FISHERY BY-PRODUCT REPORT

IFFO GLOBAL STANDARD FOR RESPONSIBLE SUPPLY OF FISHMEAL AND FISH OIL

 R1

FISHERY By-Product:	**Yellowfin Tuna (*Thunnus albacares*)**
LOCATION:	**Mexico**
DATE OF REPORT:	**March 2017**
ASSESSOR:	**Deirdre Hoare**

1. APPLICATION DETAILS AND SUMMARY OF THE ASSESSMENT OUTCOME			
Name:			
Address:			
Country: Mexico		**Zip:**	
Tel. No.		**Fax. No.**	
Email address:		**Applicant Code**	
Key Contact: :		**Title:**	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:	**SAI Global (Ireland)**		
Assessor Name	**Peer Reviewer**	**Initial/Surveillance/ Re-certification**	
Deirdre Hoare	Virginia Polonio	Re-certification	
1. Scope of Assessment	By-Product surveillance year 2016		
2. Fishery By-Product	Yellowfin Tuna (*Thunnus albacares*)		
3. Fishery By-Product Location	Mexico		
4. Fishery Method	Purse seine, longline		
5. Outcome of Assessment	Maintain approval		

2. GUIDANCE FOR ONSITE ASSESSMENT

3. ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION

Effective fishery management and research frameworks are established at the national and international levels. Due in part to the presence of international RFMOs focused on the management of tuna in general and Yellowfin specifically, the assessment team recommends approving the byproduct with a high compliance rating.

4. RATIONALE OF THE ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

A. THE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	
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.	
LOW	An administrative framework that ensures an efficient management of the fishery is not established.
MEDIUM	An administrative framework that ensures an efficient management of the fishery is somehow established, but there is evidence of not being efficient to ensure the management of the stock.
HIGH	A legal and administrative framework that ensures an efficient management of the fishery is established and works efficiently.

Determination: A legal and administrative framework remains in place since the initial assessment at the national and international levels, and works specifically to ensure the sustainability of the yellowfin tuna fishery.

Fishery management framework: The government body with responsibility for fisheries management in Mexico is Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadaría, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación, SAGARPA). The primary legal instruments are the Fisheries Law (Ley de Pesca) and the Regulation to the Fisheries Law (Reglamento de la Ley de Pesca). Based on the contents of these laws, the SAGARPA mission statement includes a commitment to "facilitate the competitive and sustainable development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in the country to increase the welfare of Mexicans". Within SAGARPA, the National Commission on Aquaculture and Fisheries (Comisión Nacional de Acuacultura y Pesca, CONAPESCA) is directly responsible for management, co-ordination and policy development with regards to fisheries. Scientific advice is provided by the National Fisheries Institute (Instituto Nacional de Pesca, INP, see section B), through which the National Fisheries Chart (Carta Nacional Pesquera) was developed. The Chart is an annually-updated summary of the status and scientific understanding of all commercial fishery resources in federal waters. The Chart is broadly divided between Pacific and Gulf of Mexico fisheries.

Species-specific management: As a highly-migratory species, effective management of yellowfin tuna stocks is necessarily international. Mexican tuna fisheries are conducted in both the Pacific and the Gulf of Mexico, and as such fall under the jurisdiction of two tuna RFMOs: on the west coast, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), and on the east coast the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Mexico is a member of both Commissions, and the resolutions of these commissions form the basis for yellowfin management within Mexican waters. Management measures include gear and vessel restrictions, limited entry, seasonal and regional closures, and some country-specific quotas. ICCAT also provides periodical stock assessments and management advice, the most recent Stock Assessment meeting was held in Spain in July 2016. Management recommendations from this are yet to be published.

The annual TAC for 2012 and subsequent years of the multi-annual Program is 110,000 t for yellowfin tuna and shall remain in place until changed based on scientific advice.

References: R2-R8

B. STOCK ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND MANAGEMENT ADVICE

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	
B. Research in support of fisheries management should exist.	
LOW	Research to support the management of the stock does not exist

MEDIUM	Research to support the management of the stock exists, however research programmes could be significantly improved to decrease scientific advice uncertainty.
HIGH	Research to support the management of the stock exists, and research programmes for provision of scientific advice are considered adequate.

Determination: Research organisations conduct and publish regular stock assessments for yellowfin tuna in the relevant geographical regions, and these assessments are used to inform management of the stocks.

Scientific research and advice in support of the management of Mexican fisheries is provided by the National Fisheries Institute (INP). The mission of the INP is to "Coordinate and conduct scientific and technological research on fisheries and aquaculture resources with sustainability criteria for its management and conservation and promote research schemes with the participation and financial support from the sectors involved". This includes the development of stock-specific management plans, the maintenance of the National Fisheries Charter, and the planning and conducting of research in support of these functions. In addition to the INP, the national fisheries research of other signatories to the IATTC and ICCAT is collated and utilised in the management of the international yellowfin fishery. ICCAT uses international data to produce a stock assessment report for yellowfin tuna every 4 years.

A new stock assessment was conducted in 2016. The full stock assessment conducted for yellowfin tuna was in 2016 by ICCAT, applying both an age-structured model and a non-equilibrium production model to the available catch data. According to this report, management recommendations were to be developed and presented to the species group meeting in September 2016. Adopted recommendations will be included in the Yellowfin Tuna Executive Summary. This report has yet to be published.

IATTC uses an integrated statistical; age-structured stock assessment model based on the assumption that there is a single stock of yellowfin in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). The recent fishing mortality rates (F) are slightly below the MSY level (Fmult=1.02), and the recent levels of spawning biomass (SSB) are estimated to be below that level (Srecent/S_{MSY} = 0.95). As noted in the most recent and previous assessments, these interpretations are uncertain, and highly sensitive to the assumptions made about the steepness parameter (h) of the stock-recruitment relationship, the average size of the older fish (L2), and the assumed levels of natural mortality (M). R6, R7

C. STOCK STATUS

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	
C. 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.	
LOW	The fish By-Product must not come from a species that is listed as extinct, or critically endangered.
MEDIUM	The fish By- Product is from a species that is classified as vulnerable, but has a management regime in place that will control the level of fishing permitted. Or if a species is deemed to be endangered but the sub-group from where the fish By- Product is harvested is deemed scientifically to be at no risk of over exploitation.
HIGH	The fish By- Product comes from a fishery that is not deemed to be at risk of over exploitation from fishing activities.

Determination: Yellowfin tuna is categorised by the IUCN as 'near threatened', and therefore a high compliance rating is still appropriate.

Thunnus albacares is categorised as 'near threatened' on the IUCN red list, and it does not appear in the CITES appendices.

This species is fast-growing, widely distributed and highly productive. It is important in commercial fisheries around the world. All stocks are being fished below current maximum sustainable yield (MSY). Based on weighted declines of biomass or spawning stock biomass (SSB) across all stocks, there has been an estimated 33% decline globally over the past 10 years (1998–2008), or three generation lengths. This species is listed as Near Threatened, primarily as population declines would be much greater if it were not for the catch quotas that have been implemented. R8	

5. REFERENCES

R1 – Yellowfin tuna image
http://fishbase.org/summary/speciessummary.php?genusname=Thunnus&speciesname=albacares

R2-FAO fisheries and aquaculture country page, Mexico:
http://www.fao.org/fishery/legalframework/nalo_mexico/en

R3 – CONAPESCA mission and vision:
http://www.conapesca.sagarpa.gob.mx/wb/cona/cona_mision_y_vision_acerca

R4 – INP, about: http://www.inapesca.gob.mx/portal/english

R5 – National Fisheries Chart, 2012: http://www.inapesca.gob.mx/portal/documentos/publicaciones/CARTA NACIONAL PESQUERA/2408201 2 SAGARPA.pdf

R6 – ICCAT yellowfin tuna stock assessment, 2016:
https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Meetings/Docs/2016_YFT_ASSESSMENT_ENG.pdf

R7 – IATTC fishery status report, 2015:
https://www.iattc.org/PDFFiles2/FisheryStatusReports/FisheryStatusReport13.pdf

R8 – IUCN red list: http://www.iucnredlist.org/