



IFFO RS Limited

London 10th March 2016

Outcome of IFFO RS fishery assessment on Blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) from Northeast Atlantic (ICES subdivisions I-IX, XII & XIV)

The Blue whiting fishery from the Northeast Atlantic has been assessed and approved to be used as compliant raw material for the production of compliant IFFO RS marine ingredients since 2010. In recent years, this fishery under the IFFO RS assessment has indicated some medium score ratings in which the team of assessors granted approval with some conditions of improvements to the fishery.

The overall medium rating, granted in 2013 by the fishery assessment team of the approved IFFO RS Certification Body, included a condition regarding a unilateral quota setting. This unilateral management action on international stocks has the potential to seriously undermine efforts towards sustainable management, and this conclusion must in no way be seen to legitimise such activity in a generalised sense. For this reason, the assessment team proposed that the fishery be approved only on the condition that it will be potentially suspended upon the unilateral action of any nation prosecuting the fishery.

The assessment report produced in 2015 indicated failures of compliance and adherence to the condition given by the IFFO RS Standard suggesting unilateral quotas that were above the recommended Total Allowance Catch. Therefore, according to the current IFFO RS Standard fishery assessment criteria, Blue whiting fishery for the Northeast Atlantic is not approved to be used as compliant IFFO RS raw material.

However, The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) has recently certified this fishery as sustainable with a condition similar to the one given by IFFO RS in 2013; and, according to the current version of the IFFO RS Standard, we recognise fisheries that are MSC certified as compliant to the IFFO RS Standard. The IFFO RS Certification Programme stands by the decision of disapproval. However, in conjunction with our policy of recognition of other standards, the certification of Blue whiting by the MSC has changed the status of disapproval. Therefore, this fishery can be used by IFFO RS certified fishmeal and fish oil factories as a compliant raw material.

This decision will be subject to further discussion and final decision by the IFFO RS Governance Board in April 2016.

Kind regards

Dr. Andrew Jackson
IFFO RS Ltd – Governance Board Chairman