



FISHERY ASSESSMENT REPORT

IFFO GLOBAL STANDARD FOR RESPONSIBLE SUPPLY OF FISHMEAL AND FISH OIL



FISHERY:	Blue whiting (<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>)
LOCATION:	Northeast Atlantic (ICES subdivisions I-IX, XII & XIV, combined stock)
DATE OF REPORT:	March 2014
ASSESSOR:	Sam Peacock

Global Trust Certification Ltd, Quayside Business Centre, Dundalk, Co. Louth, Ireland Tel: 042 932 0912 Fax 042 938 6864

Issue No; 2; Issue Date; Nov 09

Report Ref: Blue Whiting 2013

CCM Code:

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1. Application Details and Summary of the Assessment Outcome			
Name: UK/Ireland, Iceland and Norway			
Address:			
Country:		Zip:	
Tel. No.		Fax. No.	
Email address:		Applicant Code	
Key Contact:		Title:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:			
Assessor Name:	Peer Reviewer:	Assessment Days:	Initial/Surveillance/Re-Approval:
Sam Peacock	Dave Garforth		Surveillance
Assessment Period	March 2014		
Scope Details			
1. Scope of Assessment:		IFFO Global Standard for Responsible Supply – Issue 1	
2. Fishery		Blue Whiting in the North-East Atlantic – Iceland, Denmark, UK, Ireland and Norway	
3. Fishery Location		ICES subdivisions I-IX, XII & XIV, combined stock	
4. Fishery Method		Pelagic trawl	
Outcome of Assessment			
5. Overall Fishery Compliance Rating		Medium	
6. Sub Components of Low Compliance		None	
7. Information deficiency		Minor	
8. Peer Review Evaluation		The reviewer agrees with the findings of the assessment and recommends continued approval of this fishery subject to annual review.	
9. Recommendation		Maintain approval	

2. Quality of Information
Good; primarily governmental and ICES websites.

3. Compliance Level Achieved
Medium
Recommendation
Approve fishery with condition – see assessment determination

4. Guidance for On-site Assessment
Based on High Compliance Findings
Based on Medium Compliance Findings
Key Stakeholders of the Fishery

5. Assessment Determination
<p>The North-East Atlantic blue whiting stock was first assessed under the IFFO RS scheme in 2010, solely for the Icelandic component of the fishery. In this initial assessment the fishery was awarded high compliance in every section. Subsequent assessments have raised concerns about certain aspects of the quota setting process, until in late 2012 it was discovered that the Russian Federation had unilaterally set its own TAC independently of the international management plan. Early in 2013 the fishery underwent a full re-assessment, as a result of which it was re-instated into the scheme on the condition that a similar suspension would occur if any unilateral quotas were set in future.</p> <p>This is the first annual surveillance of that re-assessment, and once again the assessment team has awarded the fishery high compliance in all but two sections. Sections D3 and D1 retain a medium compliance rating as there have been no substantial changes since the time of the re-assessment. Importantly, no new unilateral activity has occurred, and quotas have been set in line with advice and the international management plan. The assessment team recommends the fishery remain approved against the IFFO RS standard at this time, but that the previous condition should continue to be monitored.</p> <p>Of additional note, the previous re-assessment covered blue whiting caught in the Icelandic, UK, Irish and Norwegian fisheries. This surveillance adds Denmark to this list. Although usually a full assessment would be conducted when a fishery first enters the IFFO RS scheme, the assessment team has decided that in this case the addition of Denmark at the surveillance stage is appropriate because the following two conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The blue whiting stock has been fully assessed, and as such those clauses relevant to the stock itself have already been fully assessed. • The Danish management system has been fully assessed against the IFFO RS scheme, and approved for the boarfish, Norway pout and sandeel fisheries. The most recent full assessment for a Danish fishery was conducted in July 2013. <p>As both the international and national components of the Danish blue whiting fishery have been separately assessed within the last year, their inclusion in this surveillance assessment is appropriate. At the time of the next blue whiting combined stock re-assessment, the Danish component will be subject to a full review alongside the other countries.</p>
HIGH COMPLIANCE
A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, C1, D2, E1, E2
MEDIUM COMPLIANCE
D1, D3

SUMMARY OF LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE					
	The Management Framework and Procedures	Stock assessment procedures and management advice	Precautionary approach	Management measures	Implementation
legal and administrative basis	High Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
Fisheries management should be concerned with the whole stock unit	High Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
Management actions should be scientifically based	High Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
Research in support of fisheries conservation and management should exist	Medium Compliance	High Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
Best scientific evidence available should be taken into account when designing conservation and management measures	Medium Compliance	High Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
The precautionary approach is applied in the formulation of management plans	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	High Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
The level of fishing permitted should be set according to management advice given by research organisations	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Low Compliance	Medium Compliance
Where excess fishing capacity exist, mechanisms should be in established to reduced capacity	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	High Compliance	Medium Compliance
Management measures should ensure that fishing gear and fishing practices do not have a significant impact on non-target species and the physical environment	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Low Compliance	Medium Compliance
A management system for fisheries control and enforcement should be established	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	High Compliance
A framework for sanctions of violation of laws and regulations should be efficiently exists	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	High Compliance

KEY: Low Compliance [Red Box] Medium Compliance [Yellow Box] High Compliance: [Green Box]

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6. Rationale of the Assessment Outcome

a. The Management Framework and Procedure

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	a.i. The management of the fishery must include a legal and administrative basis for the implementation of measures and controls to support the conservation of the fishery.	References	Rating
LOW	<p>Determination: Fisheries management in Iceland, Norway and the EU remains based on firm legal and administrative foundations. As a widely distributed stock, blue whiting is also subject to a considerable range of international management arrangements, which are coordinated by the NEAFC. The only significant changes in the legal and administrative basis for the management of the fishery since the last assessment have occurred during the reform of the EU CFP. These changes are likely to have an impact on the future management of the fishery, including the phasing-out of discarding and movement towards the MSY approach.</p> <p>The blue whiting fishery is prosecuted by a varying number of EU states, Iceland, Norway, the Faroe Islands and the Russian Federation. This assessment considers only the Icelandic, UK & Ireland, Norwegian and Danish components of the fishery, each of which implements a different legal and administrative framework for the management of national fisheries in general, and the blue whiting fishery specifically.</p> <p>International</p> <p>International cooperation on the management of the blue whiting stock is largely coordinated by the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission, the Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (RFMO) for the North East Atlantic.</p> <p>Iceland</p> <p>Modern Icelandic fisheries management is based on the Fisheries Management Act of 1990, and is the</p>	R1, R3, R4	HIGH
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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	<p>responsibility of the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture.</p> <p>Denmark, UK & Ireland / EU</p> <p>The UK & Ireland are Member States of the European Union, and therefore in Community waters implement the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The CFP reform mentioned in the 2013 re-assessment was implemented on 1st January 2014. The principal aim of the new CFP is to achieve maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for all stocks by 2015 where possible, and at the latest by 2020. The 2014 reform also details the gradual roll-out of a landing obligation (prohibiting discards), starting in 2015 and eventually encompassing all commercial fisheries from 2019. Finally, the 2014 reform increases the role and importance of management at the regional level, and encourages more intensive stakeholder engagement.</p> <p><i>UK</i></p> <p>The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and inshore fisheries and conservation authorities (IFCAs) work together to achieve sustainable fisheries management and marine conservation.</p> <p><i>Ireland</i></p> <p>The Irish governmental department with responsibility for capture fisheries is the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The Department is responsible for, amongst other things, sea fisheries administration, seafood policy and development, harbour management, environmental assessment, and fisheries research.</p> <p><i>Denmark</i></p> <p>The responsible authority for monitoring and enforcing EU and national conservation policies is the Danish Directorate of Fisheries, which is a part of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, under the 1999 Fisheries Act. The primary provider of scientific information and advice at the national level within Denmark is the National Institute of Aquatic Resources at the Technical University of Denmark (DTU Aqua).</p> <p>Norway</p>		
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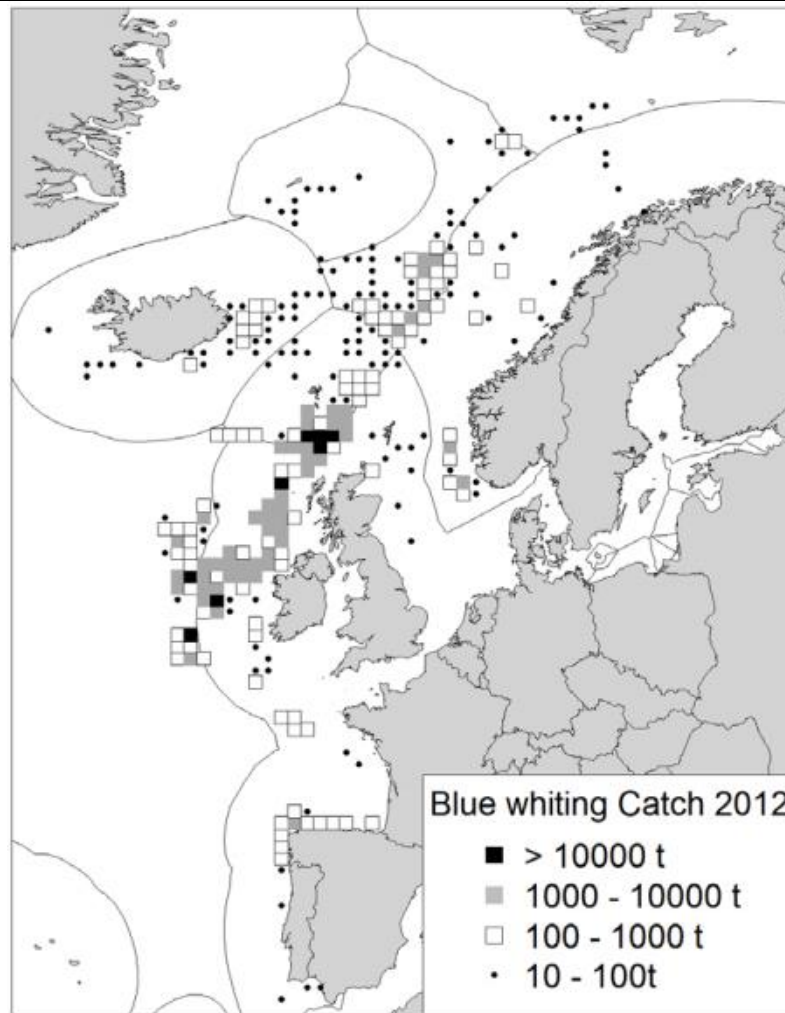
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	<p>The Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs is responsible for, amongst other activities, ensuring long-term, optimal exploitation of living marine resources; ensuring sound management of the marine environment; and progressing towards a profitable, self-sustained fisheries industry.</p> <p>For further details on the national and international legal and administrative organisations involved in the management of the fishery, please refer to the February 2013 re-assessment (R1) and the July 2013 Danish sandeel assessment (R4).</p>		
	a.ii. Fisheries management should be concerned with the whole stock unit over its entire area of distribution and take into account fishery removals and the biology of the species	References	Rating
LOW	<p>Determination: <i>As at the time of the previous assessment, the stock management unit matches the biological distribution of the stock, and the biology of the species is factored heavily into the stock assessment process. A high compliance rating remains appropriate.</i></p> <p>Since 1993 blue whiting has been assessed as a single stock unit in the North-East Atlantic; however, due to the large population size, its considerable migratory capabilities and wide spatial distribution, the stock composition and dynamics require continued monitoring. Studies to this end are ongoing, and to date have found no evidence in support of multiple stocks with distinct spawning locations or timings. As a result, the ICES WGWIDE working group decided to recommend treating blue whiting in ICES subareas I–IX, XII and XIV as a single stock for assessment purposes.</p> <p>The ICES stock assessment process considers removals by all participating nations, but does not include discard data. ICES consider discarding of blue whiting to be negligible.</p> <p>For more detail on the scientific basis for the definition of the management unit, please refer to the February 2013 re-assessment (R1).</p>	R1, R2	HIGH
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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Total blue whiting catches (t) in 2012 by ICES rectangle. Catches below 10 t are not shown. From the ICES advice Oct 2013 (R2).

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		a.iii .Management actions should be based on long-term conservation objectives	References	Rating
LOW		<p>Determination: <i>Management of the blue whiting stock remains primarily based on an internationally-agreed management plan with long-term biomass and fishing mortality objectives. The plan, its objectives, and the harvest control rules utilised are under ongoing review.</i></p> <p>Since 2008 the fishery has been managed according to an internationally-agreed management plan to which Norway, the EU, the Faroe Islands and Iceland are all signatories. ICES evaluated a NEAFC request concerning an alternative management plan in May 2013 and further in October 2013; however at the time of this assessment no changes have been implemented.</p> <p>The 2008 management plan has been assessed by ICES and was found to be adherent to the precautionary approach. The long-term objective of the plan is to ensure with high probability that the size of the stock is maintained above 1.5 million tons, and to exploit the stock with a fishing mortality of 0.18.</p> <p>For more information on the long-term management objectives and harvest control rules applied in the management of the blue whiting fishery, please refer to the February 2013 re-assessment (R1).</p>	R1, R2	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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b. Stock Assessment Procedures and Management Advice

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	bi. Research in support of fisheries conservation and management should exist.	References	Rating
LOW	<p>Determination: <i>The blue whiting stock is subject to an annual stock assessment conducted by ICES and based on the best available fishery dependent and independent data. A newly-implemented modelling framework is considered by ICES to be an improvement over previous versions. A high compliance rating remains appropriate.</i></p> <p>The scientific basis for the management of the stock is provided by annual stock assessments conducted by the ICES WGWISE. The stock assessment is based on a variety of fishery dependent and independent data sources. The assessment itself uses an age-based analytical process to generate quota recommendations based on the management plan, an MSY approach, a highly precautionary approach, and a range of target F-values. A summary of the assessment recommendations from the 2013 ICES advice is shown below.</p> <p>Fishery dependent data</p> <p>Total landings by country and ICES area are considered to be accurate representations of fishery removals. Discards of blue whiting are thought to be small, an assumption which is supported by sampling studies.</p> <p>Fishery independent data</p> <p>The International Blue Whiting Spawning Stock Survey (IBWSS) is carried out on the spawning grounds west of the British Isles in March-April, and is the only survey that covers almost the entire distributional area of the spawning stock. The IBWSS forms the primary basis for annual biomass estimates and therefore is a key foundation for ICES quota recommendations. Additionally, an international ecosystem survey is carried out annually in the Nordic Seas from late April to early June aimed at observing the pelagic ecosystem in this area. This survey focuses on Norwegian spring spawning herring, blue whiting, zooplankton and hydrography. A Norwegian survey on the spawning grounds for blue whiting, west of the British Isles, provides the longest time series covering a significant part of the blue</p>	R1, R2	HIGH
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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	<p>whiting stock, and is an important time series for tuning the assessment. A number of other fishery-independent surveys are not used directly in the stock assessment process, but do provide additional information to scientists.</p> <p>For more details of the research conducted on this fishery, refer to the February 2013 re-assessment (R1).</p>	
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Outlook for 2014

Basis: $F(2013) = 0.14$ (catch constraint = 643 = TAC). $SSB(2014) = 6715$. $R(2013)$, $R(2014)$, and $R(2015) = GM(1981-2010) = 13\,463$ million at age 1.

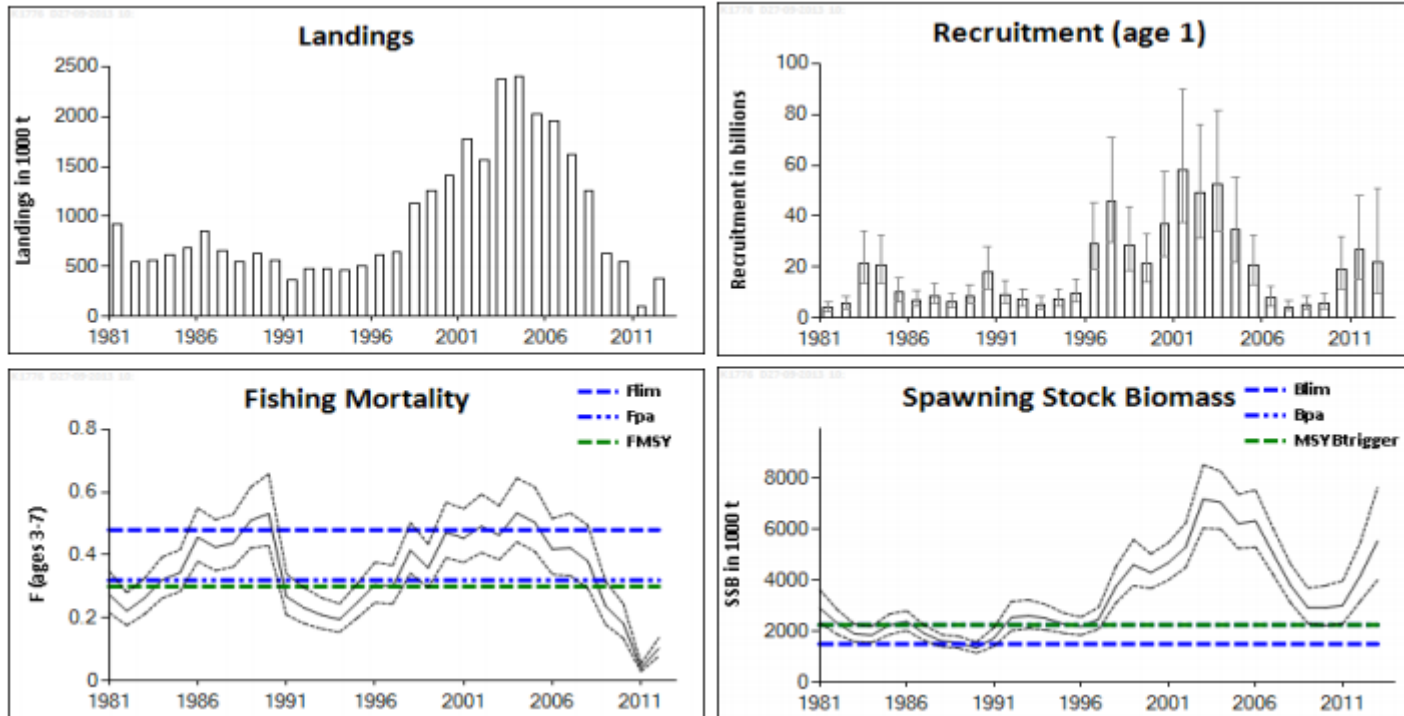
Rationale	Catch (2014)	Basis	F 2014	SSB (2015)	% SSB change ¹⁾	% TAC change ²⁾
Management plan	948.950	$F = 0.18$ for $SSB(2014) > 2250$	0.18	6958	4	48
NEAFC request	1140	Management plan, $F = 0.22$	0.22	6767	1	77
NEAFC request	1279	Management plan, $F = 0.25$	0.25	6635	-1	99
NEAFC request	1502	Management plan, $F = 0.30$	0.30	6422	-4	134
MSY framework	1502	$F_{MSY} = 0.30$	0.30	6422	-4	134
$F_{pa} 0.32$	1588	F_{pa}	0.32	6333	-6	144
$F_{lim} 0.48$	2232	F_{lim}	0.48	5723	-15	247
Zero catch	0		0.00	7877	17	-100
$1.00 \times F(2012)$	562	$1.00 \times F(2012)$	0.10	7336	9	-13
$0.50 \times F(2013)$	401	$0.50 \times F(2013)$	0.07	7484	11	-38
<i>Status quo</i> F	777	$1.00 \times F(2013)$	0.15	7131	6	21
$1.50 \times F(2013)$	1129	$1.50 \times F(2013)$	0.22	6779	1	75
$2.00 \times F(2013)$	1460	$2.00 \times F(2013)$	0.29	6465	-4	127

Weights in thousand tonnes.

¹⁾ SSB 2015 relative to SSB 2014.

²⁾ Catch 2014 relative to TAC 2013 (643).

ICES stock assessment outputs, TAC recommendations, predicted 2015 biomass and TAC changes for the 2014 fishery. From the ICES advice, October 2013 (R2).



Blue whiting in Subareas I-IX, XII, and XIV. Summary of available data (weights in thousand tonnes). From the ICES advice, Oct 2013 (R2).

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LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	b.ii Best scientific evidence available should be taken into account when designing conservation and management measures	References	Rating
LOW	<p>Determination: <i>The management advice and broader expertise provided by ICES forms the basis for the majority of management decisions made across the stock as a whole. Fishery management decisions on a national level are informed by advice from national advisory organisations. There have been no significant changes since the last assessment.</i></p> <p>The current international management plan, agreed between Norway, Faroe Islands, Iceland, and the EU in 2005, aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Maintain spawning-stock biomass above 1.5 million t (Blim) in the long-term but reduce the target fishing mortality at which the stock is exploited to 0.18 (Fy); 2) Reduce the fishing mortality by 35% a year in 2009 and 2010 or until the fishing mortality reaches 0.18; 3) Once the target fishing mortality has been reached, implement a harvest control rule, setting F at 0.18 when SSB is expected to reach or exceed the trigger biomass (2.25 million t = Bpa); reducing F to 0.05 when SSB < Blim and linearly reducing F between these two states. <p>The process of development and implementation of this management plan is indicative of the ICES-based processes at the heart of the management of the blue whiting fishery. Additional management measures recommendations are made by the NEAFC to its members and are also based on ICES advice and reports.</p> <p>National fisheries management decisions are informed by information provided by national scientific organisations. These are the Marine Research Institute in Iceland; the Institute of Marine Research in Norway; the National Institute of Aquatic Resources at the Technical University of Denmark (DTU Aqua) in Denmark; the Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science in the UK; and the Marine Institute in Ireland.</p>	R1, R2	HIGH
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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c. The Precautionary Approach

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		c.i The precautionary approach is applied in the formulation of management plans.	References	Rating
LOW		<p>Determination: <i>As at the time of the full re-assessment, the assessment team considers the more recent management of the stock to be sufficiently precautionary to warrant a score of high compliance.</i></p> <p>In previous assessments a discrepancy between the TAC implied by the management plan and the TAC implied by following the precautionary approach has led to the fishery being awarded a score of medium compliance under this category. However, ICES has since reviewed the advice and updated the recommendations. The fact that ICES has reviewed the current management plan and found it to be adherent to the precautionary approach led the assessment team to consider that a score of high compliance was appropriate at the time of the previous assessment, and there have been no significant changes since that time.</p> <p>For more information on the decision-making process leading to a high compliance rating, and the historical concerns over the level of precaution applied in the management of this fishery, please refer to the February 2013 re-assessment (R1).</p>	R1, R2	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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d. Management Measures

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		d.i The level of fishing permitted should be set according to management advice given by research organisations.	References	Rating
LOW		<p>Determination: <i>Since the previous assessment, the level of fishing has remained in line with the management advice and management plan. A condition was placed on the fishery that no unilateral quota-setting should occur, and to date the fishery has adhered to that condition.</i></p> <p>Historically, the total TACs and landings in the blue whiting fishery have been considerably higher than the ICES recommendations. When it was agreed in 2008, the management plan was intended to take full effect from 2011, with a 35% reduction in TAC each year until then. Quotas have accordingly seen significant annual reductions since 2008.</p> <p>ICES recommended that the TAC for 2012 should not exceed 391,000t. The total international TAC was ultimately set at this level, with final landings of 384,000t. The 2013 TAC recommendation was 643,000t, which was agreed as the actual TAC. The table below summarises historical TAC advice, final TACs, and final landings since 1987.</p> <p>The blue whiting fishery was suspended from the IFFO RS scheme in autumn 2012 due to concerns over the unilateral decision by the Russian Federation to set a quota considerably above the level agreed by the other participating nations. After considering the additional information gathered since that time, the assessment team proposed the re-instatement of the fishery, on the condition that approval shall be immediately suspended pending further re-assessment if unilateral actions are taken in future.</p> <p>For more details on the logic behind re-instating the fishery, and the full detail of the approval condition, please see the February 2013 re-assessment.</p>	R1, R2	MEDIUM
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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Year	ICES Advice	Predicted catch corresp. to advice	Agreed TAC	ICES catch
1987	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	950	-	665
1988	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	832	-	558
1989	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	630	-	627
1990	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	600	-	562
1991	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	670	-	370
1992	No advice	-	-	475
1993	Catch at <i>status quo</i> F (northern areas); no assessment for southern areas	490	-	481
1994	Precautionary TAC (northern areas); no assessment for southern areas	485	650 ¹	459
1995	Precautionary TAC for combined stock	518	650 ¹	579
1996	Precautionary TAC for combined stock	500	650 ¹	646
1997	Precautionary TAC for combined stock	540		672
1998	Precautionary TAC for combined stock	650		1125
1999	Catches above 650 000 t may not be sustainable in the long run	650		1256
2000	F should not exceed the proposed F_{pa}	800		1412
2001	F should not exceed the proposed F_{pa}	628		1780
2002	Rebuilding plan	0		1556
2003	F should be less than the proposed F_{pa}	600		2321
2004	Achieve 50% probability that F will be less than F_{pa}	925		2378
2005	Achieve 50% probability that F will be less than F_{pa}	1075		2027
2006	F old management plan	1500	2100 ²	1966
2007	F should be less than the proposed F_{pa}	980	1847 ³	1612
2008	F should be less than F_{pa}	835	1250 ⁴	1246
2009	Maintain stock above B_{pa}	384	606 ⁵	636
2010	Follow the agreed management plan	540	548	540
2011	See scenarios	40–223	40	105
2012	Follow the agreed management plan	391	391	384
2013	Follow the agreed management plan	643	643	
2014	Follow the agreed management plan	948.950		

Weights in thousand tonnes.
¹NEAFC proposal for NEAFC regions 1 and 2.
²Agreed TAC from four Coastal States of 2 million tonnes, and an additional allocation to Russia in the international zone of 100 000 t.
³Agreed TAC from four Coastal States of 1.7 million tonnes, and an additional allocation to Russia and Greenland of 147 000 t.
⁴Agreed TAC from four Coastal States of 1.1 million tonnes, and an additional allocation to Russia and Greenland.
⁵Agreed TAC from four Coastal States of 0.59 million tonnes, and an additional allocation to Russia (0.016 million tonnes).

Historical ICES advice, quotas and landings for blue whiting in the North-East Atlantic. From the ICES advice, Oct 2013 (R2).

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	d.ii Where excess fishing capacity exist, mechanisms should be in established to reduced capacity to allow for the recovery of the stock to sustainable levels.	References	Rating	
LOW	<p>Determination: <i>The management of excess fishing capacity is handled differently, though satisfactorily, in each of the countries under assessment. Annual quotas remain the primary mechanism for limiting fishing effort, although capacity-reducing processes are also in place.</i></p> <p>Fishing effort across the entire blue whiting stock is primarily limited by annual quotas, which are set as described in sections A3, B1 and D1.</p> <p>Iceland</p> <p>The main instrument in Icelandic fisheries and fleet management is a system based on Individual Tradable Quota (ITQs). Under the ITQ system, each vessel is allocated a certain share of the TAC of the relevant species. Decommissioning occurs indirectly, as companies increase their share of the TAC by buying out vessels and thus receiving the quota attached to those vessels.</p> <p>Denmark, UK & Ireland / EU</p> <p>The entry-exit regime, which applies to the majority of EU Member State vessels, is one of the main pillars of the European-wide fishing capacity management system. Any entry of capacity into the fleet of a Member State has to be compensated by the previous exit of at least the same amount of capacity. The second pillar of the fishing capacity management system is the rule that capacity leaving the fleet with public aid cannot be replaced. Capacity reductions supported with public aid are therefore permanent.</p> <p>Norway</p> <p>All fisheries of importance require every vessel to hold a license that allows it to participate in the fishery. Limitations on access to fisheries are critical to management as well as to the economics of the fleet. Other measures of access limitation are certain registration requirements set out in the</p>	R1, R2	HIGH	
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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	<p>annual regulation for each fishery. These mandatory registrations were introduced in order to reserve fishing rights for professional fishermen and thereby reduce effort.</p> <p>For more detail on the capacity management mechanisms in place in each jurisdiction, please refer to the February 2013 re-assessment (R1) and the July 2013 Danish sandeel assessment (R4).</p>		
LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	d.iii Management measures should ensure that fishing gear and fishing practices do not have a significant impact on non-target species and the physical environment.	References	Rating
LOW	<p>Determination: <i>The available information suggests that the impacts of the fishery on non-target species and the physical environment are minimal, however the continuing lack of solid data on bycatch and the level of PET interaction, and the minimal consideration of the potential ecosystem impacts of the fishery leads the assessment team to consider a score of medium compliance to remain appropriate under this section.</i></p> <p>Non-target species / bycatch</p> <p>Overall, most of the blue whiting is caught in directed fisheries for reduction purposes, and by-catch is considered to be small. By-catch of saithe, silver smelt and cod was been reported at below 1% in the Icelandic blue whiting fishery in 2004. An average saithe by-catch rate of 3.5% was reported by Faroese monitoring of the blue whiting fleet. Overall ICES has stated that the Blue Whiting is a relatively clean fishery and overall the by-catch rates are minimal, although actual data on the by-catch is considered incomplete for the fishery.</p> <p>Discarding is prohibited in the Icelandic and Norwegian fisheries.</p> <p>PET species</p> <p>The broadness of blue whiting’s distribution implies a habitat overlap with many species of Northeast Atlantic seabirds and marine mammals. Data on effects of the fishery on PET species is sparse but a European Commission study group considered blue whiting pelagic trawling a fishery where</p>	R1, R2	MEDIUM
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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		<p>monitoring for cetacean by- catch is a priority.</p> <p>Ecosystem considerations</p> <p>The ICES stock assessment process includes consideration of the potential ecosystem effects on the blue whiting stock. However, there appears to be minimal consideration of the effects of fishery removals on the broader ecosystem, although this is an aspect of fishery management which organisations such as the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership are attempting to improve.</p> <p>Physical environment</p> <p>Direct effects on habitat and seafloor are typically minimal for pelagic gears, although occasional contact is known to occur and, in these cases, can potentially cause damage to fragile ecosystems (e.g. corals).</p> <p>For more detail on the impacts of this fishery on non-target species and the environment, refer to the February 2013 re-assessment (R1).</p>		
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e. Implementation

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		e.i There should be a framework for sanctions of violation of Laws and regulations.	References	Rating
LOW		<p>Determination: <i>All the nations under assessment have in place a robust framework for sanctioning violations of laws and regulations. There have been no significant changes since the previous assessment.</i></p> <p>Iceland</p> <p>Breaches of the law and regulations on fisheries management are subject to fines or revoking of the fishing permit, irrespective of whether such conduct is by intent or negligence. Major or repeated intentional offenses are subject to up to six years imprisonment. Collecting and bringing ashore any catches in the fishing gear of fishing vessels is obligatory; discarding is prohibited and such conduct is subject to penalty according to law.</p> <p>Denmark, UK & Ireland / EU</p> <p>Infringements of CFP rules are dealt with by the Member State concerned. Monitoring the number of cases detected and the nature and the level of the sanctions imposed is a key part of the Commission's task of ensuring a level playing field for all EU fishers. 2008 Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 established a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Through EU Fishery Policy and Regulations, Member States must apply effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions against natural or legal persons engaged in IUU activities</p> <p>Norway</p> <p>Norway constantly seeks to regulate its own fisheries sustainably and ensure efficient control of resources both on landing and at sea through the Coast Guard. Moreover, a number of measures have been implemented to deter Norwegian vessels from participating in IUU fishing and to prevent</p>	R1, R2	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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	illegally caught fish from entering the Norwegian market. The Norwegian Government’s Plan of Action on Economic Crime has been used in order to enforce measures against Norwegian actors in IUU activities.		
LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	e.ii A management system for fisheries control and enforcement should be established.	References	Rating
LOW	<p>Determination: <i>Effective fisheries control and enforcement regimes remain in place in all the nations under assessment. There have been no significant changes since the previous assessment.</i></p> <p>Iceland</p> <p>The Icelandic Coast Guard, responsible to the Minister of Justice, monitors fishing activities in Icelandic waters, including surveillance of areas closed for fishing and inspection of mesh sizes and other gear related practices. The Department of quota allocations of the Directorate issues commercial fishing permits, allocates catch quotas to Icelandic fishing vessels and maintains records of those rights. Under a bilateral agreement between Iceland and the European Union (EU), Icelandic inspectors are required on board all EU fishing vessels in Icelandic waters</p> <p>Denmark, UK & Ireland / EU</p> <p>The UK Marine Management Organisation, and Irish Sea Fisheries Protection Authority are the competent authorities with responsibility of enforcement of sanctions and penalties with respect to the prosecution of fishery rules in each country. National fishing control systems apply EU access regulations in combination with regulations of the total fleet capacity measured by tonnage and engine power. Vessels must be registered and authorised through individual licensing. Legal instruments are brought into force through Ministerial Orders and largely reflect EU Regulations within the CFP framework.</p> <p>Norway</p> <p>Norwegian fisheries regulations are enforced at sea, when the fish is landed and when it is exported.</p>	R1, R2	HIGH
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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		<p>At sea, the Coast Guard is responsible for inspecting fishing vessels and checking their catch against their log books. Both Norwegian and foreign fishing vessels are subject to stringent controls in all Norwegian fishing waters. The activity of the Coast Guard is generally considered vital for the functioning of the management regime as a whole. The Coast Guard performs more than 1800 inspections of Norwegian and the foreign vessels that fish in Norwegian waters annually. Vessels over 24 meters (15 meters for vessels from EU) are required to carry satellite transponders that makes it possible to track their activity 24 hours a day all around the year.</p>		
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References

R1 – IFFO RS scheme full re-assessment, Blue Whiting, Feb 2013:

http://www.iffo.net/files/iffoweb/approved-raw-materials/whole-fish/combined-blue-whiting-ne-atlantic-2013-re_0.pdf

R2 – ICES advice, Blue whiting in Subareas I–IX, XII, and XIV, Oct 2013:

<http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2013/2013/whb-comb.pdf>

R3 – EU CFP reform package: http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/reform/proposals/index_en.htm

R4 – IFFO RS scheme full re-assessment, Danish sandeel, July 2013:

<http://www.iffo.net/files/iffoweb/approved-raw-materials/whole-fish/denmark-sandeel-full-re-assessment-july-2013-sp.pdf>

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