



MarinTrust Standard V2

By-product Fishery Assessment *DNK07 – Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*) in ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7d*

MarinTrust Programme

Unit C, Printworks

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Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>)
	Geographical area:	FAO 27, North Sea and eastern English Channel
	Country of origin of the product:	Denmark
	Stock:	ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7.d
Date	February 2024	
Report Code	DNK07	
Assessor	Sam Peacock	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	Denmark	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	None	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Thyborøn, FF Skagen A/S			
Country: Denmark			
Email address:		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		Global Trust Certification Ltd. / NSF	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval
Sam Peacock	Léa Lebechnech	0.2	Surveillance 2
Assessment Period	February 2024 – February 2025		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>)
Stock	ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7.d
Fishery Location	FAO 27, North Sea and eastern English Channel
Management Authority (Country/ State)	EU, Iceland, Norway, UK
Gear Type(s)	All gear types
Outcome of Assessment	
Peer Review Evaluation	Agree with the assessor's determination
Recommendation	APPROVED

Table 2. Assessment Determination

Assessment Determination
<p>If any species is categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on IUCN’s Red List, or if it appears in the CITES appendices, it cannot be approved for use as Marin trust raw material. Whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>) has been categorised by the IUCN as a species of Least Concern, and it does not appear in the CITES appendices. Therefore, <i>Merlangius merlangus</i> is eligible for approval for use as Marin trust by-product raw material.</p> <p>There is an EU multiannual management plan adopted for Whiting in ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7.d, however there is not an agreement with Norway to this plan. This stock is managed relative to established reference points, and was therefore assessed under Category C.</p> <p>Whiting in the North Sea and eastern English Channel is subjected to annual stock assessment by ICES. The most recent was conducted in 2023 using catch, discard and survey data. The assessment concluded that stock biomass is currently substantially greater than the target and limit reference point levels. Thus, it passes Clauses C1.1 and C1.2.</p> <p>Therefore, Whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>) in the North Sea and English Channel is APPROVED for the production of fishmeal and fish oil under the current MarinTrust v2.3 by-products.</p>
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
<p>The assessor correctly classified whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>) in FAO 27, ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7.d (North Sea and eastern English Channel) as Category C, as 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 and the most recent stock assessment shows that the stock is above limit reference point. Therefore, the stock is considered to satisfy C1.1. and C1.2.</p> <p>In conclusion, whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>) in FAO 27, ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7.d (North Sea and eastern English Channel) passes both clauses (C1.1 and C1.2) and therefore should be approved under the MarinTrust Standard v2.3.</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 an 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
Whiting	<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7.d	Yes	C	Least Concern ³	No

¹ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

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

³ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/198585/45097610>

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		Whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</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.	PASS
	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.	PASS
			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.

Whiting in ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7.d is subjected to regular stock assessment by the ICES Working Group on the Assessment of Demersal Stocks in the North Sea and Skagerrak (WGNSSK). The most recent stock assessment was conducted in 2023, using an age-based analytical assessment which utilised catch data in the model and the forecast (ICES 2023).

“ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2024 should be no more than 128 290 tonnes. ICES notes the existence of a precautionary management plan, developed and adopted by one of the relevant management authorities for this stock. Management should be implemented at the stock level” (ICES 2023).

The stock assessment also incorporated bycatch data and survey data. The catch advice does not include any substantial concerns regarding the robustness of the stock assessment. Therefore, fishery removals of the stock, including from the fishery under assessment, are included in the stock assessment process.

Catches

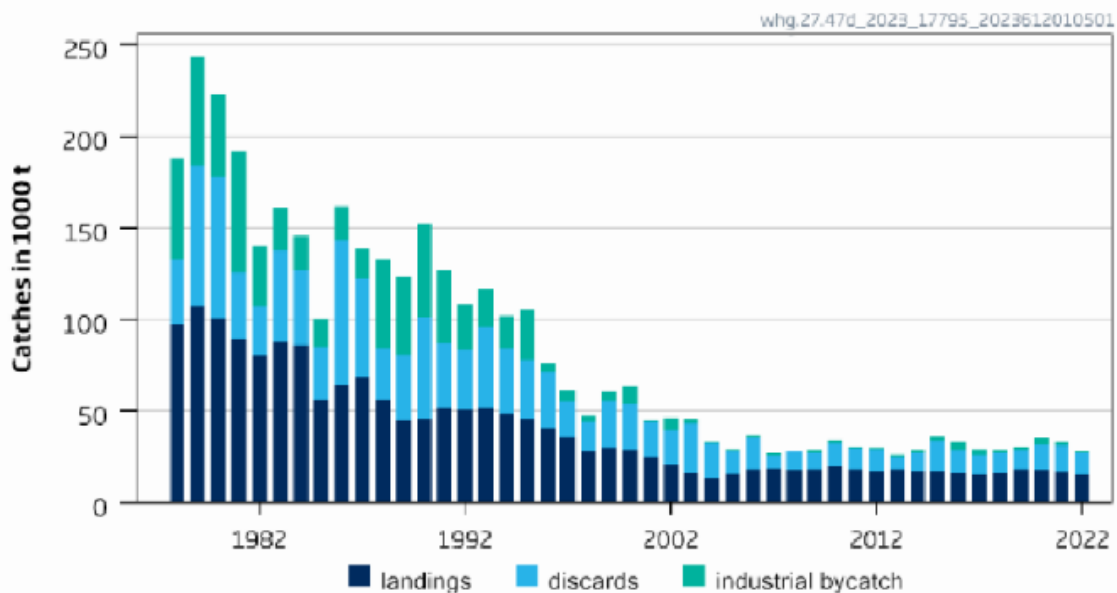


Figure 1. Whiting in ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7.d, catches (ICES 2023).

Therefore, fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process and therefore the stock PASSES clause C1.1.

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.

The 2023 catch advice provides an indication of the current stock status relative to the established reference points. The target reference points MSY $B_{trigger}$, B_{pa} , and MAP MSY $B_{trigger}$ are set at 148,888t. The limit reference points B_{lim} and MAP B_{lim} are set at 107,146t. The 2023 stock assessment projected that SSB in 2024 would be 347,863t, substantially larger than the target reference point level. The catch advice states that “spawning-stock size is above MSY $B_{trigger}$, B_{pa} , and B_{lim} ” (ICES 2023). The stock is considered to have a biomass substantially larger than the limit reference point in the most recent stock assessment (See Figure 2).

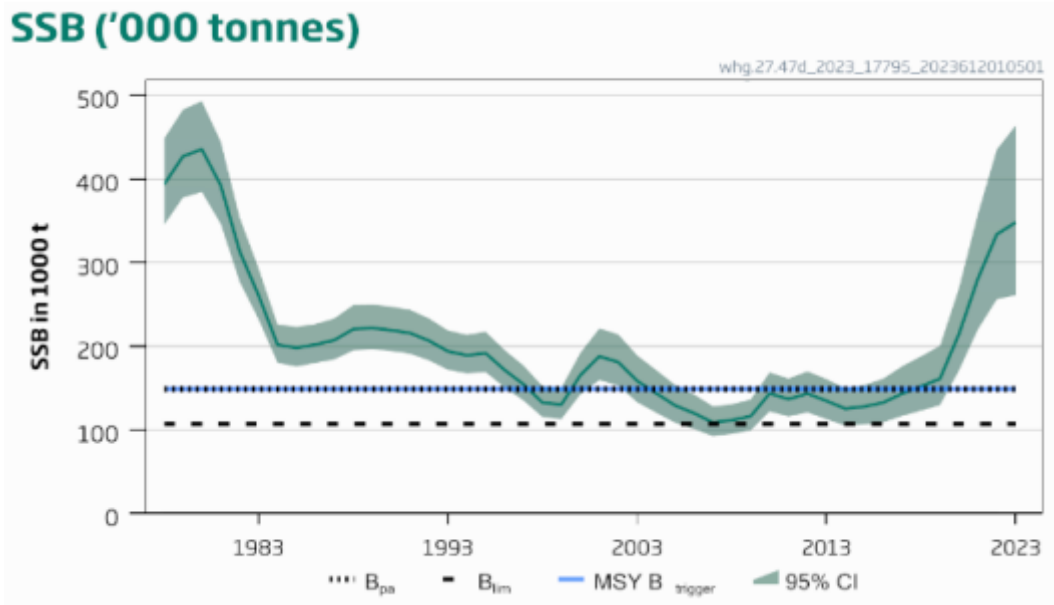


Figure 2. Whiting in ICES Subarea 4 and Division 7.d. Estimated SSB relative to current reference points (ICES 2023).

Therefore, the species is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy) and it PASSES clause C1.2.

References

ICES (2023). Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*) in Subarea 4 and Division 7.d (North Sea and eastern English Channel). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2023. ICES Advice 2023, whg.27.47d. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.21864324>

Links

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