



MarinTrust Standard V2

By-product Fishery Assessment

ISL08

Blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) in ICES Subareas 1 & 2

MarinTrust Programme

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Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Blue whiting (<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>)
	Geographical area:	FAO 27
	Country of origin of the product:	Iceland
	Stock:	ICES Subareas 1-9, 12 & 14
Date	January 2025	
Report Code	ISL08	
Assessor	Sam Peacock	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	Iceland	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	n/a	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Fiskimjolsverksmidja (Isfelag Vestmannaeyja) (PS162)			
Country: Iceland			
Email address:		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		Global Trust Certification Ltd. / NSF	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/Re-approval
Sam Peacock	Matthew Jew	0.2	Initial
Assessment Period	January 2025 – January 2026		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Blue whiting (<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>)
Stock	ICES Subareas 1-9, 12 & 14
Fishery Location	FAO27
Management Authority (Country/ State)	EU & Iceland
Gear Type(s)	Pelagic trawl
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. Blue whiting (<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>) does not appear as Endangered or Critically Endangered on IUCN’s Red List, and does not appear in CITES appendices; therefore, <i>Micromesistius poutassou</i> is eligible for approval for use as Marin trust by-product raw material.</p> <p>An internationally agreed management plan is in place for this stock. The stock is managed relative to established reference points and therefore was assessed under Category C.</p> <p>The most recent stock assessment was conducted in 2024 and utilised all international catch data, therefore C1.1 is met. The stock assessment concluded that SSB is substantially above the target and limit reference point levels, therefore C1.2 is also met.</p> <p>Therefore, blue whiting (<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>) in ICES Subareas 1-9, 12 & 14 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 blue whiting (<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>) in ICES Subareas 1-9, 12 & 14 as Category C, the stock is subject to a specific management regime and reference points are defined.</p> <p>Fishery removals are considered in the stock assessment process. The most recent stock assessment shows that the stock is above MSY $B_{trigger}$, B_{PA}, and B_{lim}. Therefore, because the stock has biomass above B_{lim}, it is considered to have biomass above the limit reference point.</p> <p>Blue whiting (<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>) in ICES Subareas 1-9, 12 & 14 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
N/A

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
Blue whiting	<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	ICES Subareas 1-9, 12 & 14	Yes	C	Least Concern ³	No

¹ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

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

³ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/198586/18983495>

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		Blue whiting (<i>Micromesistius poutassou</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.

Regular stock assessments for this stock are conducted by the ICES Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE). The most recent assessment was conducted in 2024 using an age-based analytical assessment which incorporated commercial catches, estimates of catch-at-age, one survey index, and discard data since 2014.

The most recent ICES catch advice states “ICES advises that when the long-term management strategy agreed by Norway, the European Union, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and the UK is applied, catches in 2025 should be no more than 1 447 054 tonnes.” (ICES 2024).

Catches are presented in the figure below:

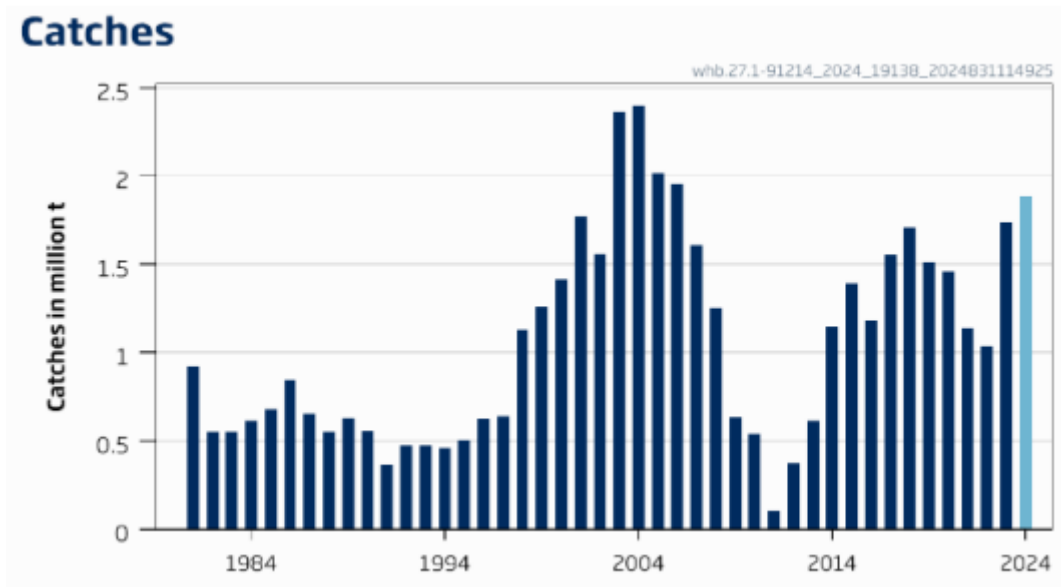


Figure 1. Blue whiting in Subareas 1-9, 12 & 14: Catches (ICES 2024)

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.

An indication of current stock status is provided in the annual ICES catch advice. Target reference points $MSY B_{trigger}$, B_{pa} , and SSB_{mgt} are set at 2,250,000t. Limit reference points B_{lim} and SSB_{mgt_lower} are set at 1,500,000t. The 2024 stock assessment produced a short-term projection for SSB in 2025 of 5,966,970t, more than double the target reference point level.

The 2024 catch advice states, "Fishing pressure on the stock is above F_{MSY} and F_{pa} but below F_{lim} ; spawning-stock size is above $MSY B_{trigger}$, B_{pa} , and B_{lim} " (ICES 2024).

Estimated SSB relative to current reference points is shown in Figure 2 below.

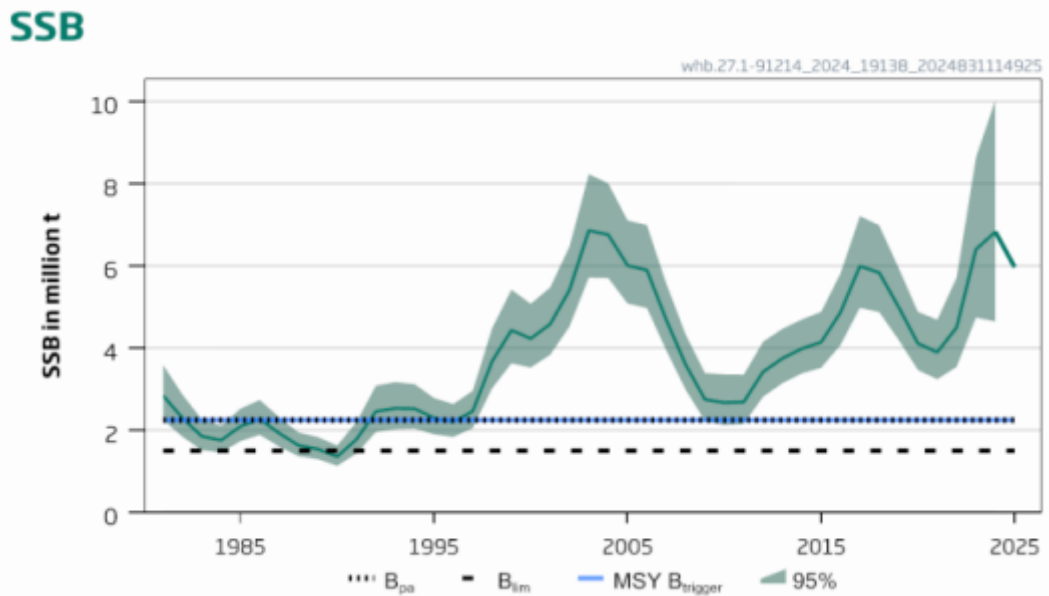


Figure 2. Blue whiting in Subareas 1-9, 12 & 14: Estimated SSB relative to current reference points (ICES 2024)

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 (2024). Blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14 (Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters). ICES Advice: Recurrent Advice. Report. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.25019714.v1>

Links

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