



MarinTrust Standard V2

By-product Fishery Assessment

*Blue Whiting (*Micromesestius poutassou*) in ICES Subareas 1-9, 12, and 14*

MarinTrust Programme

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Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Blue whiting (<i>Micromesestius poutassou</i>)
	Geographical area:	FAO Area 27, northeast Atlantic Ocean
	Country of origin of the product:	UK and Ireland (flag state(s): UK and Ireland)
	Stock:	Blue whiting in ICES subareas 1-9, 12, and 14
Date	18 April 2023	
Report Code	GBR06	
Assessor	Matthew Jew	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	UK and Ireland (flag state(s): UK and Ireland)	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	NA	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Pelagia UK			
Country: UK and Ireland			
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 2
Assessment Period	Up to April 2023		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Blue whiting (<i>Micromesestius poutassou</i>)
Stock	Blue whiting in ICES subareas 1-9, 12, and 14
Fishery Location	FAO Area 27, northeast Atlantic Ocean
Management Authority (Country/ State)	EU CFP
Gear Type(s)	2021 estimates: Pelagic trawl (96%) and other gears (4%)
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. Blue whiting (<i>Micromesestius poutassou</i>) is not assessed on IUCN’s Red List, and does not appear in CITES appendices; therefore, <i>Micromesestius poutassou</i> is eligible for approval for use as Marin trust by-product raw material.</p> <p>A long-term management strategy was agreed by the European Union, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and Norway, and subsequently by the UK in 2021. 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, blue whiting in ICES subareas 1-9, 12, and 14 is APPROVED 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 and approved the stock of blue whiting in ICES subareas 1-9, 12, and 14 under Category C. Fishery removals are included in the stock assessment and the stock is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have biomass above the limit reference point, so it PASSES Clauses C1.1 and C1.2.</p> <p>Therefore blue whiting in FAO 27, ICES subareas 1-9, 12, and 14, is APPROVED 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 ¹	CITES Appendix 1 ²
Blue whiting	<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	Blue whiting in ICES subareas 1-9, 12, and 14	EU CFP	C	Not evaluated	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		Blue whiting (<i>Micromesistius poutassou</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.

ICES advises that when the long-term management strategy agreed by the European Union, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and Norway is applied, catches in 2023 should be no more than 1 359 629 tonnes. This stock is assessed using an age-based analytical assessment (SAM) that uses catches in the model and forecast. This model uses the following in the analysis: Commercial catches, preliminary estimate of catch-at-age in the year (Q1–Q2) in which the assessment is carried out. One survey index (International Blue Whiting Spawning Stock Survey [IBWSS; A1142] ages 1–8, 2004–2022, excluding 2010 and 2020). Time invariant maturity at age was estimated in 1994 by combining maturity ogives from the southern and northern areas. Time invariant natural mortality fixed at 0.2 for all ages, derived in the 1980s from age compositions before the targeted fishery started. Discards have been used in the assessment since 2014.

Catches

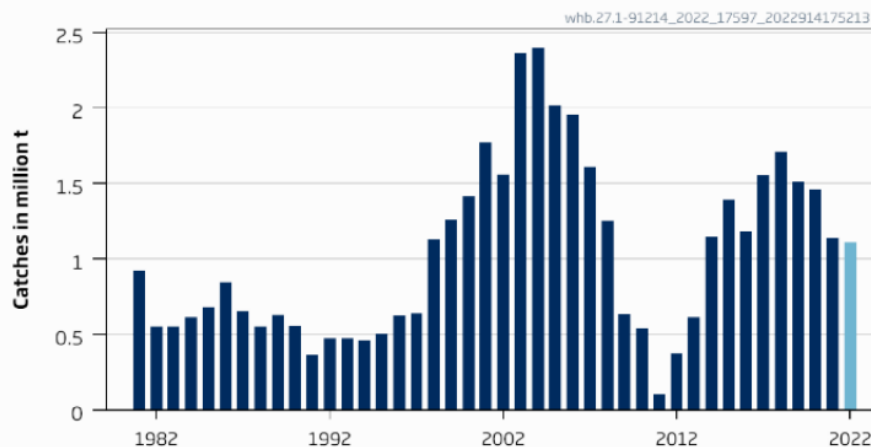


Figure 1. Long-term catches for blue whiting in ICES subareas 1-9, 12, and 14 from 1981 to 2022. Source: ICES 2022.

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.

This stock has two sets of reference points that align with the MSY and precautionary approaches.

MSY approach		Precautionary approach	
MSY Btrigger	2250000 t	Blim	1500000 t
FMSY	0.32	Bpa	MSY Btrigger
		Flim	0.88
		Fpa	FMSY

Fishing pressure on the stock is above FMSY and Fpa but below Flim; spawning-stock size is above MSY Btrigger, Bpa, and Blim.

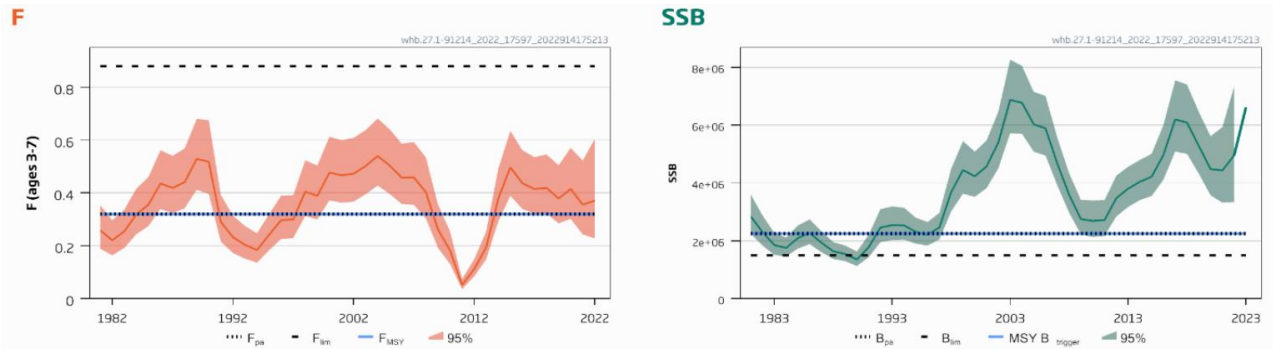


Figure 2. Blue whiting in ICES subareas 1-9, 12 and 14 summary of the stock assessment. The left panel shows the historical fishing pressure from 1981 to 2022 and the right panel show historical biomass over the same time period.
Source: ICES 2022.

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. Blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) in subareas 1-9, 12, and 14 (Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2022. ICES Advice 2022, whb.27.1-91214. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.21493974>

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) <i>For susceptibility attributes, please provide a brief rationale for scoring of parameters where there may be uncertainty affecting your decision</i>		
	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.

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	