



By-Product assessment report

BP060

Pioneer Fishing (Pty) Ltd

Report code	BP060	Date of issue	August 2026
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1. Application details	
Applicant	St Helena Bay (Pioneer Fishing Pty Ltd)
Applicant country	South Africa
2. Certification Body details	
Name of Certification Body (CB)	NSF / Global Trust Certification Ltd.
Contact information for CB	Fisheries@nsf.org
Assessor name	Sérgio Abreu
CB internal peer reviewer name	Matthew Jew
Internal peer review evaluation	Agree with evaluation
Number of Assessment days	1

<i>Comments on the assessment</i>	This re-approval assessment covers eight by-product species sourced under six flag states. Seven species are Medium Risk at Step 2 and are Approved Source with Caution without requiring Step 3. Japanese pilchard is High Risk at Step 2 because Russia, one of the three applicable flag states, has a Flag State score of 4.33 and therefore proceeds to Step 3. The Category C assessment passes. Key Data Elements were requested from the applicant on 17 August 2026 and a complete whole-fish KDE set sufficient to satisfy Path 1 was not provided, so Path 2 was applied. Path 2 was assessed against the three flag states declared for this species in the application — Russia, Japan and South Korea — taking the Coastal State and Port State scores for each from the MarinTrust Step 3 Path 2 reference data and applying the highest applicable score. The highest is South Korea's Port State score of 3.11, within the medium-risk band of 2.01–3.99, and Japanese pilchard is therefore downgraded to Medium Risk. All eight by-product species within the current scope are Approved Source with Caution. This outcome is consistent with the August 2025 initial assessment, which also downgraded Japanese pilchard to Medium Risk at Step 3.	
3. Approval validity	Valid from 08/2026	Valid to 08/2027
4. Assessment cycle	Re-Approval	

5. By-product assessment outcomes			
By-product species name	Flag country(ies)	Fishing Area(s)	MarinTrust approval status
European pilchard (<i>Sardina pilchardus</i>)	Morocco	N/A	Approved source with caution
Pilchard/Sardine (<i>Sardinops sagax</i>)	South Africa, Namibia	N/A	Approved source with caution
Japanese pilchard (<i>Sardinops sagax melanostictus</i>)	Russia, Japan, South Korea	FAO 61	Approved source with caution
Chub mackerel (<i>Scomber japonicus/colias</i>)	South Africa, Namibia	N/A	Approved source with caution
Cape horse mackerel (<i>Trachurus capensis</i>)	South Africa	N/A	Approved source with caution
Horse mackerel (<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>)	Namibia	N/A	Approved source with caution
Lightfish (<i>Maurolicus muelleri/walvisensis</i>)	South Africa	N/A	Approved source with caution
Hector's lanternfish (<i>Lampanyctodes hectoris</i>)	South Africa	N/A	Approved source with caution

Guidance for on-site auditor

For the audit, the auditor will check how the facility manages by-products deemed medium risk. Any by-products downrated from high to medium risk will require additional due diligence checks.

It is important that facilities check all raw materials from and verify their suppliers especially if there is a perceived risk of sourcing from known or suspected IUU fishing activity. This requires checking supplier records or procedures in place to understand how the supplier can ensure there is no IUU in the raw material they provide. For raw materials risk rated medium, additional or more frequent checks may be required until the facility is certain that the raw materials are not from IUU fishing activity.

The audit requirements are covered in clause 2.11.3 of the MarinTrust Global Standard for Responsible Supply of Marine Ingredients (the MarinTrust Standard) and associated interpretation guidance.

Approved by-products

- No further checks are required beyond those included in the MarinTrust Standard.

Additional checks of Approved Source with Caution by-products

- Review supplier records or procedures in place.

Additional checks of by-products Approved Source with Caution via Step 3 assessment

- In addition to checks for medium risk Approved Source with Caution by-products, by-products that have had risk downgraded from high to medium at Step 3 (use **Appendix 1** to identify these by-product species), confirm that the relevant traceability information continues to be collected for this by-product. During the audit, a traceability check on any by-products downgraded from high to medium risk shall be included as part of the required traceability checks (Section 4).

Guidance for the applicant/certificate holder

The applicant/certificate holder is responsible for ensuring the relevant actions are taken to comply with the MarinTrust Standard.

The certificate holder is responsible for communicating any changes to the by-products sourced by submitting a scope extension request through the MarinTrust online Application Portal.

Appendix 1 – assessment outcomes

Step 2 Assessment Outcomes

By-product species name	Flag country(ies)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendices	Step 2 risk status	Step 3 required?
European pilchard (<i>Sardina pilchardus</i>)	Morocco	Least concern	Not listed	Medium risk	No
Pilchard/Sardine (<i>Sardinops sagax</i>)	South Africa, Namibia	Least concern	Not listed	Medium risk	No
Japanese pilchard (<i>Sardinops sagax melanostictus</i>)	Russia, Japan, South Korea	Not Evaluated	Not listed	High risk	Yes
Chub mackerel (<i>Scomber japonicus/colias</i>)	South Africa, Namibia	Least concern	Not listed	Medium risk	No
Cape horse mackerel (<i>Trachurus capensis</i>)	South Africa	Least concern	Not listed	Medium risk	No
Horse mackerel (<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>)	Namibia	Vulnerable	Not listed	Medium risk	No
Lightfish (<i>Maurolicus muelleri/walvisensis</i>)	South Africa	Least concern	Not listed	Medium risk	No
Hector's lanternfish (<i>Lampanyctodes hectoris</i>)	South Africa	Least concern	Not listed	Medium risk	No

Step 3 Assessment Outcomes

By-product species name	Flag country(ies)	Fishing Area	Stock name	Category C Assessment Outcome	Traceability information	Step 3 Risk Outcome
Japanese pilchard (<i>Sardinops sagax melanostictus</i>)	Russia, Japan, South Korea	FAO 61	Japanese Pacific Ocean pilchard	Pass	Path 2 - Yes	Risk downgraded to Medium Risk
Comments on Step 3 Assessment: Key Data Elements were requested from the applicant on 17 August 2026. A complete whole-fish KDE set sufficient to satisfy Path 1 was not provided and the traceability assessment was therefore completed under Path 2. Path 2 was assessed against the three flag states declared for this species in the application: Russia, Japan, and South Korea. The Coastal State and Port State scores for each were taken from the MarinTrust Step 3 Path 2 reference data, and the highest applicable score determines the outcome, in accordance with the guidance that the final risk rating is the highest of all scores obtained. All declared flag states were assessed, including those rated medium risk at Step 2, as it cannot be assumed that the facility segregates by-product raw material by country of origin.						

Appendix 2 – detailed assessment outcomes

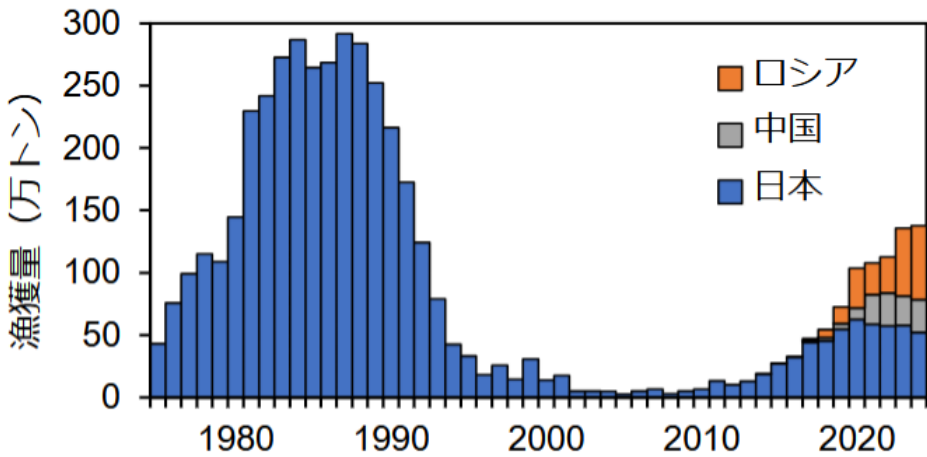
(step 2 and step 3 if applicable)

Step 2 outcomes

Flag state	Risk rating	Flag score	Port score	General score	Flag State is contracting party or cooperating non-contracting party to all relevant RFMOs	'Carded' under EU Carding system	Flag state party to PSMA	Flag state mandatory vessel tracking for commercial seagoing fleet	WGI Governance rank
Japan	Medium	2.92	2.06	1.93	1	1	1	1	91.51%
Korea (Rep. South)	Medium	3.67	3.11	1.97	1	1	1	1	83.96%
Morocco	Medium	2.29	1.78	2.17	1	1	1	1	49.06%
Namibia	Medium	1.96	2.33	2	1	1	1	1	52.36%
Russia	High	4.33	2.78	2.81	1	1	1	1	13.21%
South Africa	Medium	2.58	2.67	2.3	1	1	1	1	44.34%

Step 3 outcomes

Category C assessment

Species name		Japanese pilchard (<i>Sardinops sagax melanostictus</i>)
Fishing area and stock		Japanese Pacific Ocean pilchard
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. Japanese sardine (Pacific stock) is assessed annually by Japan's Fisheries Research and Education Agency (FRA) using a tuning VPA (cohort analysis) incorporating national catch and biological data. The FY2025 assessment explicitly incorporates catch data for Russia and China via North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) statistics (July 2025 data), in addition to Japan's own landings. Fishery removals of the species under assessment are included in the stock assessment process, and C1.1 is met.  Figure 1 - Reported landings of Japanese sardine, Pacific stock, by country: Japan (blue), China (grey) and Russia (orange). The vertical axis is in units of 10,000 t — 50 on the axis is 500,000 t. Source: FRA (2025)		
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 FY2025 FRA stock assessment (published 29 August 2025, data through 2024) estimated 2024 spawning biomass at 2.699 million tonnes (Furuichi et al., 2025). This is 1.89 times the proposed		

target reference point ($SB_{MSY} = 1.432$ million tonnes) and roughly 5.1 times the proposed limit reference point (530,000 tonnes, defined as the biomass yielding 60% of MSY catch). The assessment further notes that spawning biomass has been maintained above SB_{MSY} every year since 2019, following a recovery from a below-target period spanning 1988–2018. Fishing pressure in 2024 was estimated at 2.14 times F_{MSY} , so the stock is subject to overfishing relative to the proposed target reference point, although biomass remains well above both the target and the limit; C1.2 tests biomass against the limit reference point, which is met by a wide margin. The most recent stock assessment concluded that stock biomass was above the limit reference point level, and C1.2 is met.

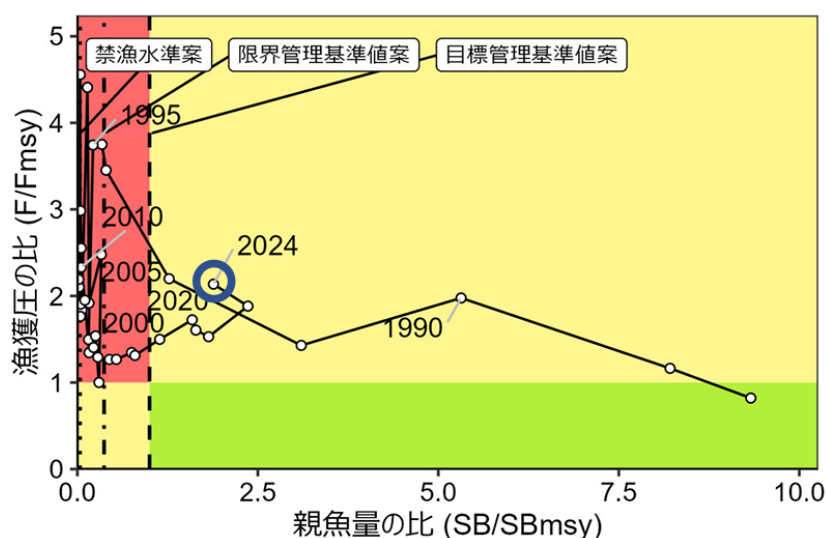


Figure 2 - Kobe chart for Japanese sardine, Pacific stock, plotting spawning biomass relative to SB_{MSY} (x-axis) against fishing pressure relative to F_{MSY} (y-axis) for each year since 1988, with 2024 ringed. Vertical dashed lines mark the proposed reference points: the fishery-closure level, the limit reference point ($SB_{0.6msy} = 530,000$ t) and the target reference point ($SB_{MSY} = 1.432$ million t). In 2024 spawning biomass stood at $1.89 \times SB_{MSY}$ while fishing pressure was $2.14 \times F_{MSY}$. Source: FRA (2025)

References

Furuichi, S., Yukami, R., Kamimura, Y., Nishijima, S., Isu, S., Izawa, Y., Higashiguchi, K. and Watanabe, R. (2025). Stock assessment and evaluation for Japanese sardine of the Pacific stock (fiscal year 2025). FRA-SA2025-SC08-01. Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency, published 29 August 2025.

https://www.fra.go.jp/shigen/fisheries_resources/meeting/stock_assessment_meeting/2025/files/sa2025-sc08/fra-sa2025-sc08-01.pdf

FRA (2025). Stock assessment summary slides: Japanese sardine (Pacific stock). Stock Assessment Meeting FY2025, Session SC08. Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency, published 29 August 2025.

https://www.fra.go.jp/shigen/fisheries_resources/meeting/stock_assessment_meeting/2025/files/sa2025-sc08/k2025_01.pdf

Traceability information

The applicant did not provide a complete vessel-level KDE dataset covering the vessel identification, authorisation, catch and other whole-fish KDEs required for Path 1.

Species name	Japanese pilchard (<i>Sardinops sagax melanostictus</i>)			
Path 1	Yes ☐ No ☒			
Confirm all KDEs are provided	Yes ☐ No ☐			
Path 2	Yes ☒ No ☐			
Path 2 outcome	Flag country	Coastal score	Port score	Risk outcome
	Russia	2.57	2.78	Risk downgraded to Medium Risk
	Japan	2.69	2.06	Risk downgraded to Medium Risk
	South Korea	2.5	3.11	Risk downgraded to Medium Risk

Guidance for Applicants/Certificate holders on improved traceability

When by-product origin cannot be made more granular than major FAO Areas, or when the source fishery is taking place in the High Seas (i.e. outside of EEZs of all relevant nations), an assessor must evaluate the Coastal and Port scores for each nation that straddles that FAO Area. This may lead to higher risk outcomes for an applicant. To mitigate that risk, better practice involves securing KDEs from the source fishery of the by-products, thereby meeting Path 1 instead of Path 2.

What does better practices look like?

Comprehensive data collection and sharing: Collect detailed information using Key Data Elements (KDEs) including vessel identification and authorisation, species, catch areas, fishing method and dates. These are defined in the MarinTrust Standard clauses 2.11.2.2 and 3.2.5.

Supply chain transparency: Maintain detailed records at each step of the supply chain, from capture to final sale, to ensure traceability.

Interoperable systems and technologies to support the collection and transfer of this information.