MarinTrust Standard V2

Whole fish Fishery Assessment

Boarfish in ICES Subareas 6-8

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Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Name(s): Pelagia (UK & Ireland)			
Country: Ireland & UK			
Email address: geraldine.fox@pelagia.com		**Applicant Code:**	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		LRQA	
Assessor Name	**CB Peer Reviewer**	**Assessment Days**	**Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval**
Sam Peacock	Kate Morris	3	Initial
Assessment Period	September 2022		
Scope Details			
Management Authority (Country/State)		EU & UK	
Main Species		Boarfish (*Capros aper*)	
Fishery Location		ICES Subareas 6-8	
Gear Type(s)		Pelagic trawl, pelagic pair trawl	
Outcome of Assessment			
Overall Outcome		Pass	
Clauses Failed		None	
CB Peer Review Evaluation		Pass	
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Group Evaluation		Approve - see appendix	
Recommendation		Maintain approval	

Table 2. Assessment Determination

Assessment Determination
For the purpose of this MT assessment, two species are present in the catch: boarfish and mackerel. Both species are categorised as Least Concern by the IUCN, and neither is listed in the CITES appendices. Boarfish makes up the large majority of the catch and is the only Type 1 species. There are no established reference points and therefore, as in the last MT assessment, it was assessed under Category B. Mackerel is managed relative to reference points under an annual quota, and was assessed under Category C. Although no formal reference points are in place, estimates for MSY-based biomass and fishing mortality reference points are available and the status of the stock relative to them is broadly known. In the most recent stock assessment, conducted in 2021, biomass was estimated to be above MSY $B_{trigger}$, and fishing mortality was below $F_{MSY.}$ This means the boarfish stock achieves a Pass rating against Table B(a). Mackerel is subject to an annual stock assessment which is conducted using all commercial landings data and estimated discards. The most recent stock assessment estimated the stock biomass to be significantly larger than the limit reference point level, and therefore mackerel meets the Category C requirements. No significant changes have occurred in the management of the fishery since the previous surveillance assessment, meaning that the requirements of sections M and F continue to be met. Robust management, scientific, control and enforcement frameworks are in place, and there is no significant evidence that the fishery has a negative impact on ETP species, habitats or ecosystems. Overall the fishery continues to meet the MT requirements, with catch levels significantly lower than the ICES recommendation, and should remain approved for use as a responsible source of raw materials.
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
The whole fishery under assessment here is the North Atlantic Boarfish (*Capros aper*) fishery which is pursued by EU and UK vessels in ICES 6-8. Boarfish is managed by the EU Common Fisheries Policy in Ireland water and the UK's Fisheries act and devolved administrations in UK waters. For this Marin Trust assessment, Boarfish is scored as a Type 1 category B species. Mackerel is also recorded as by-catch, although to a much lower degree (<5% of total catch). Mackerel is managed to species-specific reference points, and the auditor has correctly identified the target stock as a Category C species. All species scoring tables have been completed by the auditor with sufficient evidence presented to support their final determination. As the fishery uses pelagic trawl, which is deployed in the pelagic environment, the associated impact to ETP species, habitats and the wider ecosystem is duly considered. ETP interactions are discussed in detail and indicate there has not been a significant number of incidental capture events. The peer review supports the auditor's recommendation to Pass this fishery under the Marin Trust IFFO RS v2.0 whole-fishery standard for the production of fishmeal and fish oil.
Notes for On-site Auditor

Table 3 General Results

General Clause	Outcome (Pass/Fail)
M1 - Management Framework	PASS
M2 - Surveillance, Control and Enforcement	PASS
F1 - Impacts on ETP Species	PASS
F2 - Impacts on Habitats	PASS
F3 - Ecosystem Impacts	PASS

Table 4 Species- Specific Results

List all Category A and B species. List approximate total percentage (%) of landings which are Category C and D species; these do not need to be individually named here

Category	Species	% landings	Outcome (Pass/Fail)
Category B	Boarfish	>95%	PASS
Category C	Mackerel	<5%	PASS

Table 5 Species Categorisation Table

Common name	Latin name	Stock	IUCN Redlist Category[1]	% of landings	Management	Category
Boarfish	*Capros aper*	ICES Subareas 6-8	Least Concern[2]	>95%	No	B
Mackerel	*Scomber scombrus*	ICES Subarea 1-8 and 14, and Division 9a	Least Concern[3]	<5%	Yes	C

Species categorisation rationale

In the absence of any new catch composition data, the species categorisation remains unchanged from the previous Marin Trust assessment. The boarfish fishery is relatively monospecific, and in Ireland (which takes the large majority of the annual catch), legislation has been passed to minimise bycatch. In particular, the fishery is subject to localised closure if bycatch exceeds 5% of the total catch per day in an ICES statistical rectangle. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the only previously identified bycatch species, mackerel, continue to be caught in relatively small quantities.

In its first MT assessments, boarfish was assessed under Category A. Subsequent changes to the fishery assessment guidance resulted in this change to Category B due to a lack of formal reference points in place for the stock. While estimates for F_{MSY} and B_{MSY} are available, they are not used to inform the management of the stock and ICES advice is not provided on their basis. Therefore, boarfish was assessed under Category B, as previously.

Finally, mackerel in the Northeast Atlantic continues to be managed relative to established reference points and under an annual quota and was assessed under Category C.

[1] https://www.iucnredlist.org/
[2] https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/198557/18981691
[3] https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/170354/18207463

MANAGEMENT

The two clauses in this section (M1, M2) relate to the general management regime applied to the fishery under assessment. The clauses should be completed by providing sufficient evidence to justify awarding each of the requirements a pass or fail rating. A fishery must meet all the minimum requirements in every clause before it can be recommended for approval.

M1	Management Framework – Minimum Requirements		
	M1.1	There is an organisation responsible for managing the fishery.	PASS
	M1.2	There is an organisation responsible for collecting data and assessing the fishery.	PASS
	M1.3	Fishery management organisations are publicly committed to sustainability.	PASS
	M1.4	Fishery management organisations are legally empowered to take management actions.	PASS
	M1.5	There is a consultation process through which fishery stakeholders are engaged in decision-making.	PASS
	M1.6	The decision-making process is transparent, with processes and results publicly available.	PASS
		Clause outcome:	PASS

The surveillance evidence review did not uncover any substantial changes to any aspect of the management of the fishery covered by Section M1 since the time of the initial assessment. A summary of the findings of that assessment is presented here for convenience.

M1.1 There is an organisation responsible for managing the fishery.

Within Irish waters, the fishery is primarily managed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), under the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) (DAFM 2022). Fisheries management in the UK is a devolved issue, with responsibility falling to Marine Scotland (under the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Irelands) in Scotland; the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in Northern Ireland; the Welsh Government in Wales; and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in England (HoC 2018).

M1.2 There is an organisation responsible for collecting data and assessing the fishery.

The main organisation responsible for assessing the fishery is the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). ICES provides independent management advice for fisheries within their area of competence, collating and analysing data collected by its member states. These include the UK and Ireland. ICES conducts an annual stock assessment for boarfish in the Northeast Atlantic and provides fishery management advice including catch recommendations based on the outcomes of the assessment (ICES 2022).

M1.3 Fishery management organisations are publicly committed to sustainability.

The stated strategic goal of the DAFM in Ireland is “to deliver a sustainable, growth-driven sector focused on competitiveness and innovation driven by a skilled workforce delivering value-added products in line with market demands” (Gov. i.e. 2022). Each fishery management organisation within the four UK administrations also has a public commitment to sustainability.

M1.4 Fishery management organisations are legally empowered to take management actions.

The primary fisheries legislation in Ireland is the Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act of 2006. Fisheries management in all EU countries occurs within the legal framework of the Common Fisheries Policy (EC 2022). In the UK the over-arching legal framework is provided by the Fisheries Act 2020.

M1.5 There is a consultation process through which fishery stakeholders are engaged in decision-making.

Fishery stakeholders are engaged in the decision-making process through different mechanisms in each country. Full links were provided in the previous MT assessment.

M1.6 The decision-making process is transparent, with processes and results publicly available.

All documentation required to complete this and the previous MT assessments was available online. ICES publishes details of the stock assessment process and the associated source data. National fishery management authorities in each jurisdiction also publish details of decision-making processes and outcomes online, including the European Commission.

References

DAFM (2022). Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-agriculture-food-and-the-marine/

EC (2022). Common Fisheries Policy. https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/policy/common-fisheries-policy-cfp_en

Fisheries Act 2020: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/22/contents/enacted

Global Trust Certification (2021). Whole fish fishery assessment, Boarfish, ICES Areas 6-8. September 2021. https://www.marin-trust.com/sites/marintrust/files/approved-raw-materials/WF%2015%20Boardfish%20Ireland%20ICES%204%20North%20East%20Atlantic_SURV2_2021_Final%20version.pdf

Gov.ie (2022). Marine policy overview. https://www.gov.ie/en/policy/04164-marine/

HoC (2018). House of Commons Library, Briefing Paper: "Fisheries Management in the UK". No. 8457, 5 December 2018. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8457/CBP-8457.pdf

ICES (2022). Who we are. https://www.ices.dk/about-ICES/who-we-are/Pages/Who-we-are.aspx

Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2006/act/8/enacted/en/html

Links	
MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.1.1, 1.3.1.2
FAO CCRF	7.2, 7.3.1, 7.4.4, 12.3
GSSI	D.1.01, D.4.01, D2.01, D1.07, D1.04,

M2	**Surveillance, Control and Enforcement - Minimum Requirements**		
	M2.1	There is an organisation responsible for monitoring compliance with fishery laws and regulations.	PASS
	M2.2	There is a framework of sanctions which are applied when laws and regulations are discovered to have been broken.	PASS
	M2.3	There is no substantial evidence of widespread non-compliance in the fishery, and no substantial evidence of IUU fishing.	PASS
	M2.4	Compliance with laws and regulations is actively monitored, through a regime which may include at-sea and portside inspections, observer programmes, and VMS.	PASS
		Clause outcome:	PASS

The surveillance evidence review did not uncover any substantial changes to any aspect of the management of the fishery covered by Section M2 since the time of the initial assessment. A summary of the findings of that assessment are presented here for convenience.

M2.1 There is an organisation responsible for monitoring compliance with fishery laws and regulations.

There are organisations responsible for monitoring compliance in each of the relevant fisheries administrations, including the EC. Within Ireland, the relevant authority is the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), with support from the Irish Naval Service and the Air Corps (SFPA 2022). Additionally, control and enforcement in all EU member states are supported by the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA 2022), whose primary role is to coordinate control and inspection activities between countries. In the UK responsibility for control and enforcement is similarly devolved, with the responsible bodies being the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Marine Scotland, and the Fisheries and Environment Division (HoC 2018).

M2.2 There is a framework of sanctions which are applied when laws and regulations are discovered to have been broken.

A framework of sanctions is set out in each of the two main fisheries legislations: the Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006 in Ireland and the Fisheries Act 2020 in the UK, covering all four administrations.

M2.3 There is no substantial evidence of widespread non-compliance in the fishery, and no substantial evidence of IUU fishing.

As at the time of the previously surveillance assessment, no evidence was encountered to suggest widespread non-compliance in the fishery. Additionally, fishery removals continue to fall short of the TAC by a significant margin (ICES 2021), meaning the fishery is not TAC restrained and therefore reducing the incentive for illegal fishing activity.

M2.4 Compliance with laws and regulations is actively monitored, through a regime which may include at-sea and portside inspections, observer programmes, and VMS.

Compliance is monitored by the agencies set out in M2.1. The monitoring regime includes at-sea and portside inspections and VMS.

References

EFCA (2022). https://www.efca.europa.eu/en

Fisheries Act 2020: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/22/contents/enacted

Global Trust Certification (2021). Whole fish fishery assessment, Boarfish, ICES Areas 6-8. September 2021. https://www.marin-trust.com/sites/marintrust/files/approved-raw-materials/WF%2015%20Boardfish%20Ireland%20ICES%204%20North%20East%20Atlantic_SURV2_2021_Final%20version.pdf

HoC (2018). House of Commons Library, Briefing Paper: "Fisheries Management in the UK". No. 8457, 5 December 2018. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8457/CBP-8457.pdf

ICES (2021). Boarfish (*Capros aper*) in subareas 6-8 (Celtic Seas, English Channel, and Bay of Biscay). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, boc.27.6-8. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.7732

Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2006/act/8/enacted/en/html

SFPA (2022). https://www.sfpa.ie/

Links	
MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.1.3
FAO CCRF	7.7.2
GSSI	D1.09

CATEGORY B SPECIES

Category B species are those which make up greater than 5% of landings in the applicant raw material, but which are not subject to a species-specific research and management regime sufficient to pass all Category A clauses. If there are no Category B species in the fishery under assessment, this section can be deleted.

Category B species are assessed using a risk-based approach. The following process should be completed once for each Category B species.

If there are estimates of biomass (B), fishing mortality (F), and reference points

It is possible for a Category B species to have some biomass and fishing mortality data available. When sufficient information is present, the assessment team should use the following risk matrix to determine whether the species should be recommended for approval.

TABLE B(A) – F, B AND REFERENCE POINTS ARE AVAILABLE

Biomass is above MSY / target reference point	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
Biomass is below MSY / target reference point, but above limit reference point	Pass, but re-assess when fishery removals resume	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail
Biomass is below limit reference point (stock is overfished)	Pass, but re-assess when fishery removals resume	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
Biomass is significantly below limit reference point (Recruitment impaired)	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
	Fishery removals are prohibited	**Fishing mortality is below MSY or target reference point**	**Fishing mortality is around MSY or target reference point, or below the long-term average**	**Fishing mortality is above the MSY or target reference point, or around the long-term average**	**Fishing mortality is above the limit reference point or above the long-term average (Stock is subject to overfishing)**

If the biomass / fishing pressure risk assessment is not possible

Initially, the resilience of each Category B species to fishing pressure should be estimated using the American Fisheries Society procedure described in Musick, J.A. (1999). This approach is used as the resilience values for many species and stocks have been estimated by FishBase and are already available online. For details of the approach, please refer to Appendix A. Determining the resilience provides a basis for estimating the risk that fishing may pose to the long-term sustainability of the stock. Table B(b) should be used to determine whether the species should be recommended for approval.

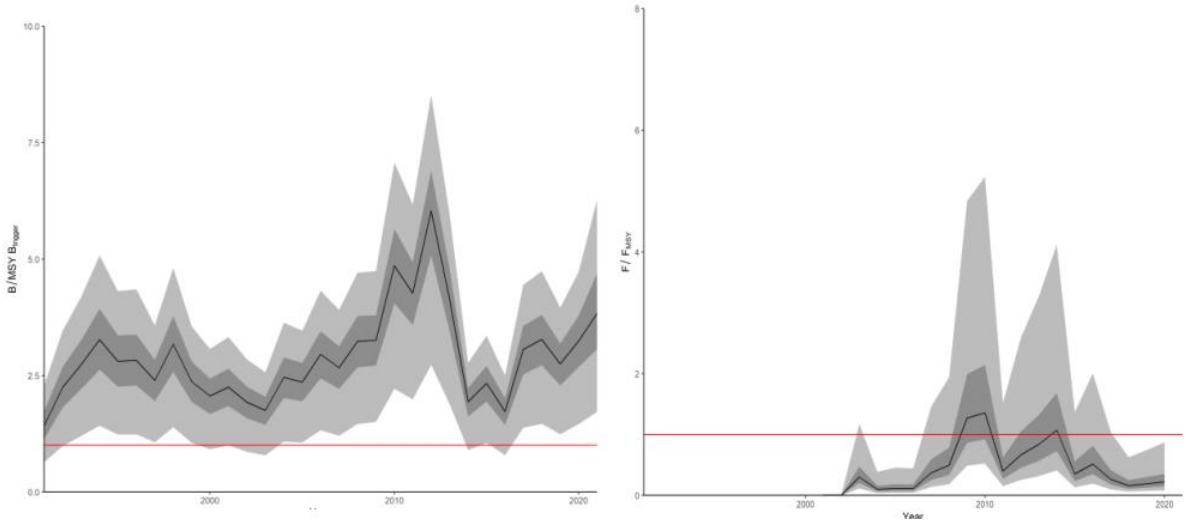
TABLE B(B) – NO REFERENCE POINTS AVAILABLE. B = CURRENT BIOMASS; B_{AV} = LONG-TERM AVERAGE BIOMASS; F = CURRENT FISHING MORTALITY; F_{AV} = LONG-TERM AVERAGE FISHING MORTALITY.

$B > B_{av}$ and $F < F_{av}$	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail
$B > B_{av}$ and F or F_{av} unknown	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
$B = B_{av}$ and $F < F_{av}$	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
$B = B_{av}$ and F or F_{av} unknown	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail
$B > B_{av}$ and $F > F_{av}$	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail
$B < B_{av}$	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
B unknown	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
Resilience	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Very Low**

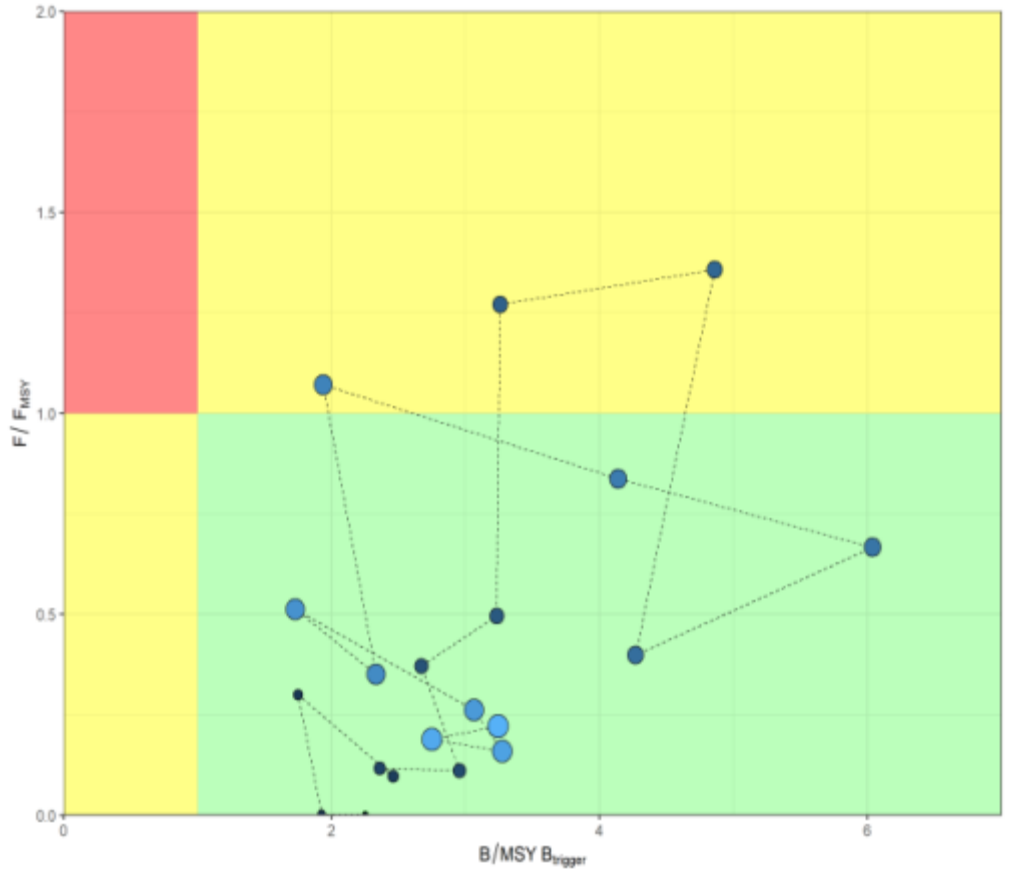
Assessment Results

Species Name		**Boarfish (*Capros aper*)**
B1		
	Table used (Ba, Bb)	B(a)
	Outcome	Pass

The ICES Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE) provides annual catch advice for the boarfish fishery. The advice is based on a relative abundance surplus production model, and the advice documentation is explicit that "there are no reference points defined for this stock" (ICES 2021). However, although there are no formal reference points in place, the 2021 WGWIDE report states that "MSY reference points can be estimated from the production model assessment parameter values" (ICES 2021a). The report subsequently states that "throughout the history of the fishery, estimates of total biomass have remained above MSY $B_{trigger}$. Fishing mortality (F) was briefly larger than the estimate of F_{MSY} between 2009 and 2010 and again in 2014, but has decreased since". This represents good evidence that biomass is currently above MSY, and fishing mortality is below MSY, leading to a Pass rating on Table B(a).



Boarfish in the Northeast Atlantic, time series for B/MSY $B_{trigger}$ (left) and F/F_{MSY} (right) with 50% (dark grey) and 95% (light grey) confidence intervals (ICES 2021a).



Boarfish in the Northeast Atlantic, Kobe plot. Median estimates only with each dot representing a year, with the lightest blue dot representing 2021 (ICES 2021a).

References

ICES (2021). Boarfish (*Capros aper*) in subareas 6-8 (Celtic Seas, English Channel, and Bay of Biscay). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, boc.27.6-8. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.7732

ICES (2021a). Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:95. 874 pp. http://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8298

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

CATEGORY C SPECIES

In a whole fish assessment, Category C species are those which make up less than 5% of landings, but which are subject to a species-specific management regime. In most cases this will be because they are a commercial target in a fishery other than the one under assessment.

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 may be assessed as a Category D species instead, EXCEPT if there is evidence that it is currently below the limit reference point.

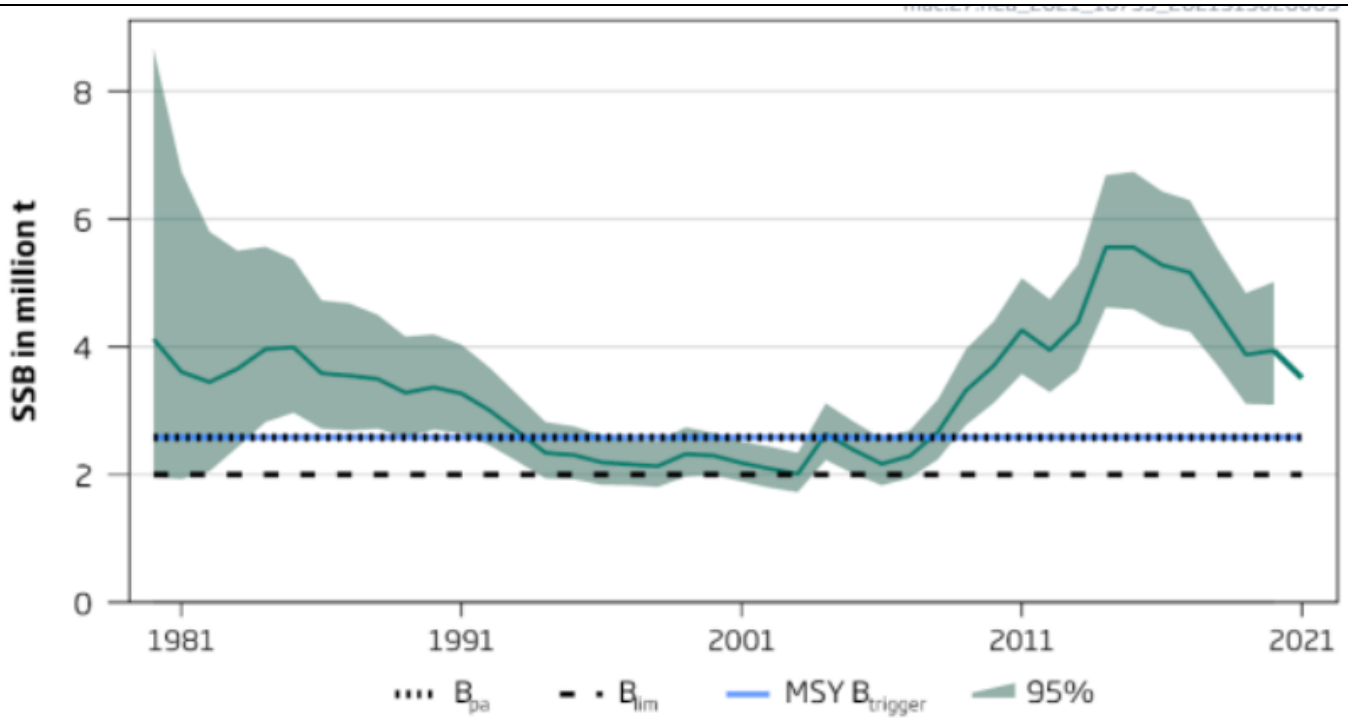
Species Name		**Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*)**	
C1	**Category C Stock Status - Minimum Requirements**		
	C1.1	Fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process, OR are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.	PASS
	C1.2	The species 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.

A stock assessment is conducted annually by the ICES Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE). The most recently conducted assessment for which results are available was conducted in 2021 via an age-based analytical model which utilised all commercial catch data. Partial discard estimates were also included but overall discarding is thought to be negligible. The catch advice includes a section on "issues relevant to the advice", where any concerns relating to data completeness are explored. The 2021 catch advice notes that stock structure is likely to be more complex than the single stock currently assessed; however, the results represent the current best available understanding of stock status. Overall, it is considered that fishery removals are included in the assessment process 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 September 2021 catch advice included a summary of the status of the mackerel stock relative to the established reference points. Although no formal management plan is in place, several reference points have been established, including the target reference points B_{pa} and MSY $B_{trigger}$ (both set at 2,580,000t), and the limit reference point B_{lim} (set at 2,000,000t). The 2021 stock assessment projected SSB to be 3,510,849t at the 2021 spawning time, substantially above the target and limit reference points. The catch advice also stated that "spawning-stock size is above MSY $B_{trigger}$, B_{pa}, and B_{lim}" (ICES 2021). The species is considered in its most recent stock assessment to have a biomass above the limit reference point, and C1.2 is met.



Mackerel in the Northeast Atlantic, SSB relative to current reference points (ICES 2021).

References

ICES (2021). Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*) in subareas 1-8 and 14 and division 9.a (the Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, mac.27.nea. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.7789.

Links	
MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.2.2
FAO CCRF	7.5.3
GSSI	D.3.04, D5.01

FURTHER IMPACTS

The three clauses in this section relate to impacts the fishery may have in other areas. A fishery must meet the minimum requirements of all three clauses before it can be recommended for approval.

F1	Impacts on ETP Species - Minimum Requirements		
	F1.1	Interactions with ETP species are recorded.	PASS
	F1.2	There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative effect on ETP species.	PASS
	F1.3	If the fishery is known to interact with ETP species, measures are in place to minimise mortality.	PASS
		Clause outcome:	PASS

The surveillance evidence review did not uncover any substantial changes to any aspect of the management of the fishery covered by Section F1 since the time of the initial assessment. A summary of the findings of that assessment are presented here for convenience, along with updated data from the most recent WGBYC report.

F1.1 Interactions with ETP species are recorded.

Interactions with ETP species are recorded as required by EU and UK legislation (for example EC Regulation 812/2004 and EU Regulation 2017/10042) and are submitted to the ICES Working Group on Bycatch of Protected Species (WGBYC) for analysis. The most recent WGBYC report was published in March 2022 and contains detailed information on the data sources used to inform the activities of the group. The data are used to estimate bycatch rates and overall impacts of fisheries on ETP species in the waters covered by ICES.

F1.2 There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative effect on ETP species.

The most recent evidence of ETP interactions in European fisheries is summarised within the 2022 WGBYC report (ICES 2022), which includes data from 2020. Within the Celtic seas ecoregion, pelagic trawls targeting all species reported a total of 17 interactions with *Halichoerus grypus* (Northeast Atlantic grey seal, categorised by the IUCN as Least Concern); 1 with *Morus bassanus* (Northern gannet, Least Concern); and 2 interactions with *Globicephala melas* (Long-finned pilot whale, Least Concern). As at the time of the previous MT assessment, this indicates that interactions with marine mammals and birds are rare, and none of the reported interactions is with species categorised as ETP according to the MT definition. As in previous assessments, there is no evidence that this fishery has a significant negative effect on ETP species.

F1.3 If the fishery is known to interact with ETP species, measures are in place to minimise mortality.

No evidence was encountered during the previous MT assessments to indicate that this fishery interacts with ETP species, and this remains the case. Despite this, EU-wide technical measures to protect ETP species are in place

References

Global Trust Certification (2021). Whole fish fishery assessment, Boarfish, ICES Areas 6-8. September 2021. https://www.marin-trust.com/sites/marintrust/files/approved-raw-materials/WF%2015%20Boardfish%20Ireland%20ICES%204%20North%20East%20Atlantic_SURV2_2021_Final%20version.pdf

ICES (2022). Working Group on Bycatch of Protected Species (WGBYC). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:107. 168 pp. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.9256

IUCN, Long-finned pilot whale. https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/9250/50356171

IUCN, Northeast Atlantic grey seal. https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/61382025/61382327

IUCN, Northern gannet. https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/22696657/166314602

Links	
MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.3.1
FAO CCRF	7.2.2 (d)
GSSI	D4.04, D.3.08

F2	Impacts on Habitats - Minimum Requirements		
	F2.1	Potential habitat interactions are considered in the management decision-making process.	PASS
	F2.2	There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on physical habitats.	PASS
	F2.3	If the fishery is known to interact with physical habitats, there are measures in place to minimise and mitigate negative impacts.	PASS
		Clause outcome:	PASS

The fishery continues to be conducted using only pelagic trawl gears, and therefore risks to physical habitats are minimal. Pelagic trawls are widely accepted to interact with the seabed very infrequently, and due to the risk of damaging the gear fishers will usually make every effort to avoid such interactions.

F2.1 Potential habitat interactions are considered in the management decision-making process.

The MT whole fish assessment guidance for this clause states that "good practice requires there to be a strategy in place that is designed to ensure the fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to habitat types". Interactions are known to be very unlikely and therefore such a strategy is not required.

F2.2 There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on physical habitats.

There is substantial evidence that pelagic trawl gears rarely have any impact on physical habitats. Pelagic gears are not intended to interact with the seabed and vessels make efforts to avoid interactions wherever possible.

F2.3 If the fishery is known to interact with physical habitats, there are measures in place to minimise and mitigate negative impacts.

The fishery is known not to interact with physical habitats, and therefore no such measures need to be in place.

References

Global Trust Certification (2021). Whole fish fishery assessment, Boarfish, ICES Areas 6-8. September 2021. https://www.marin-trust.com/sites/marintrust/files/approved-raw-materials/WF%2015%20Boardfish%20Ireland%20ICES%204%20North%20East%20Atlantic_SURV2_2021_Final%20version.pdf

Links	
MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.3.2
FAO CCRF	6.8
GSSI	D.2.07, D.6.07, D3.09

F3	Ecosystem Impacts - Minimum Requirements		
	F3.1	The broader ecosystem within which the fishery occurs is considered during the management decision-making process.	PASS
	F3.2	There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the marine ecosystem.	PASS
	F3.3	If one or more of the species identified during species categorisation plays a key role in the marine ecosystem, additional precaution is included in recommendations relating to the total permissible fishery removals.	PASS
		Clause outcome:	PASS

The surveillance evidence review did not uncover any substantial changes to any aspect of the management of the fishery covered by Section F3 since the time of the initial assessment. A summary of the findings of that assessment are presented here for convenience.

F3.1 The broader ecosystem within which the fishery occurs is considered during the management decision-making process.

As previously, the most recent annual report from the ICES Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE) includes a section covering "Ecosystem Considerations", demonstrating that the broader ecosystem is considered during the decision-making process (ICES 2021). Additionally, ICES regularly publishes ecoregion overviews which set out the main ecosystem considerations for each of the ecoregions within the waters covered by ICES – see for example the most recent Celtic Seas ecoregion overview, which covers the area where the large majority of boarfish are caught (ICES 2021a).

F3.2 There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the marine ecosystem.

The ecological role and importance of boarfish continues to be poorly understood. They have been shown to be an important predator species in some regions. There is also some evidence that they may be an important component in the diets of species such as tope, thornback ray, conger eel, forkbeard, bigeye tuna and swordfish, among others. There is currently insufficient evidence to indicate whether boarfish are an important component of the Celtic Seas ecosystem, or more widely in the Northeast Atlantic. As at the time of previous assessments, no evidence was encountered to suggest that the fishery has a significant negative impact on marine ecosystems.

F3.3 If one or more of the species identified during species categorisation plays a key role in the marine ecosystem, additional precaution is included in recommendations relating to the total permissible fishery removals.

Atlantic mackerel plays a key role in the marine ecosystem; however, catches of the species in the boarfish fishery are small relative to the directed fishery for mackerel, and the important role of the species in the ecosystem is considered in the setting of mackerel TACs. The scale of the boarfish fishery has varied over time, but since 2018 TACs have been relatively consistent, fluctuating around 20,000t. Actual catch has fallen short of the TAC every year since 2013, and in recent years has been around 10,000 – 15,000t.

References

Global Trust Certification (2021). Whole fish fishery assessment, Boarfish, ICES Areas 6-8. September 2021. https://www.marin-trust.com/sites/marintrust/files/approved-raw-materials/WF%2015%20Boardfish%20Ireland%20ICES%204%20North%20East%20Atlantic_SURV2_2021_Final%20version.pdf

ICES (2021). Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:95. 874 pp. http://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8298

ICES (2021a). Celtic Seas Ecoregion – Ecosystem overview. In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, Section 7.1, https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.9432

Links	
MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.3.3
FAO CCRF	7.2.2 (d)
GSSI	D.2.09, D3.10, D.6.09

SOCIAL CRITERION

In addition to the scored criteria listed above, applicants must commit to ensuring that vessels operating in the fishery adhere to internationally recognised guidance on human rights. They must also commit to ensuring there is no use of enforced or unpaid labour in the fleet(s) operating upon the resource.

Appendix A - Determining Resilience Ratings

The assessment of Category B species described in this assessment report template utilises a resilience rating system suggested by the American Fisheries Society. This approach was chosen because it is also used by FishBase, and so the resilience ratings for many thousands of species are freely available online. As described by FishBase, the following is the process used to arrive at the resilience ratings:

"*The American Fisheries Society (AFS) has suggested values for several biological parameters that allow classification of a fish population or species into categories of high, medium, low and very low resilience or productivity (Musick 1999). If no reliable estimate of r_m (see below) is available, the assignment is to the lowest category for which any of the available parameters fits. For each of these categories, AFS has suggested thresholds for decline over the longer of 10 years or three generations. If an observed decline measured in biomass or numbers of mature individuals exceeds the indicated threshold value, the population or species is considered vulnerable to extinction unless explicitly shown otherwise. If one sex strongly limits the reproductive capacity of the species or population, then only the decline in the limiting sex should be considered. We decided to restrict the automatic assignment of resilience categories in the Key Facts page to values of K, t_m and t_{max} and those records of fecundity estimates that referred to minimum number of eggs or pups per female per year, assuming that these were equivalent to average fecundity at first maturity (Musick 1999). Note that many small fishes may spawn several times per year (we exclude these for the time being) and large live bearers such as the coelacanth may have gestation periods of more than one year (we corrected fecundity estimates for those cases reported in the literature). Also, we excluded resilience estimates based on r_m (see below) as we are not yet confident with the reliability of the current method for estimating rm. If users have independent r_m or fecundity estimates, they can refer to Table 1 for using this information*."

Parameter	High	Medium	Low	Very low
Threshold	0.99	0.95	0.85	0.70
r_{max} (1/year)	> 0.5	0.16 - 0.50	0.05 - 0.15	< 0.05
K (1/year)	> 0.3	0.16 - 0.30	0.05 - 0.15	< 0.05
Fecundity (1/year)	> 10,000	100 - 1000	10 - 100	< 10
t_m (years)	< 1	2 - 4	5 - 10	> 10
t_{max} (years)	1 - 3	4 - 10	11 - 30	> 30

[Taken from the FishBase manual, "Estimation of Life-History Key Facts", http://www.fishbase.us/manual/English/key%20facts.htm#resilience]

Glossary

Non-target: Species for which the gear is not specifically set, although they may have immediate commercial value and be a desirable component of the catch. OECD (1996), Synthesis report for the study on the economic aspects of the management of marine living resources. AGR/FI(96)12

Target: In the context of fishery certification, the target catch is the catch of stock under consideration by the unit of certification – i.e. the fish that are being assessed for certification and ecolabelling. (GSSI)

MarinTrust Fishery Assessment Peer Review Template

This section comprises a summary of the fishery being assessed against version 2 of the MarinTrust Standard.

Fishery under assessment	North Atlantic Boarfish (*Capros aper*) fishery pursued by EU and UK vessels in ICES 6-8
Management authority (Country/State)	EU & UK
Main species	Boarfish (*Capros aper*)
Fishery location	ICES Subareas 6-8
Gear type(s)	Pelagic trawl, pelagic pair trawl
Overall recommendation. (Approve/ Fail)	Approve

Summary: in this section, provide any additional information about the fishery that the reviewers feel is significant to their decision.
No further comments necessary.
General Comments on the Draft Report provided to the peer reviewer

Summary of Peer Review Outcomes

Peer reviewers should review the fishery assessment report with the primary objective of answering the key questions listed in the table below. Where the situation is more complicated, reviewers may instead answer "See Notes".

	YES	NO	See Notes
A – Fishery Assessment			
1. Has the fishery assessment been fully completed, using the recognised MarinTrust fishery assessment methodology and associated guidance?	X		
2. Does the Species Categorisation section of the report reflect the best current understanding of the catch composition of the fishery?	X		
3. Are the scores in the following sections accurate (i.e. do the scores reflect the evidence provided)?			
Section M - Management	X		
Category A Species			NA
Category B Species	X		
Category C Species	X		
Category D Species			NA
Section F – Further Impacts	X		

Detailed Peer Review Justification

Peer reviewers should provide support for their answers in the boxes provided, by referring to specific scoring issues and any relevant documentation as appropriate.

Detailed justifications are only required where answers given are one of the 'No' options. In other (Yes) cases, either confirm 'scoring agreed' or identify any places where weak rationales could be strengthened (without any implications for the scores).

Boxes may be extended if more space is required.

1. Is the scoring of the fishery consistent with the MarinTrust standard, and clearly based on the evidence presented in the assessment report?
The assessment report seems to be adequate and in general, it provides the information necessary to justify the scores assigned to the different categories. Only minor comments in the respective sections.
Certification body response
Responses provided under the relevant sections.

2. Has the fishery assessment been fully completed, using the recognised MARINTRUST fishery assessment methodology and associated guidance?
Yes, the IFFO RS standard has been adequately and clearly applied to this assessment.
Certification body response

3. Does the Species Categorisation section of the report reflect the best current understanding of the catch composition of the fishery?
No new catch composition data seems to be available, and the species categorisation remains unchanged from the previous MarinTrust assessment. The boarfish fishery is relatively monospecific, and it is considered that the species categorisation (which only includes one bycatch species) may be correct.
Certification body response

3M. Are the scores in "Section M – Management" clearly justified?	
M1.1 There is an organisation responsible for managing the fishery.	Yes
There is an organisation responsible for collecting data and assessing the fishery.	Yes
Fishery management organisations are publicly committed to sustainability.	Yes
Fishery management organisations are legally empowered to take management actions.	Yes
There is a consultation process through which fishery stakeholders are engaged in decision-making.	Yes
The decision-making process is transparent, with processes and results publicly available.	Yes

Yes, I consider that the information provided is adequate to support the score. The fishery in Ireland is managed under the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and in UK waters by the UK fishing authorities. No major changes have occurred in the management since the previous assessment (and only summaries provided). No further comments necessary.

Certification body response

3A. Are the "Category A Species" scores clearly justified?
No Category A species identified in the fishery.
Certification body response

3B. Are the "Category B Species" scores clearly justified?
Boarfish has been assessed under category B species as no reference points are approved (it has been moved from category A, which seem to be adequate). Biomass of the species is above the estimated B_{MSY} and F below F_{MSY}. The species passes category B.
Certification body response

3C. Are the "Category C Species" scores clearly justified?
Mackerel is the only bycatch in the fishery and it is assessed under category C. The species is over the MSY $B_{trigger}$. Therefore, it passes Category C.
Certification body response

3D. Are the "Category D Species" scores clearly justified?
No Category D species identified.
Certification body response

3F. Are the scores in "Section F – Further Impacts" clearly justified?
The fishery uses pelagic trawls which have no impact on the habitat as they do not interact with the seabed. Interaction with ETP species (marine mammals and seabirds) seems to be low. The ecological role and importance of boarfish continues to be poorly understood and the impact on prey and predators of removing the species from the ecosystem is largely unknown. I would recommend including at least the volumes caught by the fishery in section F3 to have an idea about how large the fishery is.
Certification body response
A paragraph has been added to F3.3 to indicate the scale of the fishery, as recommended.

Optional: General comments on the Peer Review Draft Report
The summary section is quite clear and provides a good overview of the fishery and the assessment process. In the peer reviews comments it is indicated that boarfish and mackerel are scored as category C and B species respectively. That is not correct, it is the other way around.
Certification body response
The error in the peer review comments section has been corrected.