



FISHERY ASSESSMENT REPORT

IFFO GLOBAL STANDARD FOR RESPONSIBLE SUPPLY OF FISHMEAL AND FISH OIL



FISHERY:	Boarfish (<i>Capros aper</i>)
LOCATION:	UK, Denmark & Ireland
DATE OF REPORT:	28/11/13
ASSESSOR:	Sam Peacock

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Issue No; 2; Issue Date; Nov 09

Report Ref:

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1. Application Details and Summary of the Assessment Outcome			
Name:			
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-certification:
Sam Peacock		1	Surveillance
Assessment Period	28/11/13		
Scope Details			
1. Scope of Assessment:		IFFO Global Standard for Responsible Supply – Issue 1	
2. Fishery		Boarfish (<i>Capros aper</i>)	
3. Fishery Location		UK, Denmark and Ireland. Faroe Islands vessels do not prosecute this fishery.	
4. Fishery Method		Pelagic trawl	
Outcome of Assessment			
5. Overall Fishery Compliance Rating		Medium	
6. Sub Components of Low Compliance		None	
7. Information deficiency		None	
8. Peer Review Evaluation			
9. Recommendation		Maintain approval	

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2. Quality of Information
Good; primarily ICES reports, national and EU websites.

3. Compliance Level Achieved
Medium
Recommendation
Maintain approval

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 development of the management of the boarfish stock off the Irish coast is considered by ICES to be an excellent example of successful collaboration between fishers and scientists in the development of a new fishery.</p> <p>The long-term management plan for the stock proposed by the Pelagic RAC in August 2012 has not yet been fully evaluated by ICES nor adopted by managers; however it does represent a major commitment to science- and precautionary-approach-based management of the fishery. Advances in the survey data available to managers, in particular the development of a boarfish-specific acoustic target strength index, have significantly improved the informational basis of management advice.</p> <p>As at the time of the first surveillance, the scientific understanding and management approach in the boarfish fishery continues to improve. Although none of the medium compliance ratings from previous reports have yet been upgraded to high compliance, it is once again the opinion of the assessment team that such upgrades are likely to occur in the future if management of the fishery continues along its current trajectory.</p>
HIGH COMPLIANCE
A1, D1, D2, E1, E2
MEDIUM COMPLIANCE
A2, A3, B1, B2, C1, 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	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
Management actions should be scientifically based	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
Research in support of fisheries conservation and management should exist	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
Best scientific evidence available should be taken into account when designing conservation and management measures	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance
The precautionary approach is applied in the formulation of management plans	Medium Compliance	Medium Compliance	Medium 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	High 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	Medium 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: <i>The European Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is undergoing a comprehensive reform process, which is likely to result in an improved commitment to scientific research, a reduction or ban of discarding, and the widespread adoption of the MSY approach. Changes are still progressing through the European government but are likely to come into force from 2014.</i></p> <p>The European Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), which provides the main legal and administrative framework for UK, Ireland and Denmark fisheries management, has been undergoing an extensive reform process since before the initial assessment. To date there have been no substantial changes to the way this fishery is managed, but as more reforms are implemented in the future, changes are likely to occur. Key reform proposals include banning discards, improving scientific understanding of stocks, and implementing the MSY approach more broadly.</p> <p>The primary authorities with responsibility for implementing the CFP are the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in Ireland, the Marine Management Organisation (in cooperation with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) in the UK, and the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries in Denmark.</p> <p>For more details on the CFP as it currently stands, and its implementation in national contexts, please refer to the initial assessment.</p>	R1, R2	HIGH
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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	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>The only significant change since the initial assessment has been the inclusion of boarfish bycatch data in the ICES stock assessment process. The management area remains unchanged from 2011, and so continues to cover a smaller area than the best scientific understanding of the boarfish stock distribution. However, the fishery continues to be prosecuted only in the managed region.</i></p> <p>As at the time of the initial assessment, bottom trawl survey data suggest a continuity of distribution spanning ICES Subareas V, VI, VII, and VIII, a wider area than that currently covered by the EU TAC. There continues to be no fishery prosecuted outside the area for which the TAC is set, and the proposed management plan presented by the Pelagic Regional Advisory Council (RAC) in August 2012, while yet to be adopted, covers the entire scientifically-understood biological distribution. A dedicated study on the stock structure of boarfish within the Northeast Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea will commence in October 2013, the results of which will feed into future ICES assessments.</p> <p>At the time of the initial assessment discards of boarfish in other fisheries were not included in ICES calculations; however they have since been collated for all years since 2003 and have been included in the ICES advice since 2012; thus all fishery removals are now considered. Of the total boarfish removals in 2012, an estimated 8% (by weight) was discards.</p> <p>For more information on the proposed management plan, see section A3, below.</p>	R2, R3	MEDIUM
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

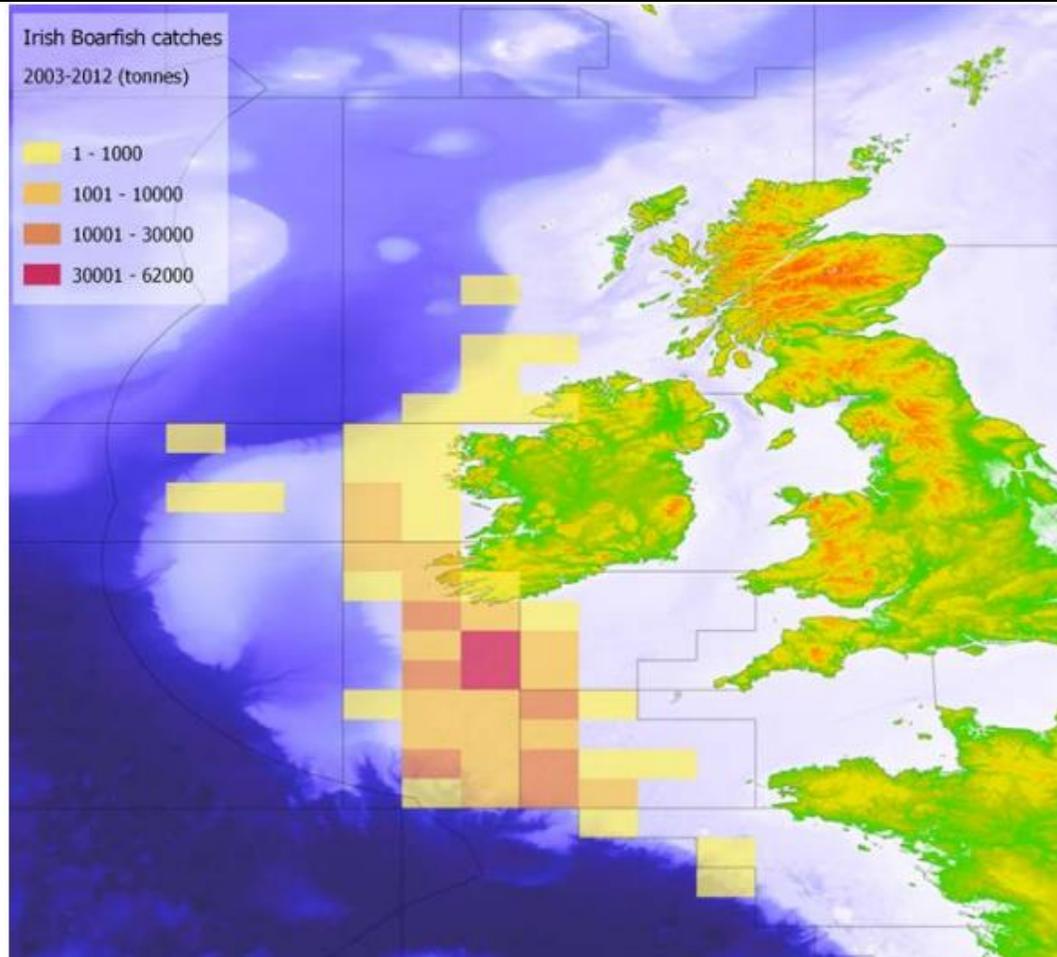
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**Areas fished by Irish vessels (being representative of the areas where all international vessels are fishing) 2003-2012.
From the ICES advice, 2013 (R3).**

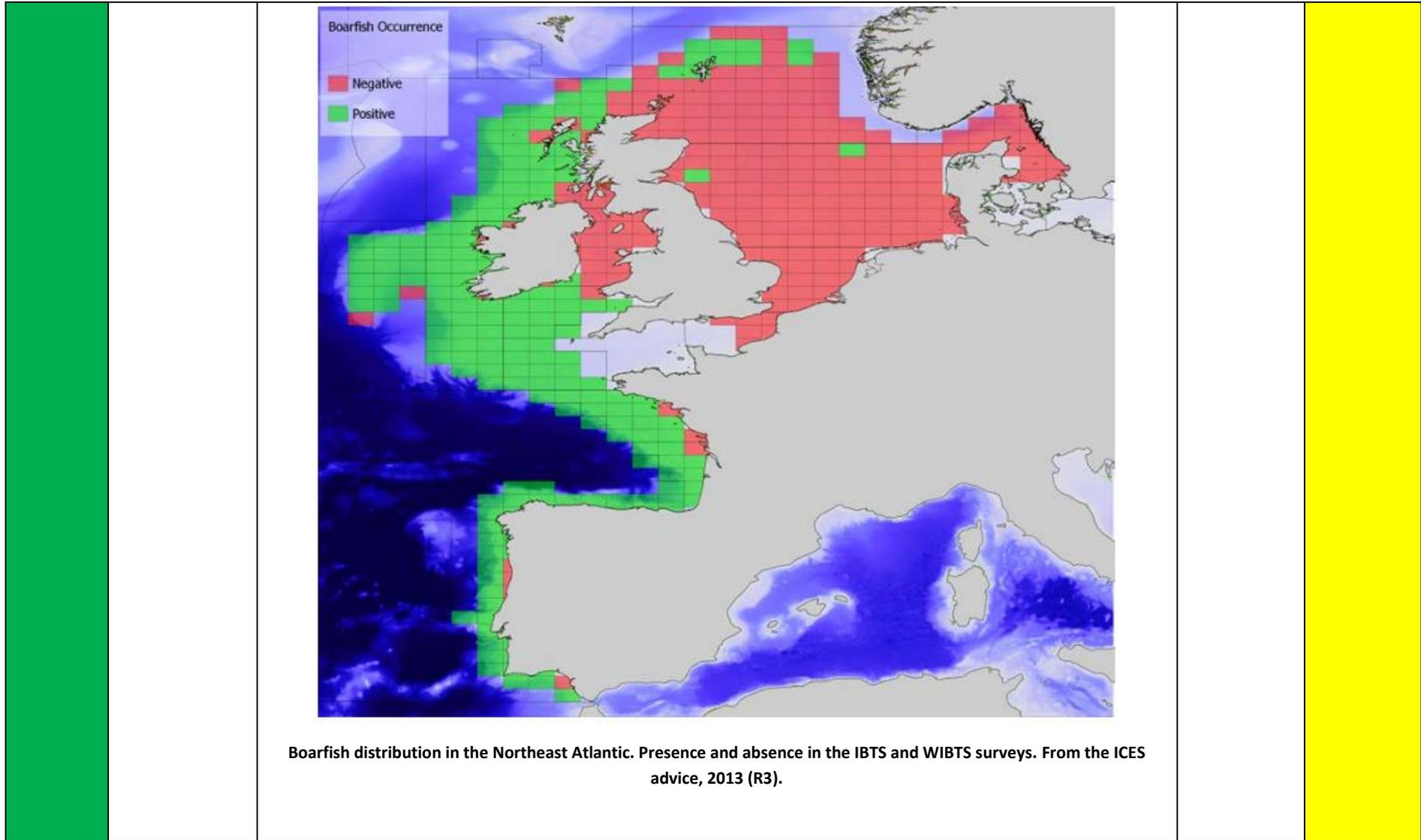
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	a.iii .Management actions should be based on long-term conservation objectives	References	Rating
LOW	<p>Determination: <i>Although the fishery is still not subject to an internationally agreed long-term management plan, the interim management plan continues to adhered to on a voluntary basis, and ICES recommendations are based on the precautionary approach. A management plan with harvest control rules defined by long-term biomass reference points has been proposed and is under review by ICES. At this stage the assessment team considers a rating of medium compliance to remain appropriate.</i></p> <p>In 2010, an interim management plan was proposed by Ireland for boarfish in ICES Divisions VI, VII and VIII, formulated by the Marine Institute Ireland, in association with National Institute of Aquatic Resources at the Technical University of Denmark. The plan included basic harvest control rules and commitments to sustainability and scientific research on the stock. Since ICES began providing advice for the stock in 2011, quota recommendations have been based on average catch (in 2011), an F_{MSY} proxy (in 2012), and an MSY-approach based on the Schaefer surplus production model (in 2013). This illustrates the continuing reduction in uncertainties surrounding the stock.</p> <p>In August 2012 the Pelagic Regional Advisory Council (RAC) presented a draft management plan to ICES which contains detailed harvest control rules for all levels of information availability, from a default TAC to be set in the case of the absence of a stock assessment, through biomass estimates, up to high-certainty estimates of biomass and F-value. The plan also proposes that in the case of ICES advice being for a lower TAC than that prescribed by the harvest control rules, that be adopted instead. Finally, the plan includes a closed season (to protect juvenile herring and mackerel), a closed area (to protect known herring aggregations), and a temporary closure statement: “If catches of other species covered by TAC, amount to more than 5% of the total catch by day by ICES statistical rectangle, then all fishing must cease in that rectangle for 5 consecutive days”.</p> <p>At the time of the previous surveillance report, the proposed management plan had not been assessed by ICES nor officially implemented. In October 2013, ICES published a Special Request</p>	R2-R5	MEDIUM
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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		<p>Advice titled “EC request to ICES to evaluate the proposed long-term management plan for boarfish and possible in-year revision of the TAC for 2013”. In this advice, ICES states that,</p> <p><i>“ICES has not fully evaluated the proposed long-term management plan for boarfish. However, ICES identifies that Tier 1 of the proposed plan coincides with the ICES generic approach to giving advice for data-rich situations. Given that a Category 1 assessment is now being used for advice, ICES recommends that Tier 1.1 of the plan be considered consistent with the PA and MSY approaches for as long as a Category 1 assessment is available”.</i></p> <p>Until the plan has been fully evaluated by ICES and adopted as the official management plan for the fishery, the assessment team considers a rating of medium compliance to remain appropriate. However, this initial consideration by ICES and the Pelagic RAC’s continuing commitment to implementing a precautionary management plan is very positive.</p>		
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Rule	Assessment	Uncertainty	Condition	Procedure
1.1.a	SSB and F	Low	$SSB > B_{trigger}$	F_{target}
1.1.b			$SSB < B_{trigger}$	$SSB * (F_{target} / B_{trigger})$
1.2.a	SSB and F	Higher	$SSB > B_{trigger}$	F_{target}
1.2.b			$SSB < B_{trigger}$	$SSB * (F_{target} / B_{trigger}) * G$
1.3.a	F	Any	$F < F_{target}$	Reference TAC * G
1.3.b			$F > F_{target}$	$RTAC + (-RTAC / F_{lim} - F_{pa}) * (F - F_{pa}) * G$
1.4.a	U	Any	$U > U_{pa}$, TAC =	Reference TAC * G
1.4.b			$U < U_{pa}$, TAC =	$U * (Reference TAC / U_{pa}) * G$
1.5.	Survey biomass	Any	$TAC_{y,q3,4} = TAC_{y+1, q1}$	$ASB * 1 - exp^{-F_{0.1}} * G * 0.62$
				$ASB * 1 - exp^{-F_{0.1}} * G * 0.38$
1.6	None		No information on stock status <i>and</i> no risk of recruitment impairment	TAC = 33,000 t (interim management plan TAC)

Proposed harvest control rules for the boarfish fishery. For the definitions of variables please refer to the proposed management plan (R6). From the Pelagic RAC proposed management plan (R6).

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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>Scientific understanding of the stock has improved since the time of the initial assessment, and additional data are available to ICES for stock assessment purposes. As at the time of the previous surveillance assessment, a medium compliance level remains appropriate at this time. However, if acoustic surveys continue, and the species is adopted into the new Data Collection Framework from 2014, it is likely that the fishery will score high compliance in this section in future.</i></p> <p>The analysis conducted by ICES on the stock in 2011 was considered “exploratory in nature and based on limited information”, and ICES concluded that a comprehensive and coordinated sampling scheme and a targeted survey are needed to provide the scientific basis for advice on this species. Since that time, improvements have been made in the data available and the stock assessment process itself.</p> <p>Since the beginning of 2010, the Danish and Irish pelagic fleets have been actively involved in providing scientific samples of boarfish. They have also directly funded biological studies, target strength research, and dedicated boarfish acoustic surveys (2011–2013). ICES states that since 2010 sampling has been considered adequate, although a comprehensive and coordinated sampling scheme and a continuation of the targeted acoustic survey are needed to provide the scientific basis for advice.</p> <p>The initial assessment approved the fishery on the condition, amongst others, that it be included in the EU Data Collection Framework (DCF) from 2013 onwards. It became clear at the time of the first surveillance assessment that the current DCF is in place up to and including 2013, and that boarfish will be considered for inclusion from 2014. It remains the intention of the relevant state authorities to request that this occur, and as such the full re-assessment scheduled for next year should ensure this occurs.</p>	R2, R3	MEDIUM
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

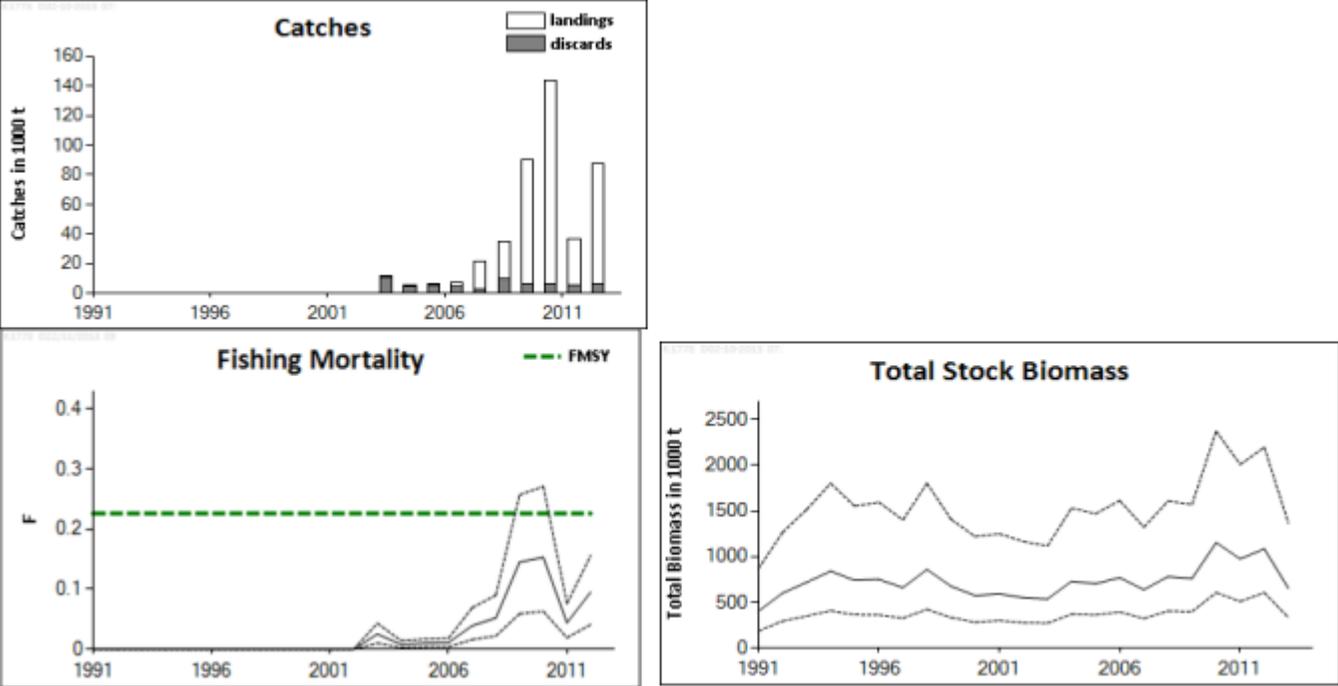
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	 <p>Boarfish in the Northeast Atlantic. Top left: Catches. Bottom left: fishing mortality. Bottom right: Total stock biomass. Dotted lines on the total stock biomass and fishing mortality plots indicate the 95% credible interval. From the ICES advice, Oct 2013.</p>		
LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	b.ii Best scientific evidence available should be taken into account when designing conservation and management measures	References	Rating
LOW	Determination: <i>Scientific information is sparse for this species, and advice has only been provided by ICES since</i>	R2, R3	MEDIUM

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MEDIUM	<p>2011. For these reasons current management measures such as closed seasons and areas are largely based on precautionary principals and not scientific research. However, ICES quota recommendations have already been implemented, and it is likely that as scientific evidence improves, management measures will be adapted to take this into account. There have been no major changes since the initial assessment.</p> <p>In 2010, the interim management plan was proposed by Ireland, which included a number of measures to mitigate potential bycatch of other TAC species in the boarfish fishery. A closed season from the 15th March to 31st August was proposed, as anecdotal evidence suggests that mackerel and boarfish are caught in mixed aggregations during this period. A closed season was proposed in Division VIIg from 1st September to 31st October, in order to prevent catches of Celtic Sea herring, which is known to form feeding aggregations in this region at these times. Finally, if catches of a species covered by a TAC, other than boarfish, amount to more than 5% of the total catch by day by ICES statistical rectangle, then fishing must cease in that rectangle. While these measures were developed in the light of available scientific information at the time, they were not a direct response to ICES advice as none was published until 2011. Now that ICES advice has become available for the first time, the contents of the management plan have begun to be adapted, most notably in the setting of the 2012 quota in accordance with ICES advice. The new management plan proposed by the Pelagic RAC in August 2012 includes the management measures listed above. ICES has conducted an initial assessment of the plan and recommended that it be considered precautionary until a full assessment can be conducted in the immediate future.</p>		
HIGH			

c. The Precautionary Approach

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	c.i The precautionary approach is applied in the formulation of management plans.	References	Rating
LOW	Determination: <i>The interim management plan was not evaluated by ICES for adherence to the precautionary</i>	R2, R3	MEDIUM

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MEDIUM	<p><i>approach, however the proposed permanent management plan has been found to be preliminarily precautionary. Additionally, both appear to be highly precautionary compared to previous landings data and initial ICES advice. The proposed management plan includes multiple harvest control rules for various levels of scientific uncertainty, and if the plan is approved by ICES it seems likely the fishery will score high compliance in this section in future.</i></p> <p>During the period 2008–2010, boarfish do not appear to have been overfished. However, landings have increased rapidly during these years, reaching almost 140,000t in 2010. While information on the exploitation of boarfish was preliminary, ICES stated that it would be cautious for catches not to increase above the average of landings (82,000t) recorded during that period. In the last year, understanding of the stock has improved to the point where the 2013 TAC recommendation has been increased to 133,957t.</p> <p>Despite the comparatively large scale of the fishery in 2010, qualitative information suggests that boarfish are not over-exploited. The age composition of the commercial catch (as of 2012) is not truncated and contains a full range of ages.</p> <p>The newly proposed management plan, which is still under assessment by ICES, contains a range of harvest control rules for various levels of scientific understanding of the stock, reflecting fishery manager’s adherence to the precautionary approach.</p>		
HIGH			

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>The level of fishing continues to be set in line with ICES advice. Fishery removals in 2011 exceeded the TAC marginally; however, the figure includes discards, was a large reduction on 2010 landings, and was substantially less than the level of fishing which ICES ultimately determined was precautionary. In 2012 landings were below the TAC, and in every year the TAC has been set in line with the ICES advice. For these reasons the assessment team believes a score of high compliance in this section remains appropriate.</i></p> <p>Until 2011 no TAC was set for this species, and landings increased rapidly from negligible at the turn of the century up to 143,900t in 2010. In response to this rapid expansion, the 2011 quota was set according to the temporary management plan proposed by Irish and Danish scientists. The 2011 TAC was 33,000t, less than a quarter of the landings the previous year. Total fishery removals in 2011 were 36,900t, slightly exceeding the TAC; however, approximately 15% of this value is attributable to discards.</p> <p>ICES first provided quota advice for the stock in 2011, when it recommended that the 2012 TAC be set at 82,000t. This advice was followed when the final quota was set, and total landings in 2012 were 80,700t. The 2013 TAC advice was also 82,000t, which was followed by fishery managers. At the time of this report, there is no estimate available for landings in 2013.</p>	R2, R3, R6	HIGH
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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Boarfish in the Northeast Atlantic. ICES advice, management, and landings, 2001-2014. From the ICES boarfish advice, Oct 2013.

Year	ICES Advice	Predicted catch corresp. to advice	TAC ¹	Bycatch quota ²	ICES Catch
2001	None	-	None	None	0.1
2002	None	-	None	None	0.9
2003	None	-	None	None	11.3
2004	None	-	None	None	5.0
2005	None	-	None	None	5.9
2006	None	-	None	None	7.1
2007	None	-	None	None	21.0
2008	None	-	None	None	33.8
2009	None	-	None	None	89.9
2010	None	-	None	None	143.9
2011	None	-	33	9.8	36.9
2012	No increase in catches	82	82	9.9	80.7
2013	MSY approach	82	82	9.5	
2014	MSY approach	127.509			

Weights in thousand tonnes.

¹ EU and international waters of Subareas VI, VII, and VIII.

² The maximum permitted bycatch (5%) of boarfish allowed to be subtracted from the EC quotas for western and for North Sea horse mackerel. The 5% applies to boarfish, whiting, haddock, and/or mackerel.

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 primary tool for the management of fishing effort in the boarfish fishery remains the TAC, with the restriction of fleet-wide capacity being achieved by the EU capacity management system. A rating of high compliance remains appropriate.</i></p>	R2	HIGH
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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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>Management measures general to EU fisheries and specific to the boarfish fishery are in place to attempt to minimise the impact on non-target species and the physical environment. At present, due to the recent development of the fishery, there is insufficient information on bycatch of non-target and PET species such as cetaceans. There have been no major changes since the time of the initial assessment, although it is worth noting that the closed seasons and areas already voluntarily adhered to by fishers have been included in the proposed management plan (see section A3).</i></p> <p>Pelagic trawling is considered to have virtually no impact on the benthic habitat, and additionally is generally considered highly species-specific when combined with fish-finding gear. The information on the overall impact of this fishery on PET species is lacking, although marine mammals and seabirds in EU waters are currently protected by a set of directives, conventions (e.g. Bern Convention and the Habitats Directive) and multilateral agreements. The ecological role and significance of boarfish in the NE Atlantic is largely unknown. However, in the south-east North Atlantic, in Portuguese waters, they are considered to have an important position in the marine food web. Boarfish appear an unlikely target of predation given their array of strong dorsal and anal fin spines and covering of ctenoid scales. However, there is evidence to suggest that they may be an important component of some species' diets.</p> <p>The voluntary management measures proposed in the interim management plan to protect herring, mackerel and other TAC species have been included in the updated management plan proposed by the Pelagic RAC. These include a closed season (to protect juvenile herring and mackerel), a closed area (to protect known herring aggregations), and temporary closures in the event of significant non-boarfish catch in an area (see section A3).</p> <p>For more details on the impacts of the fishery on non-target species and the physical environment, please see the initial assessment.</p>	R2-R5	MEDIUM
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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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: A framework of sanctions exists and is effective at national and international levels. There have been no major changes since the initial assessment.</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.</p> <p>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. A maximum sanction of at least five times the value of the fishery products obtained is provided for with regard to the committing of the said infringement.</p> <p>In the event of a repeated infringement within a five-year period, the Member States shall impose a maximum sanction of at least eight times the value of the fishery products obtained by committing the serious infringement.</p>	R2	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				
LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		e.ii A management system for fisheries control and enforcement should be established.	References	Rating
LOW		<p>Determination: Fisheries control and enforcement is largely the responsibility of individual EU Member States, with oversight at the European level. Denmark, Ireland and the UK all have in place robust management systems for fisheries control and enforcement. There have been no major changes since the initial assessment.</p> <p>CFP control as carried out by the Member States' control authorities can be broken down into three broad areas: conservation, structures, and markets. Conservation measures cover issues such as</p>	R2	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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		<p>quota management or the implementation of technical measures (e.g. mesh sizes). Inspections are used to ensure that the fishing gear on board vessels meets official norms and that the information entered in log-books. Structural policy plays a key role in the search for a balance between the fishing capacity of Member States, the fishing effort actually deployed, and the available fish resources.</p> <p>The Danish Directorate of Fisheries, 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.</p> <p>For more detail on fisheries control and enforcement mechanisms in EU nations, please refer to the initial assessment.</p>		
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