



## MarinTrust Standard V2

### By-product Fishery Assessment, ESP37

### Blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) (FAO 27, ICES 1 – 9, 12, 14)

**MarinTrust Programme**

Unit C, Printworks

22 Amelia Street

London

SE17 3BZ

E: [standards@marin-trust.com](mailto:standards@marin-trust.com)

T: +44 2039 780 819

**Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome**

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Blue whiting ( <i>Micromesistius poutassou</i> )
	Geographical area:	FAO 27 Atlantic Northeast
	Country of origin of the product:	Spain
	Stock:	Blue whiting in ICES subareas 1–9, 12, and 14 (Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters)
Date	October 2024	
Report Code	ESP37	
Assessor	Sam Dignan	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	Spain	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	Not applicable	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Conserveros Reunidos SL (CONRESA)			
Country:			
Email address:		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		LRQA	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval
Sam Dignan	Phoebe Schouten	0.2	Surveillance 1
Assessment Period	To December 2025		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Blue whiting ( <i>Micromesistius poutassou</i> )
Stock	Blue whiting in ICES subareas 1–9, 12, and 14 (Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters)
Fishery Location	FAO 27 Atlantic Northeast
Management Authority (Country/ State)	EU, Norway, Faroe Islands, Iceland, UK
Gear Type(s)	Purse seine
Outcome of Assessment	
Peer Review Evaluation	Pass
Recommendation	PASS

## Table 2. Assessment Determination

Assessment Determination
<p>Blue whiting has been categorised by the IUCN Red List as Least Concern and does not appear in the CITES appendices.</p> <p>The Northeast Atlantic blue whiting stock is managed relative to target and limit reference points, and was therefore assessed under Category C.</p> <p>Landings from the fishery under assessment are included in the assessment of the stock, where the most recently available advice from September 2023 shows the stock to be above its limit reference point.</p> <p>Overall, the species, stock and fishery continue to meet relevant MT by-product requirements such that continuing approval for use as a raw material is appropriate.</p>
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
<p>The peer reviewer agrees that the stock is correctly assessed under category C. The information provided by the assessor has been checked and is appropriate to justify the Passing score against C1.1 and C1.2, and therefore the assessor agrees that Blue Whiting from ICES subareas 1–9, 12, and 14 should be approved for use as Marin Trust raw material.</p>
Notes for On-site Auditor
<p>As blue whiting is subject to significant reduction fisheries, the on-site auditor should confirm that it meets the requirements for consideration as a byproduct (rather than as a wholefish).</p>

## 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 <sup>1</sup>	CITES Appendix 1 <sup>2</sup>
Blue whiting	<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	Blue whiting in ICES subareas 1–9, 12, and 14 (Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters)	Yes	C	Least Concern <sup>3</sup>	No

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

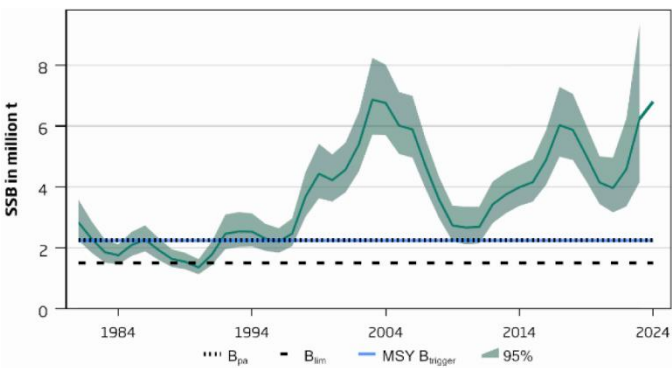
<sup>2</sup> <https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php>

<sup>3</sup> [Micromesistius poutassou \(Blue Whiting\)](#)

## 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.

<b>Species Name</b>		Blue whiting in ICES subareas 1 – 9, 12, and 14	
<b>C1</b>	<b>Category C Stock Status - Minimum Requirements</b>		
	<b>C1.1</b>	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
	<b>C1.2</b>	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
			<b>Clause outcome:</b> PASS
<b>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.</b>			
Catches are not negligible and are estimated to have been 1,512,600 mt in 2022 including estimated landings of 1,035,094 mt and discards of 3,641 mt of which an estimated 26,310 mt were Spanish catches. Overall, catch data are available and are included in the stock assessment process such that C1.1 is met.			
<b>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.</b>			
The most recent assessment of the stock estimates $SSB_{2024}$ 6,799,985 mt $\gg$ $B_{lim}$ 1,500,000 mt; therefore, the stock is considered to have a biomass above its defined limit reference point such that C1.2 is met.			
		<b>Figure 1.</b> Blue whiting in subareas 1 – 9, 12, and 14. Summary of the stock assessment (SSB).	
<b>References</b>			
ICES, 2023. Blue whiting ( <i>Micromesistius poutassou</i> ) in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14 (Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2023. ICES Advice 2023, whb.27.1-91214, <a href="https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.21856554">https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.21856554</a> .			
<b>Links</b>			
<b>MarinTrust Standard clause</b>		1.3.2.2	
<b>FAO CCRF</b>		7.5.3	
<b>GSSI</b>		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.

<b>D1</b>	<b>Species Name</b>	n/a	
	<b>Productivity Attribute</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Score</b>
	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		
	<b>Average Productivity Score</b>		
	<b>Susceptibility Attribute</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Score</b>
	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		
	<b>Average Susceptibility Score</b>		
	<b>PSA Risk Rating (From Table D3)</b>		
	<b>Compliance rating</b>		
	<b>Further justification for susceptibility scoring (where relevant)</b>		
	<i>For susceptibility attributes, please provide a brief rationale for scoring of parameters where there may be uncertainty affecting your decision</i>		
<b>References</b>			
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.

<b>D3</b>	<b>Average Susceptibility Score</b>			
		<b>1 - 1.75</b>	<b>1.76 - 2.24</b>	<b>2.25 - 3</b>
<b>Average Productivity Score</b>	<b>1 - 1.75</b>	PASS	PASS	PASS
	<b>1.76 - 2.24</b>	PASS	PASS	TABLE D4
	<b>2.25 - 3</b>	PASS	TABLE D4	TABLE D4

<b>D4</b>	<b>Species Name</b>	n/a		
	<b>Impacts On Species Categorised as Vulnerable by D1-D3 - Minimum Requirements</b>			
	<b>D4.1</b>	The potential impacts of the fishery on this species are considered during the management process, and reasonable measures are taken to minimise these impacts.		
	<b>D4.2</b>	There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the species.		
				<b>Outcome:</b>
<b>Evidence</b>				
<b>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.</b>				
<b>D4.2 There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the species.</b>				
<b>References</b>				
<b>Links</b>				
<b>MarinTrust Standard clause</b>		1.3.2.2, 4.1.4		
<b>FAO CCRF</b>		7.5.1		
<b>GSSI</b>		D.5.01		