LFPO Pelagic Trawl Sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*)

MSC Certificate code: MSC-F-31308 (F-BV-0580)

3rd Surveillance Report

August 2020

Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)	Bureau Veritas Certification Holding SAS
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Fishery client	LFPO Latvian Fisheries Producer Organisation / NZRO Nacionālās zvejniecības ražotāju organizācija
Assessment Type	Third Surveillance

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2 Glossary

Concepts and terms:

B_{LIM}	Precautionary reference point. SSB below B_{lim} indicate increase risk of impairment of recruitment
B_{MSY}	Spawning biomass (equilibrium) when fishing at FMSY
B_{PA}	Precautionary reference point SSB below B_{PA} indicate that action should be taken to recover the stock
$B_{trigger}$	Biomass level below which fishing mortality should be reduced
BASS	Baltic Acoustic Spring Survey
BIAS	Baltic International Acoustic Survey
CAB	Conformity Assessment Body (in the case of this particular assessment the CAB is BV)
CBH	Central Baltic Herring Stock
CoC	Chain of Custody
CFP	European Common Fisheries Policy
CPUE	Cath per Unit of Effort
DCF	Data Collection Framework (EU program for documentation of fisheries activities and fishing fleets)
FCR	(MSC) Fisheries Certificacion Requirements
FCP	(MSC) Fisheries Certification Process
GoR	Gulf of Riga
GoRH	Gulf of Riga Herring Stock
EBC	Eastern Baltic Cod stock
ETP	Endangered, Threatened and Protected
f/v	Fishing vessel
F_{LIM}	Fishing mortality which should be avoided with high probability because it is associated with unknown population dynamics or stock collapse
F_{MSY}	Fishing mortality at MSY
F_{PA}	Fishing mortality to ensure that there is a high probability that F_{lim} will be avoided and that the spawning stock biomass will remain above the threshold B_{lim}
HCR	Harvest Control Rules
IPI	Inseparable or practicably inseparable (catches or stocks)
LFICIS	Integrated Control Information for Latvian Fisheries Fisheries System
LTL	Low Trohic Level
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield
P1, P2, P3	MSC Principles 1, 2, 3 respectively
PRI	Point where Recruitment would be Impaired
SA	(MSC) Surveillance audit
t	Metric tons
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
UoA	Unit of Assessment
UoC	Unit of Certification
WBSSH	Western Baltic Spring Spawning Herring Stock

Organizations:

ASCOBANS	Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas
BIOR	Latvian Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment
BV	Bureau Veritas
CITES	Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora
DIFRES	Danish Institute of Fisheries and Marine Research
EU	European Union
EFCA	European Fisheries Control Agency
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HELCOM	Helsinki Commission -Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission-
IBSF	International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
LFPO	Latvian Fishermen's Producers Organization (NZRO in Latvian)
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
NZRO	Nacionālās zvejniecības ražotāju organizācija (LFPO in English)
SES	(Latvian) State Environmental Service
STECF	Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
WGBAST	Baltic Salmon and Trout Assessment Working Group
WGBFAS	ICES Baltic Fisheries Assessment Working Group

3 Executive summary

This fishery was assessed against MSC Fisheries Certification Requirements version 2.0 and received the MSC-Fisheries certificate on May 22, 2017. This report accounts for the results of the third surveillance audit carried out in June 2020. This audit covers activities developed between the second audit (April-May 2019) and this audit (May 2020), i.e., the 3rd year after the certification.

No conditions were set to this fishery during the initial assessment and no re-scoring took place during the first surveillance audit. At the second audit several PIs were re-scored due to harmonisation process (see Appendix 5.4 of the 2nd Surveillance Report for further details on the process). The most significant change to initial scoring is due to including the cumulative impacts from all MSC UoAs on harbour porpoise population in the Baltic proper, which led to setting a new condition on PI 2.3.1.

At this third audit no PI was rescored nor was there any new condition set. The condition on 2.3.1 (Harbour porpoise) was found to be 'ahead target'. See **Section 5.1.4** for details.

Table 3.1 presents scores given to each MSC Principle as published at the PCR and after subsequent surveillance audits, while **Table 3.2** presents scores for each Performance Indicator.

Table ¡Error! No hay texto con el estilo especificado en el documento..**1** Scores obtained by the fishery for each MSC Principle as published at the PCR and after the 2nd and 3rd Surveillance audits.

Principle	Score (PCR)	Score (2SA)	Score (3SA)
Principle 1 – Target Species	96,7	93,3	No change
Principle 2 – Ecosystem	92,0	90,3	No change
Principle 3 – Management System	91,3	87,1	No change

Table ¡Error! No hay texto con el estilo especificado en el documento..**2** PI scores of the certified fishery as published at the PCR and after the second and third surveillance audits (in orange are the scores below 80, meaning a condition was raised for that PI).

Principle	Component	Performance Indicator (PI)		Score	2SA	3SA
One	Outcome	1.1.1	Stock status	100	=	=
		1.1.2	Stock rebuilding	N/A	N/A	
	Management	1.2.1	Harvest strategy	90	=	=
		1.2.2	Harvest control rules & tools	95	85	=
		1.2.3	Information & monitoring	100	90	=
		1.2.4	Assessment of stock status	95	=	=
Two	Primary species	2.1.1	Outcome	100	=	=
		2.1.2	Management strategy	100	=	=
		2.1.3	Information/Monitoring	100	=	=
	Secondary species	2.2.1	Outcome	95	80	=
		2.2.2	Management strategy	85	=	=
		2.2.3	Information/Monitoring	85	=	=
	ETP species	2.3.1	Outcome	85	75	=
		2.3.2	Management strategy	80	=	=
		2.3.3	Information strategy	80	=	=
	Habitats	2.4.1	Outcome	100	=	=
		2.4.2	Management strategy	90	=	=
		2.4.3	Information	85	=	=
	Ecosystem	2.5.1	Outcome	100	=	=
		2.5.2	Management	95	=	=
		2.5.3	Information	100	=	=

Three	Governance and policy	3.1.1	Legal &/or customary framework	100	95	=
		3.1.2	Consultation, roles & responsibilities	85	=	=
		3.1.3	Long term objectives	100	80	=
	Fishery specific management system	3.2.1	Fishery specific objectives	100	=	=
		3.2.2	Decision making processes	85	=	=
		3.2.3	Compliance & enforcement	85	=	=
		3.2.4	Monitoring & management performance evaluation	80	=	=

Main findings from this surveillance audit are summarized below:

- No changes were found in the administrative framework for the sprat fishery and the Latvian regulation of the fishery. For 2020 the sprat fishery is banned 1 May -31 August in response to protection of cod.
- Most of the fishing effort continues to be concentrated in SD28.2, about 15% of the catch is taken in ICES area 25 -26.
- The status of the sprat stock is generally unchanged the stock remains at full reproductive capacity and is fished slightly above F_{MSY}.
- Biological reference points were updated in 2020. This applies to the fishing mortality while the biomass reference points were unchanged.
- Updated information on the UoC catch species composition confirms that almost the entire catch is comprised by sprat and herring.
- The observer coverage of the Latvian monitoring program for marine mammals (implementation on Regulation (EC) 812/2004) continued as in previous years. No interactions with cetaceans were recorded as is the case since the beginning of the programme in 2006.
- New information was assessed on the stock status of the Central Baltic Herring and the Eastern Baltic Sea Cod, and on new reference points for Flounder (see **Section 4.2.7**). As there were no significant differences from the previous year, no re-scoring was carried out.
- WWF expressed concern regarding cod's stock status (see **Section 7.2.1**). Even though the assessment team took into consideration their comment, PI 2.5.1 on ecosystem outcome was not re-scored in the present surveillance audit. The assessment team, however, will keep assessing the issue in the future.
- The condition on PI 2.3.1 was found to be 'Ahead Target' (see **Section 5.1.4** for details).

The assessment team concludes that **the MSC Certificate for this fishery shall remain active**, subject to the agreed annual surveillance schedule and progress on the current condition 1.

4 Report details

4.1 Surveillance information

Table 4.1. Surveillance information

1	**Fishery name**		
LFPO Pelagic Trawl Sprat			
2	**Unit of Assessment**		
UoA	Target stock:	*Sprat* (Sprattus sprattus) *in the Baltic Sea (ICES SD22-32)*	
	Fishing Area:	*Central Baltic Sea excl Gulf of Riga (ICES SD 25-29 and 32, excluding 28.1)*	
	Fishing method:	*Single and twin pelagic trawl*	
	Fishing management	*Based on EU CFP and Latvian legislation*	
	Fishing operators:	*Vessels owned by the fishing companies' members of LFPO with sprat quota in Baltic. An updated list of vessels can be found on the MSC website.*	
	Other elegible fishers	*No other eligible vessels*	
3	**Certificate details**		
Certificate code	MSC-F-31308 (F-BV-0580)		
Date certified	22 May 2017	Updated date of expiry*	21 November 2022
***Due to the MSC Covid-19 Derogation of 27 March 2020, the certificate of the fishery has been extended 6 months. Consequently, the updated date of expiry is now the 21st of November 2022.**			
4	**Surveillance level and type**		
Level	At the second surveillance audit, the surveillance level was changed to level 4 (i.e., 2 on-site and 2 off-site audits). For the current Surveillance (Year 3), the surveillance program has remained off-site as it was established in the second surveillance report (see **Appendix 7.3** for more details).		
Type	Current surveillance audit was carried out as an off-site audit (see **Appendix 7.1.1** for more details).		
5	**Surveillance number**		
1st Surveillance			
2nd Surveillance			
3rd Surveillance	X		
4th Surveillance			
Other (expedited etc)			
6	**Assessment team[1]**		
Team leader	Hans Lassen		
Team member 1	Gemma Quílez		
Team member 2	Sarmite Zoltnere		
7	**Audit/review time and location**		
Remote Meetings were held on 1 and 2 June 2020 (see **Appendix 7.1.1** for further details).			
8	**Assessment and review activities**		
The team conducted assessment activities in accordance with FCP 7.28.15-18. The team focused on: (i) checking for any relevant modification affecting the fishery; (ii) assessing progress against the conditions set to the fishery.			

[1] See the Surveillance announcement at the MSC website for more details on how the team meets the competency criteria and the areas that they are responsible.

See **Appendix 7.1** for details on the people interviewed and on the stakeholder engagement strategy, and **Appendix 7.2** for details on topics discussed during the site visit and other stakeholder inputs. Harmonization activities with overlapping fisheries are described in **Appendix 7.4**	
9	**Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)**
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10	**Client**
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4.2 Background

4.2.1 Personnel involved in science, management or industry

Since the last surveillance, the Client organisation NZRO (LFPO) changed its President and the new president is Viesturs Ulis. Other key personnel involved in science, management or industry have remained as in the previous year.

4.2.2 Certified fleet and client group

The list of members of the Client group and vessel list were updated (**Table 4.2.1**). Moreover, the updated list of vessels can be also found on the MSC website.

Table 4.2.1 Updated (from May 12, 2020) LFPO list of fishing companies and vessels targeting sprat in 2019 that are entitled to use the certificate. The validity of this list is linked to the validity of the certificate ES081416-v2.

No.	Fishing Companies	Name of vessel	Vessels Reg. No.
1	KURSAS JŪRA, SIA	Bravo	LVR 0813
2	VERĢI, SIA	Vergi	LVR 0829
3		Urga	LVR 0786
4		Ulrika	LVR 0814
5		Unions	LVR 0805
6		Stella	LVR 0841
7	ZVEJNIEKU KOMPĀNIJA "GRIFS", SIA	Grifs	LVR 0697

8		Priedaine	LVR 0837
9		Sirius	LVR 0842
10	A.I. UN KO, SIA	Zane	LVR 0518
11		Sencis	LVR 0662
12	ERVILS, SIA	Briedis	LVL 2013
13	BraDava, SIA	Harengus	LVV 1551
14		Glenrose	LVV 1555
15		Daugava	LVV 1556
16	LĪCIS – 99, SIA	Valderoy	LVR 1504
17	HANTERS, SIA	Bandava	LVV 1507
18		Brocēni	LVL 2038
19	GRĪVA, SIA	Grīva	LVR 0744

4.2.3 Fishery management and regulatory framework

According to the stakeholders interviewed (see **Appendix 7.1** and **7.2**), the fishery was conducted as in previous years and the assessment team verified that the regulatory framework was unchanged.

4.2.3.1 EU-Russia arrangements

The sprat stock is shared between the EU and Russia. The EU has a multiannual plan (MAP) in place for stocks in the Baltic Sea, which includes sprat (EU, 2016) and this plan is considered precautionary by ICES. The ICES advice for this stock (see **Table 4.2.2**), is based on the F_{MSY} ranges used in the management plan. However, Russia, whose catch is around 13.5% of the total landings from this stock, does not have a management plan for this stock. The EU+Russia TACs for 2018, 2019 and 2020 were slightly (around 1%) above the catch recommended by ICES for this stock (**Table 4.2.2**) (ICES, 2020a).

Table 4.2.2 EU multiannual plan target F ranges and EU+Russia TAC (in tonnes).

Year	EU MAP target F ranges (t)	EU+Russia TAC (t)
2018	219,152–301,722	304,900
2019	225,752–311,523	313,100
2020	169,965–233,704	256,700

4.2.3.2 Legal changes

Latvia:

The Ministry of Agriculture informed the assessment team that the following legal changes have occurred since the previous surveillance audit. None of the changes substantially changes the management of the fishery:

- The Latvian Fishing law has been reviewed, which includes a change in the penalty system for infringements, the topic is moved to the Fisheries law while it previously was dealt with under a general system applicable to a wider range of sectors. However, the there was no change of substance;
- A seasonal ban to fish for cod for 2020 (from 1 May – 31 August) has been implemented. This also applies to the the sprat fishery;
- The regulation on 'designated ports' for coastal and inland fisheries, which is fully implemented by this fishery, has been reviewed resulting in a number of changes, although none of these affect the sprat fishery as they were only formal changes;
- The legislation on administrative penalties has been changed (i.e., details have been added regarding the institutions that can penalize and each sector – municipality, policy, coast guards and border guards - will have its own system) although it is still not implemented.

EU:

In June 2019, Regulation (EC) 812/2004 was repealed by Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 and new technical measures were established at regional level. Annex XIII of this regulation sets out such technical measures for sensitive species.

Within Annex XIII of this regulation, it is stated that Member States shall take the necessary steps to collect scientific data on incidental catches of sensitive species; and it requires member states to undertake monitoring of cetacean by-catches for pelagic trawl fisheries in ICES divisions 3a-d (i.e., all of the Baltic Sea).

4.2.3.3 Distribution of the fishery

BIOR shared with the team the updated effort distribution of the Latvian sprat fishery (**Figure 4.2.1**). It can be observed that the fishery covered the same grounds as in previous years. There were a few hauls on grounds north of the Gulf of Gdansk, although these were also fished in previous years.

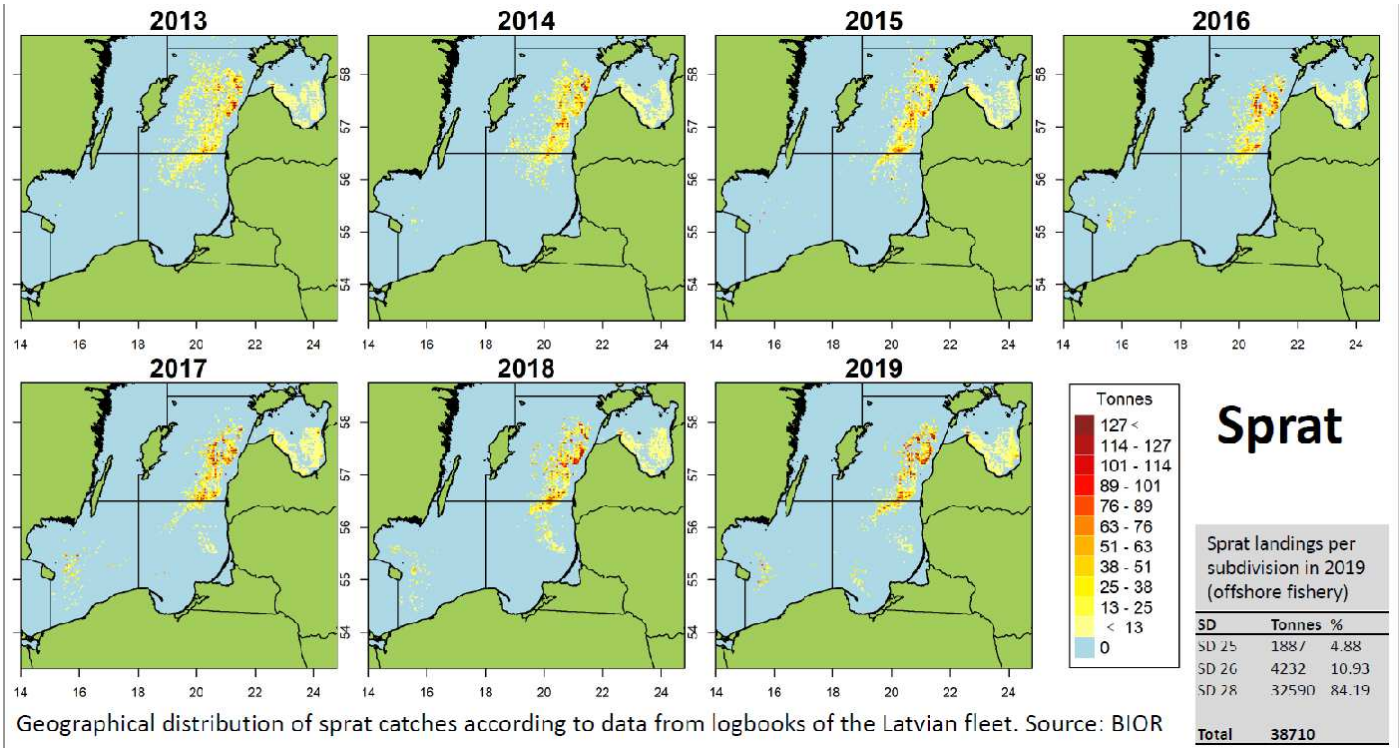


Figure 4.2.1 Effort distribution for the Latvian sprat fishery, based on logbooks. Source: BIOR

4.2.3.4 Catch data

Updated catch data are given in **Section 5.1.2**.

4.2.4 Compliance

The Control authorities (the State Environmental Service – SES) reported that there was no systematic non-compliance for this fishery. Most of the infringements they found were related to either:

i) Lack of reporting;
ii) Overdeclaring by-catch of flounder or plaice;
iii) Non-compliance with the 10% margin of tolerance (according to Article 13 of Regulation 2016/1139), i.e., for catches which are landed unsorted (e.g. sprat and herring), the permitted margin of tolerance of the estimated kilograms of fish retained on board recorded in the logbook shall not be more than 10 % different from the total quantity retained on board.

These types of infringements, however, are considered minor infringements.

Only three minor infringements were found in 2019 for the certified fleet (**Table 4.2.2**), which is consistent with what the SES mentioned last year regarding the compliance having improved in Latvian fisheries in the last 6 years, and that no concerns were raised in relation to the client's fleet.

Table 4.2.2 Details of the minor infringements raised to the NZRO sprat fishery in Latvia in 2019. Source: SES.

Date	Inspection area	Type of infringement	Description of infringement	Sanctions applied
04.02.2019	Port	Minor	SMS message of entry into port was sent with delay	140 eur
01.04.2019	Port	Minor	Fishing without electronic logbook and DEP notification	400 eur
11.04.2019	Other	Minor	- 17,78% difference between reported and landed amount of catch. Infringement detected on LFICIS system.	300 eur

The Latvian Administrative Penalty Code (whose amendment will be soon implemented) remains in force and it is applied rigorously. The MCS efforts remained at the same level as in previous years. Monitoring and inspections in the sprat fishery focus on controlling that the quota allocated to each company is not exceeded, and in verifying total landings and sprat/herring estimates. During the surveillance audit, the SES representative confirmed that they work closely with the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA).

The issue of misidentification of sprat and herring recognized even by ICES (see **Section 4.2.7.2a**) is controlled through sampling of the landings (and inspections carried out by the SES) and by captains' estimates at sea. Article 13 of Regulation 2016/1139 establishes that: "for catches which are landed unsorted the permitted margin of tolerance in estimates recorded in the fishing logbook of the quantities in kilograms of fish retained on board shall be 10 % of the total quantity retained on board". Last year, the SES representatives expressed their concern because through this article the margin of tolerance applies to all species, while previously the Latvian authorities applied this margin to each species individually (it was more restrictive). Therefore, since Regulation 2016/1139 entered into force they thought it was going to be more likely that fishermen declared smelt instead of herring or sprat, or that they would declare a lower herring bycatch in the Baltic sprat fishery. However, the recent implementation of the LFICIS system has improved their capacity to inspect processing plants (even though they recognize there are still problems in processing plants as numbers switch from herring to sprat because it is still difficult to calculate the amount at the time of landing) and has also improved their capacity to detect problems of underreporting certain species using the 10% margin of tolerance. In fact, they have observed that the system is effective as it has improved the compliance.

4.2.5 Traceability issues

The were no changes in the traceability procedures. Nor were any new risks identified.

Transhipment of fish at sea is prohibited, so there is no risk of fish from a non-UoC vessel being transferred to a UoC vessel. The risks of mixing of certified and non-certified fish during processing after landing has not been assessed. Processing facilities would require their own MSC Chain of Custody certification. All landings are reported and recorded in LZIKIS (Latvian Fisheries Integrated and Control Information System), and quantities of fish landed are reconciled with logbook catch records with QR code. This ensures that the processing factory is able to identify the fishery, species, and data of catch with QR Code. The first buyer and processing company in Latvia shall use LZIKIS to maintain the traceability.

The client confirmed that about 56% of the sprat caught by the NZRO members is sold as MSC-certified. They keep records for each company detailing the MSC product sold. These records are updated monthly.

As indicated in previous reports, separate records of the volumes of each species are kept at all times throughout the process: fishing, unloading, transportation, entrance at the plant and processing. The recent implementation of the LZIKIS system (see 2nd surveillance report for more details) allows the fishermen to include MSC data in the system and competent Authorities to crosscheck the information at all steps, ensuring and improving the traceability of fish products from landing at a Latvian port until the product is consumed in Latvia or exported.

NZRO was only selling the fish to the NZRO members, and each fishing company was responsible for processing and commercialising the different fish products. The NZRO had a grading facility and sometimes they graded the fish before selling to the members, but they can also process some fish to produce fish meal and fish oil.

NZRO members registered as first buyer more than 14,000 t of certified raw material in 2019. As indicated in the first surveillance report (Lassen and Garcia, 2018) a restriction to fish meal and fish oil products was raised to enter in subsequent MSC CoC. The client confirmed that this product is not being sold as MSC-certified (the same as for any fish meal and fish oil produced by the NZRO members since the certificate was issued).

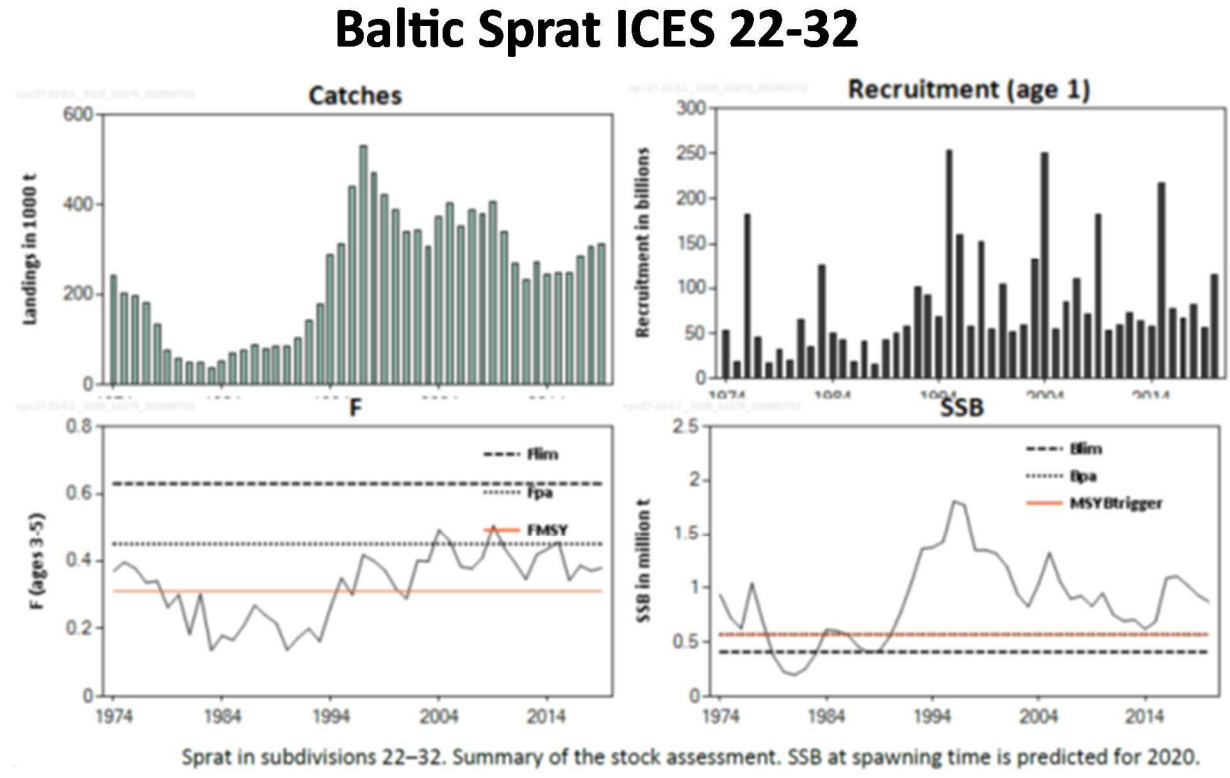
4.2.6 Scientific based information related to P1

4.2.6.1 Stock status

The status of the Baltic sprat stock is based on ICES (2020a) Baltic Sprat Advice (**Figure 4.2.2**). According to ICES, the spawning-stock biomass (SSB) is above MSY $B_{trigger}$. The increase of SSB in 2016–2017 is attributable to the strong year class of 2014. The 2015–2018 year classes are below or close to average, while the 2019 year class is above average. Fishing mortality (F) has remained above F_{MSY} since 2002.

As observed in **Figure 4.2.2** (State of the stock and the fishery relative to reference points), ICES assessed that fishing pressure on the stock is above F_{MSY}, below F_{pa}, and below F_{lim}, and spawning-stock size is above MSY $B_{trigger}$, B_{pa}, and B_{lim}.

There is no B_{MSY} defined for the stock, but current SSB is above the default 1.4*MSY $B_{trigger}$ defined for MSC stocks (~800 kt) as SSB has been predicted for 2020 at 873 kt (ICES, 2020a).



Sprat in subdivisions 22–32. Summary of the stock assessment. SSB at spawning time is predicted for 2020.

Sprat in subdivisions 22–32. State of the stock and the fishery relative to reference points.

		Fishing pressure				Stock size			
		2017	2018	2019		2018	2019	2020	
Maximum sustainable yield	F_{MSY}	✗	✗	✗	Above	MSY $B_{trigger}$	✓	✓	✓ Above trigger
Precautionary approach	F_{pa},F_{lim}	✓	✓	✓	Harvested sustainably	B_{pa},B_{lim}	✓	✓	✓ Full reproductive capacity
Management plan	F_{MGT}	✓	✓	✓	Within the range	SSB_{MGT}	✓	✓	✓ Above

Figure 4.2.2 Baltic Sprat stock status and stock trends. Source: ICES, 2020a.

The Sprat assessment was reviewed (ICES, 2019a) partly based on input from the multispecies assessment on natural mortality. The fishing mortality reference points were updated while the biomass reference points were unchanged (**Table 4.2.3**).

Table 4.2.3 Sprat in subdivisions 22–32. Reference points, values, and their technical basis. Weights are in tonnes. Source: ICES, 2020a**.**

Framework	Reference point	Value	Technical basis
MSY approach	MSY Btrigger	570 000	Assumed at Bpa.
	FMSY	0.31	Stochastic simulations with Beverton–Holt stock–recruitment model
Precautionary approach	Blim	410 000	Stock–recruitment relationship (average of biomasses which produce half of the maximal recruitment in the Beverton–Holt and Ricker models).
	Bpa	570 000	Blim × exp (1.645 × σ), where σ = 0.2.

	Flim	0.63	Consistent with Blim.
	Fpa	0.45	Consistent with Bpa.
Management plan	MAP MSY Btrigger	570 000	MSY Btrigger
	MAP Blim	410 000	Blim
	MAP FMSY	0.31	FMSY
	MAP target range Flower–FMSY	0.22–0.31	Consistent with the ranges that result in a no more than 5% reduction in long-term yield compared with MSY.
	MAP target range FMSY–Fupper	0.31–0.41	Consistent with the ranges that result in a no more than 5% reduction in long-term yield compared with MSY.

The database on which the latest stock assessment was built (ICES, 2020a) is unchanged: commercial catches; two acoustic surveys (Baltic Acoustic Spring Survey - BASS; Baltic International Acoustic Survey - BIAS); natural mortalities from the multispecies model (SMS) and regression of M against eastern Baltic cod SSB. The methodology is also unchanged: age-based analytical assessment, XSA (ICES, 2020b) that uses catches in the model and in the forecast.

Based on all the above, the stock status is unchanged.

4.2.6.2 Acoustic surveys (BIOR)

According to the acoustic data provided by BIOR to the team, the biomass of sprat was lower than in previous years, both, in spring and autumn (**Figures 4.2.3** and **4.2.4**, respectively), but mostly in spring (May 2019), while a high concentration occurred in Polish waters (source: BIOR).

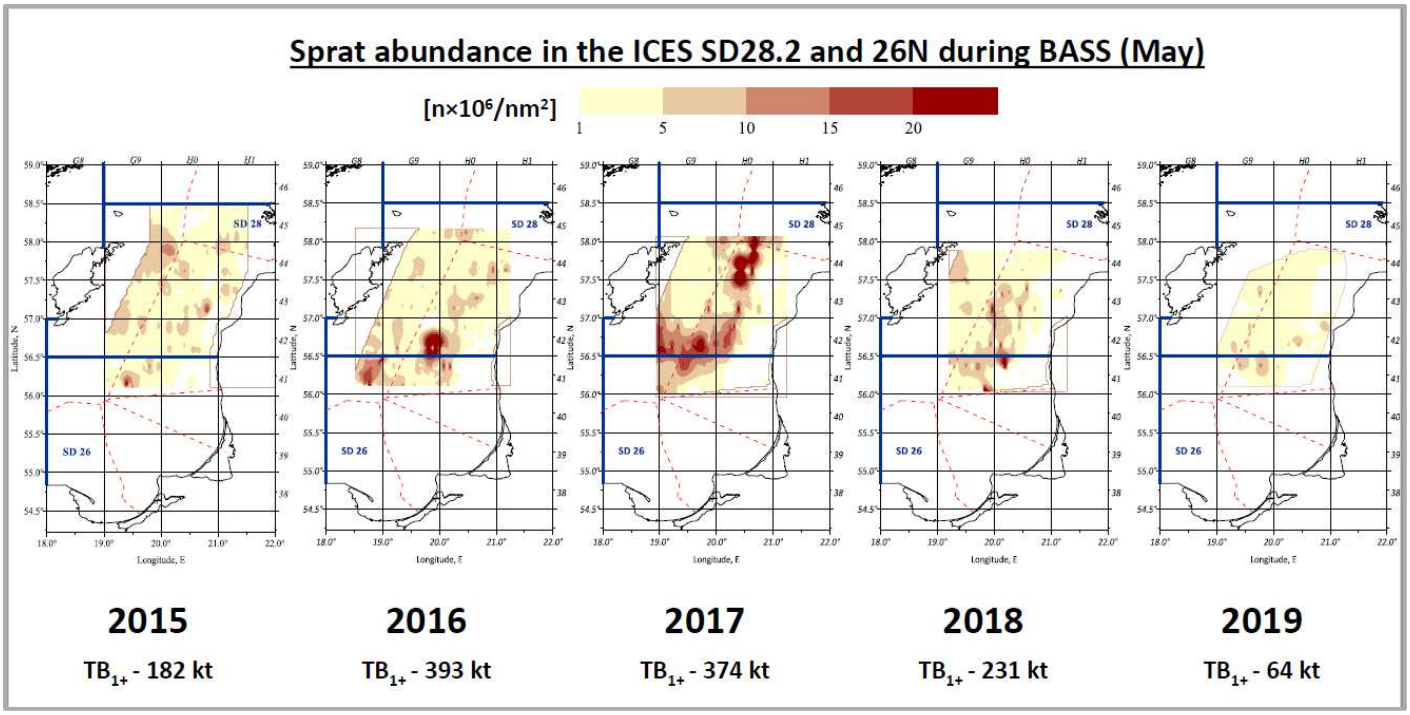


Figure 4.2.3 Sprat abundance in the ICES SD 28.2 and 26N during the Spring Acoustic Survey (BASS). Source: BIOR.

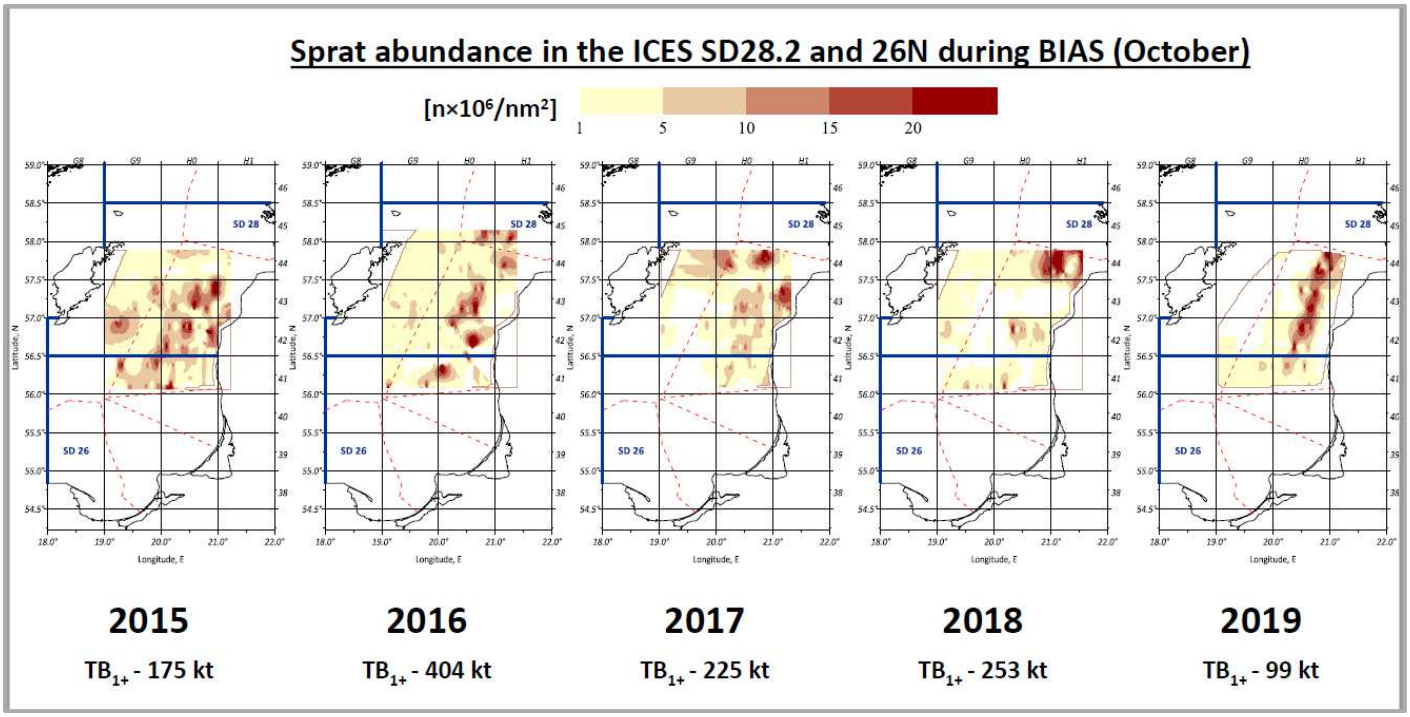


Figure 4.2.4 Sprat abundance in the ICES SD 28.2 and 26N during the Autumn Acoustic Survey (BIAS). Source: BIOR.

4.2.7 Scientific based information related to P2

The updates on relevant P2-related information are presented below:

4.2.7.1 UoC catch composition

In order to monitor any significant changes affecting the scientific based information on P2-species components, the team collected the following information on the catch composition of the UoC catches:

a) Species contribution to the annual total catches of the certified fleet

During the initial assessment the client provided detailed information on the catch composition of the assessed vessels for 2015. This information was updated with data from 2016-2018 in the second surveillance audit, and with data from 2019 during the current audit (see **Table 5.4**). **Table 4.2.4** confirms that sprat and herring are the dominant species in this fishery, accounting for 97.12% of the total catches in weight during the studied period (79.38% sprat and 17.74% herring). The remaining 2.88% is comprised mainly by flounder and cod (1.53% and 1.32%, respectively), while eelpout, smelt and four-horned sculpin constitute a negligible part of the catch. These data are in accordance with the initial assessment, with the only exception of the four-horned sculpin, which was not assessed. A total of 9.83 tons of four-horned sculpin were caught by the UoC during the studied period, in fact, catches correspond to 2016 (5.3t) and 2017 (4.53t).

Table 4.2.4 Species contribution to the annual total catches of the certified fleet. Source: NZRO.

Year	sprat	herring	cod	flounder	eelpout	smelt	four-horned sculpin
2015	87.67%	12.27%	0.01%	0.01%	0.03%	0.00%	0.00%
2016	74.98%	19.28%	2.79%	2.90%	0.02%	0.01%	0.02%
2017	78.37%	16.65%	2.55%	2.40%	0.01%	0.00%	0.02%
2018	75.57%	21.62%	1.03%	1.78%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
2019	80.33%	18.87%	0.22%	0.58%	0.00%	0.01%	0.00%
Average contribution	**79.38%**	**17.74%**	**1.32%**	**1.53%**	**0.01%**	**0.00%**	**0.01%**

b) Catch composition collected by BIOR observers on board Latvian trawlers targeting sprat

During the initial assessment, and within the EU DCF programme, BIOR provided the assessment team with data collected between 2013 and 2016 by scientists on board the fishing vessels targeting sprat in ICES SD 26 and 28.2. This series of data was updated with data from 2016-2018 during the second surveillance audit and now with data from 2019 (**Table 4.2.5**). In all years, sprat and herring have comprised 100% of the total catches in weight, since only a few individuals from a handful of additional species have been identified. These data are in accordance with the initial assessment, with the only exception of the great sandeel, which was not assessed in the initial assessment. However, only 2 individuals and only in one year (2018) were identified in BIOR's samplings.

Table 4.2.5 Catch composition from 53 samplings on board fishing vessels targeting sprat in ICES SD 26, 28.2 between 2016 and 2019. Source: BIOR.

Year	N samplings	Total Catch (kg)	Sprat (%)	Herring (%)	Cod (N ind)	Flounder (N Ind)	Eelpout (N ind)	Smelt (N ind)	Lumpfish (N ind)	Lamprey (N ind)	Great sandeel (N ind)
2013-2015	82	648,550	88,81%	11,19%	-	-	-	-	2	2	-
2016	15	110,400	90,66%	9,34%	18	32	-	-	-	-	-
2017	19	217,200	53,57%	46,43%	6	5	-	2	-	-	-
2018	12	102,750	86,79%	13,21%	3	6	3	-	-	-	2
2019	7	100,235	80,75%	19,25%	4	19	-	-	-	-	-

As observed in **Table 4.2.5**, the number of biological samples in 2019 is lower than in previous years. This is due to the fact that they only come from one trip.

Thus, overall there are no major changes compared to previous years.

4.2.7.2 Primary species

Herring is the only P2 species caught by the UoA that is classified as 'primary' and 'main' (SA3.1.3 and SA3.4 from the MSC Fisheries Standard v2.01). As its stock status was updated in 2020, this was revised in order to evaluate if it had to be re-scored (see the following section "a) Update on the Central Baltic Herring (CBH) stock status").

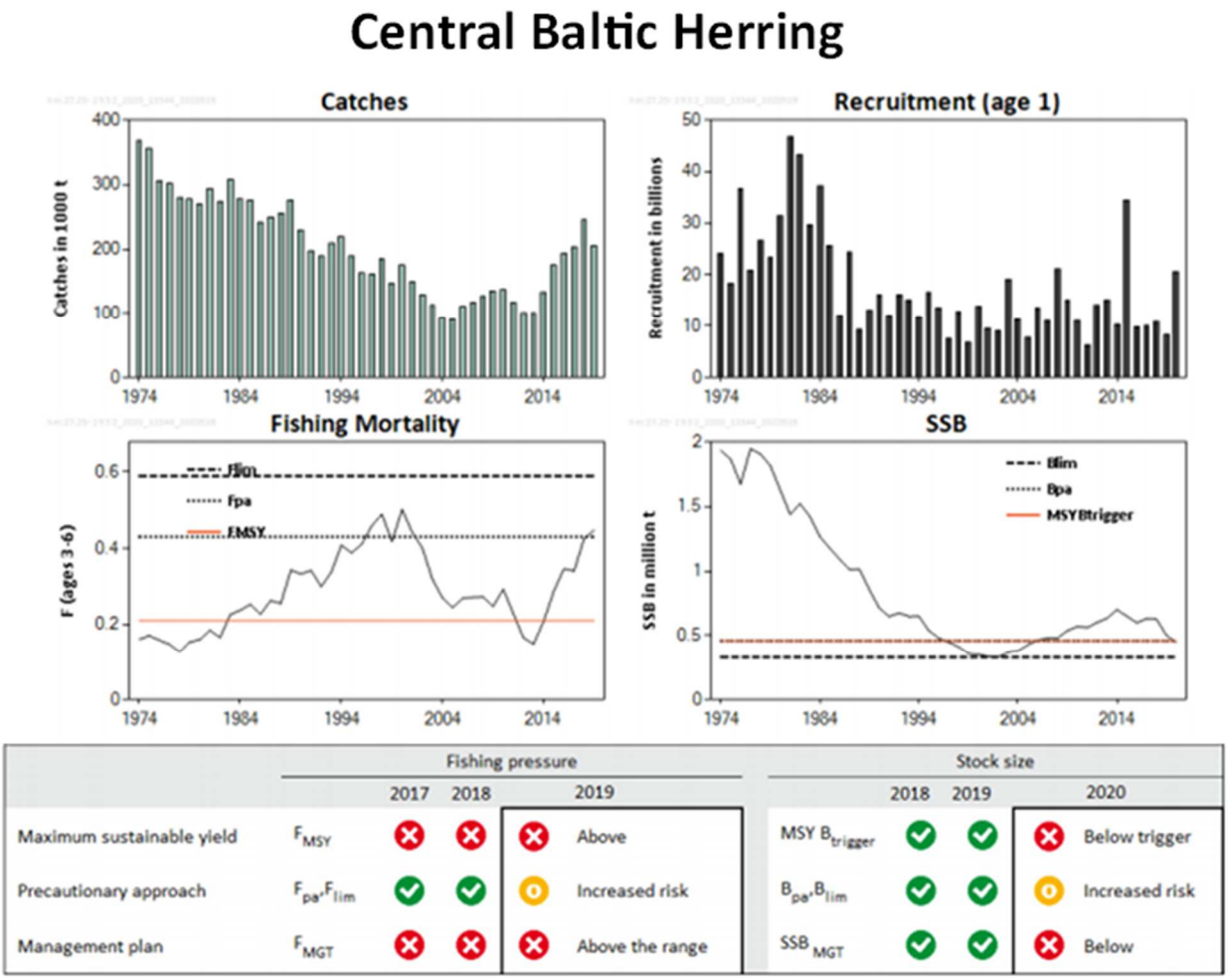
Cod, on the other hand, due to the concern expressed by WWF (see Section 7.2.1.1), even though it is classified as a 'primary' and 'minor' species (SA3.1.3 and SA3.4.5 from the MSC Fisheries Standard v2.01) and did not have to be assessed individually as a result of applying PF5.3.2.1 (FCP v2.1), the assessment team revised its updated stock status too (see the following section "b) Update on the Eastern Baltic Sea Cod stock status").

a) Update on the Central Baltic Herring (CBH) stock status

The stock impacted by the fishery is the Central Baltic herring, ICES (2020c). A recent interbenchmark assessment (ICES, 2020d) introduced updated natural mortalities for 1974–2018, which led to a downward revision of SSB and an upward revision of fishing mortality compared to previous assessments.

Therefore, in the latest stock assessment (ICES, 2020c), the SBB has shown a decreasing trend since 2014, and is just below MSY $B_{trigger}$ and between B_{pa} and B_{lim} in 2020 (**Figure 4.2.5** and **Table 4.2.5**). Fishing mortality has shown an increasing trend since 2014 and has been above F_{MSY} since 2015 and above F_{pa} in 2019 (**Figure 4.2.5** and **Table 4.2.5**). The high recruitment in 2015 was followed by four years of below average or average recruitment and recruitment in 2020 is above average (**Figure 4.2.5**). Moreover, the estimate of the large 2014-year class is imprecise. In addition, species misreporting of herring has occurred in the past, and there are indications of sprat being misreported as herring (see **Section 4.2.4** for futher

details). These effects have not been quantified; however, they may affect the quality of the assessment (ICES, 2020c).



		Fishing pressure				Stock size			
		2017	2018	2019			2018	2019	2020
Maximum sustainable yield	F_{MSY}	✗	✗	✗	Above	MSY $B_{trigger}$	✓	✓	✗ Below trigger
Precautionary approach	F_{pa},F_{lim}	✓	✓	○	Increased risk	B_{pa},B_{lim}	✓	✓	○ Increased risk
Management plan	F_{MGT}	✗	✗	✗	Above the range	SSB_{MGT}	✓	✓	✗ Below

Figure 4.2.5 Herring in subdivisions 25–29 and 32, excluding the Gulf of Riga (central Baltic Sea). Above: Summary of the stock assessment (SSB at spawning time in 2020 is predicted). Below: State of the stock and the fishery relative to reference points. Source: ICES, 2020c.

The management of the Central Baltic herring stock is based on an EU multiannual plan (MAP) for stocks in the Baltic Sea (EU, 2016). This plan affects the different herring stocks in the Baltic Sea.

ICES advises that when the EU MAP for the Baltic Sea is applied, catches in 2021 that correspond to the F ranges in the plan are between 83,971 tonnes and 138,183 tonnes. According to the MAP, catches higher than 111,852 tonnes can only be taken under conditions specified in the MAP, whilst the entire range is considered precautionary when applying the ICES advice rule (ICES, 2020c).

Therefore, ICES assessed that fishing pressure on the stock is above F_{MSY} and between F_{pa} and F_{lim}, and that spawning-stock size is below MSY $B_{trigger}$ and between B_{pa} and B_{lim}, however, the assessment team decided not to rescore this element based on the following:

a) The stock is still close to MSY $B_{trigger}$ and well above B_{lim}, hence there is a high degree of certainty that the stock is above PRI;
b) The stock is managed according to a management plan and the TAC/catches are inside this Plan (see **Table 4.2.6**). The ICES advice basis for 2018-2020 is MAP target F ranges: Flower to Fupper (F = 0.16–0.28), but F higher than F_{MSY} = 0.22 only under conditions specified in MAP. The Plan is considered precautionary according to ICES (ICES, 2020c).

Table 4.2.6 Management plan (ICES advice), agreed TAC and ICES catches (ICES, 2018a; 2019b; 2020c).

Year	ICES advice	Agreed TAC (t)	ICES Catch (t)
2018	**200,236–331,510 t**, but catch higher than 267,745 t only under conditions specified in MAP	258,855	244,365
2019	**115,591–192,787 t**, but catch higher than 155,333 t only under conditions specified in MAP	200,260	204,438
2020	**130,546–214,553 t**, but catch higher than 173,975 t only under conditions specified in MAP	182,484	

As it can be observed in **Table 4.2.6** the catch in 2018 and 2019 is close to the agreed TAC, and the agreed TAC is inside the range indicated by the Management Plan (but above the lower limit defined in it), even though in 2019 it was higher than the higher limit. The management plan is followed and the stock is expected to vary around MSY based on the evaluation. The future is expected to be better based on the 2019-year class recruiting in 2020. Therefore, a re-scoring was not deemed necessary.

b) Update on the Eastern Baltic Sea Cod stock status

The assessment strategy for the eastern Baltic Sea cod was changed since the initial assessement of the fishery and ICES (2018b) presented a SPiCT assessment and advice based on this assessment. This involved reference points which were not available previously (ICES, 2016). Hence, cod was reassessed as a primary minor by-catch during the 2nd Surveillance audit.

The Eastern Baltic cod stock is biologically distinct from the adjacent Western Baltic (subdivisions 22–24) stock although there is mixing of the two stocks in SD 24 that is taken into account in the ICES assessment (ICES, 2019c). However, this does not really affect the Latvian sprat fishery where the fishery is restricted to ICES 25 and areas further east (see **Figure 4.2.1**).

The results of the 2019 ICES assessment and advice on the Eastern Baltic Sea Cod (ICES, 2019c) are shown in Figure **4.2.6**; while those of the 2020 assessment and advice are shown in **Figure 4.2.7**. Due to the Covid-19 disruption, the 2020 advice is abbreviated, therefore, both assessments will be compared in this surveillance report.

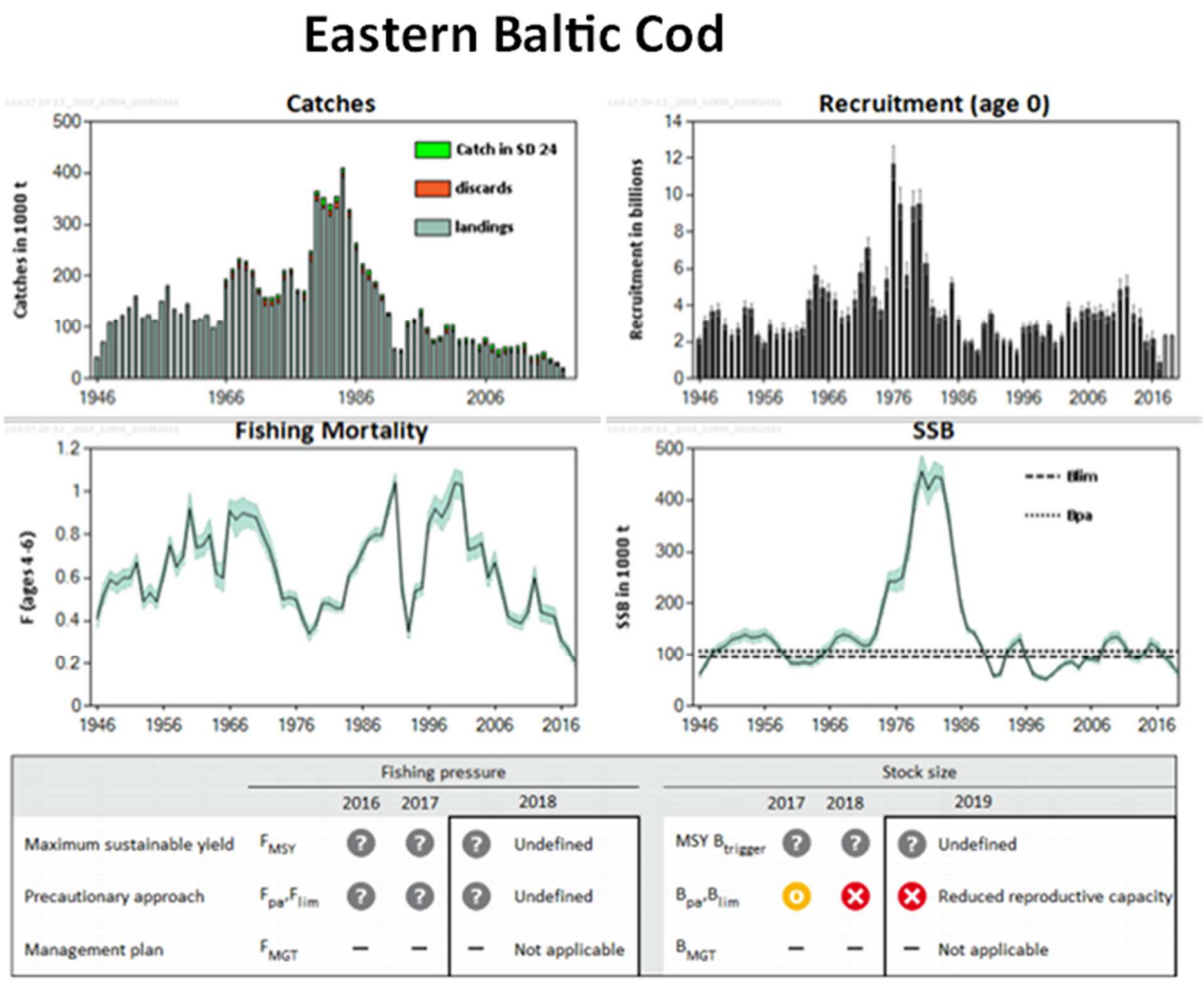


Figure 4.2.6 Cod in subdivisions 24–32 eastern Baltic stock. Above: Summary of the stock assessment. R, F, and SSB (spawning stock biomass at the spawning time) have confidence intervals (90%) in the plot. Assumed R values are unshaded. The EU landing obligation entered into force in 2015; therefore, landings since 2015 include fish above and below the minimum conservation reference size (MCRS). Below: State of the stock and fishery relative to reference points. Source: ICES, 2019c.

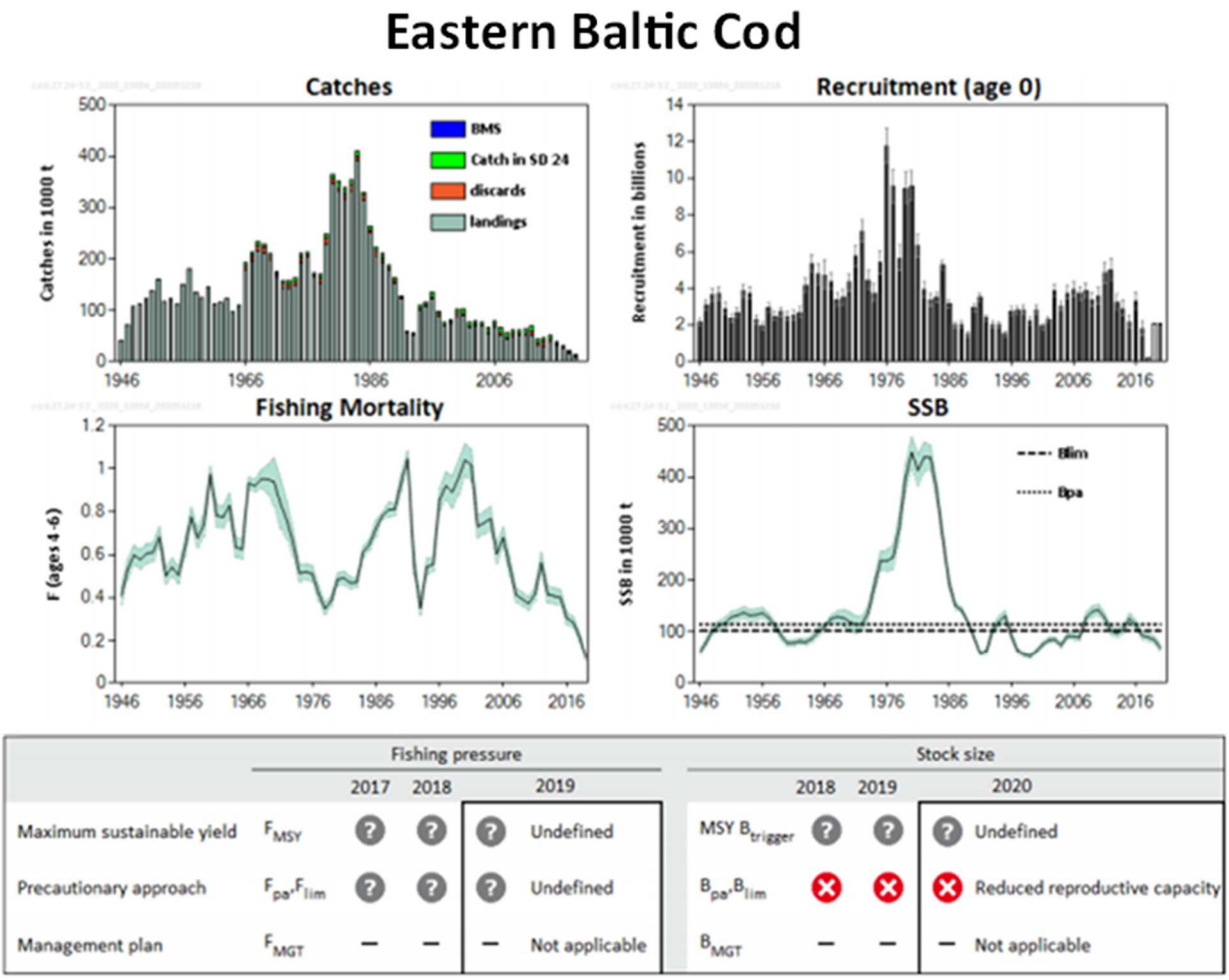


Figure 4.2.7 Cod in subdivisions 24–32 eastern Baltic stock. Above: Summary of the stock assessment. R, F, and SSB (spawning stock biomass at the spawning time) have confidence intervals (90%) in the plot. Assumed R values are unshaded. Below: State of the stock and fishery relative to reference points. Source: ICES, 2020e.

The spawning stock biomass (SSB) has been at the highest level in the late 1970s-early 1980s. In the period since the 1990s, the SSB has fluctuated, but has been declining since 2015 and is estimated to be below B_{lim} in the last 3 years. Fishing mortality (F) has declined since 2012 and the value estimated for 2019 is the lowest recorded. Recruitment (R) has been declining since 2012, and the recruitment in 2017 is estimated to be the lowest in the time series.

Apart from the spawning stock size being below B_{lim} and B_{pa}, fishing pressure reference points are not defined, and neither is the stock status relative to these (**Figures 4.2.6** and **4.2.7**).

The poor status of the Eastern Baltic cod is largely driven by biological changes in the stock during the last decades. Growth, condition (weight at length), and size at maturation have substantially declined (**Figure 4.2.8**). These developments indicate that the stock is distressed and is expected to have reduced reproductive potential. Natural mortality has increased, and is estimated to be considerably higher than the fishing mortality in recent years (**Figure 4.2.8**). Population size structure has continuously deteriorated during the last years as the size of the largest fish in the population has shown a decline since 1990 (**Figure 4.2.8**).

Due to the large decline in size at maturation, the development of the exploitable stock size is not consistently represented by SSB, especially in recent years (**Figure 4.2.9**). This implies that the SSB now includes small cod that were not part of SSB in earlier years. The biomass of commercial sized cod (≥ 35 cm) is currently at the lowest level observed since the 1950s.

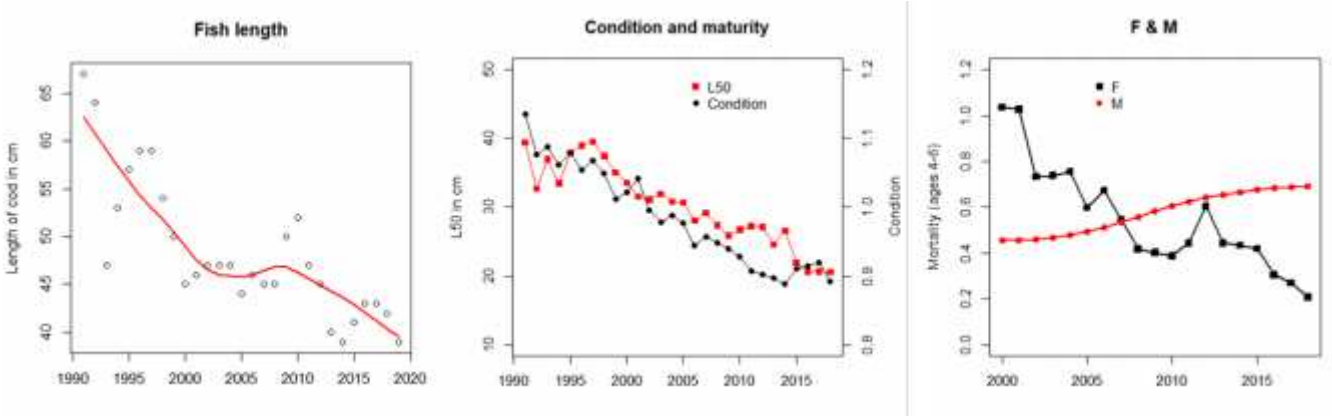


Figure 4.2.8 Cod in subdivisions 24–32, eastern Baltic stock. Left panel: Indicator of size structure of the stock (length at the 95th percentile of the length distribution, data from BITS-Q1 survey). Middle panel: length at which half of the stock has become mature (L50) and condition (weight at length) of 40–60 cm cod (data from BITS-Q1 survey). Right panel: Fishing mortality (F) and natural mortality (M) for ages 4–6, estimates in stock assessment. Source: ICES, 2019c.

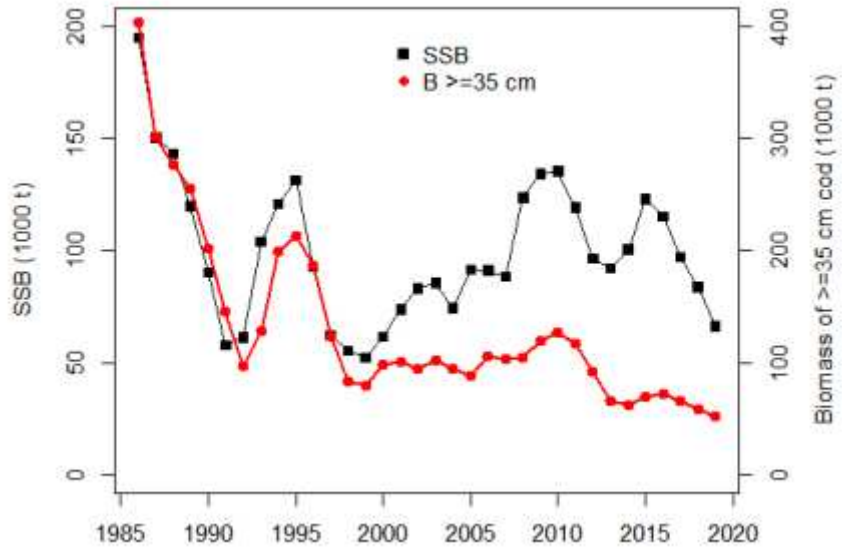


Figure 4.2.9 Cod in subdivisions 24–32, eastern Baltic stock. Spawning stock biomass at the spawning time and biomass of commercial sized cod (≥35 cm in length) in the beginning of the year. Source: ICES, 2019c.

The low growth, poor condition, and high natural mortality of cod are related to changes in the ecosystem, which include the following:

i) Poor oxygen conditions that can affect cod directly by altering metabolism and indirectly from a shortage of benthic prey, while also affecting the survival of offspring,

ii) Low availability of fish prey in the main distribution area of cod. This is because sprat and herring are more northerly distributed in recent years and are overlapping less with the distribution of the cod stock,

iii) High levels of parasite infestations; this is related to an increased abundance of grey seals.

These drivers are interrelated, and the relative effect on the cod stock is unclear.

The management of the Eastern Baltic Cod stock is based on an EU multiannual plan (MAP) for stocks in the Baltic Sea (EU, 2016). This plan includes cod. However, as seen above, F_{MSY} ranges are not available for the eastern Baltic cod stock. In fact, the concept of F_{MSY} assuming long-term equilibrium is not considered appropriate for this stock presently, due to a large decline in productivity in later years (ICES, 2019c). At the present low productivity, the stock is estimated to remain below B_{lim} in the medium-term (2024), even at no fishing. Furthermore, fishing at any level will target the remaining few commercial sized (≥35 cm) cod; this will deteriorate the stock structure further and reduce its reproductive potential (ICES, 2019c).

However, by-catches remain very low (**Table 4.2.4**) and there are measures in place (including closing the fishery in summer) assuring that the by-catch also in the future will remain low, therefore, as the situation and the very low by-catch is unchanged from last year, no re-scoring has been deemed necessary for the present surveillance.

*4.2.7.3 Secondary species - Flounder (**Platichthys flesus**)*

Up until the second surveillance, flounder had no reference points. Now, however, there is a F-reference point ($F_{MSY}/F = 1$ and a relative F_{MSY}/F estimate) based on the length distribution (ICES, 2019d; 2020f), but the requirement for classifying the species as 'primary' (SA3.1.3.3 from the MSC Fisheries Standard v2.01) states the following: "Species where management tools and measures are in place, intended to achieve stock management objectives reflected in either limit or target reference points."

Moreover, flounder is not included within the Baltic Sea Multiannual Plan COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) 2019/1838 of 30 October 2019 fixing for 2020 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/124 as regards certain fishing opportunities in other waters.

In addition, ICES is only providing stock status and the EU is not setting overall quotas, i.e. management tools are not fully met. Furthermore, the recent recognition of another flounder species in the fishery complicates the evaluation. ICES states (ICES, 2020f): Two flounder species occur in the Baltic Sea, both of which are present in the management area [26+28]. Through studies of survey data from 2014 and 2015, the shares of offshore spawning *Platichthys flesus* and the newly described coastal spawning species *Platichthys solemdali* in this management area were estimated at approximately 85% and 15%, respectively. However, it is not possible at this stage to separate the proportion of this species in either stock assessment or fisheries. Abundance index and LBI reference points were calculated from data from BITS Quarter 4 when the two species are mixing. Assuming that both species have the same life history parameters, the advice is considered to be representative for both flounder species.

Therefore, and independent of the unclear stock status, as the species remains classified as 'secondary', no re-scoring was deemed necessary for the present surveillance.

4.2.7.4 ETP species

a) Marine mammals

Under the Latvian National programme for marine mammals (EU 812/2004), 13 vessels were subject to observers covering a total of 456 fishing days. No harbour porpoises were observed. Note that the observer programme covers trips in ICES 25 and ICES 26, including the ground north of the Gulf of Gdansk (**Figure 4.2.3**).

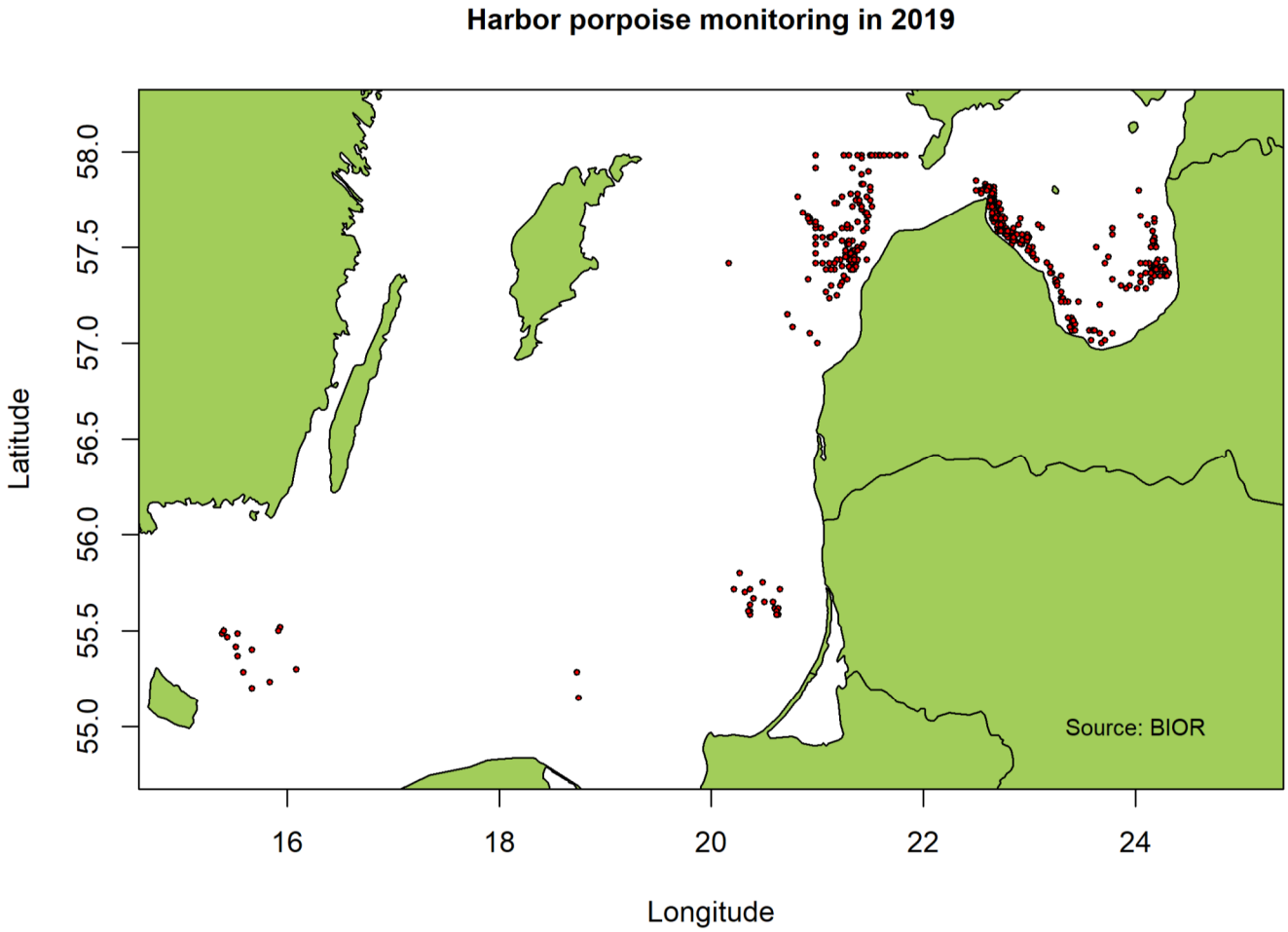


Figure 4.2.3 Observed fishing operations for the harbour porpoise monitoring in 2019. Source: BIOR

b) Birds

As for harbour porpoises, BIOR also stated that no birds were caught as by-catch.

4.3 Version details

Details on the version of the fisheries program documents used for this assessment are presented in **Table 4.3**, as required in the 'MSC Surveillance Reporting Template v2.01.

Table 4.3 Details on the versions of the fisheries program documents used for this assessment

Document	Version number, date of publication (and date effective)
MSC Fisheries Certification Process	The fishery sureillance was announced before the 25th September 2020. Therefore, the valid document was the MSC Fisheries Certification Process v2.1, 31 August 2018 (28 February 2019).
MSC Fisheries Standard	Version 2.01, 31 August 2018 (28 February 2019)
MSC General Certification Requirements	Version 2.4.1, 7 May 2019 (28 September 2019)
MSC Surveillance Reporting Template	The fishery sureillance was announced before the 25th September 2020. Therefore, the valid document was the MSC Surveillance Reporting Template v2.01, 28 March 2019 (28 March 2019)

5 Results

5.1 Surveillance results overview

5.1.1 Summary of conditions

The original assessment (Lassen et al., 2017) and the First Surveillance Audit set no conditions. However, as a result of the harmonization process with overlapping fisheries, a new condition was opened on PI 2.3.1 due to cumulative impacts of all MSC UoAs in the Second Suveillance Audit (Table 5.2). This condition has been assessed in the Third (current) Surveillance Audit (see Section 5.1.4 for further details).

In accordance with the MSC Covid-19 Derogation published on the 27th of March 2020 and following the MSC fisheries CAB guidance for derogation, BV has updated the condition deadline and milestones in this Surveillance report. As a result, the condition status progress evaluated during the current surveillance has been documented as 'ahead target' as the fishery milestones and condition deadlines have been extended 6 months from the original timeline (May 2020) to November 2020.

Table 5.2 Summary of conditions

Condition number	Condition	Performance Indicator (PI)	Status	PI original score	PI revised score
1	By 2023 it shall be demonstrated that the combined effects of the MSC UoAs on the population of Baltic proper harbour porpoise are known and highly likely to be within ASCOBANS limits for acceptable anthropogenic removal.	2.3.1	**Ahead target**	75	NA

5.1.2 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and catch data

Table 5.3 shows the total EU TAC for sprat in the Baltic proper (ICES SD 22-32). Almost 15% of the EU TAC corresponded to Latvia (40,250 tons) and over 67% of that quota was allocated to the fishing companies included in the UoC (27,145 tons). The fishing companies are allowed to exchange quota, so the final UoC catches did not reach the initial quota allocation (they caught 25,241 tons).

Table 5.3 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and UoC catch data of sprat in 2018 and 2019. Sources: Council Regulation (EU) 2016/1903 and NZRO

Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and catch data				
TAC (EU)	Year	2019	270,000,772	kg
Latvian quota	Year	2019	37,460,000 [2]	kg
UoC share of TAC	Year	2019	27,145,000	kg
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (most recent)	2019	25,241,175	kg
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (second most recent)	2018	21,000,600	kg

[2] According to Reg. 2018/1628.

Historical UoC catches are presented in **Table 5.4**. Sprat average annual catch of the UoC amounted to 20.956 tons for the period 2015-2019.

Table 5.4 Retained species annual catches (tons) of the certified fleet. Source: NZRO.

Common name	Scientific name	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Average annual catch per spp.
Sprat	*Sprattus sprattus*	19,684.90	17,008.58	21,845.74	21,000.60	25,241.18	**20,956.20**
Herring	*Clupea harengus*	2,754.20	4,374.79	4,641.61	6,009.20	5,929.90	**4,741.94**
Cod	*Gadus morhua*	3.1	633.34	711.88	286.6	69.033	**340.79**
Flounder	*Platichthys flesus*	2	658.28	669.27	493.7	181.113	**400.87**
Eelpout	*Zoarces viviparus*	7.5	3.83	2.08	0	0	**2.68**
Smelt	*Osmerus eperlanus*	0.5	1.3	0	0	1.886	**0.74**
Four-horned sculpin	*Myoxocephalus quadricornis*	0	5.3	4.53	0	0	**1.97**
Total UoC annual catch		***22,452.20***	***22,685.42***	***27,875.11***	***27,790.10***	***31,423.10***	***26,445.19***

5.1.3 Recommendations

No recommendations were issued during the initial assessment or previous surveillance audits, and no recommendations were raised during the current surveillance audit.

5.1.4 Conditions

One condition was opened during the previous surveillance audit for the LFPO sprat fishery (**Table 5.5**).

Table 5.5 – Condition 1

Performance Indicator	**PI 2.3.1 The UoA meets national and international requirements for the protection of ETP species. The UoA does not hinder recovery of ETP species** **SI(a) Effects of the UoA on population/stock within national or international limits, where applicable**
Score	*75*
Justification	*Midwater/pelagic trawl is considered by the ICES WGBYC to pose a higher risk (category 2) than other mobile gear. ICES Working Group on Marine Mammal Ecology shows no pelagic trawl interaction with harbour porpoise, but does indicate capture of other cetaceans (common dolphins), highlighting potential for risk to other cetacean species (17 common dolphin caught in German pelagic trawl in ICES divisions 6 and 7).* *With regard to cumulative impacts two MSC assessed fisheries overlaps with the LFPO pelagic trawl sprat fishery and have been assessed under MSC FCR v2.0: the Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Sweden Baltic herring & sprat fishery and the Finnish*

	herring and sprat trawl and trap fisheries. The team assessing the Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Sweden Baltic herring and sprat fishery confirmed during harmonisation meetings held during the preparation of the second surveillance audit report (and drafts shared with the BV team) that observer coverage in those fisheries was below 5%. Furthermore, the ICES WGBYC note that while bycatch in pelagic trawls are considered extremely rare, observing 5% of pelagic trawl effort in the Baltic cannot provide estimates of total cetacean bycatch with an acceptable level of uncertainty. *SG80 level requires justification that cumulatively (across Latvia, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Estonia) all MSC fisheries are highly unlikely to have an impact above the acceptable limit of 8.5 harbour porposie. Across six countries, this equates to 1.5 individual harbour porpoise each.* *On the basis of the available evidence, including frequency / proportion of observer coverage, the combined effects of the UoAs, covering Latvia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany and Estonia can not be considered to be highly likely to be within the ASCOBANS limit of 8.5 individuals. SG80 is not met.*
Condition	In accordance with FCR 7.11.1.3a, the CAB considers that the following exceptional circumstances determine that achieving a performance level of 80 may take longer than the period of certification: - Joint effort from at least 16 different UoAs from 6 different countries are required to fulfil this condition. - At the time of preparing this report the remaining certificate period for the LFPO fishery is less than 3 years. - During the harmonisation meetings it was agreed with Lloyd's Register to provide at least until 2023 to the affected UoAs to fulfil this condition **CONDITION**: By 2023 it shall be demonstrated that the combined effects of the MSC UoAs on the population of Baltic proper harbour porpoise are known and highly likely to be within ASCOBANS limits for acceptable anthropogenic removal.
Milestones as set in the Second surveillance	At the moment of preparing the Second surveillance report the DDES Baltic Herring & Sprat Fishery was still busy preparing its action plan, and the LFPO was going to join that action plan once approved. Most of the affected UoAs also have a condition on information. The draft milestones discussed during the harmonisation meeting are presented below: Year 1 (2020): Prepare a proposal for developing a multi-national plan for collection of data across all MSC UoAs on the incidental capture of harbour porpoise, that is independently verified and that demonstrates the combined impact on this species. Score: 75 Year 2 (2021): Agree and adopt the multi-national plan. Score: 75 Year 3 (2022): Implement the multi-national plan. Score: 75 Year 4 (2023): Evaluate initial data and propose strategies to minimise impact if required. Score: 80 In addition to the harmonized milestones explained above, the client has to achieve the following milestones: Year 1 (2020). In order to help preparing a proposal for developing a multi-national plan, the client shall gather all relevant information in relation to interactions with harbour porpoises: (i) recorded by the Latvian fishers in compliance with the Article

	8.10 of Cabinet Regulation 296/2007; (ii) collected by observers as a result of the implementation of Regulation (EC) 812/2004. Year 2 (2021). The client shall agree a joint action plan with the other overlapping MSC UoAs. Year 3 (2022). At the end of the certificate period (May 2022), the client shall have implemented the joint action plan
Harmonized Milestones	As above mentioned, from the information obtained from BV's Second surveillance report, at that time the DDES Baltic Herring & Sprat fishery (assessed by Lloyd's Register) was still preparing its action plan. It was, therefore, decided that NZRO would join that action plan once approved and the Milestones published on the 2nd Surveillance report would be a draft. As explained in **Section 7.4**, after the publication of the 2nd Surveillance Audit report of the LFPO sprat fishery (on 23/07/2019), a harmonization meeting was conducted (on 09/09/2019) to deal with the present condition (PI 2.3.1 SI a). After this harmonization meeting, a couple of emails were also exchanged between both CABs until agreement was reached regarding the new condition and its milestones (on 13/09/2019). However, at that time BV did not update the report to include these milestones. The final harmonized Milestones between the overlapping fisheries are as follows: Year 1: Each UoA shall develop a plan for recording the occurrence of incidental capture of harbour porpoise at a UoA level. Resulting Score: 75. Year 2: Each UoA shall implement plan to record occurrence of incidental capture of harbour porpoise at a UoA level. Resulting Score: 75. And; Year 2: Propose a mechanism by which data are compiled and analysed across all MSC UoAs, that is independently verified and that demonstrates the combined impact of MSC UoAs on the "Baltic proper" harbour porpoise stock. Resulting Score: 75. Year 3: Provide evidence that the plan to record occurrence of incidental bycatch for each UoA has been implemented, including initial data collected. Resulting Score: 75. And; Year 3: Agree and adopt the mechanism for compiling and analysing data across all MSC UoAs. Resulting Score: 75. And; Year 3: Propose strategies to mitigate combined impacts on harbour porpoise, if required. Resulting Score: 75. Year 4: Provide evidence that compiled data across all MSC UoAs have been analysed and that the combined effects on harbour porpoise are known. Resulting Score: 75. And;

	Year 4: Implement strategies if required, such that the combined effects of the UoAs on harbour porpoise are highly likely to be within ASCOBANS limits. Resulting Score: 80
Client action plan	Since the DDES Baltic Herring & Sprat Fishery is still working on its action plan to address the harmonized milestones (see above), the client has prepared there specific action plan for the first year milestones. The LFPO and the Finnish fishery will collaborate to develop a joint action plan. The client action plan developed by the client is presented below: *As a result of the implementation of Regulation (EC)812/2004, interactions between Latvian fisheries and harbour porpoise in Baltic sea are being monitored by BIOR. They have observers on board the midwater trawl fishing fleet (including NZRO vessels), both in the Baltic proper and the Gulf of Riga.* *Further, Republic of Latvia Cabinet Regulation No. 296, Article 8.10 determines that fishers shall inform the State scientific institute (BIOR): "regarding the catching of marked or rare species of fish and birds, as well as marine mammals (for example, harbour porpoises, seals) and to perform the relevant entries in the fishing logbook". It is mandatory by law to record and report interactions with harbour porpoises.* *Also, in our organization the data sheet used by fishermen to record catches has a special row ('others') where they should write species of fish and birds, as well as marine mammals. Our fishermen are well aware of this legal requirement.* *The NZRO commits to the following action plan aimed to fulfil the condition established on PI2.3.1:* *Year 1 (2020). The NZRO commits to collect and analyse all data collected in Latvia in relation to interactions between fisheries and harbour porpoises. Further, we will get in contact with the other MSC UoAs and start to work in close collaboration in order to develop a joint action plan* *Year 2 (2021). A joint action plan shall be adopted* *Year 3 (2022). The joint action plan shall be implemented.*
Consultation on condition	Annual reports prepared by BIOR on the implementation of Regulation (EC) 812/2004 are available under request (as confirmed by the team during the current surveillance audit). In addition, the client contacted via email the contact person of the DDES Baltic Herring & Sprat Fishery on 19/07/2019 to express their interest to work together towards a joint action plan regarding the condition on PI 2.3.1. BV got a copy of this email.
Progress on Condition (Year 1)	As explained above, new harmonized milestones were agreed recently (in September 2019). BV has, therefore, decided to assess the progress on this condition based on these new harmonized milestones and not the ones shown in the second surveillance report. According to these harmonized milestones, in Year 1 each UoA shall develop a plan for recording the occurrence of incidental capture of harbour porpoise at a UoA level. In the case of Latvia, interactions between Latvian fisheries and harbour porpoises in the Baltic Sea have been (and still are) monitored by BIOR since the implementation of Regulation (EC) 812/2004 (repealed now by Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 – see Section 4.2.3.2 for further details). As a result of this regulation, since 2006 they have

	observers on board the midwater trawl fishing fleet (including NZRO vessels), both in the Baltic proper and the Gulf of Riga. Furthermore, Republic of Latvia Cabinet Regulation No. 296 adopted on 2 May 2007, details the duties of fishers (section II), and Article 8.10 requires that fishers shall inform the State scientific institute (BIOR): "regarding the catching of marked or rare species of fish and birds, as well as marine mammals (for example, harbour porpoises or seals) and to perform the relevant entries in the fishing logbook". It is, therefore, mandatory by law to record and report interactions with harbour porpoises since 2006. Moreover, specifically in NZRO's organization, the data sheet used by the fishermen to record catches has a special row ('others') where they enter the species of fish and birds, as well as marine mammals. Thus, NZRO fishermen collect information about catches and bycatch of harbour porpoises and seals every month. In addition, according to the collected information and BIOR's input, no interactions with harbour porpoises have ever been recorded since 2006 (when the domestic monitoring program on incidental catches of cetaceans began). Thus, the UoA fleet is already (and has been since 2006) collecting data on any incidental harbour porpoise catches within their fishery, in accordance with the Year 1 milestone of the Client Action Plan (see Section 5.1.5).
Status	As the LFPO fishery has already been recording the occurrence of incidental capture of harbour porpoises and BIOR has been monitoring the interactions between Latvian fisheries and harbour porpoises in the Baltic Sea since 2006, the team understands this as already having "a plan implemented to record occurrence of incidental capture of harbour porpoise at a UoA level" as stated in the harmonized milestones (see above), hence meeting the Year 1 milestone. The condition deadline and milestones are subject to a 6-month extension in accordance with the COVID-19 Derogation of 27 March 2020 from the original timeline (May 2020) to November 2020 (see **Section 3** for further details), therefore, the condition status is 'ahead target' following the MSC CAB guidance.
Additional information	No additional information is required.

5.1.5 Client Action Plan

As mentioned above, at the time of preparing the Second surveillance report (which is when the Condition was opened) the DDES Baltic Herring & Sprat fishery was still working on its action plan to address the harmonized milestones, hence, NZRO prepared their specific action plan for the first year milestones (see the initial Client action plan above) and it was decided that NZRO would join that action plan once approved and the Milestones published on the 2nd Surveillance report would be a draft.

Hence, as agreed, the LFPO, the DDES Baltic Herring & Sprat, and the Finnish fisheries collaborated to develop the following Joint Action Plan which is the one in force at present (see **Section 7.4** for further details on the harmonisation):

Year 1: Each client UoA will develop a plan for (self-reporting) data collection on any incidental harbour porpoise catches within the fisheries.

Year 2: Each client UoA will implement the plan and start collecting data on any incidental harbour porpoise catches within the fisheries. The clients will work together to propose a mechanism for data compilation and analysis of all MSC UoAs incidental catches of harbour porpoise.

Year 3: Each client UoA will demonstrate that their data collection plan is working and present initial data. The clients will implement a mutual mechanism for data compilation and analysis of incidental catches of harbour porpoise.

If needed based on the initial data analysis, the clients will work together to propose strategies to minimise impact of the fisheries on the harbour porpoise.

Year 4: The clients will show that data compilation and analysis across all MSC UoAs has been implemented and present the conclusions about the fisheries impact on harbour porpoise.

If needed based on the data analysis, the clients will work together with other certified UoAs in the Baltic to implement strategies to minimise impact on harbour porpoise.

5.1.6 Re-scoring Performance Indicators

No PI was rescored.

6 References

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7 Appendices

7.1 Evaluation processes and techniques

7.1.1 Site visit

The surveillance audit was announced on the MSC website on the 4th May 2020.

The third annual surveillance audit was conducted remotely on 1 and 2 June 2020. There were only a few tehnical problems and these did not affect the conduction of the meetings.

Table 7.1.1. Details of the meetings held during the remote visit for the 3SA audit of the Latvian Baltic Sprat open Sea fishery

Date	Place/Address	Time (CET)	Institution	Attendees
1 June 2020	Remote	10:00-11:30	Client Group	Assessment team Viesturs Ulis
	Remote	13:00-13:45	Ministry	Assessment team Normans Riekstins Santa Jansone
	Remote	15:00:15:45	Control and enforcement	Assessment team Miks Weinsbergs
2 June 2020	Remote	10:30-11:45	BIOR	Assessment team Didzis Ustups Ivars Putnis
	Remote	16:00-17:00	Client Group	Assessment team Viesturs Ulis

General agenda for the remote sessions:

1. Welcome, identification of participants, basis for the sessions
2. Confidentiality, Status of documentation
3. General status of the fishery, changes in grounds, season, gears and other operational aspects
4. Status of conditions and recommendations
5. Traceability, CoC
6. Target stock, stock status and stock assessment, management at stock level, EU-Russian fisheries agreement
7. Observer programs
    a. By-catches, fish
    b. By-catch, sea birds
    c. By-catch marine mammals
    d. By-catch ETP species (Harbour porpoise)
8. Habitat impact
9. Fishery specific management, general arrangements, compliance
10. Any other business

The closing meeting with the Client reviewed issues that were raised during the audit and rebviewed outstandaing information that was required. This particularly concerned the status of the condition (Multi-national) sampling plan for harbour porpoise. Finally, the time table was discussed.

7.1.2 Stakeholder participation

The site visit for the surveillance audit was announced on the MSC website on the 4th May 2020 and stakeholders could send their inputs until May 30. In addition, the notification of the surveillance audit was sent to a list of stakeholders identified during the initial assessment and revised before the current surveillance audit. This list included up to 59 different contacts from management institutions (Fishery Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, Rural Support Service of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Service, the Control Unit of the State Environmental Service), other stakeholders from the fishing industry(Latvian Fisherman Federation, Latvian fishing Producers Group Society "Kurzeme Fisherman's Association", Latvian Fish Processing Industry Union), research institutions (BIOR, Faculty of Biology of the University of Latvia,), NGOs (WWF, Society "Latvian Fish Growers Association", Latvian Fund for Nature (LDF), BirdLife International, Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF), Latvian Ornithological Society (LOB), Hel Marine Station) and CABs from overlapping fisheries (Lloyd's Register, SAI Global).

Furthermore, the team with the assistance of the client elaborated a list of key stakeholders to be interviewed and were contacted via email and telephone in order to ensure their participation and arrange the meetings. The list of institutions and people finally interviewed during the site visit is detailed above in **Table 7.1.1**.

7.2 Stakeholder input

After the list of key stakeholders to be interviewed was elaborated (between the assessment team and the client), a document with issues/questions to be discussed with each one of them was sent by email so they would have the chance to send their replies to the team before the site visit (**Table 7.2.1**).

In the present surveillance, apart from WWF who could not attend the surveillance audit and sent their input prior the site visit (see **Section 7.2.1**), all the other stakeholders (i.e., Client, Ministry, Control authorities and BIOR) shared the information either during or after the site visit. All this information is included in **Section 4.2**.

Table 7.2.1 Compilation of all the issues/questions sent to the different key stakeholders for the surveillance audit.

MSC Principle	Issue	Question (focus on changes since previous audit)	Yes / No / NA / quantity	Comment (if applicable) or link to information source
General	Changes in client group	Are there any changes in function, role, organisational structure and responsibility of the client group?	No	
	Fishery within MSC scope	Is the fishery conducted under a controversial unilateral exemption to an international agreement?	No	
	Fishery within MSC scope	Are destructive fishing practices such as fishing with poisons or explosives used within the fishery?	No	
	Gear used	Any new gears or major gear modifications?	No	
	Fishing operations	Provide updated operators and vessel list (list here or add file)	Updated 12.05.2020	
Principle 1: Status of the stock	TAC and catches for 2018-2019	Complete **Catch Tables**.	Completed	

MSC Principle	Issue	Question (focus on changes since previous audit)	Yes / No / NA / quantity	Comment (if applicable) or link to information source
	Fishing operations	Are there any changes in fishing season, fishing areas and gear used?	No	
	Fishing operations	Provide data on current size and structure of the LFPO fleet. If unchanged since 2nd surveillance note 'No change'	Updated 12.05.2020	
	Fishing operations	Are there any changes in recording of catch and effort data? (e.g. electronic log-books or paper log-books)	No	
	Harvest strategy	Any changes to the relevant legislation, regulations or objectives for the fishery?	Amendments to the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of 20 February 2018 No. 94 "Regulations for Control of Landings of Caught Fish and Inspection of Fish Trade and Transport Facilities, Warehouses and Production Premises"	
Principle 2: Impact on ecosystem	Non-target species - recording	Are there any changes in recording requirements of non-target species (retained, bycatch, ETP species) including fish, shellfish, birds, marine mammals, elasmobranches, other? (e.g. electronic log-books or paper log-books). Have statutory requirements to record interactions (fatal or otherwise) with seabirds or marine mammals been implemented?	No	
	Retained species	List all retained species: (species and quantities 2018-2019). Complete **Catch Table**	Completed	
	ETP species	List catch of marine mammals, ETP species, birds: (species and quantities). Complete **Table on reported catches**.	Completed	

MSC Principle	Issue	Question (focus on changes since previous audit)	Yes / No / NA / quantity	Comment (if applicable) or link to information source
	By-catch species	Are there any changes in discarding practices? Impact of EU Landing Obligation?	No	
	By-catch (discarded) species	List commercial/non-commercial species that are generally discarded. If quantities are known, complete **Table 6** below.	None	
	Non-target species	Are there any new measures in place to minimize the catch of small fish and non-commercial species by commercial fishing vessels?	No	
	Non-target species	Do you have any concerns/data on level of non-target species in the fishery?	No	
	Habitats / vulnerable marine ecosystems	Are there any changes in the overlap of the fishery with sensitive habitats and closed and/or protected areas? If yes, specify and provide maps of habitats that the vessels avoid	No	
	Habitats / vulnerable marine ecosystems	Specify if there've been any incidents of loss of fishing gear, and if relevant, its recovery	No	
Principle 3: Management system	Governance and policy	Any changes to the Management regime at local, national or international level?	No	
	Fishery-specific management system	Details of any internal audits of the management system in 2018-2019.	None.	
	Fishery-specific management system	Specify if the fishery has been a subject to sanctions and penalties (or cautions/warnings) in the most recent fishing years (2018-2019). If yes, provide inspection reports and details on infractions.	No	
	Monitoring, control and surveillance	Specify if there've been any changes to control, surveillance and monitoring procedures/regulations.	No	
	Compliance and enforcement	Specify if the client group has been involved in any disputes with national and/or international authorities during the last year? If yes, provide records	No	
Traceability	Tracking and tracing	Are there any changes to the systems of tracking and tracing within the fishery?	No	
	Tracking and tracing	Have there been any changes in labelling of products or labelling routines?	No	
	Fishing outside the UoC	Specify if any of the client group's vessels have been fishing for sprat outside the Unit of Certification on a same fishing trip?	No	
	Risk of substitution	Specify if there've been any incidents of substitution of certified sprat products with non-certified prior to or at landing or any fraudulent claims from within and outside the certified fishery?	No	

MSC Principle	Issue	Question (focus on changes since previous audit)	Yes / No / NA / quantity	Comment (if applicable) or link to information source
	At sea processing	Do sea processing activities occur? If so, are there any changes	No	
	Transhipment	Are there any transhipment activities?	No	
	Landing of fish / fish products from UoC	Are there any changes in landing places for fish / fish products from the fishery?	No	
	First point of sale	Have there been any changes to the first point of sale? Provide example of sales note	No	
	Markets	Are there any changes in main markets for fish and fish products from the fishery?	No	
	Use of MSC logo	Do you use MSC logo on any of the products originating from this certified fishery?	No	
Other	Other issues	Is there any other information relevant for this fishery which should be considered by the assessment team?	No	

7.2.1 Stakeholder input before the site visit

WWF's input and BV response

WWF was not able to attend the site visit, however, on 30 May 2020 and prior to the remote surveillance audit, they provided the following input to the assessment team by e-mail:

Dear Gemma,

Thank you for your e-mail and the agenda.

Regarding comments from Pasaules Dabas Fonds, please find the following:

Although Baltic cod bycatch is listed as a rather small percentage based on the total catches of the fishery, but taking into account the fishing area (Central Baltic Sea excl Gulf of Riga (ICES SD 25-29 and 32, excluding 28.1), Pasaules Dabas Fonds as part of the WWF Baltic Ecoregion Prorgramme recommendation takes into consideration the ecosystem-based approach and the dynamics between the stocks of eastern Baltic cod and sprat as noted in the ICES advice. In its Ecosystem Overview – Baltic Sea Ecoregion, ICES explains: *"Many species and habitats of the Baltic Sea are not in good condition, according to recent assessments. This affects foodweb functionality, reduces the resilience and resistance against further environmental changes, and diminishes prospects for socioeconomic benefits,*

including fishing opportunities."13 More precaution is needed while managing pelagic stocks in a disturbed Baltic Sea ecosystem, thus using the lower range of FMSY is justified.

We further recommend restrictions on the sprat fishery in SDs 25-26 in order to redistribute the sprat fishery to the northern areas (subdivisions 27-29 & 32) to improve food availability for cod. This is in accordance with "*issues relevant for the advice*", where *"ICES recommends that a spatial management plan is considered for the fisheries that catch sprat, with the aim to improve the condition of cod stocks. The abundance of cod in subdivisions 25–26 is high compared to other areas in the Baltic, and the condition of these stocks is considered to be limited by food availability. Sprat and herring are important food items for cod (especially sprat), but the present high biomass of the two prey stocks is to large extent distributed outside the distribution area for cod (Figure 3). Any fishery on the two prey species in the main cod distribution area (subdivisions 25– 26) will potentially decrease the local sprat density, which may lead to increased food deprivation for cod (Casini et al., 2016). The relative catch proportion of sprat in the main cod distribution area has since 2010 increased from 37% of the total catch to 56% in 2012–2018. Thus, restrictions established on sprat fisheries in the main cod distribution area would result in increased availability of clupeid prey, which could benefit the cod stock; however, several other factors also have impact on the cod stock (see ICES, 2019). Redistribution of the fishery to the northern areas (subdivisions 27–29 and 32) may also reduce the density-dependent effect, i.e. increase the individual growth for the clupeids in the area (Casini et al., 2006)."*

Please let me know if anything else is needed from our side.

Best,
Elza

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As seen above, WWF expressed concern regarding cod's stock status and stated that "more precaution is needed while managing pelagic stocks in a disturbed Baltic Sea ecosystem, thus using the lower range of FMSY is justified". They also recommended "restrictions on the sprat fishery in SDs 25-26 in order to redistribute the sprat fishery to the northern areas (subdivisions 27-29 & 32) to improve food availability for cod."

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, there should be zero catch in 2020 and in 2021 (ICES 2019c and 2020e, respectively). This advice applies to all catches from the stock in subdivisions 24–32.

However, also according to what ICES explains (**Section 4.2.7.2b**), the low growth, poor condition, and high natural mortality of cod are related to changes in the ecosystem (ICES, 2019c), which include the following:

i) Poor oxygen conditions that can affect cod directly by altering metabolism and indirectly from a shortage of benthic prey, while also affecting the survival of offspring,
ii) Low availability of fish prey in the main distribution area of cod. This is because sprat and herring are more northerly distributed in recent years and are overlapping less with the distribution of the cod stock,
iii) High levels of parasite infestations; this is related to an increased abundance of grey seals.

In fact, natural mortality is estimated to be considerably higher than the fishing mortality in recent years (**Figure 4.2.8**) (ICES, 2019c; 2020e).

Moreover, having a look at the by-catch of the certified fishery on cod, we can observe that the total annual catch (**Table 5.4**) and cod's contribution to both the annual catch (**Table 4.2.4**) and even from the observers' sampling (**Table 4.2.5**) have decreased since 2016. As a matter of fact, currently, the UoC impact on cod can be considered negligible as it only accounts for 0.22% of the total annual catch, being on average 1.32% - from 2015 to 2019 (**Table 4.2.4**).

Therefore, even taking into consideration WWF's comment, PI 2.5.1 on ecosystem outcome has not been re-scored in the present surveillance audit. The assessment team, however, will keep assessing the issue in the future.

7.3 Revised surveillance program

The fishery was certified against MSC FCR v2.0. A level 2 surveillance was established at the PCR, requiring 1 on-site audit, 2 off-site audits and one review of information. However, the surveillance level and the fishery surveillance program were modified to level 4 (requiring 2 on-site and 2 off-site audits – **Table 7.3.1**) at the announcement of the second surveillance site visit, due to a new fishery from the same client entering the program. This surveillance program has not been amended in the current (third) surveillance audit, although the team was finally made up of 3 auditors instead of 2.

Due to the MSC's 6-month derogation for the COVID-19 situation, the Anniversary date of certificate and the Proposed date of surveillance audit have both been postponed 6 months (see **Table 7.3.3**).It is expected that subsequent surveillance audits will take place close to the anniversary date of the fishery.

Table 7.3.1. Fishery surveillance program

Surveillance level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Level 4	**On-site**	**On-site**	**Off-site surveillance audit**	**Off-site surveillance audit**

Table 7.3.2. Surveillance level rationale

Year	Surveillance activity	Number of auditors	Rationale
3	Off-site audit	2 auditors off-site	The information needed can be provided remotely.
4	Off-site audit	2 auditors off-site	The information needed can be provided remotely.

Table 7.3.3. Timing of surveillance audit

Year	NEW anniversary date of certificate	Proposed date of surveillance audit	Rationale
4	21st November 2021	November 2021	To coincide with anniversary date

7.4 Harmonised fishery assessments

Table 7.4.1 lists all overlapping fisheries subject to harmonisation with the LFPO pelagic trawl fishery.

Table 7.4.1 Overlapping fisheries

Fishery name	CAB	Certification status and date	Performance Indicators to harmonise
Denmark, Estonia , Germany, Sweden Baltic herring & sprat fishery	Lloyd's Register	In assessment (Final report and determination published on 03 June 2020)	1.1.1A, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 2.3.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.3
Finland herring & sprat fishery	Lloyd's Register	Certified since 25 June 2018	1.1A, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 2.3.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.3
NZRO Gulf of Riga herring and sprat trawl fishery	Bureau Veritas	Certified since 23 January 2020	P1 (UoA-sprat) and P3 (generally)
Poland herring and sprat midwater trawl and gill net fishery	SAI Global	In assessment (PCDR not published)	1.1A, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 2.3.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.3

At the second surveillance audit of the LFPO sprat fishery, the scoring of the first three mentioned fisheries in **Table 7.4.1** was harmonised (see report of 2nd surveillance). The harmonisation with the Polish fishery is outstanding at the time of the third surveillance audit (see **Table 7.4.2** for details).

Table 7.4.2 Overlapping fisheries –supporting information-

Supporting information
Four different fisheries were considered to be overlapping fisheries subject to be harmonisation with the LFPO pelagic trawl sprat fishery, see **Table 7.4.1**. Lloyd's Register (LR) is assessing the Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Sweden Baltic herring and sprat fishery. Furthermore, Lloyd's Register was also the CAB providing the MSC-fisheries certificate to the Finland herring and sprat fishery in 2018. In addition, Bureau Veritas (BV) also assessed and provided the MSC certificate to the overlapping NZRO Gulf of Riga herring and sprat trawl fishery at the beginning of 2020. And the last fishery is the Poland herring and sprat midwater trawl and gill net fishery, which is currently beingju assessed (the PCDR is not published at the time of writing this report) by SAI Global. In the case of the two BV fisheries, both shared the same team until early this year. Last year, both site visits were planned together in order to ensure consistent outcomes for the two fisheries. No other harmonisation activities were considered necessary in relation to the NZRO Gulf of Riga herring and sprat fishery. In the case of the two fisheries assessed by Lloyd's Register, 3 different harmonisation meetings were carried out between February and May 2019 (i.e., 1st meeting: 22/02/2019; 2nd meeting: 28/03/2019; and 3rd meeting: 09/05/2019). These harmonisation discussions of the sprat assessment between the Lloyd's Register and Bureau Veritas (BV) teams were initiated prior to the BV on-site visit conducted on 24-26 April 2019, and a final meeting was held after the BV site visit took place. The meetings were focused on discussing/reviewing differences in scores (for different SIs of the three PIs) found by the Lloyd's Register team while assessing the DDES Baltic herring and sprat fishery (see 2nd Surveillance Assessment report for further details). After the publication of the 2nd Surveillance Audit report of the LFPO sprat fishery, additional harmonisation meetings (see below the exact dates) were conducted between BV and LR (and SAI Global that attended the meetings from the 2nd meeting), to discuss: - P2 Conditions for ETP species (specifically, PI 2.3.1) – 1st meeting - Harmonisation of P1 scores (including the Central Baltic Herring for the NZRO Gulf of Riga herring and sprat trawl fishery) – 2nd and 3rd meetings Regarding the PI 2.3.1 SI(a) condition, apart from the meeting, a couple additional emails were exchanged between both CABs after the harmonization meeting until agreement was reached regarding the new condition and milestones (on 13/09/2019) (see new Harmonized Milestones in **Section 5.1.4**).

The list of participants in these meetings is as follows:

- Beatriz Roel, Giuseppe Scarcella, Fiona Nimmo, Jim Andrews, and Polly Burns on behalf of Lloyd's Register
- Conor Donnelly, Maciej Tomczak, Sam Dignan, and Géraldine Criquet on behalf of SAI Global
- José Ríos, Hans Lassen, and Gemma Quílez on behalf of Bureau Veritas

Recently (between June 17 and 30, 2020), a suite of emails was exchanged between Lloyd's Register and Bureau Veritas. This exchange was used to verify that the Milestones and the Client Action Plan were indeed harmonized and that the progress had to be assessed against the new Harmonized Milestones,

The persons involved in this correspondence were:

- Jim Andrews, Kate Morris and Fiona Nimmo on behalf of Lloyd's Register
- Gemma Quílez, Hans Lassen and Macarena García on behalf of Bureau Veritas

Was either FCP v2.1 Annex PB1.3.3.4 or PB1.3.4.5 applied when harmonising?	N/A
Date of harmonisation meeting	1st meeting: 09/09/2019 2nd meeting: 11/11/2019 3rd meeting: 21/11/2019
If applicable, describe the meeting outcome	

As the harmonisation with the Polish fishery was pending at the time of the third surveillance audit (as the ACDR was only published on May 29), and the scoring harmonisation with the two Lloyd's Register fisheries and with the other Bureau Veritas fishery was already done in the 2nd surveillance, currently, there are no scoring differences to be shown in **Table 7.4.3**.