MarinTrust Standard V2

By-product Fishery Assessment

Thornback ray in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a and 7d

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Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Thornback Ray (*Raja clavata*)
	Geographical area:	ICES Subarea 4 & Divisions 3a & 7d (North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat & Eastern English Channel)
	Country of origin of the product:	UK & Ireland
	Stock:	ICES Subarea 4 & Divisions 3a & 7d
Date	August 2022	
Report Code	GBR19	
Assessor	Sam Peacock	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	UK & Ireland	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	None	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Pelagia			
Country:			
Email address: geraldine.fox@pelagia.com		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		LRQA	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval
Sam Peacock	Jose Peiro Crespo	0.25	Surveillance 2
Assessment Period	August 2022		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Thornback Ray (*Raja clavata*)
Stock	ICES Subarea 4 & Divisions 3a & 7d
Fishery Location	ICES Subarea 4 & Divisions 3a & 7d (North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat & Eastern English Channel)
Management Authority (Country/ State)	UK & EU
Gear Type(s)	Bottom trawl
Outcome of Assessment	
Peer Review Evaluation	Agree with assessor's determination
Recommendation	Approved

Table 2. Assessment Determination

Assessment Determination
Thornback ray has been categorised as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List and does not appear in the CITES appendices. There are no reference points established for the stock and therefore although a TAC is applied at the assemblage level, the byproduct was assessed under Category D. The productivity score of 2.14 and susceptibility score of 2.5 lead to the stock being assessed against Table D4. The impact of the fishery on the stock is considered in the management process, and some measures are in place to minimise these impacts. There is quantitative evidence that the fishery is not having a significant negative impact on the stock, in the form of a biomass index which has shown a growth trend over the last 20 years. Thornback ray in ICES areas 4, 3a and 7d meets the MarinTrust byproduct requirements and should be approved for use as a raw material.
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
The assessor correctly classified the Thornback ray in ICES Subarea 4 & Divisions 3a & 7d as category D as no biomass-based target and limit reference points have been established for the stock. Therefore, a Productivity Susceptibility Analysis has been conducted. A productivity score of 2.14 and susceptibility score of 2.5 lead to the stock being assessed against Table D4. As indicated by the assessor, the impact of the fishery on the stock is considered in the management process, and some measures are in place to minimise these impacts. There is also quantitative evidence that the fishery is not having a significant negative impact on the stock, as the biomass index has increased over the last 20 years. Therefore, Thornback ray in ICES Subarea 4 & Divisions 3a & 7d may be approved under the Marin Trust v 2.0 by-products standard.
Notes for On-site Auditor

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]
Thornback ray	*Raja clavate*	ICES Subarea 4, Divisions 3a & 7d	No	D	Near Threatened[3]	No

[1] https://www.iucnredlist.org/
[2] https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php
[3] https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/39399/103110667

CATEGORY D SPECIES

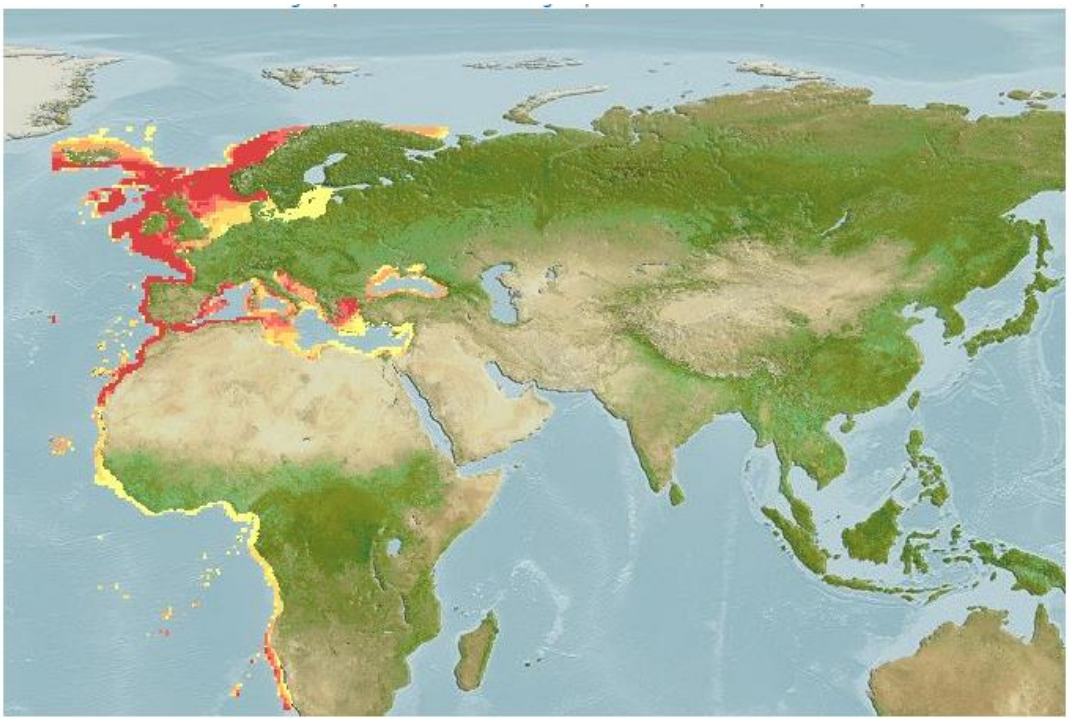
Category D species are those which are not subject to a species-specific management regime. In the case of mixed trawl fisheries, Category D species may make up the majority of landings. The comparative lack of scientific information on the status of the population of the species means that a risk-assessment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

D1

Species Name	**Thornback ray (*Raja clavata*)**

Productivity Attribute	**Value**	**Score**
Average age at maturity (years)	3.3 years	1
Average maximum age (years)	15.1 years	2
Fecundity (eggs/spawning)	142	2
Average maximum size (cm)	105cm	2
Average size at maturity (cm)	49.6cm	2
Reproductive strategy	Live bearer	3
Mean trophic level	3.8	3
	Average Productivity Score	**2.14**
Susceptibility Attribute	**Value**	**Score**
Availability (area overlap)	<10%	1
Encounterability (the position of the stock/species within the water column relative to the fishing gear)	Targeted	3
Selectivity of gear type	Juveniles frequently retained	3
Post-capture mortality	Retained	3
	Average Susceptibility Score	**2.5**
	PSA Risk Rating (From Table D3)	**D4**
	Compliance rating	**PASS**

Further justification for susceptibility scoring (where relevant)



Computer generated distribution map for Thornback ray, fishbase https://www.fishbase.se/summary/2059

	Juveniles assumed to be frequently retained due to minimum mesh size of 100mm (https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R0227) and generally no minimum landing size (https://www.mcsuk.org/goodfishguide/ratings/wild-capture/855/)
References Fishbase, thornback ray. https://www.fishbase.se/summary/2059	
Standard clauses 1.3.2.2	

Table D2 - Productivity / Susceptibility attributes and scores.

Productivity attributes	Low productivity/ High risk	Medium productivity/ Medium risk	High productivity/ Low risk
	Score 3	Score 2	Score 1
Average age at maturity (years)	>4	2 to 4	<2
Average maximum age (years)	>30	10 to 30	<10
Fecundity (eggs/spawning)	<1 000	1 000 to 10 000	>10 000
Average maximum size (cm)	>150	60 to 150	<60
Average size at maturity (cm)	>150	30 to 150	<30
Reproductive strategy	Live bearer, mouth brooder or significant parental investment	Demersal spawner "berried"	Broadcast spawner
Mean trophic level	>3.25	2.5–3.25	<2.5

Susceptibility attributes		High susceptibility/ High risk	Medium susceptibility/ Medium risk	Low susceptibility/ Low risk
		Score 3	Score 2	Score 1
Availability	1) Overlap of adult species range with fishery	>50% of stock occurs in the area fished	Between 25% and 50% of the stock occurs in the area fished	<25% of stock occurs in the area fished
	2) Distribution	Only in the country/ fishery	Limited range in the region	Throughout region/ global distribution
Encounterability	1) Habitat	Habitat preference of species make it highly likely to encounter trawl gear (e.g. demersal, muddy/sandy bottom)	Habitat preference of species make it moderately likely to encounter trawl gear (e.g. rocky bottom/reefs)	Depth or distribution of species make it unlikely to encounter trawl gear (e.g. epi-pelagic or meso-pelagic)
	2) Depth range	High overlap with trawl fishing gear (20 to 60 m depth)	Medium overlap with trawl fishing gear (10 to 20 m depth)	Low overlap with trawl fishing gear (0 to 10 m, >70 m depth)
Selectivity		Species >2 times mesh size or up to 4 m length	Species 1 to 2 times mesh size or 4 to 5 m length	Species <mesh size or >5 m length
Post capture mortality		Most dead or retained Trawl tow >3 hours	Alive after net hauled Trawl tow 0.5 to 3 hours	Released alive Trawl tow <0.5 hours

Note: Availability 2 is only used when there is no information for Availability 1; the most conservative score between Encounterability 1 and 2 is used.

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	Thornback ray (*Raja clavata*)	
	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.	PASS
	D4.2	There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the species.	PASS
		Outcome:	PASS

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.

ICES provides stock assessment and management recommendations annually. The most recent ICES advice for the stock was published in October 2021. Although there are no reference points established for the stock, TACs are in place for skates and rays as a group. Estimated landings of thornback ray have been below the recommended level since at least 2016. The elasmobranch fishery is subject to gear restrictions in both EU and UK waters. The potential impacts of the fishery on this species are monitored and therefore considered during the management process, and some measures are in place to mitigate these impacts. D4.1 is met.

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

As noted above, catch levels have been below the ICES advice since at least 2016. Although no reference points are established for the stock and total biomass is not estimated, a biomass index is used to monitor the health of the stock and shows consistent growth over the last 20 years. As per the MT assessment guidance, the presence of some quantitative information indicating that the stock is not significantly negatively impacted by the fishery means D4.2 is met.

Thornback ray in Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a and 7d, relative stock size index. stock size indicator is the mean normalized exploitable biomass index (individuals of ≥ 50 cm total length) from the average of the two NS-IBTS surveys (NS-IBTS-Q1 [G1022] and NS-IBTS-Q3 [G2829]), the BTS-ENG-Q3 (B2453), the FR-CGFS-Q4 (G3425) and BTS-BE-Q3 (B2453). The horizontal lines show the mean stock indicators for 2019–2020 and 2014–2018 (ICES 2021).

References

ICES (2021). Thornback ray (*Raja clavata*) in Subarea 4 and in divisions 3.a and 7.d (North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat, and eastern English Channel). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, rjc.27.3a47d, https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.7843

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