

# FISHERY BY-PRODUCT REPORT

## IFFO GLOBAL STANDARD FOR RESPONSIBLE SUPPLY OF FISHMEAL AND FISH OIL



|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>FISHERY By-Product:</b> | <b>Whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>)</b>                |
| <b>LOCATION:</b>           | <b>UK &amp; Ireland-Ices Area IVa-c, VI a, VIIa,b,d-h,j</b> |
| <b>DATE OF REPORT:</b>     | <b>February 2017</b>  |
| <b>ASSESSOR:</b>           | <b>Deirdre Hoare</b>  |

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| Global Trust Certification Ltd, 3rd Floor, Block 3, Quayside Business Park, Mill Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth, Ireland Tel: 042 932 0912 Fax 042 938 6864 |             |             |           |
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| 1. APPLICATION DETAILS AND SUMMARY OF THE ASSESSMENT OUTCOME |                      |  |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Name: UFI  |                      |  |
| Address:   |                      |  |
| Country: UK & Ireland  | 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/<br>Re-certification          |
| Deirdre Hoare  | Virginia Polonio     | Re-certification                                   |
| 1. Scope of Assessment                                       |                      |  |
| 1. Scope of Assessment                                       |                      | IFFO RS By-Product surveillance year 2016          |
| 2. Fishery By-Product  |                      |  |
| 2. Fishery By-Product  |                      | Whiting ( <i>Merlangius merlangus</i> )            |
| 3. Fishery By-Product Location                               |                      |  |
| 3. Fishery By-Product Location                               |                      | UK & Ireland-Ices Area IVa-c, VI a, VIIa,b,d-h,j   |
| 4. Fishery Method  |                      |  |
| 4. Fishery Method  |                      | Demersal trawl, <i>Nephrops</i> trawl, purse seine |
| 5. Outcome of Assessment                                     |                      |  |
| 5. Outcome of Assessment                                     |                      | Approve byproduct                                  |

## 2. GUIDANCE FOR ONSITE ASSESSMENT

## 3. ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION

**There is a robust fishery management framework at the EU and UK & Ireland levels, which is applied specifically to the whiting stock in the assessment area, albeit in management units which do not match the scientifically-defined biological stocks. Management is supported by levels of species-specific data collection and stock assessment which vary between stocks. The assessment team recommends the approval of this byproduct material against the IFFO RS standard.**

**4. RATIONALE OF THE ASSESSMENT OUTCOME**

**A. THE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE**

| LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>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.</i> |   |
| <b>LOW</b>   | An administrative framework that ensures an efficient management of the fishery is not established.   |
| <b>MEDIUM</b>  | 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. |
| <b>HIGH</b>  | A legal and administrative framework that ensures an efficient management of the fishery is established and works efficiently.  |

**Determination: There are effective fishery management frameworks in place at the EU and national levels, and these frameworks are applied specifically to the byproduct stock under assessment. However, as at the time of the 2016 surveillance there is a considerable discrepancy between the management areas and the stocks for which ICES provides advice, and so a medium compliance rating remains appropriate.**

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**Fishery management framework:**

The UK & Ireland are members of the European Union and therefore in Community waters implement the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). In force since 1983, the CFP aims to reconcile resource conservation with the preservation of income and jobs in coastal zones that offer few alternatives in terms of production or employment. It therefore covers not just resources but also markets and structures.

The CFP has undergone a series of updates, including the most recent reform which was implemented from 1st January 2014. The principal aim of the new CFP is to achieve maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for all stocks by 2015 where possible, and at the latest by 2020. The 2014 reform also details the gradual roll-out of a landing obligation (prohibiting discards), which began in selected fisheries in 2015 and will eventually encompass all commercial fisheries from 2019. Finally, the 2014 reform increases the role and importance of management at the regional level, and encourages more intensive stakeholder engagement.

The primary authorities with responsibility for implementing the CFP are the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in Ireland; the Marine Management Organisation (in cooperation with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) in England and Wales; and Marine Scotland, a Directorate of the Scottish Government, in Scotland.

**Species-specific management:**

Quotas are set for whiting in four management areas relevant to this assessment. The management units and their quotas for 2016 are as follows:

- IV, EU waters of IIa: 13,678t
- VI, Vb, international waters of XII and XIV: 213t
- VIIa: 80t
- VIIb-k: 22,778t

These do not fully match the stock units for which ICES provides advice (see section B). The majority of European whiting fisheries are not subject to a management plan (although one is in place in the North Sea), but a minimum

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| <p>landing size of 27cm is in place. The assessment team is not aware of any additional species-specific technical measures.</p> <p>R1 – R8</p>   |  |          |
| <b>B. STOCK ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND MANAGEMENT ADVICE</b>   |  |          |
| <b>LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE</b>  |  |          |
| <i>B. Research in support of fisheries management should exist.</i>   |  |          |
| <b>LOW</b>  | Research to support the management of the stock does not exist   |          |
| <b>MEDIUM</b>   | Research to support the management of the stock exists, however research programmes could be significantly improved to decrease scientific advice uncertainty. |          |
| <b>HIGH</b>   | Research to support the management of the stock exists, and research programmes for provision of scientific advice are considered adequate.                    |          |
| <p><b><i>Determination: The level of uncertainty in the stock assessments conducted in support of whiting fishery management varies considerably between stocks, but as there have been no significant changes since the 2015 surveillance a medium compliance rating remains appropriate.</i></b></p> <p>Fisheries management in EU waters is supported by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). ICES utilises the best available scientific information collected by 20 member countries and others, and develops advice for the majority of commercially fished stocks in European waters.</p> <p>ICES provides species-specific stock assessment and advice for whiting in four stocks relevant to this assessment, as follows:</p> <p><i>Subarea IV (North Sea) and Division VIId (Eastern Channel)</i></p> <p>An age-based analytical assessment is conducted using commercial catch data and two survey indices. Spawning-stock biomass (SSB) has fluctuated around MSY Btrigger. Fishing mortality (F) has been above FMSY throughout the time-series. Recruitment (R) has been low since 2003, with recruitment in 2014 and 2015 above previous years.</p> <p><i>Divisions VIIb,c,e–k (Southern Celtic Seas and eastern English Channel)</i></p> <p>An age-based analytical assessment is conducted using commercial catch data and one survey index. Reference points have been defined based on the MSY and precautionary approaches. ICES reports that the quality of input data is considered sufficient for the assessment of the stock, and the assessment itself appears to be quite robust to uncertainty. This year’s assessment is consistent with last years.</p> <p><i>Division VIIa (Irish Sea)</i></p> <p>A trend-based assessment is conducted using two trawl survey indices. No reference points are defined and ICES considers the stock to be data-limited. Discarding is estimated to be 97% of the catch in weight. Survey and catch data are consistent with a high total mortality and low stock size since the early 2000s.</p> <p><i>Division VIa (West of Scotland)</i></p> <p>An age-based analytical assessment is conducted using commercial catch data and five survey indices. Reference points have been defined based on the precautionary approach but not based on MSY. The assessment indicates an increasing mismatch between the survey catchability and the fishery. This may lead to underestimation of stock size, but the magnitude of the possible underestimation is unknown. Since 2014, effort has been made to</p> |  | <b>M</b> |

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| <p>improve coverage by the Scottish industry/science observer sampling scheme in Subareas IV and VI. The sampling coverage now is more likely to reflect fishing patterns.<br/>R7, R8</p>   |   |          |
| <b>C. STOCK STATUS</b>  |   |          |
| <b>LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE</b>  |   |          |
| <p><i>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.</i></p>  |   |          |
| <b>LOW</b>  | The fish By-Product must not come from a species that is listed as extinct, or critically endangered.   |          |
| <b>MEDIUM</b>   | 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. |          |
| <b>HIGH</b>   | The fish By- Product comes from a fishery that is not deemed to be at risk of over exploitation from fishing activities.  |          |
| <p><b><i>Determination: Whiting is categorised by the IUCN as a species of least concern, and therefore a high compliance rating is appropriate.</i></b></p> <p>The IUCN has categorised <i>Merlangius merlangus</i> as a species of least concern, and it does not appear in the CITES appendices.</p> <p>This species is endemic to the North-eastern Atlantic; it is highly commercial throughout its range. The stocks for which data are available show variable trends in total biomass, spawning stock biomass and recruitment. In the northern portion of its range in the North-eastern Atlantic, summed biomass estimates across the North Sea, West of Scotland and Celtic Sea over the past 10 years (2002-2012) are fluctuating and relatively stable. The North Sea stock, which accounts for 90% of the total biomass of stocks for which data are available, decreased to a historical low in 2007 and has since shown some sign of recovery. <i>M. merlangus</i> is therefore listed as Least Concern. However, additional biomass estimates are needed for stocks in Rockall, Irish Sea, Kattegat, Skagerrak and Bay of Biscay-West Iberia.</p> <p>R9 - R10</p> |   | <b>H</b> |

## 5. REFERENCES

R0 – Whiting picture by Rivo 2005

R1 – About the Common Fisheries Policy: [http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/index_en.htm)

R2 – CFP – Managing fish stocks: [http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/fishing\\_rules/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/fishing_rules/index_en.htm)

R3 – CFP – Discarding and the Landing Obligation:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/fishing\\_rules/discards/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/fishing_rules/discards/index_en.htm)

R4 – Irish Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Fisheries Department:  
<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/fisheries/>

R5 – Marine Management Organisation (About): <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation>

R6 - Marine Scotland (About): <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/About>

R7 – ICES advice 2016,

- Subarea IV (North Sea) and Division VIId (Eastern Channel):  
<http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2016/2016/whg-47d.pdf>
- Divisions VIIb,c,e-k: <http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2016/2016/whg-7e-k.pdf>
- Division VIIa (Irish Sea): <http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2016/2016/whg-iris.pdf>
- Division VIa (West of Scotland):  
<http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2016/2016/whg-scow.pdf>

R8 – EU TACs, 2016: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016R0072&from=EN>

R9 – IUCN redlist: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/>

R10 – CITES appendices: <http://www.cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php>