

FISHERY BY-PRODUCT REPORT

IFFO GLOBAL STANDARD FOR RESPONSIBLE SUPPLY OF FISHMEAL AND FISH OIL



R1

FISHERY By-Product:	Big Skate (<i>Raja binoculata</i>)
LOCATION:	Alaska EEZ
DATE OF REPORT:	December 2015
ASSESSOR:	Deirdre Hoare

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1. APPLICATION DETAILS AND SUMMARY OF THE ASSESSMENT OUTCOME		
Name:		
Address:		
Country: USA (Alaska)	Zip:	
Tel. No.	Fax. No.	
Email address:	Applicant Code	
Key Contact: :	Title:	
Certification Body Details		
Name of Certification Body:	SAI Global (Ireland)	
Assessor Name	Peer Reviewer	Initial/Surveillance/ Re-certification
Deirdre Hoare	Giles Bartlett	Surveillance
1. Scope of Assessment		
	IFFO RS By-Product surveillance 2015	
2. Fishery By-Product		
	Big Skate (<i>Raja binoculata</i>)	
3. Fishery By-Product Location		
	Alaska EEZ	
4. Fishery Method		
	Demersal trawls, beam and otter trawls	
5. Outcome of Assessment		
	Maintain approval	

2. GUIDANCE FOR ONSITE ASSESSMENT
3. ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION
Alaska fisheries management has a robust legal and administrative framework which is applied specifically to big skate. Stock assessment and data collection tend to occur at the skate assemblage rather than species level. The assessment team recommends the approval of this byproduct is maintained.

4. RATIONALE OF THE ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

A. THE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	
<i>The management of the fishery used to produce the By- Product must include a legal and administrative basis for the implementation of measures and controls to support the management of the fishery.</i>	
LOW	An administrative framework that ensures an efficient management of the fishery is not established.
MEDIUM	An administrative framework that ensures an efficient management of the fishery is somehow established, but there is evidence of not being efficient to ensure the management of the stock.
HIGH	A legal and administrative framework that ensures an efficient management of the fishery is established and works efficiently.

Determination: There is a robust fishery management framework in place at the state and federal levels. Although management measures are applied at the assemblage level, there is evidence that they work efficiently.

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Fishery management framework:

The State of Alaska manages groundfish fishery resources within state territorial waters (i.e. 0-3 nm from shore). The Alaska Board of Fisheries was established under Alaska Statute 16.05 and has control over the setting of fishing seasons, quotas, harvest levels, fishing methods and other aspects of Alaska fishery management. Chapter 28 of the Alaska Commercial Fisheries regulations describes a detailed framework for the regulation of Alaska groundfish fisheries (including pollock, Pacific cod, sablefish, Atka mackerel, lingcod and numerous rockfish and flatfish species). These regulations define permitted gear types, fishing regions, seasons, permit requirements, TACs and distribution of TACs between commercial and other fisheries, and landing requirements. The federal groundfish fisheries are managed as two stock complexes; the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) and the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI).

Fisheries 3-200 nm from the Alaska coastline are managed by the US National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under federal Fishery Management Plans. The Office of Sustainable Fisheries (OSF), which is part of the NMFS, implements the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 by mandating annual catch limits and accountability measures.

State regulations (i.e. fisheries 0-3 nm from the Alaska coast) are enforced by the Marine Enforcement Section of the Division of Alaska Wildlife Troopers. Federal regulations are enforced by the Alaska Division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Law Enforcement.

Species-specific management:

Skate are managed as a component of the groundfish fisheries in the GOA and Bering Sea & Aleutian Islands BSAI. In the GOA fishery, big skate is subject to regional harvest specifications, whereas in the BSAI fishery big skate is managed in aggregate with other skate species. In both fisheries big skate is considered a Tier 5 species, meaning that the level of information available for stock assessments is very limited. However, the tier system implemented by Alaska fishery managers is highly precautionary, and the low level of information is reflected in the management measures applied to Tier 5 stocks.

R2 – R6

B. STOCK ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND MANAGEMENT ADVICE

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	
<i>B. Research in support of fisheries management should exist.</i>	
LOW	Research to support the management of the stock does not exist

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MEDIUM	Research to support the management of the stock exists, however research programmes could be significantly improved to decrease scientific advice uncertainty.	
HIGH	Research to support the management of the stock exists, and research programmes for provision of scientific advice are considered adequate.	
<p>Determination: Some species-specific data collection and stock assessment activities are conducted, but significant improvements could be made and the majority of research is conducted at the assemblage level.</p> <p>Fisheries management in Alaska waters is supported by the Alaska Fisheries Science Centre (AFSC), a research branch of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The AFSC plans, develops and manages scientific research programs, and conducts stock assessments, in support of fishery management throughout the state and federal waters off Alaska.</p> <p>The AFSC biennially analyses skate population data for Alaska Skate and ‘Other Skate’, and combines the two analyses to produce management recommendations. Most skate species are not managed individually due to a lack of data, primarily due to the difficulty of identifying species in the field. There is a recognised lack of data for all skate species except the Alaska Skate; however available data are combined to produce a scientific basis for generalised skate management. The tier system implemented by Alaska fishery managers is highly precautionary, and the low level of information is reflected in the management measures applied to Tier 5 stocks.</p> <p>The 2015 stock assessment report for skate in the BSAI estimated biomass to be 96,923t in 2015 across the entire skate assemblage excluding Alaska skate. In the GOA the big skate biomass was estimated to be 43,398t in 2015.</p> <p>R6, R7</p>		M
C. STOCK STATUS		
LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		
C. The fish used to produce the fish By- Product is not considered to be critically at risk of over exploitation in accordance with the IUCN guidance.		
LOW	The fish By-Product must not come from a species that is listed as extinct, or critically endangered.	
MEDIUM	The fish By- Product is from a species that is classified as vulnerable, but has a management regime in place that will control the level of fishing permitted. Or if a species is deemed to be endangered but the sub-group from where the fish By- Product is harvested is deemed scientifically to be at no risk of over exploitation.	
HIGH	The fish By- Product comes from a fishery that is not deemed to be at risk of over exploitation from fishing activities.	
<p>Determination: Big skate has been categorised by the IUCN as ‘near threatened’, and as such a high compliance rating is appropriate.</p> <p>The IUCN has categorised <i>Raja binoculata</i> as ‘near threatened’, and it is not listed in the CITES appendices.</p> <p>R8, R9</p>		H

5. REFERENCES

R1 - Raja binoculata Picture by Gotshall, D.W.

<http://www.fishbase.org/summary/SpeciesSummary.php?genusname=Raja&speciesname=binoculata>

R2– Alaska Department of Fish and Game: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.main>

R3 – Alaska Department of Fish and Game – Commercial Fisheries Legislation:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishregulations.commercial>

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R4 – National Marine Fisheries Service: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/>

R5 – Division of Alaska Wildlife Troopers – Marine Enforcement Section:
<http://www.dps.alaska.gov/AWT/Marine.aspx>

R6 – Office of Law Enforcement – Alaska Division: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ole/ak_alaska.html

R7 – Bering sea/Aleutian Island 2015 skate SAFE report: <http://www.afsc.noaa.gov/REFM/Docs/2015/BSAIskate.pdf>

R8 – Gulf of Alaska 2015 skate SAFE report: <http://www.afsc.noaa.gov/REFM/Docs/2015/GOAskate.pdf>

R9 – IUCN redlist: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/>

R10 – CITES appendices: <http://www.cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php>

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