



MarinTrust Standard V2

By-product Fishery Assessment

VNM07 –

Alaska pollock (*Gadus chalcogrammus*)

in FAO Area 67,

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

MarinTrust Programme

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Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Alaska pollock (<i>Gadus chalcogrammus</i>)
	Geographical area:	FAO 67 Pacific Northeast (Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI))
	Country of origin of the product:	USA
	Stock:	Eastern Bering Sea (EBS) pollock & Aleutian Islands (AI) pollock
Date	July 2024	
Report Code	VNM07	
Assessor	Ana Elisa Almeida Ayres	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	USA	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	NA	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Thien Quynh Co. Ltd			
Country: USA			
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
Ana Elisa Almeida Ayres	Matthew Jew	0.5	Re-approval
Assessment Period	July 2024 - July 2025		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Alaska pollock (<i>Gadus chalcogrammus</i>)
Stock	Eastern Bering Sea (EBS) pollock & Aleutian Islands (AI) pollock
Fishery Location	FAO 67 Pacific Northeast (Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands)
Management Authority (Country/ State)	North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC), US National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
Gear Type(s)	Bottom water 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 Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species - IUCN's Red List, or if it appears in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora - CITES appendices, it cannot be approved for use as MarinTrust raw material. Alaska pollock (<i>Gadus chalcogrammus</i>) is not categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on IUCN's Red List and does not appear in CITES appendices; therefore, Alaska pollock is eligible for approval for use as MarinTrust by-product raw material.</p> <p>For management purposes, the pollock population in the Eastern Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands has been split into three stocks. These stocks are: Eastern Bering Sea (EBS) pollock occupying the eastern Bering Sea shelf from Unimak Pass to the U.S.-Russia Convention line, Aleutian Islands (AI) pollock encompassing the pollock in the Aleutian Islands shelf region from 170°W to the U.S.-Russia Convention line; and the Central Bering Sea-Bogoslof Island (CBS-BI) pollock. This assessment covers the EBS and AI pollock stocks. There are reference points defined for these stocks and they are MSC certified. The stocks were assessed under Category C.</p> <p>EBS pollock stock was most recently subject to stock assessment in 2023 and AI, in 2022. The assessments incorporated all commercial landings and multiple survey indices. Thus, C1.1 was met. In both stocks, biomass was estimated to be above the target reference point level. Thus, C.1.2 was met.</p> <p>Therefore, Alaska pollock in Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands is APPROVED for the production of fishmeal and fish oil under the current MarinTrust v2.3 by-products standard.</p>
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
<p>The assessor correctly classified Alaska pollock (<i>Gadus chalcogrammus</i>) in EBS and AI 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 target reference point. Therefore, the stock is considered to have biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy). It passes Category C.</p> <p>Alaska pollock (<i>Gadus chalcogrammus</i>) in the EBS and AI 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 a 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
Alaska pollock	<i>Gadus chalcogrammus</i>	Eastern Bering Sea pollock & Aleutian Islands pollock	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/18258863/45097315>

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		Alaskan Pollock (<i>Gadus chalcogrammus</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
<p>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.</p> <p>This fishery is currently MSC certified. The most recent stock assessment for walleye pollock stock in the Aleutian Islands (AI) was carried out in 2022 and for eastern Bering Sea (EBS) walleye pollock, in 2023. Both assessments incorporated all catch data, plus survey indices and sampling data from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) bottom trawl survey and acoustic-trawl survey.</p> <p><u>Eastern Bering Sea walleye pollock</u></p> <p>For the 2023 stock assessment, total catch as reported by NMFS Alaska Regional office was updated and included through 2023. Besides new time series from the acoustic data collected from the bottom trawl survey covering 2006-2023 (except for 2020) [lanelli <i>et al.</i>, 2023].</p>			

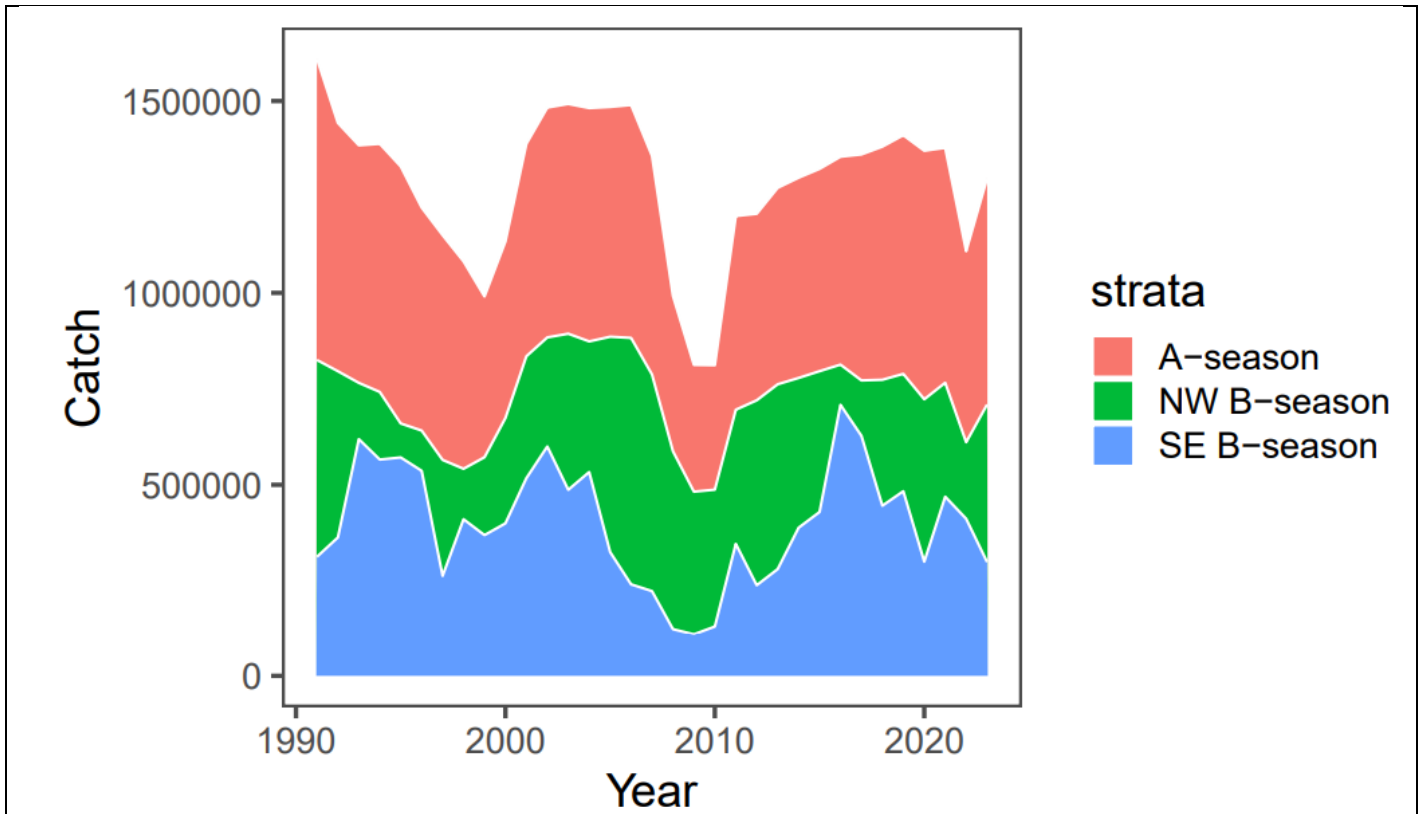


Figure 1. Pollock catch estimates (t) from the Eastern Bering Sea by season and region. The A-season is defined as from Jan-May and B-season from June-October (Ianelli *et al.*, 2023).

Aleutian Islands pollock stock

For a harvest projection year, the projection model is updated with new catch data, but the assessment model is not re-run. The new data added to the projection model included an updated 2022 catch estimate (3,058 t) and new catch estimates for 2023. The 2023 catch was estimated at 3,663 t by increasing the official catch as of September 25, 2023 (3,238 t), by an expansion factor of 13%, which represents the average fraction of catch taken after September 25 in the last three complete years (2020-2022). The 2024 catch was set at the 3-year average for 2020-2022 of 2,701 t (Barbeaux *et al.*, 2023).

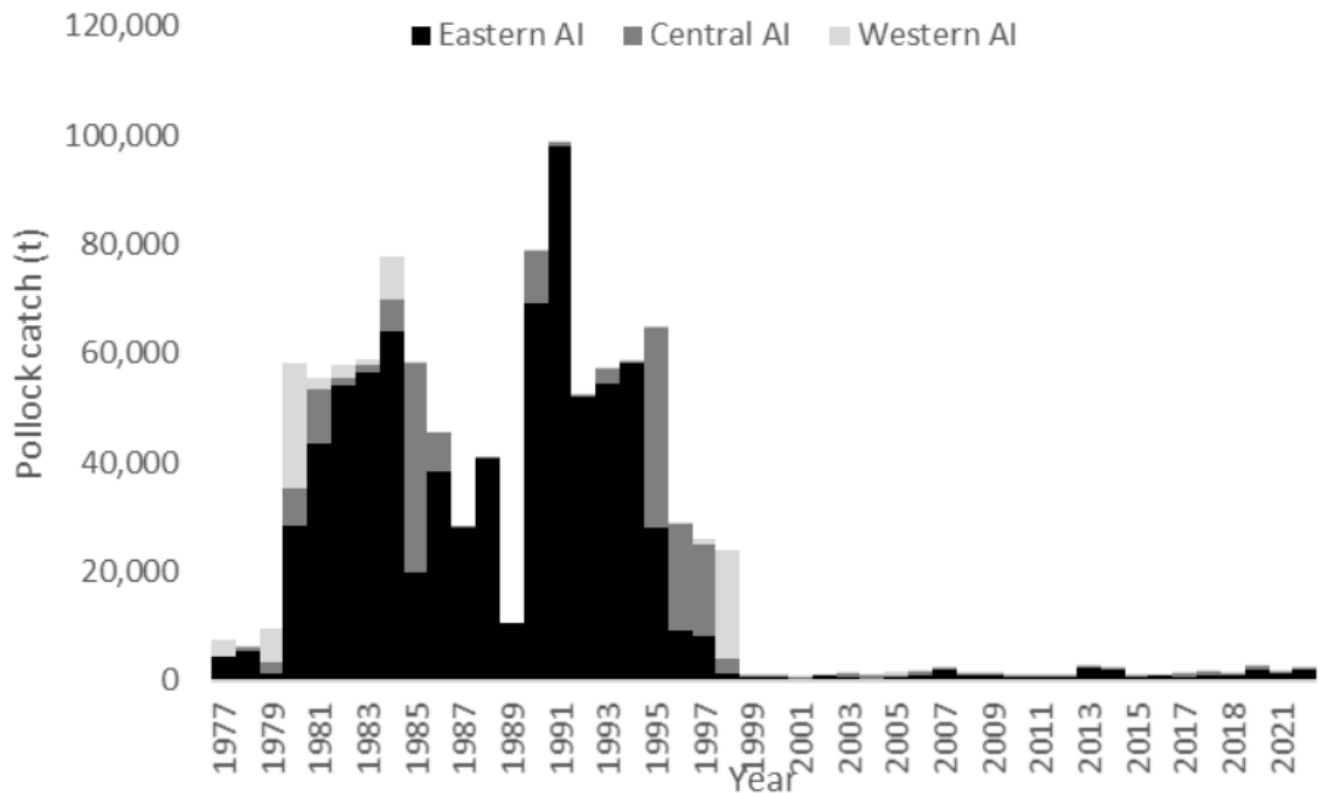


Figure 2. Aleutian Islands (AI) pollock catch by NMFS reporting area for 1977- 2022 by total catch (Barbeaux *et al.*, 2022).

Fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process. C.1.1 is met for both stocks.

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.

Eastern Bering Sea walleye pollock

The estimates of spawning biomass for 2024 is 3,518,00t, relative to a BMSY of 2,689,000 t. The probability that the current stock size is below 20% of B_0 is <0.1% for 2024 and 2025. The stock is not currently overfished nor approaching an overfished condition (Ianelli *et al.*, 2023).

Table 3. Reference points, stock status and catch recommendations for EBS pollock (Ianelli *et al.*, 2023).

Quantity	As estimated or <i>specified</i> <i>last year for:</i>		As estimated or <i>recommended</i> <i>this year for:</i>	
	2023	2024	2024	2025
M (natural mortality rate, ages 3+)	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Tier	1a	1a	1a	1a
Projected total (age 3+) biomass (t)	12,389,000 t	11,445,000 t	10,184,000 t	9,437,000 t
Projected female spawning biomass (t)	4,171,000 t	3,944,000 t	3,518,000 t	3,255,000 t
B_0	6,653,000 t	6,653,000 t	6,728,000 t	6,728,000 t
B_{msy}	2,674,000 t	2,674,000 t	2,689,000 t	2,689,000 t
F_{OFL}	0.491	0.491	0.422	0.422
$maxF_{ABC}$	0.434	0.434	0.379	0.379
F_{ABC}	0.365	0.365	0.33	0.33
OFL	3,381,000 t	4,639,000 t	3,162,000 t	3,449,000 t
$maxABC$	2,987,000 t	4,099,000 t	2,837,000 t	3,095,000 t
ABC	1,910,000 t	2,275,000 t	2,313,000 t	2,401,000 t
Status	2021	2022	2022	2023
Overfishing	No	n/a	No	n/a
Overfished	n/a	No	n/a	No
Approaching overfished	n/a	No	n/a	No

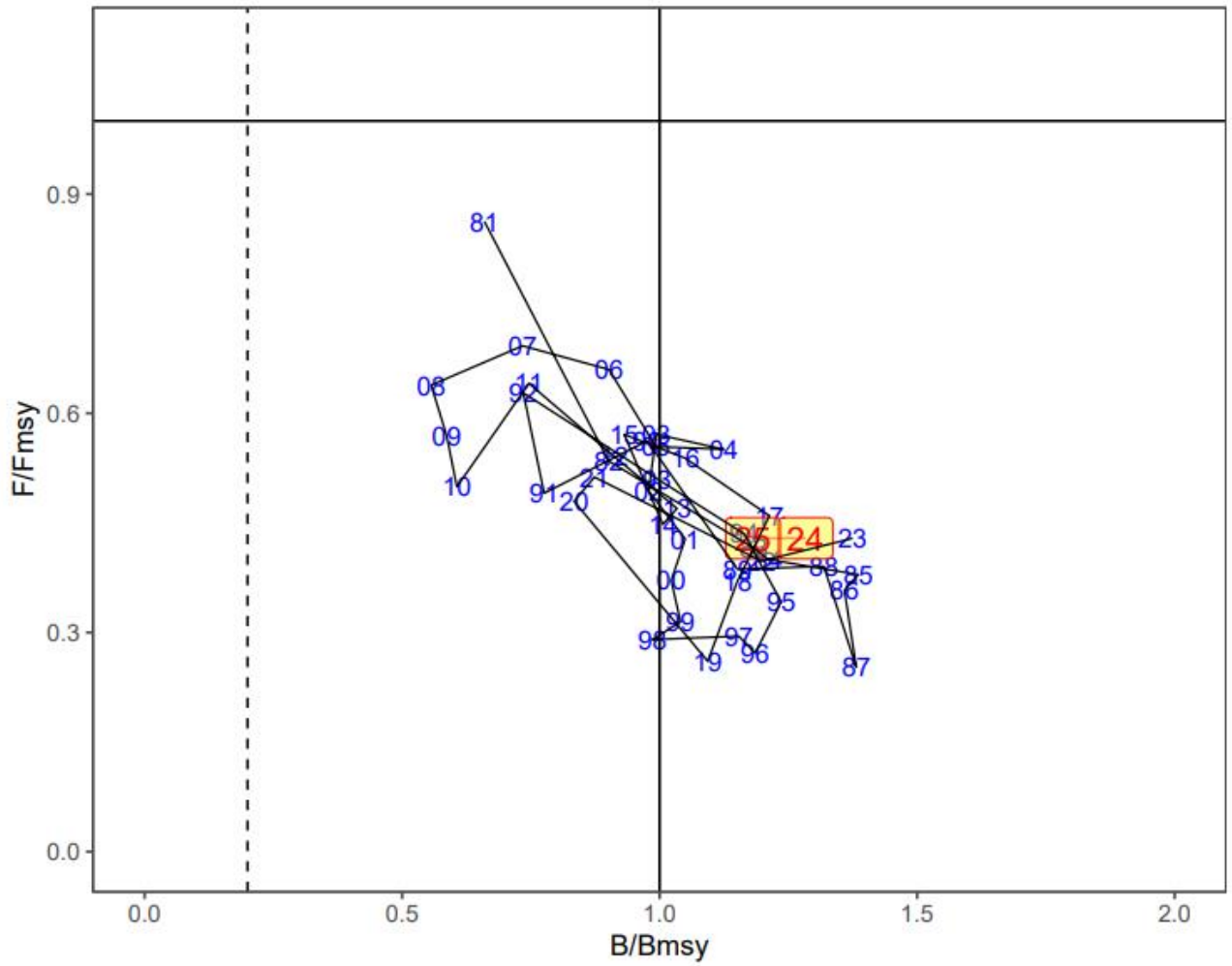


Figure 3. Estimated spawning biomass relative to annually estimated *FMSY* values and fishing mortality rates for EBS pollock. Two projection years are shaded in yellow.

Aleutian Islands pollock stock

The estimates of spawning biomass for 2023 and 2024 from last year’s assessment model and the current year (2023) projection model are 78,628 t and 80,432 t, respectively. The 2023 estimate from the projection is above the MSY level, defined as B35%, at 60,976 t. The stock is not currently overfished nor approaching an overfished condition (Barbeaux *et al.*, 2023).

Table 4. Reference points, stock status and catch recommendations for AI pollock (Barbeaux *et al.*, 2023).

Quantity	As estimated or specified last year for:		As estimated or recommended this year for:	
	2023	2024	2024	2025*
<i>M</i> (natural mortality rate)	0.21		0.21	
Tier	3a		3a	
Total (age 1+) biomass (t)	264,173	281,618	279,764	302,068
Female spawning biomass (t)				
Projected	78,628	80,432	79,747	81,3352
<i>B</i> _{100%}	174,218		174,218	
<i>B</i> _{40%}	69,687		69,687	
<i>B</i> _{35%}	60,976		60,976	
<i>F</i> _{OFL} **	0.380	0.380	0.380	0.380
<i>maxF</i> _{ABC}	0.305	0.305	0.305	0.305
<i>F</i> _{ABC}	0.305	0.305	0.305	0.305
OFL (t)	52,383	52,043	51,516	53,030
maxABC (t)	43,413	43,092	42,654	43,863
ABC (t)	43,413	43,092	42,654	43,863
	As determined this year for:			
Status	2021	2022	2022	2023
Overfishing	no	n/a	no	n/a
Overfished	n/a	no	n/a	no
Approaching overfished	n/a	no	n/a	no

* Projection based on estimated catches of 3,663 t for 2023 and 2,701 t for 2024, the three-year average (2020-2022), used in place of maximum permissible ABC.

** Long-term equilibrium *F*_{OFL} and *F*_{ABC} were 0.380 and 0.305, respectively.

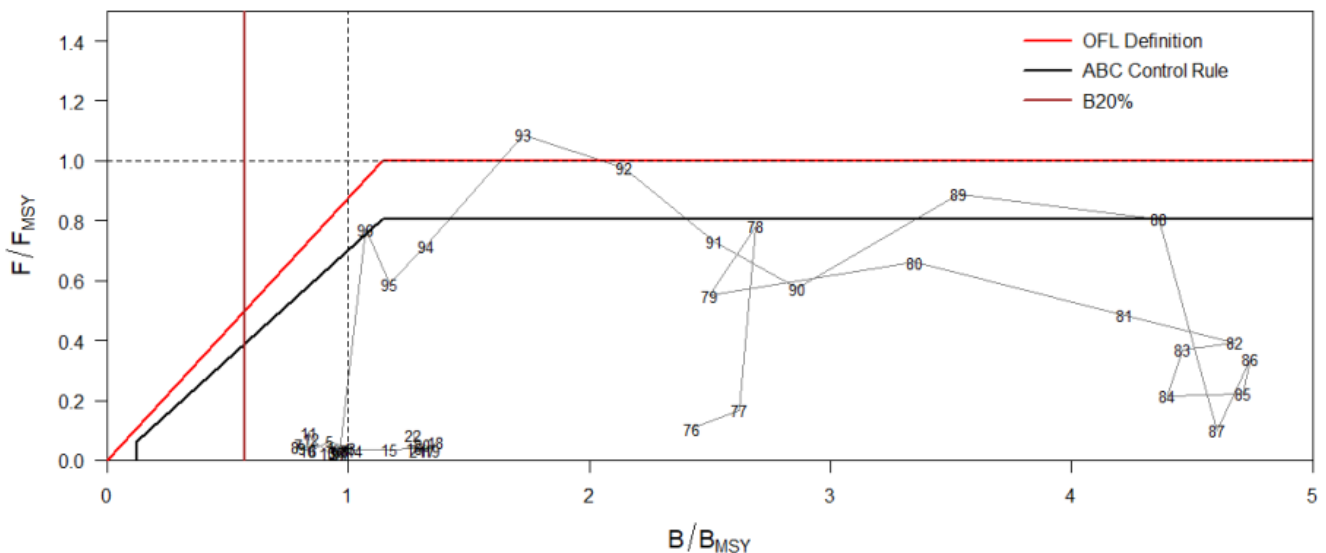


Figure 4. Aleutian Islands pollock spawning biomass relative to BMS and full-selection fishing mortality relative to FMSY (1978-2024). The ratio of fishing mortality to FMSY is calculated using the estimated selectivity pattern in that year. 2023 and 2024 are plotted with catch assumed to be at the 5-year average (Barbeaux *et al.*, 2023).

The species is considered, in its most recent stock assessments for both stocks, to have a biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy). C.1.2 is met.

References

Barbeaux, S, Ianelli, J, Ortiz, I, Laman, N. 2023. Chapter 1A: Harvest Projection for the walleye pollock stock in the Aleutian Islands, November 2023. AFSC, NMFS. https://apps-afsc.fisheries.noaa.gov/Plan_Team/2023/Alpollock.pdf

Barbeaux, S, Ianelli, J, Ortiz, I, Laman, N. 2022. Chapter 1A: Assessment of the pollock stock in the Aleutian Islands, December 2022. AFSC, NMFS. https://apps-afsc.fisheries.noaa.gov/Plan_Team/2022/Alpollock.pdf

Ianelli, J. et al. 2023. Assessment of the eastern Bering Sea walleye pollock. North Pacific Fishery Management Council, Anchorage, AK. https://apps-afsc.fisheries.noaa.gov/Plan_Team/2023/EBSPollock.pdf

Links

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