



## **Overview of FishSource Scoring of Wild Capture Pacific Salmon Fisheries**

Our general approach to the development and application of FishSource’s assessment criteria (for all species) has been two-fold: we have strived to align with MSC’s Fisheries Assessment Methodology (FAM), with a focus on performance indicators that can be scored affordably and reliably based on standard fisheries statistics commonly available for assessed fisheries around the world. Secondly, we have also analyzed MSC scoring of fisheries to date (i.e. in addition to the FAM, assessment tree and other MSC standards documentation) and incorporated this information into the development of criteria benchmarks. An analysis focused upon whitefish resulted in FishSource’s original quantitative scoring methodology. A 2007 report describing this analysis and the resultant scoring framework is available at [www.fishsource.com](http://www.fishsource.com). In some cases our scoring criteria may set a higher mark at the “80” level, where we feel that scores above 80 were being achieved at too low a performance level. Our intent is to maintain alignment with MSC at the “60” level.

Due to the specificities of salmon fishery management, FishSource is applying separate qualitative criteria to the assessment of salmon fisheries. Much of the MSC scoring of salmon fisheries to date has been qualitative rather than quantitative in nature. Correspondingly, we developed a qualitative scoring approach for salmon based upon an empirical analysis of MSC scoring results, which we translated into fairly specific benchmarks intended to reduce scorer subjectivity. While our assessment framework differs in its language from MSC salmon assessment trees, we consider that it captures the main sustainability issues raised by certification bodies in MSC scoring of salmon fisheries in past assessments.

We initiated scoring of salmon fisheries using a rapid assessment format – fisheries received scores for each of the five FishSource criteria in range rather than numeric format ( $\geq 8$ ,  $\geq 6$ ,  $< 6$ ), accompanied by text-based rationales describing the performance factor(s) and nested sub-criteria responsible for the score. Many of the scoring rationales and scores for fisheries that are MSC-certified were derived from relevant MSC performance indicator scores, possibly updated with research published since the most recent certification. While many initial scores have been posted, we chose to not immediately make the methodology public in order to allow for refinement as further analysis of past MSC scoring was conducted.

We are now in the process of reviewing our preliminary scoring of salmon fisheries, replacing the initial scores in range format with numeric scores for all criteria and nested sub-criteria. The numeric scores correspond with the benchmarks described in the FishSource salmon assessment methodology. A forthcoming technical report will also describe the results of our MSC scoring analysis and will explain our efforts to align FishSource benchmarks with MSC scoring results.

We have scored some MSC certified fisheries as <6 against some criteria. This is possible for two reasons: (1) if those fisheries were scored lightly by an MSC CB; and (2) if the situation in the fishery has gotten worse since MSC scoring. We have chosen to not make some of these <6 scores public, but the scores and resulting red ratings have been made available to our partners as interim scores through our private Metrics platform. These scores will remain interim while statistical analysis and further research is underway to better understand MSC's "60" benchmark and variables that may be influencing recent scores.

Future changes to our assessment approach may result from our continuing efforts to analyze MSC scoring of salmon fisheries and improve FishSource alignment with MSC, and may also occur after the new MSC salmon-specific default assessment tree is finalized. Scores and information on FishSource are also reviewed at least annually. There are mechanisms built into the website that allow for stakeholder contributions and commentaries, and we encourage your feedback.