



# FISHERY ASSESSMENT REPORT

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



<b>FISHERY:</b>	<b>Gulf Menhaden (<i>Brevoortia patronus</i>)</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>Gulf of Mexico</b>
<b>DATE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> July 2011</b>
<b>ASSESSOR:</b>	<b>Sam Peacock</b>

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Issue No; 2; Issue Date; Nov 09

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1. Application Details and Summary of the Assessment Outcome			
<b>Name:</b> Omega Protein Inc / Daybrook Fisheries. Inc			
<b>Address:</b>			
<b>Country:</b> U.S.A		<b>Zip:</b>	
<b>Tel. No.</b>		<b>Fax. No.</b>	
<b>Email address:</b> _____		<b>Applicant Code:</b> IFFO 116 /IFFO 118	
<b>Key Contact:</b>		<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Certification Body Details</b>			
<b>Name of Certification Body:</b> Global Trust Certification Ltd			
<b>Assessor Name:</b>	<b>Peer Reviewer:</b>	<b>Assessment Days:</b>	<b>Initial/Surveillance/Re-certification:</b>
Sam Peacock	Mike Platt	1	Surveillance
<b>Assessment Period</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> July 2011		
<b>Scope Details</b>			
<b>1. Scope of Assessment:</b>	IFFO Global Standard for Responsible Supply – Issue 1		
<b>2. Fishery</b>	Menhaden, Gulf of Mexico		
<b>3. Fishery Location</b>	Gulf of Mexico		
<b>4. Fishery Method</b>	Purse seining		
<b>Outcome of Assessment</b>			
<b>5. Overall Fishery Compliance Rating</b>	<b>HIGH</b>		
<b>6. Sub Components of Low Compliance</b>	NONE		
<b>7. Information deficiency</b>	NONE		
<b>8. Peer Review Evaluation</b>	AGREE WITH ASSESSMENT		
<b>9. Recommendation</b>	MAINTAIN APPROVAL		

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<b>2. Quality of Information</b>
Good

<b>3. Compliance Level Achieved</b>
HIGH
<b>Recommendation</b>
<b>Approve fishery</b>

<b>4. Guidance for On-site Assessment</b>
<b>Based on High Compliance Findings</b>
Ensure that only Gulf Menhaden are being used as raw material for the IFFO RS fish meal and fish oil
<b>Based on Medium Compliance Findings</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Not Applicable.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Key Stakeholders of the Fishery</b>

<b>5. Assessment Determination</b>
Aside from some minor enforcement reforms, the science and management of the Gulf Menhaden fishery remains largely unchanged since the original, highly compliant assessment. The surveillance team recommends the continued approval of this fishery.
<b>HIGH COMPLIANCE</b>
A1,A2,A3,B1,B2,C1,D1,D2,D3,E1,E2.
<b>MEDIUM COMPLIANCE</b>
NONE

SUMMARY OF LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE					
	The Management Framework and Procedures	Stock assessment procedures and management advice	Precautionary approach	Management measures	Implementation
legal and administrative basis	High Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance
Fisheries management should be concerned with the whole stock unit	High Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance
Management actions should be scientifically based	High Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance
Research in support of fisheries conservation and management should exist	Low Compliance	High Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance
Best scientific evidence available should be taken into account when designing conservation and management measures	Low Compliance	High Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance
The precautionary approach is applied in the formulation of management plans	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	High Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance
The level of fishing permitted should be set according to management advice given by research organisations	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	High Compliance	Low Compliance
Where excess fishing capacity exist, mechanisms should be in established to reduced capacity	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	High Compliance	Low Compliance
Management measures should ensure that fishing gear and fishing practices do not have a significant impact on non-target species and the physical environment	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	High Compliance	Low Compliance
A management system for fisheries control and enforcement should be established	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	High Compliance
A framework for sanctions of violation of laws and regulations should be efficiently exists	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	Low Compliance	High Compliance

**KEY:** Low Compliance [Red Box] Medium Compliance [Yellow Box] High Compliance: [Green Box]

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**6. Rationale of the Assessment Outcome**

**a. The Management Framework and Procedure**

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		a.i. The management of the fishery must include a legal and administrative basis for the implementation of measures and controls to support the conservation of the fishery.	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>The initial assessment found an extensive legal and administrative framework for the implementation of measure to control and support the long-term sustainability of the fishery. There have been no major changes since that time.</i></p> <p>The Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (1976) provides the basis for administration of all fisheries within the 200 mile US exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which is under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Individual States have jurisdiction over waters within 3-9 miles of their shoreline. Management plans for commercially important species within the Gulf are drawn up by the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council, and the implementation of these plans is managed by the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC).</p> <p>For more information, see the initial fishery report.</p>	R1, R4, R7	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				
		a.ii. Fisheries management should be concerned with the whole stock unit over its entire area of distribution and take into account fishery removals and the biology of the species	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>The initial assessment found that the entire distribution of Gulf Menhaden stock is managed, taking into account all fishery removals and the biology of the species. There have been no major changes since that time.</i></p> <p>The biology of Gulf Menhaden is well understood, and the NMFS, Gulf Council and GSMFC</p>	R1, R5	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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		jointly control the fishery across the whole of the Gulf of Mexico stock. Menhaden stock tends to form dense shoals that stay relatively close to the shore and therefore never leave the waters controlled by the three agencies. The Magnuson Stevens Acts ensures that only US registered boats are allowed to fish in these waters.		
		a.iii .Management actions should be based on long-term conservation objectives	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>The initial assessment found a long-term science-based management plan covering the entire fishery. This management plan is still in place.</i></p> <p>The fishery long term conservation objectives for the Menhaden are based upon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acoustic surveys to detect stock abundance</li> <li>• Egg surveys to detect fecundity rates</li> <li>• Restricted fishing areas to protect juvenile menhaden the boats are not allowed to fish in any bay, river, pass or tributary, or within one mile of any barrier, jetty, island or pass, or within ½ mile offshore in the Gulf of Mexico.</li> <li>• Restricted fishing season during the menhaden spawning phase</li> <li>• Day fishing only no electronic fishing aids</li> </ul> <p>It is considered that the existing seasonal management of the fishery has proven to be successful for the protection of the menhaden resource. This approach to controlling fishing capture by the use of a restrictive season was created over sixty years ago and was initiated by the fishing industry, but has now been adopted by the regulatory authorities of the Gulf States to protect the fishery during its spawning phase.</p>	R1	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				



**b. Stock Assessment Procedures and Management Advice**

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		bi. Research in support of fisheries conservation and management should exist.	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>There is considerable research carried out in support of the management of the fishery. This research is an ongoing, fundamental part of the management regime.</i></p> <p>Around 7,000 fish are sampled annually, both at sea and from landings. These data are used in conjunction with over 50 years of historical fishery research data to inform the management of the fishery. The data overwhelmingly suggest that the stock is not currently unsustainably fished.</p> <p>The NMFS also publishes annually the conclusions of that years research, a review of the previous year’s fishing season, and a forecast of the upcoming year’s fishery.</p> <p>Final purse-seine landings of gulf menhaden for reduction in 2010 amounted to 379,727 metric tons (1,250 million standard fish). This is down 17% from total landings in 2009 (457,457 t), and down 15% from the previous 5-year mean (446,982 t) (Fig. 1).</p>	R1-3	<b>HIGH</b>
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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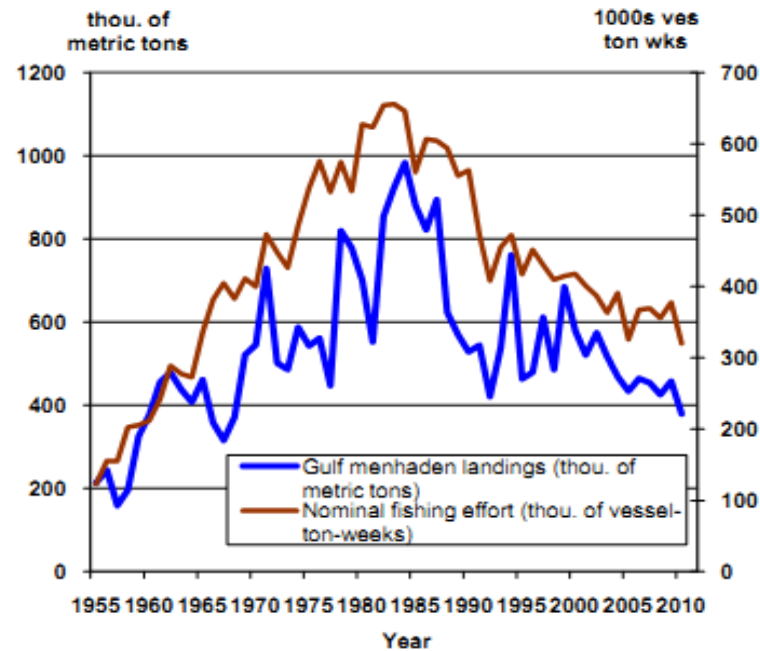


Figure 1. Gulf menhaden landings and nominal fishing effort, 1955-2010

Based on average nominal fishing effort for recent years by vessels expected to be active in 2011, NMFS estimate that nominal fishing effort in 2011 may be about 350,000 vessel ton weeks. With 350,000 vessel ton weeks of effort, NMFS forecast 2011 gulf menhaden landings of 437,000 t, with 80% confidence levels of 318,000 and 556,000 t.

For more general information, see the initial assessment report.

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		b.ii Best scientific evidence available should be taken into account when designing conservation and management measures	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>The initial assessment found clear evidence that science is taken into account in the management of this fishery. There has been no significant change since that time.</i></p> <p>There is substantial research suggesting that a maximum sustainable yield-based approach, and by extension the setting of quotas, would be inappropriate for the management of the Menhaden stock. The overwhelming scientific evidence considers that at present, the existing seasonal management and the technical restrictions imposed on the fishery have proven to be the most successful for the protection of the Menhaden resource. The annual stock assessments and forecasts are used in on-going fishery management. For more details, see the initial assessment.</p>	R2,R3	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

**c. The Precautionary Approach**

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		c.i The precautionary approach is applied in the formulation of management plans.	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>From the evidence available, precautionary principals are applied in the formulation of the fisheries management plans. There has been no significant change since the original report.</i></p> <p>The Menhaden management plan satisfies the three criteria of the precautionary approach:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The fisheries management framework must apply a precautionary approach to the conservation of the target fishery resource, associated non target species and for the conservation of the wider eco-system.</li> <li>2. Suitable or proxy target and limit reference points must be set and take into account uncertainties relating to the size and productivity of the stocks, unknown fishing</li> </ol>	R1	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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		<p>mortality and the impact of fishing on the environment.</p> <p>3. Precautionary measures must consider (where relevant) discards, dependent species, habitats, communities and threatened, endangered and protected species.</p> <p>Although the Menhaden management plan does not explicitly state that a precautionary approach is taken, the initial assessment found that all the above criteria were met in the management of the fishery. The fishery continues to be managed in accordance with the plan and therefore with the precautionary approach.</p>		
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**d. Management Measures**

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE	d.i The level of fishing permitted should be set according to management advice given by research organisations.	References	Rating
LOW	<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>Although the quota system is not used to restrict the level of fishing in this fishery, the measures which are used to manage fishing effort are considered successful and in accordance with available research.</i></p> <p>For 2010, NMFS scientists forecast a total catch of 463,000 t, with 80% confidence levels of 344,000 and 582,000 t. Actual landings in 2010 were 379,727 metric tons (1,250 million standard fish), and were likely lower than expected due to regional closures after the Deep Water Horizon oil spill. Fishing effort is, according to research over the past 30 years, about 3% of the total stock biomass, so the effect on predator species and the longer term conservation of the stock should be minimal.</p> <p>The measures used to maintain fishing effort around this level, in particular strict gear limitations and seasonal restrictions, are considered to be highly effective and have been</p>	R2,R3	
MEDIUM			
HIGH			

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		verified by on-site audit.		
LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		d.ii Where excess fishing capacity exist, mechanisms should be in established to reduced capacity to allow for the recovery of the stock to sustainable levels.	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>The initial assessment found that there were mechanisms in place to reduce fishing capacity if it became necessary. There have been no significant changes to these mechanisms.</i></p> <p>At the end of the fishing season, biostatistical data are merged with landings on a port-week basis to produce estimated landings of fish at age (in numbers). Estimates are summed overall port-weeks for the entire fishing season to produce annual estimates of total landings at age. This data is then used to review the total fishing operation.</p>	R1, R4, R6	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				
LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		d.iii Management measures should ensure that fishing gear and fishing practices do not have a significant impact on non-target species and the physical environment.	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>The initial assessment found that the fishery management plan takes all possible efforts to minimise the impacts of the fishery on non-target species and the environment, and that these efforts were being complied with by fishermen. There has been no significant change since the initial assessment.</i></p> <p>No evidence could be found during the initial assessment that any significant impact as a result of fishing effort was having a detrimental effect on endangered marine mammals, birds or predatory fish. Captains and crews are instructed that if a marine mammal or turtle is found to in the net, the net must be released. No reports of interactions with whales have been recorded. From the evidence found there were very low incidence of interactions with turtles, mammals, and birds.</p>	R1	HIGH
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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		NOAA concurred that the fishers are completely compliant with all regulations regarding interactions with protected, threatened, and endangered species. In addition research has shown that the purse seining has a very low impact on the environment and on non-target and endangered species.		
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**e. Implementation**

LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		e.i There should be a framework for sanctions of violation of Laws and regulations.	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>The initial assessment found a robust framework for fishery enforcement at both State and National levels. While some changes have been made to the sanctions and appeals process, the enforcement framework for the fishery remains robust.</i></p> <p>The United States coast guard is responsible for enforcing fisheries management regulations within the EEZ.</p> <p>The five lead state agencies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission;</li> <li>• Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resource;</li> <li>• Mississippi Department of Marine Resources;</li> <li>• Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries;</li> <li>• Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.</li> </ul> <p>All of the above enforce the regulations within their own state territorial waters.</p>	R4, R6, R7	
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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		<p>Enforcement reforms introduced by the NOAA include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing fishermen and businesses to request a stay of penalty payment as part of the complaint process.</li> <li>• Issuing a new nationwide penalty policy that provides consistency and greater transparency on the assessment of penalties and permit sanctions throughout the country.</li> <li>• Launching an independent audit of the AFF that will include a targeted review of transactions going back to 2004 to determine if there was fraud or other illegal activity.</li> <li>• Working with fishery councils, fishermen and stakeholders to streamline and simplify fishing regulations.</li> </ul>		
LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE		e.ii A management system for fisheries control and enforcement should be established.	References	Rating
LOW		<p><b>Determination:</b> <i>Each State enforces fisheries policy in its own territorial waters, and the US coast guard enforces policy in the EEZ. The initial on-site assessment confirmed enforcement in Louisiana waters and there have been no significant changes since then.</i></p> <p>All fishing vessels are registered with the US Coast Guard, are licensed and permitted by states whose authority and empowerment is derived from the Fishery Commissions by act of US Congress.</p> <p>The enforcement division of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries periodically checks fishing vessels on the fishing grounds in respect of issues such as fishing in closed areas, possession of restricted species, and ensuring by-catch is not more than 5% by weight.</p>	R4, R6, R7	
MEDIUM				
HIGH				

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## References

R1 – Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Gulf Menhaden management plan:

<http://menhaden.gsmfc.org/pdf/Menhaden%20FMP.pdf>

R2 - NOAA Forecast for the 2011 Gulf and Atlantic Menhaden Purse-Seine Fisheries and Review of the 2010 Fishing Season.

R3 - NOAA Forecast for the 2010 Gulf and Atlantic Menhaden Purse-Seine Fisheries and Review of the 2010 Fishing Season.

R4 - Louisiana dept Wild Life and Fisheries Commercial fishing 2010: <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/>

R5 - Fish Source, Menhaden, (Gulf of Mexico):

[www.fishsource.org/fishery/menhaden%20\(gulf%20of%20mexico\)](http://www.fishsource.org/fishery/menhaden%20(gulf%20of%20mexico))

R6 - Federal regulations prepared by the NMFS Dec 2009:

[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/sfweb/NS2PR.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/sfweb/NS2PR.pdf)

R7 - Gulf of Mexico Commercial Fisheries: <http://www.commercial-fishing.org/commercial-fishing-regulations/gulf-of-mexico-commercial-grouper-tilefish-individual-fishing-quota-program-referendum-a362.html>

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