



MarinTrust Standard V2

By-product Fishery Assessment

GBR19

Thornback ray (*Raja clavata*)

in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a, 7d

MarinTrust Programme

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Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Thornback ray (<i>Raja clavata</i>)
	Geographical area:	FAO 27 Northeast Atlantic Ocean
	Country of origin of the product:	UK & Ireland
	Stock:	ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a, 7d
Date	May 2024	
Report Code	GBR16	
Assessor	Sam Peacock	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	UK & Ireland	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	n/a	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Aberdeen (Pelagia)			
Country: UK			
Email address:		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		NSF / Global Trust Certification Ltd.	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/Re-approval
Sam Peacock	Matthew Jew	0.2	Surveillance 1
Assessment Period		May 2024 – May 2025	

Scope Details	
Main Species	Thornback ray (<i>Raja clavata</i>)
Stock	ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a, 7d
Fishery Location	FAO 27, Northeast Atlantic
Management Authority (Country/ State)	UK & EU
Gear Type(s)	Not provided
Outcome of Assessment	
Peer Review Evaluation	Agree with assessor's recommendation
Recommendation	APPROVED

Table 2. Assessment Determination

Assessment Determination
<p>If any species is categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on IUCN’s Red List, or if it appears in the CITES appendices, it cannot be approved for use as Marin trust raw material. Thornback ray (<i>Raja clavata</i>) does not appear as Endangered or Critically Endangered on IUCN’s Red List, and does not appear in CITES appendices; therefore, <i>Raja clavata</i> is eligible for approval for use as Marin trust by-product raw material.</p> <p>There is no agreed precautionary management plan for thornback ray in this area. The stock is managed relative to established reference points, and is subject to a TAC which also covers other skate and ray species. For these reasons it was assessed under Category C.</p> <p>The most recent benchmarking and stock assessment for the stock was conducted in 2023, and utilised catch and discard data. C1.1 is met. The stock assessment concluded that current stock biomass is substantially above the target and limit reference point levels, and C1.2 is met.</p> <p>Therefore, Thornback ray (<i>Raja clavata</i>) in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a, 7d is APPROVED for the production of fishmeal and fish oil under the current MarinTrust v2.3 by-products.</p>
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
<p>The assessor correctly classified thornback ray (<i>Raja clavata</i>) in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a, 7d as Category C, the stock is subject to a specific management regime.</p> <p>Fishery removals are considered in the stock assessment process. The most recent stock assessment shows that the stock is above B_{MSY} and B_{lim}. Therefore, the stock is considered to have biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy). It passes Category C.</p> <p>Thornback ray (<i>Raja clavata</i>) in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a, 7d passes both clauses (C1.1 and C1.2) and therefore should be approved under the MarinTrust Standard v.2.3</p>
Notes for On-site Auditor
<p>N/A</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 ¹	CITES Appendix 1 ²
Thornback ray	<i>Raja clavata</i>	ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a, 7d	Yes	C	Near Threatened ³	No

¹ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

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

³ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/39399/103110667>

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		Thornback ray (<i>Raja clavata</i>)	
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.

Thornback ray in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a and 7d is subject to regular stock assessment by the ICES Working Group on Elasmobranch Fisheries (WGEF). The stock was benchmarked in 2023, and the most recent stock assessment was conducted the same year. The stock assessment was an SPiCT assessment utilising commercial landings, discard estimates, and two survey indices.

The 2023 catch advice states that “ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2024 and 2025 should be no more than 5,274 and 5,307 tonnes, respectively.” (ICES 2023).

Catches are presented in the figure below:

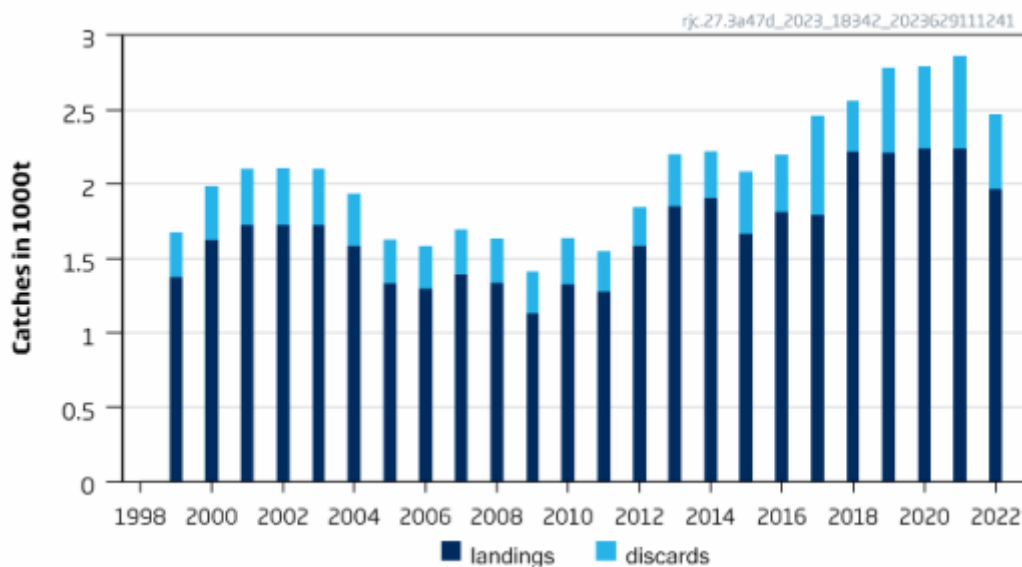


Figure 1. Thornback ray in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a & 7d, catches and discards (ICES 2023)

Therefore, fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process and therefore the stock PASSES clause C1.1.

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 regular ICES catch advice provides an indication of the status of the stock relative to established reference points. Reference points are set relative to estimated B_{MSY} . The target reference point $MSY B_{trigger}$ is set at $0.5 \times B_{MSY}$; the limit reference point B_{lim} is set at $0.3 \times B_{MSY}$. The 2023 catch advice included a projection for relative biomass in 2023, estimating that it would be $1.13 \times B_{MSY}$.

The 2023 ICES catch advice stated that “Fishing pressure on the stock is below F_{MSY} , and spawning-stock biomass is above $MSY B_{trigger}$ and B_{lim} ” (ICES 2023). See figure 2, below.

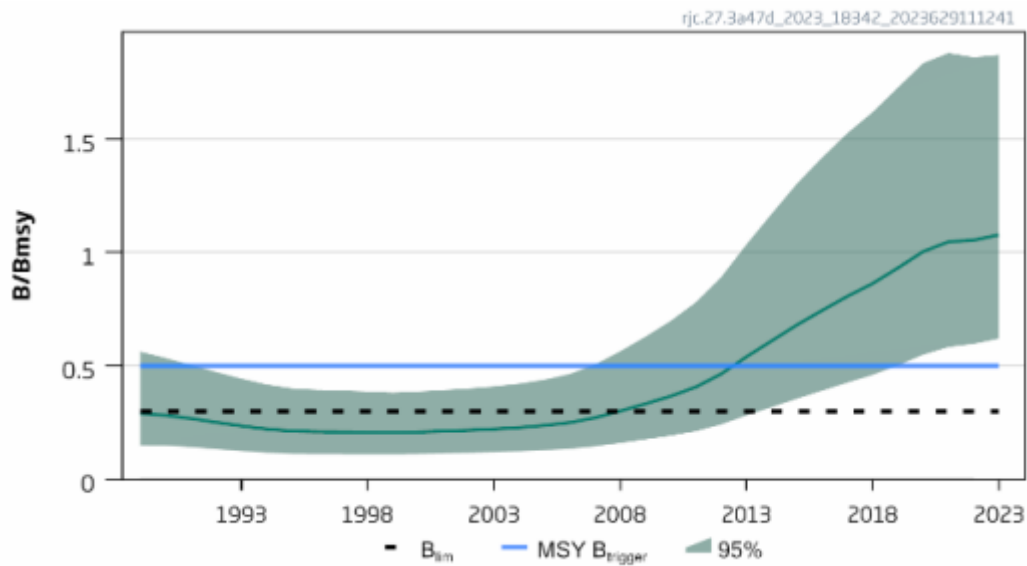


Figure 2. Thornback ray in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a & 7d, relative biomass (ICES 2023).

Therefore, the species is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy) and it PASSES clause C1.2.

References

ICES (2023). Thornback ray (*Raja clavata*) in Subarea 4 and in divisions 3.a and 7.d (North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat, and eastern English Channel). ICES Advice: Recurrent Advice. Report. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.21856875.v1>

Links

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