MarinTrust Standard V2

By-product Fishery Assessment Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*), FAO 27, ICES 7.e (Western English Channel)

Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*)
	Geographical area:	FAO 27 – Northeast Atlantic
	Country of origin of the product:	Denmark , France, Belgium, UK
	Stock:	ICES 7. e (Western English Channel)
Date	May 2024	
Report Code	DNK22	
Assessor	Blanca Gonzalez	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	Denmark, France, Belgium, UK	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	None	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): FF Skagen A/S			
Country: Denmark			
Email address:		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		LRQA	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval
Blanca Gonzalez	Sam Peacock	0.5	Re-approval
Assessment Period	May 2024 – May 2025		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*)
Stock	ICES 7. e (Western English Channel)
Fishery Location	FAO 27 – Northeast Atlantic
Management Authority (Country/ State)	EU and UK
Gear Type(s)	Beam trawl, otter trawl, fixed nets, other gears
Outcome of Assessment	
Peer Review Evaluation	Agree with assessment outcome
Recommendation	PASS

Table 2. Assessment Determination

Assessment Determination
Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*) was assessed as a category C species considering that it is a Least Concern species by the IUCN, it is not in included in any CITES Appendixes, and the stock is managed using biennial quotas relative to established reference points.

Plaice in ICES Division 7. e (western English Channel) is subject to a biennial stock assessment by ICES working group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion (WGCSE). The last assessment was published in June 2022 based on the rfb rule which uses catches data. Fishing pressure on the stock is above F_{MSY} proxy, and the stock-size index is above MSY $B_{trigger}$ ($I_{trigger}$). Therefore, both clauses in the assessment were met.

The plaice by-product meets the Marin Trust requirements and it should be re-approved for use as a raw material.

Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
The peer reviewer agrees that this species is eligible for assessment under the MarinTrust byproduct assessment methodology, and that the stock falls into Category C. The most recent stock assessment was adequate to meet the requirements of C1.1, and biomass is currently estimated to be above the target reference point level, meeting the requirements of C1.2. Overall, the peer reviewer agrees that this stock should be approved as a source of byproduct raw material for MarinTrust certified facilities.

Notes for On-site Auditor
None

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Species Categorisation

NB: If any species is categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List, or if it appears in CITES Appendix 1, it **cannot** be approved for use as an MarinTrust raw material.

IUCN Red list Category

By-product material from a species listed by IUCN (the International Union for Conservation of Nature) under the Red List for the following categories shall immediately fail the assessment;

- EXTINCT (E) AND EXTINCT IN THE WILD (EW)

- CRITICALLY ENDANGERED (CR) facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.

- ENDANGERED (EN) facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild.

By-product material may be used from the following categories provided that all clauses in the MarinTrust standard are passed.

- VULNERABLE (VU) facing a high risk of extinction in the wild.

- NEAR THREATENED (NT) does not qualify for above now, but is close or is likely to qualify for, a threatened category in the near future.

- LEAST CONCERN (LC) Widespread and abundant.

- DATA DEFICIENT (DD) and NOT EVALUATED (NE)

Table 3 Species Categorisation Table

Common name	Latin name	Stock	Management	Category	IUCN Red List Category[1]	CITES Appendix 1[2]
Plaice	*Pleuronectes platessa*	ICES 7. e (Western English Channel)	Yes	C	Least Concern[3]	No

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[1] https://www.iucnredlist.org/
[2] https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php
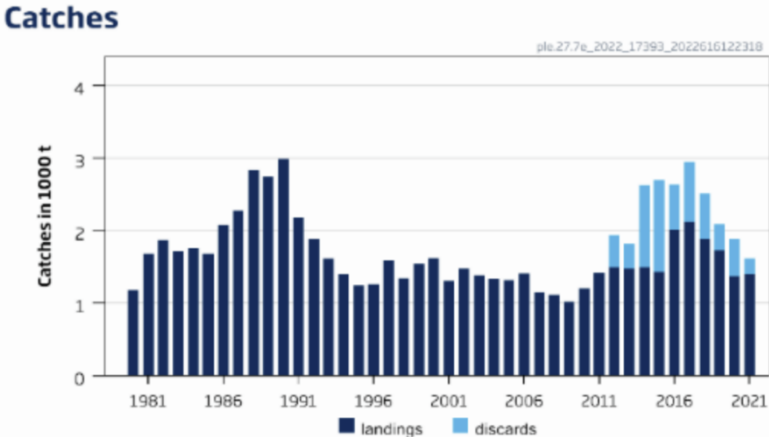3 https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/135690/50018800

CATEGORY C SPECIES

In a by-product assessment, Category C species are those which are subject to a species-specific management regime and are usually targeted species in fisheries for human consumption.

Clause C1 should be completed for each Category C species. If there are no Category C species in the fishery under assessment, this section can be deleted. Where a species fails this Clause, it should be assessed as a Category D species instead.

Species Name	Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*)	
C1	**Category C Stock Status - Minimum Requirements**	
	C1.1	Fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process, OR are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.	PASS
	C1.2	The species is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy), OR removals by the fishery under assessment are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.	PASS
		Clause outcome:	PASS

C1.1 Fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process, OR are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.

The clause is met considering that:

The plaice in the western English Channel (ICES Division7.e) most recent assessment was published in June 2022 by The International Council for exploration of the Sea (ICES) Working Group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion (WGCSE). The 2022 assessment is still in force since ICES gave biennial advice for 2023 and 2024; therefore, no new assessment / advice was produced at WGCSE 2023 (ICES 2023). The assessment for this stock is basses on the rfb rule, since this stock is a category 3 data-limited stock, which requires commercial catch (international landings and discards, length frequencies from catch sampling) and one survey index (ICES 2022). Thus, removals of the species are included in the stock assessment process (figure 1).

Figure 1. Plaice catches in Division 7.e (Western English Channel) since 1980 (ICES 2022).

C1.2 The species is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy), OR removals by the fishery under assessment are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.

The Clause is met considering that:

The 2022 plaice assessment indicates that fishing pressure on the stock is above $F_{MSY\ proxy}$ (figure 1), and the stock-size index is above MSY $B_{trigger}$ ($I_{trigger}$) (ICES 2022) (figure 2). ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches should be no more than 1,219 tonnes in each of the years 2023 and 2024 (ICES 2023).
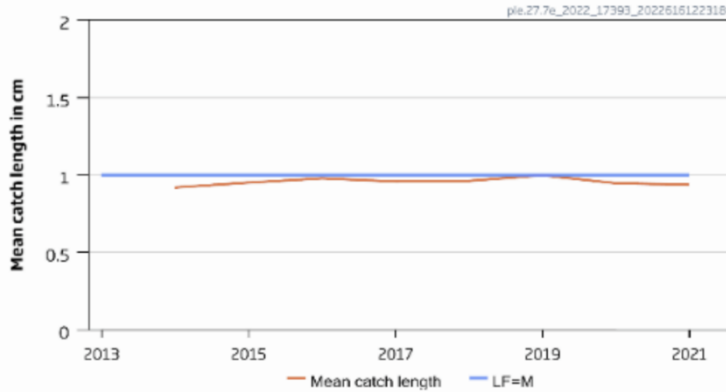

Figure 1. Plaice in Division 7.e (Western English Channel). Length indicator (mean length of fish in the catch and MSY proxy reference length $L_{F=M}$). The exploitation status is below $F_{MSY\ proxy}$ when the indicator ratio value is higher than 1 (shown by a blue line) (ICES 2022).
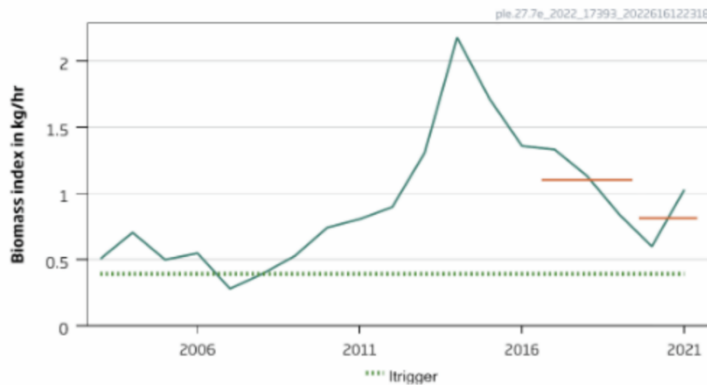

Figure 2. Stock biomass index for plaice in Division 7.e (Western English Channel) above MSY $B_{trigger}$ ($I_{trigger}$). The horizontal orange lines indicate the average of the biomass index for 2017 to 2019 and for 2020 to 2021 (ICES 2022).

References

ICES (2023). Working Group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion (WGCSE). ICES Scientific Reports. Report. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.22268980.v1

ICES (2022). Plaice (Pleuronectes platessa) in Division 7.e (western English Channel). ICES Advice: Recurrent Advice. Report. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.19453631.v1

Links	
MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.2.2
FAO CCRF	7.5.3
GSSI	D.3.04, D5.01

CATEGORY D SPECIES

Category D species are those which are not subject to a species-specific management regime. In the case of mixed trawl fisheries, Category D species may make up the majority of landings. The comparative lack of scientific information on the status of the population of the species means that a risk-assessment style approach must be taken.

D1	Species Name	NA		
	Productivity Attribute	**Value**		**Score**
	Average age at maturity (years)			
	Average maximum age (years)			
	Fecundity (eggs/spawning)			
	Average maximum size (cm)			
	Average size at maturity (cm)			
	Reproductive strategy			
	Mean trophic level			
		Average Productivity Score		
	Susceptibility Attribute	**Value**		**Score**
	Availability (area overlap)			
	Encounterability (the position of the stock/species within the water column relative to the fishing gear)			
	Selectivity of gear type			
	Post-capture mortality			
		Average Susceptibility Score		
		PSA Risk Rating (From Table D3)		
		Compliance rating		
	Further justification for susceptibility scoring (where relevant) *For susceptibility attributes, please provide a brief rationale for scoring of parameters where there may be uncertainty affecting your decision*			
References				
Standard clauses 1.3.2.2				

Table D2 - Productivity / Susceptibility attributes and scores.

Productivity attributes	High productivity (Low risk, score = 1)	Medium productivity (medium risk, score = 2)	Low productivity (high risk, score = 3)
Average age at maturity	<5 years	5-15 years	>15 years
Average maximum age	<10 years	10-25 years	>25 years
Fecundity	>20,000 eggs per year	100-20,000 eggs per year	<100 eggs per year
Average maximum size	<100 cm	100-300 cm	>300 cm
Average size at maturity	<40 cm	40-200 cm	>200 cm
Reproductive strategy	Broadcast spawner	Demersal egg layer	Live bearer
Mean Trophic Level	<2.75	2.75-3.25	>3.25

Susceptibility attributes	Low susceptibility (Low risk, score = 1)		Medium susceptibility (medium risk, score = 2)		High susceptibility (high risk, score = 3)	
Areal overlap (availability) Overlap of the fishing effort with the species range	<10% overlap		10-30% overlap		>30% overlap	
Encounterability The position of the stock/species within the water column relative to the fishing gear, and the position of the stock/species within the habitat relative to the position of the gear	Low overlap with fishing gear (low encounterability).		Medium overlap with fishing gear.		High overlap with fishing gear (high encounterability). Default score for target species	
Selectivity of gear type Potential of the gear to retain species	a	Individuals < size at maturity are rarely caught	a	Individuals < size at maturity are regularly caught.	a	Individuals < size at maturity are frequently caught
	b	Individuals < size at maturity can escape or avoid gear.	b	Individuals < half the size at maturity can escape or avoid gear.	b	Individuals < half the size at maturity are retained by gear.
Post-capture mortality (PCM) The chance that, if captured, a species would be released and that it would be in a condition permitting subsequent survival	Evidence of majority released post-capture and survival.		Evidence of some released post-capture and survival.		Retained species or majority dead when released.	

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D3		Average Susceptibility Score		
		1 - 1.75	1.76 - 2.24	2.25 - 3
Average Productivity Score	1 - 1.75	PASS	PASS	PASS
	1.76 - 2.24	PASS	PASS	TABLE D4
	2.25 - 3	PASS	TABLE D4	TABLE D4

D4	Species Name	
	Impacts On Species Categorised as Vulnerable by D1-D3 - Minimum Requirements	
	D4.1	The potential impacts of the fishery on this species are considered during the management process, and reasonable measures are taken to minimise these impacts.
	D4.2	There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the species.

Outcome:	

Evidence

D4.1: The potential impacts of the fishery on this species are considered during the management process, and reasonable measures are taken to minimise these impacts.

D4.2 There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the species.

References

Links	
MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.2.2, 4.1.4
FAO CCRF	7.5.1
GSSI	D.5.01