatch and discard problems, and is hence related to their effectiveness.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the requirement to review alternative measures under 2.1.2 and 2.2.2 includes the caveat that alternative measures are implemented appropriate under SG80 and SG100. GSA 3.5.3.3 that provides additional context for decisions around implementation. Overall, the UoA should ensure that they balance the benefits of implementing a measure for one species against the likely impacts on another species or on habitats, and against the practical and economic consequences of implementation. MSC further notes that The MSC requirements are for ""a regular review of the potential effectiveness and practicality of alternative measures..."" (as in PI 2.1.2e). The related guidance sections expand on the nature of such assessments of 'practicality', including the statements below, GSA3.5.3.1: In situations where the proposed alternative mitigation measures are cost prohibitive or impractical for the fishery to implement, other lower cost alternative measures may be considered, such as improved education for fisheries regarding best practice approaches. This is not meant to be a	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.04.04 Non-Certified Catches	
means to avoid the costs associated with implementation of gear modifications or other measures, but as an alternative to achieve minimisation when other measures would render the fishery economically unviable. GSA3.5.3.3: FAO (2011) recognizes that there are both costs and benefits to implementing different measures that include direct and indirect costs, such as cost of the gear, impact on revenue from catch volumes or quality, operational efficiency and access or restriction to fishing opportunities. In addition, costs can be mitigated through the application of grants/loans and preferential treatment on duties and taxes for investment in new technologies. The judgement of whether costs are prohibitive should take into these issues into account together with the size and scale of a fishery.	

D.5.04.05 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that management measures are designed to achieve management objectives (see D.2.04.02) seeking to ensure that non-certified stocks (i.e. stocks/species in the catch that are other than the stock under consideration) are not threatened with recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	This Supplementary Component requires that management measures for non-target species (i.e. stocks/species in the catch that are other than the stock under consideration) consider the impacts of all fishing on those stocks/species of all activities that might give rise to recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible over their entire areas of distribution.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.1.2 requires that there is strategy in place that is designed to maintain or to not hinder rebuilding of primary species at/to levels which are likely to be above the PRI. PI 2.1.1 requires that the UoA aims to maintain	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.04.05 Non-Certified Catches	
primary species above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI) and does not hinder recovery of primary species if they are below the PRI. PI 2.2.2 requires that there is a strategy for managing secondary species that is designed to maintain or to not hinder rebuilding of secondary species at/to levels which are highly likely to be above biologically based limits. PI 2.2.1 requires that UoA aims to maintain secondary species above a biologically based limit and does not hinder recovery of secondary species if they are below a biologically based limit.	

D.5.05 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management measures that minimize unwanted catch and discards, where appropriate, and reduce post-released mortality where incidental catch is unavoidable.	This Essential Component is related to D.5.04 in that minimizing unwanted catch and discards and reducing post-released mortality can help to reduce the impact of non-certified catches and discards by the unit of certification. Under the CCRF, users of aquatic ecosystems should minimize waste and catch of non-target species, both fish and non-fish species. Non-certified catches and discards refers to species/stocks that are taken by the unit of certification other than the stock for which certification is being sought (see Glossary). The words "where appropriate" give a scheme the flexibility not to require a fishery to have bycatch avoidance if there is no risk of bycatch in the fishery.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, new scoring issues have been added to the P1 Harvest Strategy (PI 1.2.1) and P2 Species Management PIs (PI 2.1.2, 2.2.2, 2.3.2) requiring fisheries to continually review alternative measures to encourage the development and implementation of technologies and operational methods that minimise mortality of unwanted catch or ETP species,	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.05 Non-Certified Catches	
taking into account the practicality of the measures, their potential impact on other species and habitats and on the overall cost of implementing the measures. Box GSA8 clarifies MSC's intent on unwanted species and habitats, which is summarised here: ""Prior to the release of CR v2.0, the MSC Certification Requirements did not adequately take into account the MSC Principles & Criteria in relation to bycatch, namely that fisheries should ""make use of fishing gear and practices designed to avoid the capture of non-target species (and non-target size, age, and/or sex of the target species); minimise mortality of this catch where it cannot be avoided, and reduce discards of what cannot be released alive"" (Criterion 3B.12)."" The MSC definition of unwanted catch has been adapted from part of the description of 'bycatch' in FAO (2011); it is the part of the catch that a fisher did not intend to catch but could not avoid, and did not want or chose not to use. Changes in the P2 Species PIs in FCR v2.0 have been made to motivate fishers to ""continually ""think smart"" about their impact on the environment (species and habitats); both in delivering the sustainable impact most efficiently, and continuing to reduce their impact beyond that; and to balance this desire with efficiency by not spending a lot of money and time generating only marginal improvements."" Towards this end, fisheries are required to review alternative measures that are shown to minimise mortality of the species or species group in question (SA3.5.3). Fisheries need also to consider alternative measures to reduce impacts on habitats. Fisheries should take account of the potential for both positive and negative impacts of alternative measures on species and habitats (refer to GSA3.14.2) when considering whether such measures should be implemented. Alternative measures should avoid capture of the species in the first place or increase its survivability if released. Alternatively, in the case of in-scope species, they could utilise the unwanted catch in some way so that it would no longer be 'unwanted'. Fisheries are thus expected to adopt management measures as far as reasonably possible that 'minimize' the mortality of unwanted catches, and may only avoid this requirement where strong justification is given relevant to the practicality/safety of measures, their potential impact on the catches of other desired species and the cost of implementation.	

D.5.05.01 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that management measures incorporate best practices for bycatch management and reduction of discards.	The FAO International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards, paragraph 4.1.4 sets out best practices for bycatch management and reduction of discards. These best practices are required, where applicable, to meet this Supplementary Component. See also Responsible fish utilization. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries. No. 7. Rome, FAO. 1998. 33p 108, 112

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, new scoring issues have been added to the P1 Harvest Strategy (PI 1.2.1) and P2 Species Management PIs (PI 2.1.2, 2.2.2, 2.3.2) requiring fisheries to continually review alternative measures to encourage the development and implementation of technologies and operational methods that minimise mortality of unwanted catch or ETP species as described under D.3.07. Guidance Section GSA3.5.3.1 confirms the expectation that such 'alternative measures' identify best practice as follows: ""The requirement is that the measures selected for review are those that have been shown to reduce unwanted catch levels to the 'lowest achievable levels.' Where best practice measures in a gear/species/region have been established as achieving the lowest achievable levels - and therefore meeting the FAO's description of ""proper selective and environmentally safe fishing gear"" (see Box GSA8) - these measures should be included in the review. Where best practice has not been established, or it is not clear which measures reduce catch to the lowest achievable levels, the assessment team should assess whether the review considers measures that are expected or known to minimise mortality of the unwanted species. The gear and practices selected for review may be from a number of sources, including those that have been shown to be effective in similar fisheries or regions, or those presented as 'best practice' in international fora.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.05.02 Non-Certified Catches		
GSSI Component	Guidance	
The standard requires that regulatory measures do not provide incentives which may undermine bycatch management and discard reduction measures.	Regulatory measures that undermine bycatch management and discard reduction measures might be, for example, those that reduce the level of uptake, or otherwise create an incentive to discard.	
Conclusion		References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the intent of the P2 Species Management PIs (2.1.2, 2.2.2, 2.3.2) is to assess the arrangements in place to manage the impact that the UoA has on the P2 species to ensure that it does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to them. The arrangements in place to manage impacts on the species may include measures to address both wanted and unwanted catch (see Box GSA8). With respect to unwanted catch, measures may include incentives for fishers to comply with measures to manage and/or reduce mortality of unwanted catch (as listed in guidance section GSA3.5). As stated in guidance section GSA3.5, "In these PIs, CABs should also consider incentives that might compromise the effectiveness of the management strategy meeting P2 outcomes, such as fishing overcapacity caused by subsidies. If overcapacity exists as a result of subsidies, the management system should be robust enough to deal with this issue and still deliver a sustainable fishery in accordance with MSC Principle 2. If the management system is not robust enough to deal with overcapacity caused by subsidies, a condition should be set..		• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.05.03 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance

D.5.05.03 Non-Certified Catches	
The standard requires the adoption of measures to minimize mortalities as a result of pre-catch losses and ghost fishing.	Examples of measures to minimize mortalities as a result of pre-catch losses and ghost fishing include gear modifications that enable undersized fish and/or non-target species to escape the fishing gear unharmed and measures to reduce gear loss, or ensure that lost gear does not continue to result in mortality.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, ghost fishing and gear loss criteria are operationalised in the MSC standard (default tree) throughout Principle 2. For example, when determining the fishing operation's impact on primary, secondary and ETP species, assessment teams are required to consider unobserved, in addition to observed fishing mortality and impacts (SA3.1.8). The guidance associated with this clause stipulates that unobserved fishing mortality can include (but is not limited to) ghost fishing (GSA3.1.8). Assessment teams are required to consider whether fisheries review measures to minimise mortality of unwanted catch. This also includes consideration of unobserved mortality, such as that caused by ghost fishing.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.06 Endangered Species	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management measures, as necessary, designed to achieve the management objectives (D.2.06) that seek to ensure that endangered species are protected from adverse impacts resulting from interactions with the unit of certification	The context of this Essential Component is Endangered Species. Endangered species are defined in the Glossary. These species are already adversely impacted at the population level, by definition, and are susceptible to further adverse impacts at this level from which they need to be protected. Where "adverse impacts" is used in relation to Endangered Species in the FAO Guidelines there is no further qualification provided (i.e. no "significant" or "severe"). Elsewhere in the Guidelines, the term "adverse impacts" is qualified, but in each case this is in a very specific context. For example. the term “significant negative impacts” is used in the FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines only in relation to enhanced

D.5.06 Endangered Species	
and any associated culture or enhancement activity, including recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	fisheries and “severe adverse impacts” is used only in relation to dependent predators. The term "significant adverse impacts" occurs only in the Deep Sea Guidelines with respect to VMEs. The FAO Guidelines acknowledge that much greater scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks (paragraph 31 (41)), hence the management measures to meet the objectives to protect endangered species should take into account risk and uncertainty.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.3.2. requires that the UoA has a precautionary management strategy in place designed to meet national and international requirements for protection of ETP species and to minimise UoA related mortality of ETP species and to ensure that the UoA does not hinder recovery of ETP species. Also the UoA regularly reviews and implements measures, as appropriate, to minimise the mortality of ETP species. Modified assessment trees have been developed for enhanced fisheries and they function as a supplement to Annex SA. Annex SB (Enhanced Bivalves) under Principle 1 requires that teams evaluate whether there is evidence that and enhanced catch-and -grow (CAG) bivalve fishery negatively impacts the parent stock. Bivalve fisheries involving hatchery enhancement assessed as hatch-and-catch (HAC) have to be scored against 'genetics PIs' (1.1.3, 1.2.5, 1.2.6). PI 1.1.3 requires that the fishery has unlikely impact on the genetic structure of wild populations to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. PI 1.2.5 requires that there is a strategy for managing the hatchery enhancement activity such that it does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the genetic diversity of the wild population. Annex SC (Salmon) includes three PIs that look at enhancement 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3. These three PIs require that enhancement activities do not negatively impact wild stocks (1.3.1), that effective enhancement and fishery strategies are in place to address the effects of enhancement activities on wild stocks (PI 1.3.2) and that relevant information is collected and assessments are adequate to determine the effect of enhancement activities on wild stocks.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.06.01 Endangered Species

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management measures, where appropriate, to reduce interactions with particularly vulnerable bycatch (e.g. juveniles and rare, endangered, threatened or protected species) through identifying and establishing areas where the use of all or certain gears is limited or prohibited, based on the best scientific evidence available and consistent with international law.	To meet this Supplementary Component, the standard must require management measures, where necessary, to reduce interactions with particularly vulnerable bycatch. The Supplementary Component provides examples of categories of bycatch that are particularly vulnerable. The measures envisaged are areas where use of certain gears is limited or prohibited. Endangered and threatened are described in the Glossary. "Protected" refers generally to any plant or animal that a government declares by law to warrant protection; most protected species are considered either threatened or endangered. A species that is recognized by national legislation, affording it legal protection due to its population decline in the wild. The decline could be as a result of human or other causes.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.3.2. requires that the UoA has a precautionary management strategy in place designed to meet national and international requirements for protection of ETP species and to minimise UoA related mortality of ETP species and to ensure that the UoA does not hinder recovery of ETP species. Also the UoA regularly reviews and implements measures, as appropriate, to minimise the mortality of ETP species. MSC further notes that the Component text in this case relates specifically to ""particularly vulnerable bycatch"". Juveniles are given as an example but are clearly not the direct focus of the component as clarified by the Guidance. The MSC justification relates specifically to the component text as phrased, and is believed to be adequate as is. The definition of a management measures given in GSA3.1.9 states: ""Measures"" could include the closure of an area that was primarily [been] put in place to avoid the catch of juvenile target species and enhance target species sustainability, but also has a beneficial effect on the unwanted catch of sensitive species such as other juvenile finfish.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.07 Habitat	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management measures, as necessary, designed to achieve the management objectives (D.2.06) seeking to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts of the unit of certification on essential habitats for the “stock under consideration” and on habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the unit of certification. In assessing fishery impacts, the Standard requires consideration of the full spatial range of the relevant habitat, not just that part of the spatial range that is potentially affected by fishing.	Essential habitats are described in the Glossary. There is no reason to regard them as being significantly different from the "critical fisheries habitats in marine and fresh water ecosystems" referred to in the CCRF (Article 6.8), which include wetlands, mangroves, reefs, lagoons, nursery and spawning areas. Examples of impacts on habitat that should be avoided include those listed in this paragraph: destruction, degradation, pollution and other significant impacts. The purpose of the requirement to consider the full spatial range of the relevant habitat in assessing fishery impacts may be to consider both the degree to which the habitat is rare, or common, and also that there may be impacts on the same habitat in other parts of its spatial range.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.4.2 requires that there is a strategy in place that is designed to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to habitats. MSC distinguishes between three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. At SG80, a partial strategy is in place that is expected to achieve habitat outcome 80 level of performance or above, that there is objective basis of confidence that the partial strategy will work based on information about the UoA or habitats involved, that there is some quantitative evidence that the partial strategy is being implemented successfully, that there is some quantitative evidence that the UoA complies with both its management requirements and with protection measures afforded to VMEs by other MSC UoAs/non-MSC fisheries where relevant. The 80 level for habitat in PI 2.4.1 requires that it is highly unlikely that the UoA reduces the structure and function of commonly encountered habits and VME habitats to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. Teams interpret serious and irreversible harm as reductions in habitat structure and function such that the habitat would be unable to recover at least 80% of its structure and function within 5-20 years if fishing on	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.07 Habitat	
the habitat were to cease entirely. In the case of VMEs, teams interpret serious and irreversible as reductions in the habitat structure and function below 80% of the unimpacted level. Clause SA 3.13.5 states that when assessing the status of habitats and the impacts of fishing, the team shall consider the full area managed by the local, regional, national, or international governance body(s) responsible for fisheries management in the area(s) where the UoA operates (the "managed area" for short).	

D.5.07.01 Habitat	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management measures designed to achieving management objectives (D.2.06.01) that seek to prevent significant adverse impacts of the unit of certification on VMEs.	This Supplementary Component is related to D.2.07.01 which establishes the requirement for management objectives specifically for preventing significant adverse impacts of the unit of certification on VMEs. This Supplementary Component establishes the requirement for management measures to meet the management objectives for preventing significant adverse impacts of the unit of certification on VMEs. The FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep Sea Fisheries in the High Seas provide detail on what is regarded as a VME and what is a significant adverse impact in this context. This document also provides an extensive list of management measures that could be applied.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.4.2 requires that there is a strategy in place that is designed to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to habitats. MSC distinguishes between three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. These categories are also used in the management strategy. At SG80, a partial strategy is in place that is expected to achieve habitat outcome 80 level of performance or above, that there is objective basis of confidence that the partial strategy will work based on information about the UoA or habitats involved. Additionally, that there is some quantitative evidence that the partial	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.07.01 Habitat	
strategy is being implemented successfully, that there is some quantitative evidence that the UoA complies with both its management requirements and with protection measures afforded to VMEs by other MSC UoAs/non-MSC fisheries where relevant. The 80 level for habitat in PI 2.4.1 requires that it is highly unlikely that the UoA reduces the structure and function of commonly encountered habits and VME habitats to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. Teams interpret serious and irreversible harm as reductions in habitat structure and function such that the habitat would be unable to recover at least 80% of its structure and function within 5-20 years if fishing on the habitat were to cease entirely. In the case of VMEs, teams interpret serious and irreversible as reductions in the habitat structure and function below 80% of the unimpacted level. Clause SA 3.13.5 states that when assessing the status of habitats and the impacts of fishing, the team shall consider the full area managed by the local, regional, national, or international governance body(s) responsible for fisheries management in the area(s) where the UoA operates.	

D.5.08 Dependent Predators	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management measures, as necessary, designed to meet the objectives (D.2.07) that seek to avoid severe adverse impacts on dependent predators resulting from fishing on a stock under consideration that is a key prey species.	This is the partner Essential Component of D.2.07. Where the stock under consideration is a key prey species, the standard must require that fishing mortality on that species/stock is managed so as not to result in severe adverse impacts on Dependent Predators. The FAO Guidelines require that all sources of fishing mortality on the stock under consideration are taken into account (whether or not it is a prey species) in assessing the state of the stock under consideration, including discards, unobserved mortality, incidental mortality, unreported catches and catches in other fisheries. Severe adverse impacts are mentioned in the Essential Components only in relation to dependent predators. This is in line with the Ecolabelling Guidelines. The severity of adverse impacts is related to their potential reversibility. Severe adverse impacts can be regarded as those that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible, which is described in the Glossary.

D.5.08 Dependent Predators

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, Clause SA 2.2.8 requires that the team consider the trophic position of target stock to ensure precaution in relation to their ecological role, in particular for species low in the food chain and determine whether they are key LTL. Where a species is categorised as key LTL they shall score PI 1.1.1A (Table SA2) which requires that the stock is at a level which has low probability of serious ecosystem impacts and that the stock is fluctuating around a level consistent with ecosystem needs (including those of 'dependent predators'). PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place expected to achieve management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. Additionally PI 2.5.2 requires that there are measures in place to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ecosystem structure and function so as to achieve the Ecosystem outcome 80 level of performance. PI 2.5.1 SG80 requires that the UoA is highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.09 Ecosystem structure, processes and function

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of management measures, as necessary, designed to achieve the management objectives (D.2.08) that seek to minimize adverse impacts of the unit of certification, including any	Ecosystem structure, processes and function are described in the Glossary. This language is in accordance with Section 4.1.4.1 of the FAO Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries, which suggests one of the broad management objectives for a fisheries could be to keep impact on the structure, processes and functions of the ecosystem at an acceptable level. Adverse impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible are discussed in the Glossary. These may include genetic modification and changed ecological role.

D.5.09 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
associated enhancement activities, on the structure, processes and functions of aquatic ecosystems that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	An earlier version of the requirements included an Essential Component on the conservation of biodiversity. Conservation of biodiversity is not mentioned separately in the Guidelines, but it is included in the CCRF Article 7.2.2 (d), which requires that States and sub-regional or regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements should adopt appropriate measures, based on the best scientific evidence available to provide that inter alia biodiversity of aquatic habitats and ecosystems is conserved. The structure, processes and function of aquatic ecosystems includes biodiversity, hence this is considered to be included in this Essential Component.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.5.2 requires that there are measures in place to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ecosystem structure and function such that the UoA is highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. In the case of enhanced fisheries, modified assessment trees have been developed and they function as a supplement to Annex SA. Annex SB (Enhanced Bivalves) requires that bivalve fisheries involving hatchery enhancement assessed as hatch-and-catch (HAC) have to be scored against 'genetics PIs' (1.1.3, 1.2.5, 1.2.6). PI 1.1.3 requires that the fishery has unlikely impact on the genetic structure of wild populations to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. PI 1.2.5 requires that t there is a strategy for managing the hatchery enhancement activity such that it does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the genetic diversity of the wild population. Annex SC (Salmon) includes an additional scoring issue in PI 2.5.1.b to account for enhancement. requires that enhancement activities are highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be a serious or irreversible harm.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.5.10 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard recognizes management measures commonly used in small scale fisheries can achieve adequate levels of protection for stocks in the face of uncertainty about the state of the resource and that a past record of good management performance could be considered as supporting evidence of the adequacy of the management measures and the management system.	This Essential Component derives from paragraph 32 of the Marine Ecolabelling Guidelines. It cuts across the other components covering management measures and seeks recognition within the certification scheme that less sophisticated management measures commonly used in small scale fisheries can still achieve adequate protection of stocks, providing uncertainty is properly addressed. The scheme could, for example, accept a past record of good outcomes under such management measures as evidence of their adequacy.

Conclusion	References
For PI 1.2.1a, guidance is included for considering informal approaches when looking at harvest strategy design (GSA2.4), including whether elements are working together, to what extent objectives are being achieved (which can be looked at through local knowledge) and feedback loop for effective management. When considering PI 1.2.1 b there is explicit guidance for small scale fisheries that may require a stakeholder consultation process to understand the management of the stock (GSA2.4.1). This also makes direct reference to the fact that when considering how testing has occurred, practical experience or evidence of past performance should be considered. Examples: Juan Fernandez lobster for PI 1.2.1 scoring issue a. CAB identifies that SG60 and SG80 can be met even though "the harvest strategy is largely informal and has not been designed to respond to biological reference points." The reasoning behind this is first due to the remote location of the fishery and small boats limiting the overall size/access to the fishery. Second, is the strong local involvement between University researchers and fishers for moving into different areas, termed 'marcas' if CPUE indices drop.	• *Fisheries Standard*

D.5.10 Small scale and/or data limited fisheries

Peel-Harvey Estuary blue-swimmer crabs: The team assigned SG80 as met for PI 1.2.1 scoring issue a. Their evidence included that the lack of formalised indices was appropriate given the scale of the fishery. "We note that at the time of assessment there is no fishery-independent index of the state of the stock that could allow the degree of this responsiveness to be measured. Nevertheless, the approach is reasonable given the scale of the fishery. We also note that the harvest strategy is based primarily around the commercial sector and that there are no indicators from the recreational fishery for the target species. We consider this to be a reasonable approach given that estimates of the recreational catch are only obtained every two years and that CPUE from the commercial sector is also likely to be a more robust indicator of stock status." Ashtamundi Clams: In PI 3.1.1 scoring issue a the assessment team assigned a score of 80 with informal approaches identified. They state, "there is also evidence that the management system had implemented informal (customary) controls on fishing, for instance to delay the start of the fishing season if it is felt that the clams are too small for commercial fishing." Ben Tre Clam, PI 1.2.1, cooperatives are responsible for their own monitoring in season and are responsible for their own closed areas and size limits. "□ The density, growth and mortality of clams in the managed area is monitored throughout the season by the cooperatives; actions are put in place to respond to changes in stock status (see below) ·Aproportionofbroodstockisprotectedviaclosedareasandamaximumsize(detailsgivenin1.1.1a);eachindividualcooperativeareahasitsownsystemforthis(seeunder1.2.2below).TheFisheriesResearchInstituteactsasthescientificadvisortothecooperatives"	*r* *d* *2.* *0*

D.6.01 Certified Stocks

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the stock under	The stock under consideration is considered to be overfished if its stock size is below its limit reference point (or its proxy). Decision rules should avoid stocks falling below Blim but sometimes they do not for reasons that may or may not be wholly or partly due to the fishery and/or the management of the fishery. Nevertheless, the language in the Guidelines states that "the

D.6.01 Certified Stocks	
consideration is not overfished.	stock under consideration is not overfished, and is maintained at a level which promotes the objective of optimal utilization and maintains its availability for present and future generations." If the stock under consideration of a certified fishery becomes overfished, the scheme should cause the certification of this fishery to be suspended or revoked.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 1.1.1 requires at the minimum, conditional 60 level the target stock to be likely above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI; likely meaning 70th percentile). Where information is not available on the stock status relative to the Point of Recruitment Impairment (PRI) or MSY levels, proxy indicators and reference points may be used to score PI 1.1.1. For stocks above the PRI but below the target level (e.g. BMSY), the fishery must specified rebuilding timeframes shorter of 20 years or 2 times its generation time. For cases where 2 generations is less than 5 years, the rebuilding timeframe is up to 5 years. As explained in GSA 2.2.2, MSC has chosen not to define its requirements in relation to the commonly used definitions ""overfished"" and ""overfishing"". Nevertheless, these terms are commonly used, and are referred to in some guidance as follows: Overfishing: fishing mortality higher than FMSY, the fishing mortality level that results, in the long term in the stock being at maximum sustainable yield. Overfished: biomass stock size lower than a limit defined in relation to MSY. The FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines define ""overfished"" as below a biomass limit reference point. The limit is often taken to be 50% BMSY, which is the default assumption for the point below which recruitment may be impaired (PRI) as defined by the MSC. However, the term is not commonly used internationally to relate to the PRI, and hence its use in MSC guidance and CR language is limited. If the stock becomes overfished during the certification period, PI1.1.1 would be rescored at surveillance, leading to suspension and/or withdrawal of the certificate.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.6.02 Certified Stocks

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of outcome indicator(s) consistent with achieving management objectives for the stock under consideration (D.2.01, - D.2.03).	The relevant management objectives are those referred to in Performance Area 2 and are for the whole of the stock under consideration. The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives have been effectively achieved. Outcome indicators are required for all management objectives for the stock under consideration, which may include, for example, target reference points that take into account the requirements of dependent predators, where appropriate (D.2.07).

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 1.1.1 requires the target stock to be likely above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI; likely meaning 70th percentile). Where information is not available on the stock status relative to the Point of Recruitment Impairment (PRI) or MSY In addition, PI 1.2.2 requires harvest control rules in place or available that are expected to reduce the exploitation rate as the point of recruitment impairment (PRI) is approached as well as evidence that tools used or available to implement HCRs are appropriate and effective in controlling exploitation. PI 1.1.1 also requires the stock to be fluctuating around or above a target reference point consistent with achieving MSY and addresses the issue of setting targets and limits to ensure precaution in relation to the ecological role of the stock(s) under consideration.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0* ▪

D.6.03 Enhanced Fisheries

GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the	All Essential Components that address Enhanced Fisheries can be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover these fisheries. In the case of enhanced fisheries, the stock under consideration may comprise naturally reproductive

D.6.03 Enhanced Fisheries		
natural reproductive stock components of enhanced stocks are not overfished.	components and components maintained by stocking. The natural reproductive stock component of enhanced stocks is described in the Glossary. In the context of avoiding significant negative impacts of enhancement activities on the natural reproductive components of the stock under consideration, the Inland Ecolabelling Guidelines state that displacement [of the naturally reproductive components of enhanced stocks by stocked components] must not result in a reduction of the natural reproductive stock component below abundance-based target reference points (or their proxies). Decision rules (D.5.03) should avoid stocks falling below Blim but sometimes they do not for reasons that may or may not be wholly or partly due to the fishery and/or the management of the fishery. Nevertheless, the language in the Guidelines states that both the stock under consideration and the naturally reproductive components of enhanced stocks are not overfished. In addition, naturally reproductive components of enhanced stocks are not substantially displaced by stocked components. If the stock under consideration of a certified fishery becomes overfished, the scheme should cause the certification of this fishery to be suspended or revoked.	
Conclusion		References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, MSC has chosen not to define its requirements in relation to the commonly used definitions "overfished", but in guidance this is referred to. Overfished: biomass stock size lower than a limit defined in relation to MSY. The FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines define "overfished" as below a biomass limit reference point. The limit is often taken to be 50% BMSY, which is the default assumption for the point below which recruitment may be impaired (PRI) as defined by the MSC. However, the term is not commonly used internationally to relate to the PRI, and hence its use in MSC guidance and CR language is limited. Modified assessment trees have been developed for enhanced fisheries and they function as a supplement to Annex SA. Annex SB (enhanced bivalves) requires that bivalve fisheries involving hatchery enhancement assessed as hatch-and-catch (HAC) fisheries are scored against Principle 1 PIs in accordance with the default assessment tree and are thus required to be above PRI and fluctuation around MSY. In addition they are also scored against Genetics PI 1.1.3. PI 1.1.3 requires that the fishery has negligible discernible impact on the genetic structure of the population. Annex SC		• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.6.03 Enhanced Fisheries	
(Salmon) requires that in an enhanced fishery, the team assesses the status based solely on the wild salmon in the Stock Management Unit (SMU). PI 1.1.1 (Salmon) requires that the SMU is at a level which maintains high production and has a low probability of falling below its limit reference point - which is essentially equivalent to not being overfished. Clause SC 2.2.3.1 requires that the assessment team takes into consideration the specific dynamics of salmon stocks, a fishery shall meet SG60 requirement in PI 1.1.1 scoring issue (a) if the average SMU spawning stock size is above the limit reference point (LRP). Additionally, three PIs look at enhancement PI 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3. These three PIs require that enhancement activities do not negatively impact wild stocks (PI 1.3.1), that effective enhancement and fishery strategies are in place to address the effects of enhancement activities on wild stocks (PI 1.3.2) and that relevant information is collected and assessments are adequate to determine the effect of enhancement activities on wild stocks (PI 1.3.3). Clause SC 2.2.2 requires that in an enhanced fishery, the team shall assess status based solely on the wild salmon in the SMU.	

D.6.04 Enhanced Fisheries	
GSSI Component	Guidance
In the case of enhanced fisheries, the standard requires that the natural reproductive stock component of enhanced stocks is not substantially displaced by stocked components.	All Essential Components that address Enhanced Fisheries can be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover these fisheries. In the case of enhanced fisheries, the stock under consideration may comprise naturally reproductive components and components maintained by stocking. The natural reproductive stock component of enhanced stocks is described in the Glossary. With respect to "substantially displaced", in particular, displacement must not result in a reduction of the natural reproductive stock component below abundance-based target reference points (or their proxies).
Conclusion	References

D.6.04 Enhanced Fisheries

The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, MSC has chosen not to define its requirements in relation to the commonly used definitions ""overfished"", but in guidance there is referred to. Overfished: biomass stock size lower than a limit defined in relation to MSY. The FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines define ""overfished"" as below a biomass limit reference point. The limit is often taken to be 50% BMSY, which is the default assumption for the point below which recruitment may be impaired (PRI) as defined by the MSC. However, the term is not commonly used internationally to relate to the PRI, and hence its use in MSC guidance and CR language is limited. Modified assessment trees have been developed for enhanced fisheries and they function as a supplement to Annex SA. Annex SB (enhanced bivalves) requires that bivalve fisheries involving hatchery enhancement assessed as hatch-and-catch (HAC) fisheries are scored against Principle 1 PIs in accordance with the default assessment tree and are thus required to be above PRI and fluctuation around MSY. In addition they are also scored again Genetics PIs 1.1.3. PI 1.1.3 requires that the fishery has negligible discernible impact on the genetic structure of the population. Annex SC (Salmon) requires that in an enhanced fishery, the team assesses the status based solely on the wild salmon in the Stock Management Unit (SMU) (Clause SC 2.2.2). For PI 1.1.1 (salmon) requires that the SMU is at a level which maintains high production and has a low probability of falling below its limit reference point. Clause SC 2.2.3.1 requires that the assessment team takes into consideration the specific dynamics of salmon stocks, a fishery shall meet SG60 requirement in PI 1.1.1 scoring issue (a) if the average SMU spawning stock size is above the limit reference point (LRP). Additionally, three PIs look at enhancement 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3. These three PIs require that enhancement activities do not negatively impact wild stocks (1.3.1), that effective enhancement and fishery strategies are in place to address the effects of enhancement activities on wild stocks (PI 1.3.2) and that relevant information is collected and assessments are adequate to determine the effect of enhancement activities on wild stocks. PI 1.3.1 SG80 requires that it is highly likely that the enhancement activities do not have significant negative impacts on the local adaptation, reproductive performance or productivity and diversity of wild stocks - which is similar to minimum impact on the wild population. Additionally Annex SC PI 1.1.2 requires that where the stock management unit (SMU) is reduced, there is evidence of stock rebuilding within a specified timeframe. PI 1.1.2 scoring issue (c) SG 80 requires that enhancement activities are very seldom used as a stock rebuilding strategy which also prevents 'displacing' the wild component.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.6.04 Enhanced Fisheries	
MSC futher notes that The requirement to assess the status of the wild stocks, without the addition of the enhanced stocks is confirmed by Clause SC2.2.2 in the default salmon tree, as below. SC2.2.2 In an enhanced fishery, the team shall assess status based solely on the wild salmon in the SMU. SC2.2.2.1 Artificially-produced fish shall not be counted toward meeting spawning escapement goals, or other surrogate reference points. SC2.2.2.2 Where no distinction is made between wild fish and artificially produced fish in estimates of spawning escapements or other surrogate reference points, stock status shall be scored lower than in cases where wild fish are enumerated separately.	

D.6.05 Non-Certified Catches	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of outcome indicator(s) consistent with achieving management objectives for non-certified stocks (i.e. stocks/species in the catch that are other than the stock under consideration) (D.2.04).	The relevant management objectives are those referred to in Performance Area 2 and are for non-certified species/stocks. The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives (D.2.04) have been effectively achieved. Non-certified catches refers to species/stocks that are taken by the unit of certification other than the stock for which certification is being sought (see Glossary). Examples of irreversible or very slowly reversible effects on bycatch species include excessive depletion of very long-lived organisms (see Glossary). To mitigate effects that are likely to be

D.6.05 Non-Certified Catches	
	irreversible or very slowly reversible requires those effects to be made less severe such that they are no longer likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, the MSC requirements on non-target species are divided in Primary (PIs 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3) and Secondary (PIs 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3). For Primary species, at SG80, it is required the species are highly likely (> 80th percentile) to be above the PRI OR If the species is below the PRI, there is either evidence of recovery or a demonstrably effective strategy in place between all MSC UoAs which categorise this species as main, to ensure that they collectively do not hinder recovery and rebuilding. For secondary, at SG80, species are required to be highly likely (>70th percentile) above biologically based limits OR If below biologically based limits, there is either evidence of recovery or a demonstrably effective partial strategy in place such that the UoA does not hinder recovery and rebuilding AND Where catches of a main Secondary species outside of biological limits are considerable, there is either evidence of recovery or a, demonstrably effective strategy in place between those MSC UoAs that have considerable catches of the species, to ensure that they collectively do not hinder recovery and rebuilding.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.6.06 Endangered Species	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of outcome indicator(s) consistent with achieving management objectives (D.2.05) that seek to ensure that	The context of this Essential Component is Endangered Species. Endangered species are defined in the Glossary. These species are already adversely impacted at the population level, by definition, and are susceptible to further adverse impacts at this level from which they need to be protected. Where "adverse impacts" is used in relation to Endangered Species in the FAO Guidelines there is no further qualification provided (i.e. no "significant" or "severe"). Elsewhere in the Guidelines, the term "adverse impacts" is qualified, but in each case this is in a very specific context. For example. The term “significant negative impacts” is used in the FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines

D.6.06 Endangered Species	
Endangered species are protected from adverse impacts resulting from interactions with the unit of certification and any associated culture or enhancement activity, including recruitment overfishing or other impacts that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible.	only in relation to enhanced fisheries and “severe adverse impacts” is used only in relation to dependent predators. The term "significant adverse impacts" occurs only in the Deep Sea Guidelines with respect to VMEs. The outcome indicators required by the standard should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives for Endangered Species (D.2.05) have been effectively achieved. The actual outcome would be measured by an assessment required under D.4.10. The FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines acknowledge that much greater scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks (paragraph 31 (41)), hence the outcome indicators necessary to meet this Essential Component should take into account risk and uncertainty.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.3.1. requires that, where national and/or international requirements set limits for ETP species, the combined effects of the MSC UoAs on the population /stock are known and highly likely to be within these limits (scoring issue a). If no national or international requirements set limits, the direct effects of the UoA shall be highly likely to not hinder recovery of the ETP species (scoring issue b). In both cases indirect effects are also considered at SG80 and are though to be highly likely to not create acceptable impacts. In addition, PI 2.3.3 requires that Relevant information is collected to support the management of UoA impacts on ETP species, including: - information for the development of the management strategy; - information to assess the effectiveness of the management strategy; and - information to determine the outcome status of ETP species Where the status of ETP species cannot be analytically determined, the team should trigger the use of the Risk-Based Framework to score PI 2.3.1.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.6.06 Endangered Species	
Where the fishery targets salmon, Annex SC will be used to score PIs 2.3.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.3 and there is specific reference to the effects of UoA and associated enhancement activities on ETP species.	

D.6.07 Habitat	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of outcome indicator(s) consistent with achieving management objectives (D.2.06) for avoiding, minimizing or mitigating the impacts of the unit of certification on essential habitats for the "stock under consideration" and on habitats that are highly vulnerable to damage by the fishing gear of the unit of certification.	The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives have been effectively achieved for habitat (D.2.06). Essential habitats are described in the Glossary. Examples of impacts on habitat that should be avoided include the destruction or severe modification of rare and/or vulnerable habitats. In assessing fishery impacts, the full spatial range of the relevant habitat should be considered, not just that part of the spatial range that is potentially affected by fishing. The FAO Guidelines acknowledge that much greater scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks (paragraph 31 (41)), hence the outcome indicators necessary to meet this Essential Component should take into consideration risk and uncertainty.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.4.1. requires that the UoA does not cause serious or irreversible harm to habitat structure and function, considered on the basis of the area covered by the governance body(s) responsible for fisheries management in the area(s) where the UoA operates. MSC distinguishes between three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. These categories are also	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.6.07 Habitat	
used in the outcome PI. Clause SA 3.13.4 states that the team shall interpret "serious or irreversible harm" as reductions in habitat structure and function (as defined in Table SA8) such that the habitat would be unable to recover at least 80% of its structure and function within 5-20 years if fishing on the habitat were to cease entirely. Clause SA 3.13.4.1 clarifies that the team shall interpret "serious or irreversible harm" as reductions in habitat structure and function (as defined in Table SA8) such that the habitat would be unable to recover at least 80% of its structure and function within 5-20 years if fishing on the habitat were to cease entirely.	

D.6.07.01 Habitat	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of outcome indicator(s) consistent with achieving management objectives (D.2.06.01) that seek to prevent significant adverse impacts of the unit of certification on VMEs.	This Supplementary Component is related to D.2.06.01 and D.5.07.01 which establish the requirement for management objectives and management measures, respectively, specifically for preventing significant adverse impacts of the unit of certification on VMEs. This Supplementary Component establishes the requirement for outcome indicators to demonstrate when the objectives have been achieved. The FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep Sea Fisheries in the High Seas provide detail on what is regarded as a VME and what is a significant adverse impact in this context.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.4.1. requires that the UoA does not cause serious or irreversible harm to habitat structure and function, considered on the basis of the area covered by the governance body(s) responsible for fisheries management in the area(s) where the UoA operates. MSC distinguishes between three types of habitats in the outcome PI: Commonly encountered, vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) (as defined in FAO guidelines) and minor. These categories are also used in the outcome PI. PI 2.4.1 (b) at SG80 requires that the UoA is highly unlikely to reduce structure and function of the	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.6.07.01 Habitat	
VME habitats to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm.Clause SA 3.13.4 states that the team shall interpret "serious or irreversible harm" as reductions in habitat structure and function (as defined in Table SA8) such that the habitat would be unable to recover at least 80% of its structure and function within 5-20 years if fishing on the habitat were to cease entirely. Clause SA 3.13.4.1 clarifies that the team shall interpret "serious or irreversible harm" as reductions in habitat structure and function (as defined in Table SA8) such that the habitat would be unable to recover at least 80% of its structure and function within 5-20 years if fishing on the habitat were to cease entirely.	

D.6.08 Dependent Predators	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard includes outcome indicator(s) consistent with achieving management objectives (D.2.07) that seek to avoid severe adverse impacts on dependent predators resulting from fishing on a stock under consideration that is a key prey species.	The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives have been effectively achieved for dependent predators (D.2.07). Dependent predators are described in the Glossary. The FAO Guidelines acknowledge that much greater scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks (paragraph 31 (41)), hence the outcome indicators should take into account risk and uncertainty.
Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, Clause SA 2.2.8 requires that the team consider the trophic position of target stock to ensure precaution in relation to their ecological role, in particular for species low in the food chain and determine whether they are key LTL. Where a species is categorised as key LTL they shall score PI 1.1.1A (Table SA2) which requires that the stock is at a level which has low probability of serious ecosystem impacts and that the stock is fluctuating around a level consistent with	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.6.08 Dependent Predators	
ecosystem needs. PI 1.2.1 requires that there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place expected to achieve management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. Additionally PI 2.5.2 requires that there are measures in place to ensure the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to ecosystem structure and function so as to achieve the Ecosystem outcome 80 level of performance. PI 2.5.1 SG80 requires that the UoA is highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. MSC further notes that As noted in the original evidence, key LTL are scored against PI 1.1.1A (Table SA2) which requires that the stock is at a level which has low probability of serious ecosystem impacts and that the stock is fluctuating around a level consistent with ecosystem needs. FCR section SA2.2.13b confirms the limited impacts allowed on such dependent predators in scoring this special PI.	

D.6.09 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires the existence of outcome indicator(s) consistent with achieving management objectives (D.2.08) that seek to minimize adverse impacts of the unit of certification, including any enhancement activities, on the structure, processes and function of aquatic ecosystems that are likely to be irreversible or very slowly reversible. Any modifications to the habitat for	The outcome indicators should be consistent with demonstrating that the management objectives for impacts on the structure, processes and function of aquatic ecosystems (D.2.08) have been effectively achieved. The component relating to enhancement activity may be "not applicable" to schemes that explicitly do not cover enhanced fisheries. Ecosystem structure, processes and function are described in the Glossary. This language is in accordance with Section 4.1.4.1 of the FAO Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries, which suggests one of the broad management objectives for a fisheries could be to keep impact on the structure, processes and functions of the ecosystem at an acceptable level.

D.6.09 Ecosystem structure, processes and function		
enhancing the stock under consideration must be reversible and not cause serious or irreversible harm to the natural ecosystem's structure, processes and function.	The FAO Guidelines acknowledge that much greater scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks (paragraph 31 (41)), hence the outcome indicators necessary to meet this Essential Component should take into account risk and uncertainty.	
Conclusion		References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, PI 2.5.1. requires that the UoA is highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be a serious or irreversible harm. In addition, PI 2.5.3 ensures proper information and monitoring to ensure the strategy is effective. Annex SC (Salmon) considers habitat enhancement and its impact on the ecosystem structure, processes and function under PIs 1.3.1, 2.4.1 and 2.5.1. PI 1.3.1 requires that (habitat) enhancement activities do not negatively impact the wild stock(s). PI 2.4.1 scoring issue (d) requires that (habitat) enhancement activities are unlikely to have adverse impacts on habitat. Clause SC 3.13.2 requires that the impacts of enhancement-related habitat modifications shall be assessed to the standard that they have minimal adverse impacts on the surrounding habitats (i.e., impacts resulting from the physical operation of the culture facility and not evaluated necessarily in the context of some broader regional resource consequence). PI 2.5.1 scoring issue (b) at SG80 requires that (habitat) enhancement activities are highly unlikely to disrupt the key elements underlying ecosystem structure and function to a point where there would be a serious or irreversible harm.		• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.6.09.01 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
GSSI Component	Guidance
The standard requires that the management system implements EAF in a manner that strives to ensure that the impact of fisheries on the	This Supplementary Component implies outcomes with respect to the ecosystem that go beyond those in the parent Essential Component.

D.6.09.01 Ecosystem structure, processes and function	
ecosystem is limited to the extent possible and that ecological relationships between harvested, dependent and associated species are maintained so as to avoid jeopardizing the options for future generations to benefit from the full range of goods and services provided by the ecosystem.	The outcome indicators required to meet this Supplementary Component would be consistent with achieving the principles in Section 1 of the FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries. 4. Fisheries management. 4.2. The ecosystem approach to fisheries.

Conclusion	References
The MSC is in alignment because in Version 2.0 of the MSC standard fisheries certification requirements (FCR) and guidance, there is an implicit requirement to implement EAF to limit impact of the fishery on the ecosystem. Principle 1 and 2 outcome and management PIs require that impact on components (target, primary, secondary, ETP species, habitats and ecosystem) should either avoid serious or irreversible harm or be above biologically based limits and that there is a management strategy in place to ensure that the UoA does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm. Additionally (see Box GSA 1.1) the application of the precautionary approach in fisheries management systems is explicitly scored in PIs 3.1.3 and 3.2.2. The MSC also intends the precautionary approach to be applied implicitly throughout the Certification Requirements. Additionally, several PIs under Principle 3 require clear consultation and decision-making processes in the fishery. PI 3.1.2 requires that the management system has effective consultation processes that are open to interested and affected parties AND the roles and responsibilities of organisations and individuals who are involved in the management process are clear and understood by all relevant parties. PI 3.2.1 requires that the fishery specific management system has clear, specific objectives designed to achieve outcomes expressed by MSC principle 1 and 2. PI 3.2.2 requires that the fishery-specific management system includes effective decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve the objectives and has an appropriate approach to actual disputes in the fishery. The requirement to implement EAF to limit the impact of the fishery on the ecosystem is implicit in the aforementioned PIs and requirements.	• *Fisheries Standard 2.0*

D.4 EVIDENCE OF ALIGNMENT