



MarinTrust Standard V2

European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) in FAO 27, ICES 3.a, 4, 6, 7, 8.a, b, d

MarinTrust Programme

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Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	European hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>)
	Geographical area:	FAO 27, ICES 3.a, 4, 6, 7, 8.a, b, d Northern stock (Greater North Sea, Celtic Seas, and the northern Bay of Biscay)
	Country of origin of the product:	Denmark
	Stock:	European hake in FAO 27, ICES 3.a, 4, 6, 7, 8.a, b, d Northern stock (Greater North Sea, Celtic Seas, and the northern Bay of Biscay)
Date	01 st January 2024	
Report Code	DNK01	
Assessor	Ana Elisa Almeida Ayres	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	PASS (Denmark)	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	N/A	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): FF Skagen A/S, Thyborøn			
Country: Denmark			
Email address:		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		Global Certification Trust/NSF	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/Re-approval
Ana Elisa Almeida Ayres	Matthew Jew	0.5	Surveillance 2
Assessment Period	January 2024 –January 2025		

Scope Details	
Main Species	European hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>)
Stock	European hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>) in FAO 27, ICES 3.a, 4, 6, 7, 8.a, b, d Northern stock (Greater North Sea, Celtic Seas, and the northern Bay of Biscay)
Fishery Location	FAO 27, ICES 3.a, 4, 6, 7, 8.a, b, d Northern stock (Greater North Sea, Celtic Seas, and the northern Bay of Biscay)
Management Authority (Country/ State)	European Commission (EC), France Direction des Pêches Maritimes et de l'Aquaculture (France), Danish Directorate of Fisheries (<i>Fiskeristyrelsen</i>) [Denmark]
Gear Type(s)	Longline, gillnet, trawl and others
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 Marin Trust raw material. European hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>) is not categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on IUCN’s Red List and does not appear in CITES appendices; therefore, European hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>) is eligible for approval for use as Marin Trust by-product raw material.</p> <p>A stock assessment is conducted annually by the ICES Working Group for the Bay of Biscay and the Iberian Waters Ecoregion (WGBIE) and makes use of all commercial landings data. The most recent assessment indicated that the stock biomass is well above the limit reference point. Thus, the stock passes C.1.1 and C.1.2.</p> <p>Therefore, European hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>) in FAO 27, ICES 3.a, 4, 6, 7, 8.a, b, d Northern stock (Greater North Sea, Celtic Seas, and the northern Bay of Biscay) 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 European hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>) in FAO 27, ICES 3.a, 4, 6, 7, 8.a, b, d Northern stock as Category C, the stock is subject to a specific management regime and reference points are defined.</p> <p>Fishery removals are considered in the stock assessment process. The most recent stock assessment shows that the stock is above $MSY B_{trigger}$, B_{pa}, and B_{lim}. Therefore, because the stock has biomass above target reference point, it is considered to have biomass above the limit reference point.</p> <p>European hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>) in FAO 27, ICES 3.a, 4, 6, 7, 8.a, b, d Northern stock (Greater North Sea, Celtic Seas, and the northern Bay of Biscay) 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
European hake	<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	FAO 27, ICES 3.a, 4, 6, 7, 8.a, b, d Northern stock (Greater North Sea, Celtic Seas, and the northern Bay of Biscay)	European Commission (EC), France Direction des Pêches Maritimes et de l'Aquaculture (France), Danish Directorate of Fisheries (Fiskeristyrelsen) [Denmark]	C	Least Concern	No

¹ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

² <https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php>

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		European hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</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.	Yes
	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.	Yes
Clause outcome:			Pass

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.

A stock assessment is conducted annually by the ICES Working Group for the Bay of Biscay and the Iberian Waters Ecoregion (WGBIE).

According to ICES (2023): “ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2024 should be no more than 72 839 tonnes. ICES notes the existence of a precautionary management plan developed and adopted by one of the relevant management authorities for this stock.”

The most recent assessment was a length-based and sex-disaggregated stock synthesis model, which uses landings and discards in the assessment and forecast. The input data considered in the last stock assessment are the following: commercial catches; five survey indices including the French Southern Atlantic Bottom trawl survey(EVHOE-WIBTS-Q4 [G9527]), the Spanish Porcupine Bottom Trawl Survey (SpPGFS-WIBTS-Q3 [G5768]), the Irish Groundfish Survey (IGFS-WIBTS-Q4 [G7212]), the Irish Anglerfish and Megrin Survey (IE-IAMS[G3098]), and French surveys in the Bay of Biscay (FR-RESSGACQ [G2537]); constant maturity, and sex-and age-dependent natural mortality” (ICES, 2023).

Catches are represented in Figure 1.

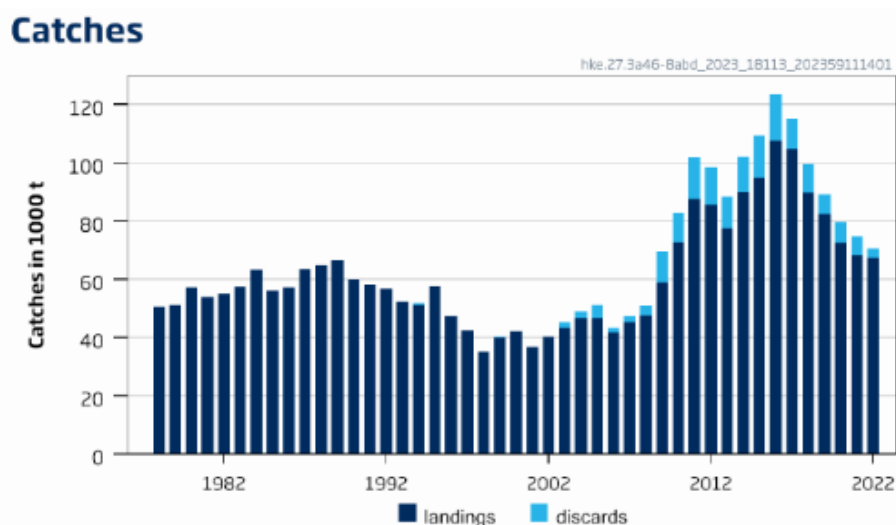


Figure 1. Catches of European hake in subareas 4, 6, and 7 and in divisions 3.a, 8.a–b, and 8.d, Northern stock. Discard estimates prior to 2003 are model estimates (ICES, 2023).

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

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.

According to ICES (2023): “Fishing pressure on the stock is below FMSY, and spawning-stock size is above MSY Btrigger, Bpa, and Blim.” (Figure 2).

The management plan target reference point (MAP MSY Btrigger) is set at 72,839 t. The management plan limit reference point (MAP Blim) is set at 61,563t. SSB in 2024 was projected to be 147,052t, considerably higher than the target and limit reference points.

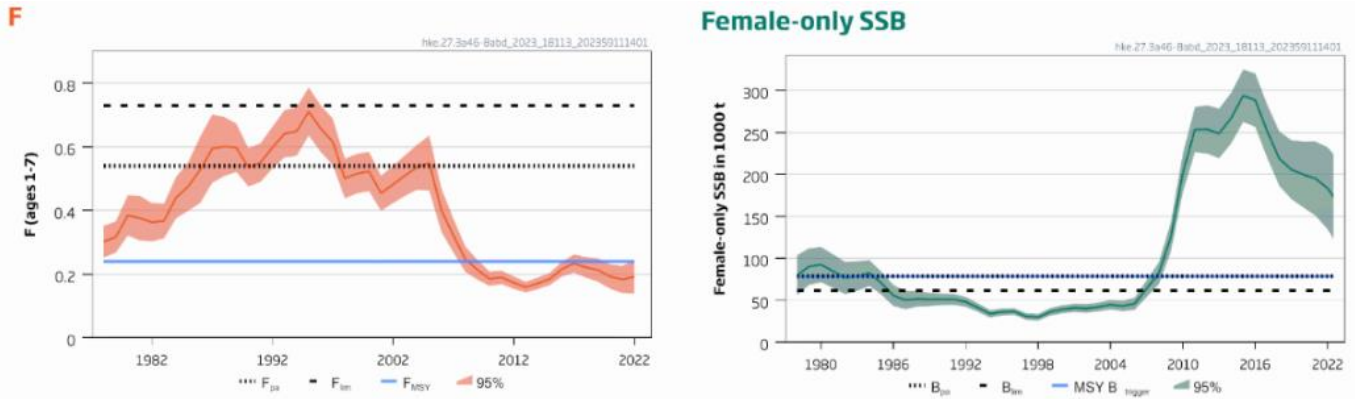


Figure 2. Summary of the stock assessment. Estimates for SSB are for females only.

The species is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference point. C.1.2 is met.

References

ICES. 2023.Hake (Merluccius merluccius) in subareas 4, 6, and 7, and in divisions 3.a, 8.a–b, and 8.d, Northern stock (Greater North Sea, Celtic Seas, and the northern Bay of Biscay). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2023. ICES Advice2023, hke.27.3a46-8abd, <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.21840852>

Links

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