
By-Product Fish Fishery Assessment Data Gathering Guidance Document

IFFO RS STANDARD FOR MARINE INGREDIENTS



BY PRODUCT FISHERY MATERIAL

Where fish are processed for human consumption, there are often substantial quantities of inedible by products generated. These can be used to produce marine ingredients such as fishmeal and fish oil, and the by product assessment is designed to provide a high-level evaluation of the by product material against three key components of the IFFO RS standard;

- 1) the by product material must come from a fishery with an established management regime
- 2) there must be scientific research conducted to support the management of the stock
- 3) the species producing the by product cannot be listed by CITES and/or considered critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable according to the IUCN listings.

The fundamental aspects of a by product assessment are identical to the full assessment – for example, the same three tiers of compliance, the layout of the assessment document, and so on. However, a by-product assessment considers only three clauses, and is considerably less in-depth than a full assessment.

Due to the comparative simplicity of the assessment, it is often more clear-cut as to whether a by-product fishery should score high, medium or low compliance in a section, and as such the by-product fishery assessment guidance can be somewhat more prescriptive than the full fishery assessment guidance. However, the final compliance determination is solely the responsibility of the certification body's assessment team.

Other Eligible By product Material

Whole fish may be consider a by product only if it can be proven that it was initially captured for Human consumption and was rejected by the human consumption factory on **QUALITY ISSUES**. It can only be approved for use as an IFFO RS raw material if this fishery is also subject to the following by product fishery assessment.

By product material from the aquaculture industry is also acceptable for IFFO RS as long as it is classified as a **Category 3 waste material**. This material **DOES NOT** have to undergo an assessment as described in this document.

Structure and layout of the Interpretation document

This document is formatted to match the structure of the IFFO RS by Product fishery assessment template.

The main body of the interpretation document provides guidance advice on a section-by-section basis. Each section is broken into three components:

1. Relevant IFFO RS standard clauses (Issue 1, Revision 6)
2. Requirements for high compliance / general guidance / examples of high compliance
3. Recommended information sources

Assessment Requirements

Initial/New By product Fishery Assessment

By product fisheries can undergo three types of assessment under the IFFO RS scheme. By product fisheries which have not previously been approved undergo an **initial assessment**. This usually takes up to 2 hours research and includes a very high level examination desk top study of fishery science and management of an applicant's by product fishery or fisheries.

Annual Surveillance

If approved the By Product fisheries Approval Status lasts for three years; however the fishery must also undergo an **annual surveillance assessment to maintain its approval status**. This usually takes up to 1 hour's research, and although it still examines the same clauses is primarily aimed at ensuring there have been no major changes in fishery science or management since the initial approval. Of particular importance in surveillance assessments is section C, which ensures that the stock status has not fallen into a more vulnerable state according to the IUCN advice.

If at this stage the certification body's assessment team considers that changes in the by product fishery have occurred, they should re-rate the section affected. If this means that the rating is lower this could result in the approval status of the by product fishery being revoked. If this situation arises the certification body will contact the applicant and the IFFO RS Fisheries Peer Review Committee to initiate proceedings to suspend the by product fishery initially until further investigations are completed. If satisfactory information cannot be provided that will result in an upgrading of a compliance rating, the approval status for the by product fishery to the IFFO RS Standard will be removed and it will then no longer be an approved raw material for the production of IFFO RS compliant marine ingredients. To regain its approval status the by product fishery will have to be totally re-assessed and will be considered at this time as a new by product fishery.

Full Re-assessment

Three years after the initial assessment, the by product fishery must undergo a full **re-assessment**. This is essentially identical to the initial assessment and is a complete review of all the new scientific evidence and responsible management objectives within the fishery, takes up to 2 hours research, and represents another high level evaluation of fishery science and management.

Fishery Levels of compliance

Fisheries are awarded a level of compliance under each section: high, medium or low.

A by-product fishery scoring **high compliance** under every section will be approved and is rated as a HIGHLY compliant fishery to the IFFO RS standard.

A by-product fishery scoring **medium compliance** under one section will usually be approved to a **medium compliance**.

A by-product fishery with more than one medium should not be re-approved without ratification from the IFFO RS Fisheries Peer Review committee prior to full approval being granted

A by-product fishery scoring with any **low compliance** in any section will not be approved until the reasons for the low compliance have been addressed. The by product fishery will be rated as low compliance for approval to the IFFO RS Standard.

General By product Fishery Assessment guidance

The certification body Assessment team will provide a brief summary of the assessment under each section under an initial determination, followed by enough information to justify the compliance level being awarded. Information should always be from reliable sources, preferably recognised scientific or governmental organisations or NGOs. References will need to be provided under each clause to show the source of all information used.

If there is insufficient information to award the fishery a medium or high compliance rating under every clause, the fishery should not be approved and ratings updated only if additional information becomes available. Where information deficiency prevents the assessment of a clause, or leads to an implied rating of low compliance, the by product fishery should not be approved until additional information is made available to the assessment team.

Tip!

If an IFFO RS by-product fishery assessment has been produced for the desired fishery, then look for the references used in the previous reports that can be found on the IFFO RS website.

Section-by-section Interpretation guidance

A. THE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE

The management of the fishery used to produce the By Product must include a legal and administrative basis for the implementation of measures and controls to support the management of the fishery.

Relevant IFFO RS clauses

4.1.3 The fish by-product must not knowingly be from illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activity

4.1.7 Regardless of the IUCN rating, each by product will also be subject to assessment which will be based on the following criteria:

That evidence does not exist that the by product is caught from

- IUU
- By destructive fishing practices
- Is fished such that it causes irreversible impact to the fishery stock and/or aquatic ecosystem

Key Questions

Which specific stock(s) is the by-product sourced from?

Describe the traceability of the by-product back to the fishery.

Include the geographic location of the stock, the management jurisdiction and the nationality of the vessels from which fish is sourced.

Describe the fishing method(s) used. Has the fishery been subject to systemic IUU (in the last 5 years) and fishing practices that are highly destructive to the habitat or ecosystem?

What is the authority responsible for the management of the fishery? What are the major legal instruments and regulations under which this authority and fishery operates?

Provide the fishery specific management measures that are in place.

Describe how enforcement/compliance is achieved?

Is a sustainable level of fishing determined?

Quality of information

The fishery producing the by-product will have to implement species-specific management measures. The assessment team will also attempt to broadly determine the extent to which the species-specific measures are sufficient to ensure the sustainable exploitation of the stock. Where measures are considered ineffective or insufficient; a high compliance rating should not be awarded.

Species-specific management measures include a long-term management plan, annual quotas, minimum landing size and many others.

Reference Information Sources

Evidence to support this evaluation will usually be provided by the stock assessment organisation of the states exploiting the fishery. Utilise a combination of fishery management plans, stock assessments, and external scientific research into gear, ecosystem and non-target species impacts of the fishery. Generalised scientific evidence may be used to illustrate the impacts (or lack of impacts) of gear types or fishing methods.

B. STOCK ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND MANAGEMENT ADVICE

Research in support of fisheries management should exist.

Relevant IFFO RS clause

4.1.7 Regardless of the IUCN rating, each by product will also be subject to assessment which will be based on the following criteria:

That evidence does not exist that the by product is caught from

- IUU
- By destructive fishing practices
- Is fished such that it causes irreversible impact to the fishery stock and/or aquatic ecosystem

Key Questions

Is there an appointed research agency for the stock?

Describe this and provide information on what research is available? E.g. Are stock assessments conducted? Provide the most recent reports.

Is the fishery described as data deficient by science or management agencies? Provide evidence.

Quality of information

The fishery producing the by product must implement species-specific data collection and stock assessment mechanisms which are deemed sufficient and appropriate; there will often be supporting information provided by the relevant scientific organisation as to any improvements which could be made to the process. In general, to achieve high compliance in this section there should be reliable estimates of fishing mortality, biomass, and one or more reference points as a minimum; however as always the final decision rests with the assessment team.

Reference Information sources

Stock assessments almost invariably contain information about the data sources used to produce their recommendations. In fisheries where no stock assessment is carried out, assessors should turn to management organizations for information about the methodology for management decision-making.

C. STOCK STATUS

The fish used to produce the fish By Product is not considered to be critically at risk of over exploitation in accordance with the IUCN guidance and is not listed on CITES.

Relevant IFFO RS clauses

4.1.5 The fish by product must not come from a species listed under the following categories on the IUCN red list (www.IUCN.org)

- Extinct
- Critically Endangered
- Endangered

4.1.6 Species that are listed as vulnerable are not eligible for use as a by product; however an exception exists for fisheries from a discrete sub population if they have a fishery management plan that continually evaluates the stock relative to fishing and adjusts/controls harvests according to changes in the status of the stock, and are compliant to FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

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Key Questions

Does the species have an IUCN designation or listed by CITES (<http://www.cites.org/>)? If so, provide the details (refer to www.iucnredlist.org and if there is information of how specific the rating is with reference to this stock/geographic location.

Quality of information

The assessment team should initially determine whether the species under assessment has been categorised on the list, and award a compliance rating based on the outcome as follows:

The species is categorised as 'of least concern' or 'near threatened' on the IUCN red list.

The species is categorised as 'data deficient' or has not been assessed, but there is strong evidence to suggest that it is not at risk of over-exploitation. A good example of such evidence is if the species is currently certified anywhere in the world against the MSC standard.

Reference Information sources

The primary source of information for this section is the IUCN red list (www.iucnredlist.org).

Look at www.msc.org as well for certified fisheries.

ALL REFERENCES To be documented

Information provided throughout the assessment should be from reliable sources, such as official government websites, internationally-recognised scientific organisations, and NGOs. The reference will include the author, the title of the report, the page number and a hyperlink to the internet source (If applicable)