



## MarinTrust Standard V2

# By-product Fishery Assessment *Whiting (Merlangius merlangus) in FAO 27, ICES 6.a (west of Scotland)*

**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 northeast Atlantic
	Country of origin of the product:	Denmark (Flag state: Denmark)
	Stock:	Whiting in FAO 27, ICES 6.a (west of Scotland)
Date	13 February 2023	
Report Code	DNK08	
Assessor	Matthew Jew	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	Denmark (Flag state: Denmark)	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	NA	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): FF Skagen: Skagen / FF Skagen: Hanstholm			
Country: Denmark			
Email address:		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		Global Trust Certification	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval
Matthew Jew	Léa Lebechnech	0.5	Surveillance 1
Assessment Period	Up to February 2023		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Whiting ( <i>Merlangius merlangus</i> )
Stock	Whiting in FAO 27, ICES 6.a (west of Scotland)
Fishery Location	FAO 27 northeast Atlantic
Management Authority (Country/ State)	European Union (Common Fishery Policy), Danish Directorate of Fisheries ( <i>Fiskeristyrelsen</i> )
Gear Type(s)	2021 catch estimates: Finfish directed otter trawl (81%), <i>Nephrops</i> directed otter trawl (18%), and other gears
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>) is not assessed on IUCN’s Red List, and does not appear in CITES appendices; therefore, <i>Merlangius merlangus</i> is eligible for approval for use as Marin trust by-product raw material.</p> <p>An EU multiannual management plan (MAP) exists for this stock and takes bycatch of the species into account. As there is a management regime in place and reference points are defined, this stock is assessed under category C.</p> <p>Fishery removals are included in the stock assessment, and it PASSES Clause C1.1. The stock is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have biomass above the limit reference point, it PASSES Clause C1.2.</p> <p>Therefore, Whiting in FAO 27, ICES 6.a (west of Scotland) is <b>APPROVED</b> for the production of fishmeal and fish oil under the current MarinTrust v2.0 by-products.</p>
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
<p>The internal peer reviewer agrees with the assessor’s determination, who correctly classified the stock of whiting in FAO 27, ICES division 6.a under Category C, as the stock is subject to a specific management regime in place and reference points are defined.</p> <p>Fishery removals are included in the stock assessment and the stock has its biomass above limit reference point, so it passes Clauses C1.1 and C1.2.</p> <p>Therefore, whiting in FAO 27, ICES division 6.a (west of Scotland), is <b>APPROVED</b> for the production of fishmeal and fish oil under the current MarinTrust v 2.0 by-products standards.</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 <sup>1</sup>	CITES Appendix 1 <sup>2</sup>
Whiting	<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	Whiting in ICES 6.a	European Union (Common Fishery Policy), Danish Directorate of Fisheries ( <i>Fiskeristyrelsen</i> )	C	LC	No

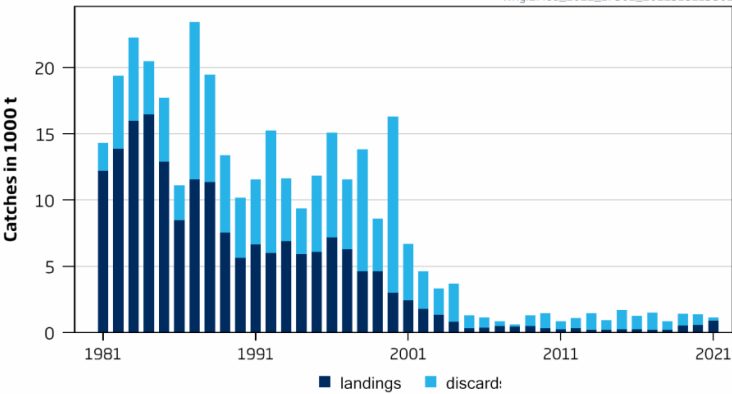
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

<sup>2</sup> <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		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.	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
<p><b>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.</b></p> <p>ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches should not exceed 4,155 tonnes in 2023. A management plan for whiting in 6.a exists and a TAC is established for EU and international waters, but that TAC spans multiple stocks. The TAC is set for Subareas 6 (including 6.a), 12, 14, and 5.b.</p> <p>This stock is assessed using an age-based analytical model (SAM) that uses fishery removals in the model and forecast (Figure 1). The input data considered in the last stock assessment are the following: commercial landings, discard estimations, age composition of catches, three survey indices, fixed maturity ogive, natural mortalities-at-age, and stock weights-at-age from survey and catch sampling.</p> <p>Due to lack of discard sampling from the Nephrops fleet in 2021 (due to COVID-19 disruption), total discards were underestimated for 2021. Discard and catch numbers at age 0 and 1 for 2021 were estimated by the assessment model.</p> <p>Catches are presented in the figure below:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Catches</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Figure 1. Long-term catches for whiting in ICES 6.a from 1981 to 2021. Source: ICES 2022.</p>			
<p><b>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</b></p>			

**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.**

Whiting in ICES 6.a is assessed as described above and has two sets of reference points defined that align with the MSY and precautionary approach. The stock was last benchmarked in 2021. Long-term trends in comparison with the sets of reference points can be found in Figure 2 below:

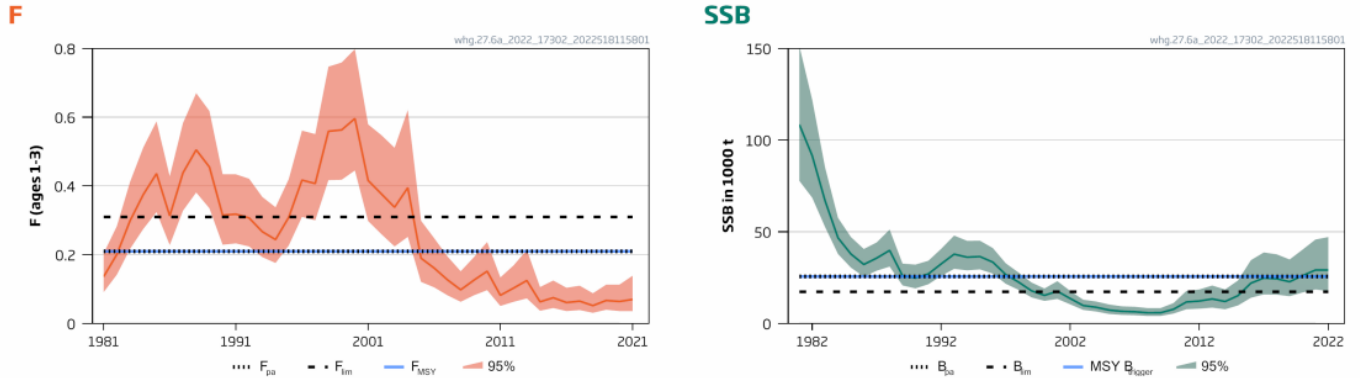


Figure 2. Whiting in ICES 6.a summary of the stock assessment. The left panel shows the historical fishing pressure from 1981 to 2021 and the right panel show historical biomass over the same time period.  
Source: ICES 2022.

Fishing pressure on the stock is below  $F_{MSY}$ ,  $F_{lim}$ , and  $F_{pa}$ , and spawning-stock size is above  $MSY B_{trigger}$ ,  $B_{pa}$ , and  $B_{lim}$ .

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

**References**

ICES. 2022. Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*) in Division 6.a (West of Scotland). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2022. ICES Advice 2022, whg.27.6a. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.19457426>

**Links**

<b>MarinTrust Standard clause</b>	1.3.2.2
<b>FAO CCRF</b>	7.5.3
<b>GSSI</b>	D.3.04, D5.01