

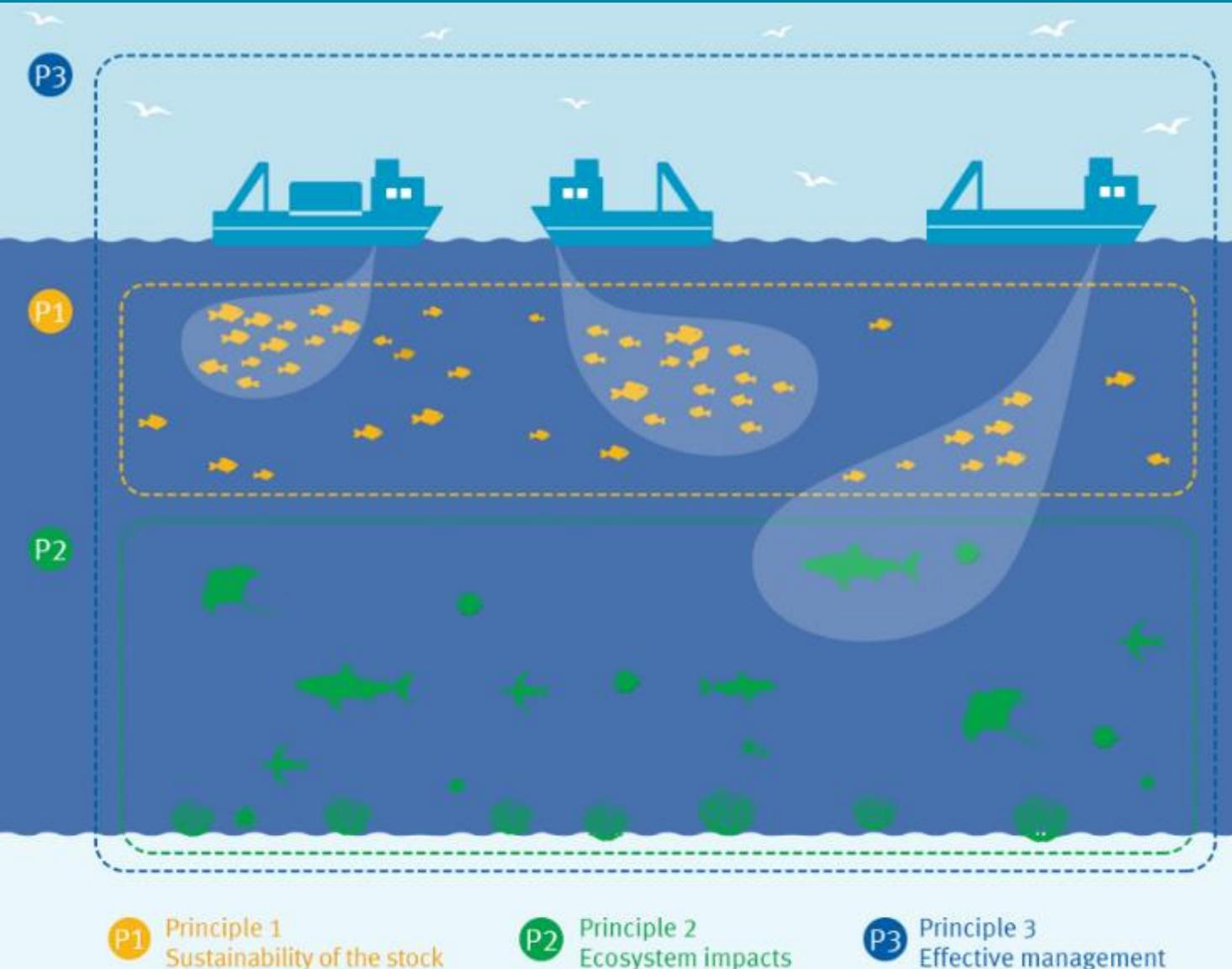


# MSC fishery assessments

## Consideration of the Landing Obligation

Tim Davies | Marine Stewardship Council  
Discard Action Group, April 2019

1. How the LO is considered in fishery assessments
2. Multiple parts of the Standard touch on the LO
3. Issues with LO implementation can affect certification



- The MSC is a standard setter; world's most recognised benchmark for sustainability
- 28 performance indicators that sit under three principles:
- Principle 1 Sustainability of the stock
- Principle 2 Ecosystem impacts
- Principle 3 Effective management

# A GUIDE TO THE MSC FISHERIES STANDARD

## Principle 1 – Sustainable fish stocks



Target stock



Harvest management strategy

## Principle 2 – Minimising Environmental Impact



Primary species



Secondary species



ETP species



Habitats



Ecosystems

## Principle 3 – Fishery Management



Governance and policy



Fishery-specific management

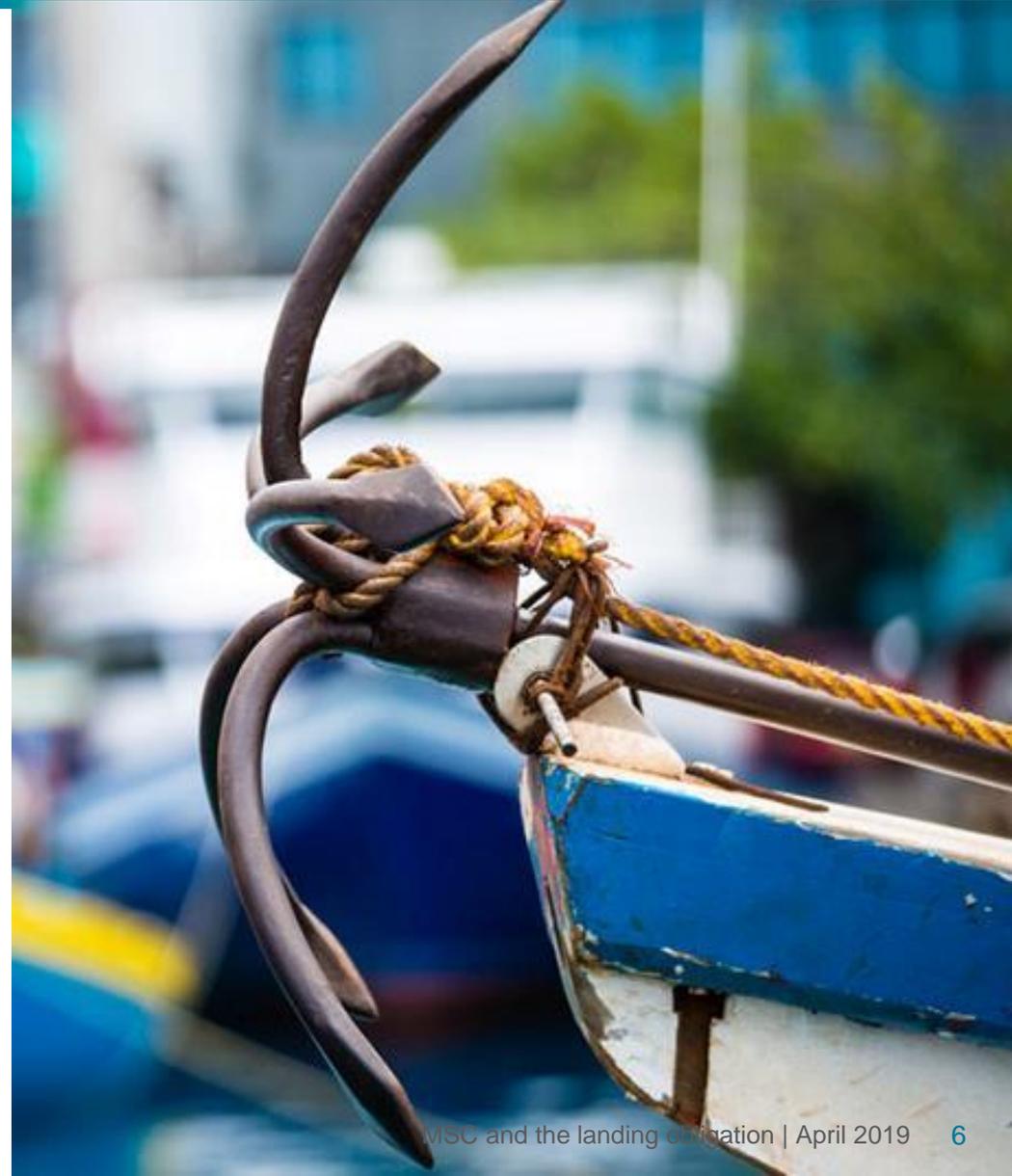
- Fishery assessments undertaken by third-party assessment bodies
- Assessment teams evaluate the performance of the fishery and the management system against Standard requirements
- MSC has a role in ensuring the proper and consistent application of the Standard



# Where does the landing obligation fit in?



- Concerns on the implementation of the LO:
  - Discarding continues in many fisheries
  - Monitoring, control and enforcement is not sufficient to implement the policy
  - Exemptions to the landing obligation may not be based on sound evidence or decision making
- MSC has produced guidance on where and how the landing obligation may impact the outcome of a fishery assessment or surveillance audit
- To support assessment bodies in considering the full range of interactions with the landing obligation
- To ensure consistency between assessment bodies

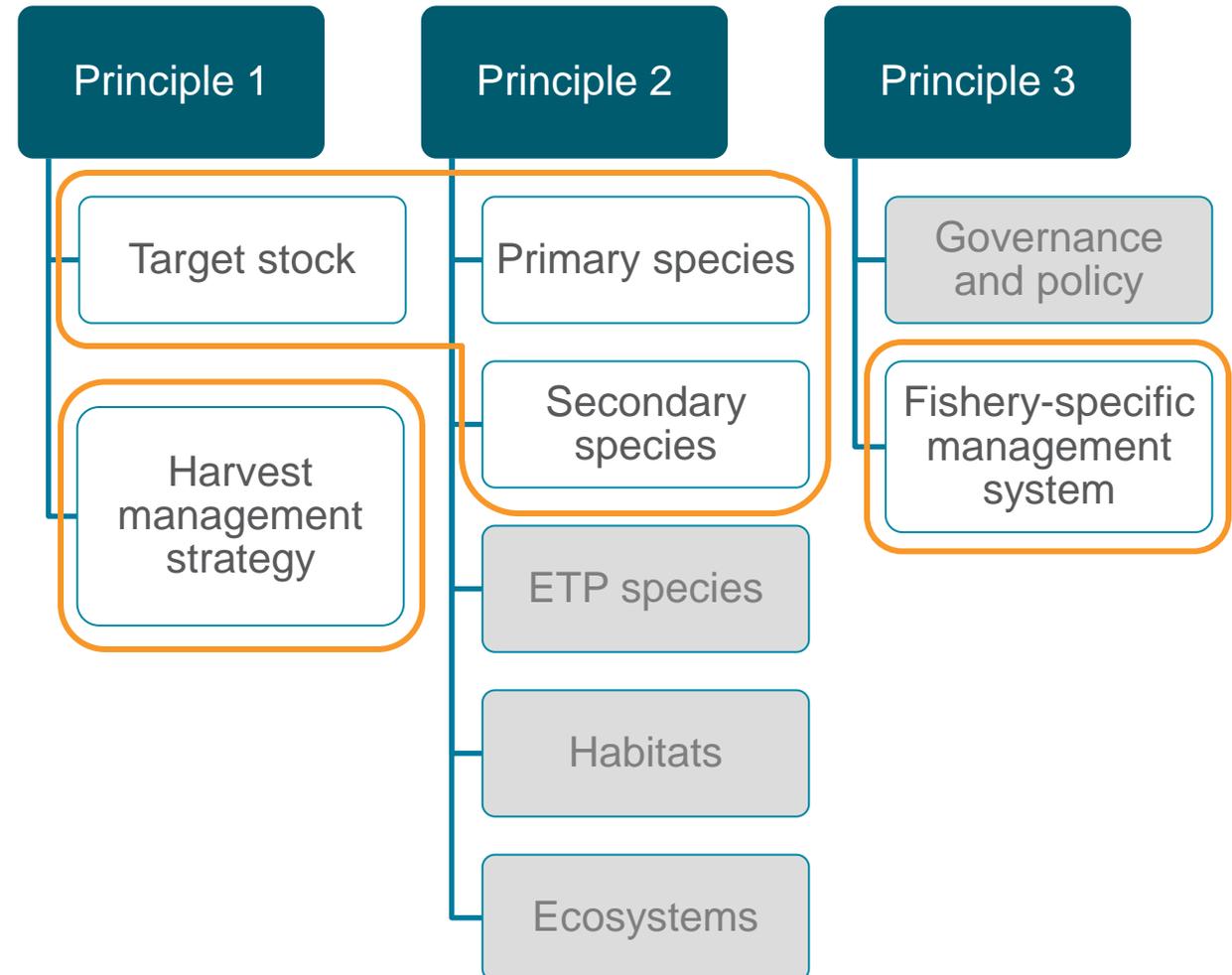


# Where does the landing obligation fit?



The main considerations:

- Non-compliance (continued discarding)
- Inadequate monitoring, control and surveillance
- Increased uncertainty (undocumented catches)
- Ability of harvest strategies to achieve objectives



# Where does the landing obligation fit?



- Guidance recognises two sides to the landing obligation:
  - Negative impacts, e.g. those resulting from non-compliance
  - Positive impacts, e.g. improved data and knowledge
- Important to acknowledge a time lag on the information base necessary for scoring
- Interactions may not have yet come to pass, or may not yet be detectable in the available information



# Example: the Joint Demersal Fishery assessment



- The public comment draft report for the joint North Sea demersal fisheries assessment includes findings with respect to the implementation of the LO
- Raised conditions under Principle 3; monitoring control and surveillance, and compliance
- “With the introduction of the LO, it can no longer be concluded that the enforcement system is sufficiently comprehensive for the context of the fishery”
- “With regards to the implementation of the Landing Obligation concern has been expressed in e.g. recent STECF reports and by stakeholders about ongoing non-compliance, although the assessment team could find no evidence that this is indeed the case.”
- “Taking into account the management system’s inability to effectively monitor this measure, the team considered that the evidence base available is currently too weak [to conclude that that fishers comply with the landing obligation]”

- The MSC Fisheries Standard considers the landing obligation in several places
- These interactions have been made clear to assessors
  
- MSC has been creating discussion to inform an MSC programme of work on the LO
  - Brussels seminar convened a cross-section of perspectives and concerns regarding LO
  - Further engagement to answer to build assurance within the EU seafood supply chain
  
- MSC's Fisheries Standard Review
  - How monitoring, control and surveillance systems are evaluated in fishery assessments
  - What information is needed to assess compliance
  - MSC will be seeking input into these topics later in 2019

# Thank you

MSC on how the landing obligation should be considered- interpretation link:  
<https://mscportal.force.com/interpret/s/article/Consideration-of-the-Landing-Obligation-in-fishery-assessments>

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