The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) has withdrawn certification of the Faroese Pelagic Organization (FPO) Atlanto-Scandian herring fishery. In December 2012, the annual coastal states meeting resulted in a disagreement on TAC allocation key and Faroe Islands did not sign the Coastal States agreement for 2013. Nevertheless, the agreement was signed by other Coastal States (EU, Iceland, Norway and Russian Federation) and the Parties agreed to set aside a quantity of 31,940 tonnes for the Faroe Islands based on the sharing arrangement agreed between the Parties in Oslo 18 January 2007. The dispute on TAC allocation for 2013 raised the question on whether the FPO AS herring fishery still meets the MSC Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fisheries. After a March review meeting t. It was concluded that the fishery would remain certified, but subject to an expedited audit should new information with ‘material differences to certification status become available. On the 26th of March 2013, the Faroese Ministry of Fisheries announced its intention to raise its national catch ceiling for AS Herring to 17%. The size of the AS herring quota set aside by the Faroe Islands (105 200 tonnes) was significantly higher than the share allocated to them by the Coastal states sharing arrangement (31 940 tonnes).

A MSC review concluded that the FPO Atlanto-Scandian Herring fishery does not meet the MSC’s scope requirements (Principle 3, Criterion A1): “A fishery shall not be conducted under a controversial unilateral exemption to an international agreement."
The certificate for this fishery was suspended effective immediately.

TAGS: sustainable, fisheries, Marine Stewardship Council, Faroe Islands, herring, MSC certification suspended