MarinTrust Standard V2

By-product Fishery Assessment, FRA35

Blue ling (Molva dypterygia), FAO 27, ICES 5b, 6 and 7

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Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*)
	Geographical area:	FAO 27 Atlantic, Northeast
	Country of origin of the product:	France
	Stock:	ICES Division 5b and Subareas 6 and 7 - Celtic Seas and Faroes grounds
Date	October 2023	
Report Code	FRA35	
Assessor	Blanca Gonzalez	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	France	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	None	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Copalis industrie			
Country: France			
Email address:		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		LRQA	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval
Blanca Gonzalez	Jose Peiro Crespo	0.3	Surveillance 2
Assessment Period	October 2023 – October 2024		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*)
Stock	ICES Division 5b and Subareas 6 and 7 - Celtic Seas and Faroes grounds
Fishery Location	FAO 27 Atlantic, Northeast
Management Authority (Country/ State)	EU and UK
Gear Type(s)	Trawl and longline
Outcome of Assessment	
Peer Review Evaluation	Pass
Recommendation	Approve

Table 2. Assessment Determination

Assessment Determination
Blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*) was assessed as a category C species considering that it is a Vulnerable (European assessment) species by the IUCN, it is not in included in any CITES Appendixes, and is managed relative to established reference points. The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) Working Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep-Sea Fisheries Resources (WGDEEP) didn´t assess the stock in 2023 and suggest using 2022 report as reference. In the 2022 stock assessment international landing and discard data were used for the stock assessment. Results indicates that spawning-stock size is above MSY Btrigger. The blue ling byproduct meets the Marin Trust requirements; therefore, it should remain approved for use as a raw material.

Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
The by-product fishery under assessment is the Blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*) trawl and longline fisheries in the Atlantic Northeast (FAO 27) ICES Division 5b and Subareas 6 and 7 (Celtic Seas and Faroes Grounds). The species is classified as VU by the IUCN in European waters. The stock is managed relative to biomass reference point and it is assessed under category C. ICES last advice for the blue ling in ICES Division 5b and Subareas 6 and 7 was published in 2022 and it indicates that the stock is above the MSY $B_{trigger}$ and therefore above B_{limit}. It passes category C. The peer review supports the auditor's recommendation to pass the Blue ling trawl and longline fisheries in ICES Division 5b and Subareas 6 and 7 (FAO area 27) under the Marin Trust IFFO RS v2.0 by-fishery standard for the production of fishmeal and fish oil.

Notes for On-site Auditor
There are no concerns that requires attention from the on-site assessor.

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]
Blue ling	*Molva dypterygia*	ICES Division 5b and Subareas 6 and 7 - Celtic Seas and Faroes grounds	Yes	C	Vulnerable[3]	NO

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[1] https://www.iucnredlist.org/
[2] https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php
[3] https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/198591/45131980

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		Blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*)	
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.

Clause is met considering that:

The blue ling stock in ICES 5b, 6 and 7 is carried out by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) Working Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep-Sea Fisheries Resources (WGDEEP). The most recent stock assessment published in June 2022 used a Multi-Year Catch Curves (MYCC) model, which is fitted to age composition and total catch in order to estimate annual total mortality (ICES 2022)

The WGDEEP 2023 report mentions that no assessment was carried out in 2023 for this stock, thus the 2022 report should be used as reference, however time-series for international landings and discards, fishing effort, survey indices and biological information were updated (ICES 2023) (figure 1).

Figure 1. International landings for blue ling in ICES 5b, 6 and 7. (ICES 2023)

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.

Clause is met considering that:

The last stock assessment indicates that the stock size is above $MSYB_{trigger}$ (figure 2). Reference points of the stock have a $MSYB_{trigger} = B_{pa}$, which is set at 75,037t, while B_{lim} is 54,000t. The 2022 stock assessment projected that SSB will remain above the limit reference point in 2023 and 2024 (ICES 2022).
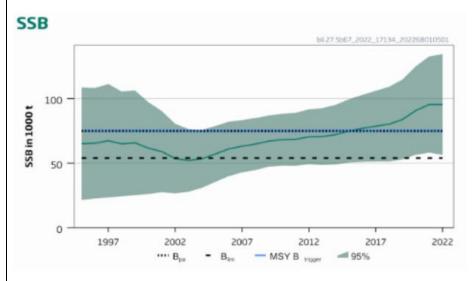

Figure 2. Blue ling SSB trend in ICES 5b, 6 and 7 (ICES 2022).

References

ICES (2022). Blue ling (Molva dypterygia) in subareas 6–7 and Division 5.b (Celtic Seas and Faroes grounds). ICES Advice: Recurrent Advice. Report. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.19447787.v1

ICES (2023). Working Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep-sea Fisheries Resources (WGDEEP). ICES Scientific Reports. Report. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.22691596.v1

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

CATEGORY D SPECIES

Category D species are those which are not subject to a species-specific management regime. In the case of mixed trawl fisheries, Category D species may make up the majority of landings. The comparative lack of scientific information on the status of the population of the species means that a risk-assessment style approach must be taken.

D1	Species Name		
Productivity Attribute		**Value**	**Score**
Average age at maturity (years)			
Average maximum age (years)			
Fecundity (eggs/spawning)			
Average maximum size (cm)			
Average size at maturity (cm)			
Reproductive strategy			
Mean trophic level			
	Average Productivity Score		
Susceptibility Attribute		**Value**	**Score**
Availability (area overlap)			
Encounterability (the position of the stock/species within the water column relative to the fishing gear)			
Selectivity of gear type			
Post-capture mortality			
	Average Susceptibility Score		
	PSA Risk Rating (From Table D3)		
	Compliance rating		
Further justification for susceptibility scoring (where relevant) *For susceptibility attributes, please provide a brief rationale for scoring of parameters where there may be uncertainty affecting your decision*			
References			
Standard clauses 1.3.2.2			

Table D2 - Productivity / Susceptibility attributes and scores.

Productivity attributes	High productivity (Low risk, score = 1)	Medium productivity (medium risk, score = 2)	Low productivity (high risk, score = 3)
Average age at maturity	<5 years	5-15 years	>15 years
Average maximum age	<10 years	10-25 years	>25 years
Fecundity	>20,000 eggs per year	100-20,000 eggs per year	<100 eggs per year
Average maximum size	<100 cm	100-300 cm	>300 cm
Average size at maturity	<40 cm	40-200 cm	>200 cm
Reproductive strategy	Broadcast spawner	Demersal egg layer	Live bearer
Mean Trophic Level	<2.75	2.75-3.25	>3.25

Susceptibility attributes	Low susceptibility (Low risk, score = 1)		Medium susceptibility (medium risk, score = 2)		High susceptibility (high risk, score = 3)	
Areal overlap (availability) Overlap of the fishing effort with the species range	<10% overlap		10-30% overlap		>30% overlap	
Encounterability The position of the stock/species within the water column relative to the fishing gear, and the position of the stock/species within the habitat relative to the position of the gear	Low overlap with fishing gear (low encounterability).		Medium overlap with fishing gear.		High overlap with fishing gear (high encounterability). Default score for target species	
Selectivity of gear type Potential of the gear to retain species	a	Individuals < size at maturity are rarely caught	a	Individuals < size at maturity are regularly caught.	a	Individuals < size at maturity are frequently caught
	b	Individuals < size at maturity can escape or avoid gear.	b	Individuals < half the size at maturity can escape or avoid gear.	b	Individuals < half the size at maturity are retained by gear.
Post-capture mortality (PCM) The chance that, if captured, a species would be released and that it would be in a condition permitting subsequent survival	Evidence of majority released post-capture and survival.		Evidence of some released post-capture and survival.		Retained species or majority dead when released.	

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D3		Average Susceptibility Score		
		1 - 1.75	1.76 - 2.24	2.25 - 3
Average Productivity Score	1 - 1.75	PASS	PASS	PASS
	1.76 - 2.24	PASS	PASS	TABLE D4
	2.25 - 3	PASS	TABLE D4	TABLE D4

D4	Species Name		
	Impacts On Species Categorised as Vulnerable by D1-D3 - Minimum Requirements		
	D4.1	The potential impacts of the fishery on this species are considered during the management process, and reasonable measures are taken to minimise these impacts.	
	D4.2	There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the species.	
		Outcome:	

Evidence

D4.1: The potential impacts of the fishery on this species are considered during the management process, and reasonable measures are taken to minimise these impacts.

D4.2 There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the species.

References

Links

MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.2.2, 4.1.4
FAO CCRF	7.5.1
GSSI	D.5.01