# MarinTrust Standard V2

# By-product Fishery Assessment

## GBR45 – Witch in FAO 27, ICES Divisions 4a,b and 6a,b

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# Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Fishery Under Assessment** | Species: | Witch, *Glyptocephalus cynoglossus* |
| | Geographical area: | FAO27, ICES Divisions 4a,b and 6a,b |
| | Country of origin of the product: | UK |
| | Stock: | ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a and 7d |
| **Date** | | February 2024 |
| **Report Code** | | GBR45 |
| **Assessor** | | Sam Peacock |
| **Country of origin of the product - PASS** | | UK |
| **Country of origin of the product - FAIL** | | n/a |

| Application details and summary of the assessment outcome | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company Name(s):  Lunar FPR Ltd | | | |
| Country: | | | |
| Email address: | | Applicant Code: | |
| **Certification Body Details** | | | |
| Name of Certification Body: | | LRQA | |
| Assessor | Peer Reviewer | Assessment Days | Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval |
| Sam Peacock | Sam Dignan | 0.2 | Initial |
| Assessment Period | | February 2024 – February 2025 | |

| Scope Details | |
|---|---|
| Main Species | Witch, *Glyptocephalus cynoglossus* |
| Stock | ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a and 7d |
| Fishery Location | ICES Divisions 4a,b and 6a,b |
| Management Authority (Country/ State) | EU, UK, Norway |
| Gear Type(s) | Bottom otter trawl, others |
| **Outcome of Assessment** | |
| Peer Review Evaluation | Agree with recommendation to approve |
| Recommendation | Approve byproduct |

## Table 2. Assessment Determination

| Assessment Determination |
| --- |
| Witch has been categorised by the IUCN Red List as Vulnerable, and does not appear in the CITES appendices. Witch in the North Sea is managed relative to established reference points, and was therefore assessed under Category C. <br><br> Witch 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 and incorporated international commercial catches, discards, and undersized landings. The assessment concluded that SSB is currently below the target reference point but above the limit reference point. The byproduct therefore meets the MT requirements and should be approved for use as a raw material. |
| **Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments** |
| Based on the information presented, the recommendation to approve this byproduct is appropriate. |
| **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] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Witch | *Glyptocephalus cynoglossus* | ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a and 7d | Yes | C | Vulnerable[3] | No |

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[1] https://www.iucnredlist.org/
[2] https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php
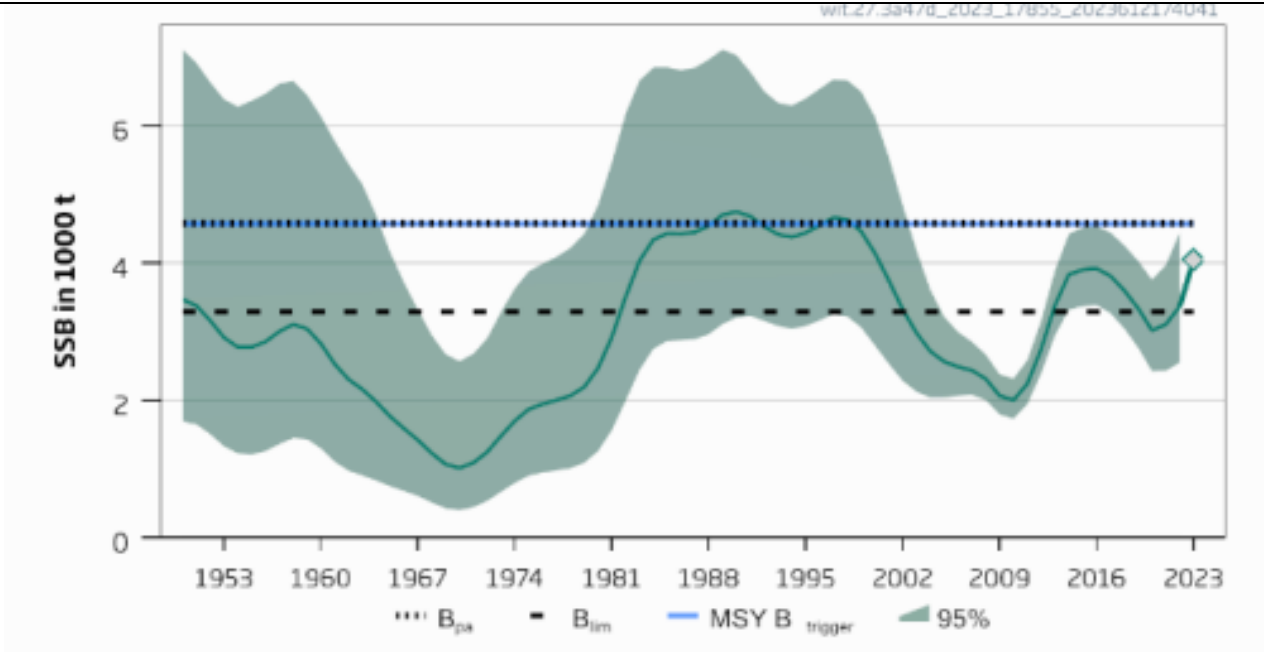[3] https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/18214757/162704857

# 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 | Witch | |
|---|---|---|
| **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**.

Witch in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a and 7d 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 assessment was conducted in 2023 and utilised an age-based analytical model which incorporated international commercial catches and three survey indices. Discard information has been included since 2009 and below minimum size landings data since 2018. The 2023 catch advice notes that witch are generally distributed in deeper areas which are poorly covered by current trawl surveys; however, the stock assessment was most recently interbenchmarked in 2021 and new reference points were established for 2023. Overall, the assessment is considered robust and C1.1 is met.

**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 status of the stock relative to established reference points. The target reference points MSY $B_{trigger}$, $B_{pa}$, and MAP MSY $B_{trigger}$ have been set at 4,576t. The limit reference points $B_{lim}$ and MAP $B_{lim}$ have been set at 3,293t. The 2023 stock assessment projected that SSB in July 2023 would be 4,050t, with the catch advice stating that "spawning-stock size is below MSY $B_{trigger}$ and between $B_{pa}$ and $B_{lim}$" (ICES 2023). Biomass is considered in the most recent stock assessment to be above the limit reference point, and C1.2 is met.

Witch in ICES Subarea 4 and Divisions 3a and 7d, estimated SSB relative to current target and limit reference points (ICES 2023)

| References | |
|---|---|
| ICES (2023). Witch (*Glyptocephalus cynoglossus*) in Subarea 4 and divisions 3.a and 7.d (North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat, eastern English Channel). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2023. ICES Advice 2023, wit.27.3a47d. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.21864345 | |

| 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 | n/a | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **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. | |

| 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 | | n/a | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **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 |