

Vottunarstofan Tún ehf. Sustainable Fisheries Scheme

Marine Stewardship Council Sustainable Fisheries Assessment

ISF Iceland Saithe and Ling Fishery

Certificate Code: F-TUN-1106

Second Annual Surveillance Report

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November 2016



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1. General Information

Fishery name	ISF Iceland Saithe and Ling Fishery				
Unit(s) of assessment	North Atlantic Saithe (<i>Pollachius virens</i>) and Ling (<i>Molva molva</i>) in ICES division Va / FAO Area 27 within the exclusive economic zone of Iceland using harvest methods bottom trawl, Danish seine, Longline, Handline, Gillnet, and <i>Nephrops</i> trawl.				
Date certified	11.09.2014	Date of exp	oiry	10.09.2019	
Surveillance level and type	Level 4 surveillance; Off	-site surveilla	ance		
Date of surveillance audit	12-14 September 2016				
Surveillance stage (tick one)	1st Surveillance				
	2nd Surveillance		x		
	3rd Surveillance				
	4th Surveillance				
	Other (expedited etc)				
Surveillance team	Dr. Jo Gascoigne: Lead assessor and Principle 2 expert Dr. Ásgeir Daníelsson: Principle 3 expert assessor Tom Jagielo: Principle 1 expert assessor Louise le Roux: Traceability, RBF				
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2. Background

This report contains the findings of the second surveillance audit for Marine Stewardship Council Fishery certification of the ISF Iceland Saithe and Ling Fishery, caught by demersal otter trawl, Danish seine, longline, handline, gillnet, and *Nephrops* trawl within the Icelandic exclusive economic zone (ICES Division Va / FAO Area 27).

The purpose of this report is to outline any changes to the ISF Iceland Saithe and Ling Fishery since the last surveillance, including (but not limited to) changes to management systems, relevant regulations, personnel involved in science, management or industry, scientific information base, and any changes that could impact traceability.

The surveillance audit assesses changes made from the last surveillance or from the full assessment. Therefore, the full Public Certification Reports for saithe and ling provides the relevant context for this surveillance audit report.

Surveillance audits may raise or close conditions and recommendations as circumstances for the fishery and certification change. Therefore, the status of the certificate is defined by the latest Surveillance Audit.

2.1 Management systems

There have not been any significant changes to the management of the fisheries in Iceland, except organizational changes to the Marine Research Institute (MRI). In 2015, the Icelandic Parliament passed a law establishing a new institution merging the old Marine Research Institute (MRI) (Icelandic: Hafrannsóknastofnun, website: <u>www.hafro.is</u>) and the much smaller Institute of Freshwater Fisheries (Icelandic: Veiðimálastofnun, website: <u>www.veidimal.is</u>). The new institution is the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute (MFRI) (Icelandic: Hafrannsóknastofnun – rannsókna- og ráðgjafastofnun hafs og vatna, website: <u>www.hafogvatn.is</u>). This merger became effective 1st of July 2016. The new institution has 165 employees, including some 20 from the Institute of Freshwater Fisheries and has 2 specially equipped research vessels.

The Directorate of Fisheries has not reported systematic non-compliance issues since the certificate was awarded.

2.2 Regulations

There have been no significant changes to regulations associated with this fishery.

2.3 Personnel

Other than the new director of MFRI (mentioned above) the team is not aware of any significant changes to personnel involved in science and management.

2.4 Scientific base of information

2.4.1 Target stock

2.4.1.1 Saithe

Currently, the harvest ratio for Icelandic saithe is slightly below the MSY level (H_{2015} < H_{MSY}) and biomass is at a level consistent with MSY (SSB > $B_{trigger}$). SSB has remained well above B_{lim} , and has been increasing in recent years (ICES 2016a).

Historically, catches of saithe from the Iceland grounds declined in the 1990's, increased into the mid-2000's, and were near the time series average (from 1980 to present) in 2015 (**Figure 1**, upper left).



Figure 1: Historical catches, recruitment, fishing mortality, and spawning stock biomass of Saithe (Pollachius virens) in Division Va (Iceland grounds). Source: ICES (2016b).

The spawning-stock biomass (SSB) has been above MSY $B_{trigger}$ since 1998 and is estimated at 139 kilotonnes, for 2015 (**Figure 1**, lower right); this is near the time series maximum (from 1980 to present), and well above $B_{trigger}$ = 65 kilotonnes and B_{lim} = 61 kilotonnes. The 2015 reference biomass (B_{4+}) is estimated at 255 kilotonnes, near the average for the assessment period (1980 to the present). The harvest rate (HR) has declined since 2009 and is currently below the target of 0.20 (HR_{MSY}); fishing mortality has varied between 0.19 and 0.25 since 2011 (**Figure 1**, lower left). Recruitment has been above average since 2009 and relatively stable (**Figure 1**, upper right) (ICES 2016a).

Management advice is derived from a statistical catch-at-age model that uses catches in the model and in the forecast. A management plan was reviewed by ICES (Hjörleifsson and Björnsson 2013) and adopted by the Minister of Industry and Innovation in 2013 (MII 2013).

There have been no changes to the management system directed specifically at the target stock since the last surveillance.

In 2013, the Icelandic government adopted a harvest control rule for managing the Icelandic saithe fishery that was evaluated by ICES (Hjörleifsson and Björnsson, 2013). When the population is above B_{trigger} , the TAC equals the average of 0.2 B_{4+} in the assessment year and previous year's TAC. According to the harvest control rule, the TAC recommended for the 2016/2017 fishing year is 55 kilotonnes, unchanged from the 2015/2016 fishing year (ICES 2016a).

2.4.1.2 Ling

Recent surveys, commercial fishery CPUE data, and an analytical assessment collectively confirm that the Icelandic ling stock is presently in good condition (ICES 2016c). The fishing mortality rate in 2015 ($F_{ages \ 15-19} = 0.25$) was slightly above the MSY level ($F_{target \ (MSY)} = 0.24$). Spawning Stock Biomass is well above the precautionary level (SSB2017 = 39,700 t > Btrigger = 9,500 t), and has been increasing in recent years (ICES 2016c).

Historically, catches of ling from the Iceland grounds ranged from 3,266 tonnes to 5,861 tonnes for the period 1982-2005, and then increased from 7,402 tonnes in 2006 to recent peaks of 13,930 tonnes in 2014 and 12,862 tonnes in 2015 (**Figure 2**) (ICES 2016c).



Figure 2: Historical catches of Ling (Molva molva) in Division 5.a (Iceland grounds) Source: ICES (2016d).

Spawning stock biomass has increased since 2000 and is now at the highest SSB estimate in the assessment time-series (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Historical estimates of spawning stock biomass (SSB) of Ling (Molva molva) in Division 5.a (Iceland grounds) Source: ICES (2016d).

Fishing mortality for fully selected ling (age 15–19) has decreased from 0.66 in 2009 to 0.25 in 2015 and is now the lowest in the time series, but remains above F_{MSY} (Figure 4) (ICES 2016c).



Figure 4: Historical estimates of fishing mortality (ages 15-19) of Ling (Molva molva) in Division 5.a (Iceland grounds) Source: ICES (2016d).

Recruitment peaked in 2009 to 2010 but has decreased to low levels since 2013 (Figure 5). (ICES 2016c).



Figure 5: Historical estimates of recruitment (age 3) of Ling (Molva molva) in Division 5.a (Iceland grounds) Source: ICES (2016d).

Ling is assessed by MRI with an analytical length-based model (developed in the Gadget framework) that uses catches in the model and in the forecast (ICES, 2016c). The model was benchmarked for stock assessment by ICES in 2014 and relevant reference points developed using boot-strap methods (ICES 2014b; 2014c). The model defined F_{MSY} at 0.24 and identified $B_{trigger}$ at 9,500 t (97.5 percentile of the lowest SSB from simulations). $B_{trigger}$ is the point when management intervention should be taken to avoid the stock falling below the limit reference point. B_{lim} was identified as 8,600 t (median of the lowest SSB from simulations) (ICES 2016c).

Since 2014, ICES has assessed ling on an annual basis. The recommended TAC for the 2015/2016 fishing year was 16,200 tonnes. The 2016 assessment shows a downward revision of SSB and an upward

revision of fishing mortality compared to the 2014 and 2015 assessments (**Figure 6**); resulting in much lower advice (ICES 2016c).

Based on F_{MSY} , the recommended TAC for the 2016/17 fishing season was <= 9,343 tonnes (ICES 2016d). It is anticipated that the level of sustainable catch is likely to decrease through 2021 due to the decrease in recruitments since 2010 (ICES 2016c).



Figure 6: Historical assessment results 2014–2016 (black line: 2016 assessment). Source: ICES 2016c.

At present, there is no formally adopted management plan for ling in this area (ICES 2016d).

There have been no changes to the management system directed specifically at the target stock since the Expedited Assessment of the ISF Iceland Ling (Tun 2015).

In the expedited assessment (Tun 2015), it was noted that: 1) the basis for setting the biomass limit reference point for the stock has not been well justified, and it is not clear that the default methods are precautionary, and 2) the harvest control rule is not fully defined. As a result of this determination, two conditions were set, both pertaining to Principle 1 of the assessment. These are discussed individually below, with respect to progress made along the established timelines for condition closure.

2.4.2 Retained Catch, Bycatch and ETP

The current estimates of stock status for main retained species is set out in Table 1.

No ETP species were identified to interact with the fishery in any significant way. This is harmonised with the cod and haddock re-assessment, which has identified black guillemot and hooded seal as potentially interacting with the gillnet fishery, but in both cases, has concluded that impacts were negligible (this analysis is still subject to review, however).

Table 1: Species/stock status for main retained species only for each gear type in the main assessment. Note:

 Ling is a main retained species for saithe and vice versa, but these stocks are considered in detail in 2.4.1 above.

Species/Stock Gear	Above Point of Recruitment Impairment	Preventing Recovery	Reference
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Cod Gadus morhua ICES Division Va	All	Yes. SSB (2016) is at a 40-year high, and harvest rate (2014-2015) is at the assessment time-series low (SSB> Btrigger; HR < HRmsy). The 2014 and 2015 year classes are estimated to be above the long term mean recruitment.	NA	MRI 2016a, ICES 2016a
Haddock <i>Melanogrammus</i> <i>aeglefinus</i> ICES Division Va	Demersal Trawl Danish Seine Longline	Yes. The stock has declined since 2004, but SSB (2016) remains above Btrigger. Estimated harvest rates (2014-2015) are at the assessment time-series low (HR < HRmsy). The 2015 year-class is estimated near the long term mean recruitment.	NA	MRI 2016b, ICES 2016a
Greenland halibut Reinhardtius hippoglossoides	Demersal Trawl	Yes. Since 2004/2005 the stock has increased slowly and is now at 71% of B _{MSY} ; fishing mortality since 2013 has been around F _{MSY} and was 10% above F _{MSY} . In 2015 (ICES 2016a).	No. Based on the stock assessment (production model), the stock has been increasing (ICES 2016a).	MRI 2016c, ICES 2016a
Deepwater Redfish Sebastes mentella Icelandic slope stock	No longer co	onsidered a 'main' retained species – s	see Year 1 surveillance	audit report
Plaice Pleuronectes platessa	Danish seine	Yes. Harvestable biomass has increased and fishing mortality has declined since 2000. Biomass was estimated at the time series high in 2016, and fishing mortality has been estimated below Fmsy since 2014.	NA	MRI 2016e,
Atlantic Wolffish Anarhichas lupus	Trawl Longline Danish seine	Highly likely. Harvestable biomass decreased from 2006-2014, but has increased since then to above the assessment time series average in 2016. Fishing mortality declined to below Fmsy in 2014- 2015. An increase in recruitment was noted in 2016.	Uncertain. Assessment indicates biomass has increased and fishing mortality has decreased in recent years.	MRI 2016f
Tusk Brosme brosme	Longline	Yes. SSB has increased since 2004. Fishing mortality has decreased since 2010, and remains above Fmsy. Estimates of recruitment declined from 2005-2013, but have increased since then.	NA	MRI 2016g ICES 2016c
Nephrops Nephrops norvegicus	Nephrops trawl	Fishable biomass has declined since 2008, and fishing mortality has remained below Fmsy for the past decade. Recruitment has declined since 2004 and is at the assessment time series low.	NA	MRI 2016h
Grey sole (witch) Glyptocephalus cynoglossus	Nephrops trawl	Yes. Survey biomass has been above the time series average since 2004. The Fproxy (catch/survey biomass) has	NA	MRI 2016i

		declined since 2009 and has been at the target level since 2012. The recruitment index has declined since 2010 and is at the time series low in 2016. The peak in recruitment came from much lower biomass than current.		
Anglerfish Lophius piscatorius	Nephrops trawl	Yes. Survey biomass has declined since 2011. The Fproxy (catch/survey biomass) has declined since 2012 and was below the target level in 2015. The recruitment index has declined steeply since 2009 and is near the time series low in 2016.	NA	MRI 2016j
Golden Redfish Sebastes norvegicus ICES subareas V, VI, XII and XIV	Demersal Trawl Danish Seine	Yes. SSB is well above Btrigger and has been increasing in recent years. Fishing mortality was slightly below Fmsy in 2015.Estimated recruitment has been relatively low since 2011.	NA	MRI 2016k, ICES 2016a

2.4.3 Habitat and Ecosystem

Habitats

The bottom trawl UoC had two conditions in relation to habitats; to improve its outcome and management performance levels. Further information on progress in relation to these conditions is given below.

Ecosystem

Iceland has seen considerable changes in the species composition and distribution of commercial fish species over the last few decades, as a result of climate change; see Year 1 surveillance audit report for more details.

2.5 Enhanced fisheries changes

N/A

2.6 Traceability

No issues or changes were identified within the fishery which may impact traceability negatively.

The scope of certification is up to the point of landing. Chain of custody commences from the point of landing. Catches of registered fishing vessels licenced to fish within the Icelandic EEZ, landed whole or processed and sold directly or through auction houses, are eligible to carry the MSC logo, if and once the fish has passed through ownership of some member of the ISF (the client group) or other entity that has entered into certificate sharing mechanism with the ISF.

Entities that take ownership of the fish and/or are involved in any handling of the fish after landing with the view of marketing the fish as MSC-certified must enquire with an accredited conformity assessment body if they are required to be certified against MSC Chain of Custody standards.

Updated list of certificate sharers and other documents can be accessed at <u>https://www.msc.org/track-a-fishery/fisheries-in-the-program/certified/north-east-atlantic/isf-saithe-ling</u>.

2.7 TAC and Catch Data

Table 2: TAC and Catch data of saithe in the ISF Iceland Saithe and ling fishery. Source: Landings fromwww.fiskistofa.is1Landings and TAC are reported by quota year, which is 1st of September to 31st ofAugust.

TAC	Year	2015/16	Amount	55,000 t
UoA share of TAC	Year	2015/16	Amount	55,000 t
UoC share of TAC	Year	2015/16	Amount	55,000 t
Total green weight catch by	Year (most	2015/16	Amount Bottom Trawl:	42,853 t
UoC	recent)		Gillnet:	2,697 t
			Handline:	1,570 t
			Danish seine:	974 t
			Longline:	908 t
			Nephrops trawl:	356 t
	Year (second	2014/15	Amount	
	most recent)		Bottom Trawl:	44.552t
			Gillnet:	2.981 t
			Handline:	2.012 t
			Danish seine:	1.222 t
			Longline:	924 t
			Nephrops trawl	531 t

Table 3: TAC and Catch data of ling in the ISF Iceland Saithe and ling fishery. Source: 2014/15 and 2015/2016landings from www.fiskistofa.is¹. Landings and TAC are reported by quota year, which is 1st ofSeptember to 31st of August.

TAC	Year	2015/16	Amount	16,200 t
UoA share of TAC	Year	2015/16	Amount	16,200 t
UoC share of TAC	Year	2015/16	Amount	16,200 t
Total green weight catch by UoC	Year (most recent)	2015/16	Amount Bottom Trawl: Gillnet: Handline: Danish seine: Longline: <i>Nephrops</i> trawl	1,778 t 732 t 14 t 239 t 6,387 t 617 t
	Year (second most recent)	2014/15	Amount Bottom Trawl: Gillnet: Handline: Danish seine: Longline: <i>Nephrops</i> trawl:	1,939 t 669 t 15 t 301 t 7,836 t 926 t

¹ <u>http://www.fiskistofa.is/veidar/aflaupplysingar/bradabirgdatolur/</u>

2.8 Harmonisation with the ISF Iceland cod and ISF Iceland haddock re-assessment

It was noted in last year's surveillance audit report that during this surveillance, scoring and conditions would be harmonised with the ISF cod and haddock fisheries, which are currently undergoing reassessment by V. Tún. The assessment is currently at the Client Draft Report stage (report in preparation). For this purpose, draft scoring, rationales and data were kindly shared by the cod and haddock team members (Tim Huntington and Paul Medley).

Two significant differences were noted between the cod/haddock assessment and this one (noting that cod/haddock conclusions are preliminary at this point): i) they have concluded that grey skate should not be a 'main' bycatch species (i.e. there is not proposed to be a condition on grey skate); and ii) they identify harbour seal as a 'main' secondary species for gillnet, on the basis that it may be vulnerable to gillnet bycatch.

The grey skate question is addressed under the discussion of Conditions 1 and 3 below.

In relation to harbour seal, the audit team considered harmonisation in relation to saithe and ling. While ling represents a very small proportion of the gillnet catch (~2.1%), saithe is more significant (~14%); there may therefore be some overlap between the saithe fishery and harbour seals, although saithe are generally taken further offshore.

More generally, the team noted that the scoring and conditions on the cod/haddock fishery are still subject to client, peer, stakeholder and MSC review, and will not be imposed on the fishery (start of Year 1) until the end of the certification process (assuming the fishery passes) – i.e. in approximately another 6 months. If the draft conditions from cod/haddock are used to impose a new condition on this fishery now, there is a significant risk either of having to change it again at the Year 3 audit, or of imposing a reverse requirement for harmonisation on the cod/haddock fishery. The team concluded that before imposing any harmonised conditions with the cod/haddock, that assessment needed to run its course. The issue will be reviewed again at the Year 3 audit.

2.9 Summary of Conditions

Condition number	Performance indicator (PI)	Status after Year 1 audit	PI score after year 1 audit	PI revised score after Year 2 audit
1	PI 2.1.1 Bottom trawl, Danish seine, Longline	Wolffish - closed Deep-sea redfish - closed	75	80
2	PI 2.1.2 Bottom trawl, Danish seine, Longline	Grey skate – on target	75	80
3	PI 2.4.1 Bottom trawl	Behind target	75	No change
4	PI 2.4.2 Bottom trawl	Behind target	75	No change

Table 4: Summary of Assessment Conditions of the ISF Iceland saithe and ling Fishery

Table 5: Summary of Assessment Conditions that only apply to ling in the ISF Iceland saithe and ling Fishery

Condition number	Performance indicator (PI)	Status	PI original score	PI revised score
5	PI 1.1.2 – Outcome- Reference Points: Limit and target reference points are appropriate for the stock	On-target	75	No change

Condition number	Performance indicator (PI)	Status	PI original score	PI revised score
6	PI 1.2.2 – Management- Harvest Control Rules and Tools: There are well defined and effective harvest control rules in place	On-target	75	No change

2.10 Updating of milestones

Conditions 3 and 4 were evaluated in Year 1 to be behind target. This means that for part of the condition, two years' worth of milestones and client action plan needed to be covered in one year for ISF to catch up. This was not practically possible, so the team and ISF reviewed the milestones and client action plan to establish a more realistic timetable, while at the same time ensuring that the condition could still be fulfilled within the four-year timeframe. A variation request was submitted to MSC for the updating of milestones and the client action plan on this basis on 28.09.16; MSC eventually concluded that a VR was not required as long as the audit team were satisfied that the conditions could still be closed within the required timeframe. The milestones and client action plan have therefore been updated on this basis.

3. Assessment Process

3.1 Audit Process

The announcement for the surveillance was published on the MSC website on 9th August 2016 and stakeholders were informed of the surveillance audit activities.

This surveillance audit was carried out by Dr. Jo Gascoigne (Team Leader), Thomas H. Jagielo (Expert), Dr. Ásgeir Daníelsson (Expert) and Louise le Roux (Expert). Lovísa Ólöf Guðmundsdóttir was Secretary to the team. Dr. Gascoigne was primarily responsible for Principles 2 and reporting, Mr. Jagielo for Principle 1, Dr. Daníelsson for Principle 3 and Mrs. le Roux for CoC and RBF issues. Vottunarstofan Tún advised all known stakeholders that the surveillance audit would be carried out off-site 12-17 September 2016. Tún maintains an active list of stakeholders who were contacted and notified of the surveillance audit. All stakeholders were given the opportunity to comment on the surveillance announcement and to request a meeting with members of the assessment team during the site visit. No requests were received.

This surveillance audit was combined with that of ISF Iceland Golden redfish and Icelandic Gillnet Lumpfish.

3.2 Scope and history of assessments

The first unit of assessment and certification covers the fishing of saithe by means of six different fishing methods (bottom trawl, Danish seine, longline, handline, gillnet, *Nephrops* trawl) within the Icelandic Economic Zone. A full assessment of the fishery was launched in April 2013 and it was certified in September 2014.

The second unit of assessment and certification covers the fishing of ling by means of six different fishing methods (bottom trawl, Danish seine, longline, handline, gillnet, *Nephrops* trawl) within the Icelandic Economic Zone. An expedited P1 assessment of the fishery was launched in April 2015 and it was added to the certificate in November 2015.

The fishery attained a score of 80 or more against each of the three MSC Principles and did not score less than 60 against any of the individual MSC Criteria. Six Performance Indicators (PI 1.1.2 (ling), PI 1.2.2 (ling), PI 2.1.1, PI 2.1.2, PI 2.4.1 and PI 2.4.2) scored less than 80, so six conditions were set for this fishery. One recommendation was made.

3.3 Surveillance activities

The assessment team met with the client organization Iceland Sustainable Fisheries (ISF). Two of the team members met with the client in Reykjavík Iceland, while two team members were present on Skype.

The assessment processes and the certifications were discussed in detail and the meetings provided an opportunity to discuss any changes to the fishery and specifically the progress against conditions and recommendations that exist for this fishery.

3.4 MSC standards

This surveillance audit was carried out according to the process requirements of "MSC Fisheries Certification Requirements and Guidance v2.0" and reported using "MSC Surveillance Reporting Template v1.0". However, the original full assessment used "MSC Certification Requirements v1.3"which remains as the standard for the fishery.

4. Results

Table 6: Condition 1

	Insert relevant PI number(s)	Insert relevant scoring issue/ scoring guidepost text	Score	
Performance Indicator(s) & Score(s)	PI 2.1.1 Bottom trawl, Danish seine, and longline	Scoring Issue c: "If main retained species are outside the limits there is a partial strategy of demonstrably effective management measures in place such that the fishery does not hinder recovery and rebuilding.	75	
Condition	For wolffish, deep-sea redfish (Icelandic slope stock) and grey skate, the fishery must put in place a partial strategy of demonstrably effective management measures, such that the fishery does not hinder their recovery and rebuilding. This can take the form of a partial strategy across the whole of Iceland (i.e. the expansion of existing Icelandic management measures for each species into a 'partial strategy' which is demonstrably effective) or a partial strategy in relation to this fishery specifically (such as a strategy to reduce wolffish and deep-sea redfish bycatch below the 5% threshold, and to eliminate grey skate bycatch as far as possible), or any other effective approach.			
Milestones	At the End of Year 1 (first surveilland impacts of bottom trawl, longline, ar bottom trawl on deep-sea redfish. T Marine Research Institute (MRI) with Danish seine fisheries on wolffish, ar redfish. Score: 75	ce audit): There shall be evidence of the Client's pland Danish seine on wolffish and grey skate and the inhere shall be evidence of the Client's engagement with the goal of evaluating the impact of bottom trawl, and grey skate and the impact of bottom trawls on de	n to evaluate mpact of vith the longline, and eep-sea	
	<u>At the End of Year 2</u> (second surveill development of options for suitable serious or irreversible harm to the re <u>At the End of Year 3</u> (third surveillar	ance audit): By the end of Year 2 there shall be evid measures to ensure that the fishery does not pose etained species this condition applies to. Score 75 ace audit): Evaluate the options developed in year 2	lence of the a risk of . Consider	

		At the End of Year 4 (fourth surveillance audit): Implement the agreed upon partial strategy. Score 80. A formal commitment to the partial strategy shall remain in place for the duration of the certification period.
Client Plan	Action	Year 1 Wolffish bycatch. ISF will ask MRI to analyze available data on wolffish as a bycatch of redfish targeted fisheries to establish a base point and discuss alternatives as the data has been evaluated and provided statistical results. MRI will analyse wolffish population status as part of their annual advice to government. Grey skate bycatch. ISF will ask MRI to analyze available data on grey skate as a bycatch of redfish targeted fisheries, and/or trends in grey skate populations, to establish a base point and discuss alternatives as the data has been evaluated and provided statistical results. Deep sear edfish, ISF will ask MRI to analyze available data on deep sea redfish as a bycatch of redfish targeted fisheries to establish a base point and discuss alternatives as the data has been evaluated and provided statistical results. MRI will analyse Deep sear edfish population status as part of their annual advice to government. <i>Improvements expected:</i> Better information on stock status or trends for these species, better information on their real overlap with the redfish fishery. <i>Auditing:</i> At the Year 1 audit, ISF will present i) the most recent MRI advice for wolffish and deep-sea redfish, ii) an analysis of available data on the bycatch of these species in the redfish fishery and iii) any available data giving an indication of population trends in grey skate. Year 2 Wolffish bycatch. ISF meets with MRI to review findings from Year 1 analysis and assist in development of options or push for the development of options in light of findings in Year 1 analyses. ISF meets with MRI to review findings from Year 1 analysis and assist in development of options or push for the development of options in light of findings in Year 1 analyses. ISF meets with MRI to review findings from Year 1 analysis and assist in development of options or push for the development of options in light of findings in Year 1 analyses. The streng information espice is a spossible. Deep sear edfish bycatch. ISF me

	The actions of year 3 will depend on results from findings from previous year. The findings will have two main sources, the MRI annual and other research. The goal is to agree on a strategy to maintain a below 5% bycatch of wolffish from redfish targeted fisheries (below 2% if the stock continues to be categorised as depleted by MRI), to minimize grey skate bycatch as far as possible and deep sea redfish TAC awarded by the MII to be consistent with scientific advise by MRI.	
	<i>Improvements expected:</i> Management measures have been agreed that will reduce bycatch to or below target levels for all three species.	
	Auditing: Evidence that suitable management measures have been agreed (e.g. draft regulations, an agreement accepted by all ISF members or similar)	
	Year 4	
	The strategies established in year 3 shall be in implementation by year four, if necessary. ISF will meet with MRI to evaluate the progress, meet with the MII to follow up on MRI findings and discuss progress and the commitment to the implemented strategies.	
	Improvements expected: Management measures are implemented.	
	Auditing: Evidence that required levels of bycatch are being achieved (e.g. landings data, DoF observer reports or similar). Evidence that measures have been implemented.	
	Wolffish (Bottom trawl, Danish seine, and longline): Closed	
Status of	Deep-sea redfish (Bottom trawl): Closed	
after Year 1	Grey skate (Bottom trawl): Closed	
audit	Grey skate (Longline, Danish seine): On target	
	Overall: On target	
	This condition remains open only in relation to grey skate in longline and Danish seine.	
Progress on condition [Year 2]	<td co<="" column="" th=""></td>	
Progress on condition [Year 2]	 This condition remains open only in relation to grey skate in longline and Danish seine. As per the client action plan for Year 2, ISF met with MFRI to discuss their analyses of bycatch and stock status (from groundfish survey trends) on 16.02.2016 As shown in the figures below, survey trends suggest that the population might be increasing. Bycatch rates likewise increased somewhat in 2014, notably in the longline fishery, as would also be expected if biomass were increasing. MFRI is of the opinion that no further management measures are required at present for grey skate (response to questions from V. Tun, 26 September 2016). MFRI also noted that reporting of all bycatch species has improved. Identification guides have been distributed to fishermen, and ISF report that fishermen are aware of the need to identify skate species carefully and report them. 	



management measures to minimise grey skate bycatch are not required at present. On t the condition is closed.	
StatusofconditionafterYearaudit	Closed

Table 7: Condition 2

	Insert relevant PI number(s)	Insert relevant scoring issue/ scoring guidepost text	Score	
Performance Indicator(s) & Score(s)	PI 2.1.2 Bottom trawl, Danish seine, and longline	Scoring Issue b "There is some objective basis for confidence that the partial strategy will work, based on some information directly about the fishery and/or species involved."	75	
Condition	For wolffish, deep-sea redfish (Icelandic slope stock) and grey skate, the fishery must put in place a partial strategy to prevent the fishery from hindering their recovery and rebuilding where there is an objective basis for confidence that the partial strategy will work, based on information directly from the fishery or the species. This can take the form of a partial strategy across the whole of Iceland (i.e. the expansion of existing Icelandic management measures for each species into a 'partial strategy' which is demonstrably effective) or a partial strategy in relation to this fishery specifically (such as a strategy to reduce wolffish and deep-sea redfish bycatch below the 5% threshold, and to eliminate grey skate bycatch as far as possible), or any other effective approach.			
	At the End of Year 1 (first surveillance audit): There shall be evidence of the Client's plan to evaluate impacts of bottom trawl, longline, and Danish seine on wolffish and grey skate and the impact of bottom trawl on deep-sea redfish. There shall be evidence of the Client's engagement with the Marine Research Institute (MRI) with the goal of evaluating the impact of bottom trawl, longline, and Danish seine fisheries on wolffish, and grey skate and the impact of bottom trawls on deep-sea redfish. Score: 75			
Milestones	At the End of Year 2 (second surveillance audit): By the end of Year 2 there shall be evidence of the development of options for suitable measures where there is an objective basis for confidence of working to ensure that the fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the retained species in the condition. Score 75			
	At the End of Year 3 (third surveillance audit): Evaluate the options developed in year 2. Consider suggested modifications, if needed and finalise and agree on a partial strategy. Score 75			
	At the End of Year 4 (fourth surveillance audit): Implement the agreed upon partial strategy where there is an objective basis for confidence that the partial strategy will work based on information from the fishery and/or species. Score 80.			
	A formal commitment to the partial strategy shall remain in place for the duration of the certification period.			
	Year 1			
Client action plan	<u>Wolffish bycatch.</u> ISF will ask targeted fisheries to establis and provided statistical resu	KMRI to analyze available data on wolffish as a byo h a base point and discuss alternatives as the data lts.	catch of redfish I has been evaluated	
	<u>Grey skate bycatch.</u> ISF will ask MRI to analyze available data on grey skate as a bycatch of redfish targeted fisheries to establish a base point and discuss alternatives as the data has been evaluated and provided statistical results.			

<u>Deep sea redfish.</u> ISF will ask MRI to analyze available data on deep sea redfish as a bycatch of redfish targeted fisheries to establish a base point and discuss alternatives as the data has been evaluated and provided statistical results.

Improvements expected: Better information on stock status or trends for these species, better information on their real overlap with the redfish fishery.

Auditing: At the Year 1 audit, ISF will present i) the most recent MRI advice for wolffish and deepsea redfish; ii) an analysis of available data on the bycatch of these species in the redfish fishery and iii) any available data giving an indication of population trends in grey skate.

Year 2

<u>Wolffish bycatch.</u> ISF meets with MRI to review findings from Year 1 analysis and assist in development of options or push for the development of options in light of findings in Year 1 analyses. The goal is for wolffish as a bycatch of redfish targeted fisheries to be maintained below 5%.

<u>Grey skate bycatch.</u> ISF meets with MRI to review findings from Year 1 analysis and assist in development of options or push for the development of options in light of findings in Year 1 analyses. ISF meets with the Directorate of Fisheries to discuss improved logging of grey skate catches, as it is the responsibility of the Directorate to oversee collection of logging data. The analysis of the data will indicate specific areas and seasonal changes in grey skate bycatch. ISF will meet with MRI to discuss the findings, compare the catch data with stock measurements and ask for development of strategies to minimize the bycatch of grey skate when targeting redfish. The goal is to eliminate grey skate catch as far as possible.

<u>Deep sea redfish bycatch.</u> ISF meets with MRI to review findings from Year 1 analysis and assist in development of options or push for the development of options in light of findings in Year 1 analyses.

Improvements expected: The bycatch impacts for wolffish and deep-sea redfish are well understood; for grey skate, population trends are monitored and measures to improve logging of bycatch are being put in place if required; management options to reduce impacts on all three species are in development.

Auditing: At the Year 2 audit, ISF will present i) evidence that options are being developed to reduce wolffish and deep-sea redfish bycatch to the required level, as necessary; ii) evidence that work is underway to improve logging of grey skate bycatch if necessary (e.g. evidence of outreach to ISF members, evidence of discussions with DoF on strengthened enforcement or other), iii) evidence that trends in grey skate populations are positive, and/or that measures are under discussion to eliminate bycatch.

Year 3

The actions of year 3 will depend on results from findings from previous year. The findings will have two main sources, the MRI annual and other new researches. Based on findings from the two sources, ISF will meet with MRI and MII to discuss and ask for adjustments to strategies as information deems needed in relation to the MSC standards. The goal is to agree on a strategy to maintain a below 5% bycatch of wolf fish from redfish targeted fisheries, to eliminate grey skate bycatch as possible and deep sea redfish TAC awarded by the MII to be consistent with scientific advise by MRI.

Improvements expected: Management measures have been agreed that will reduce bycatch to or below target levels for all three species.

Auditing: Evidence that suitable management measures have been agreed (e.g. draft regulations, an agreement accepted by all ISF members or similar)

Year 4

	The strategies established in year 3 should be in implementation by year four. ISF will meet with MRI to evaluate the progress, meet with the MII to follow up on MRI findings and discuss progress and the commitment to the implemented strategies. <i>Improvements expected:</i> Management measures are implemented.
	<i>Auditing:</i> Evidence that required levels of bycatch are being achieved (e.g. landings data, DoF observer reports or similar).
Status of condition after Year 1 audit	Wolffish (Bottom trawl, Danish seine, and longline): Closed Deep-sea redfish (Bottom trawl): Closed Grey skate (Bottom trawl): Closed Grey skate (Longline, Danish seine): On target Overall: On target
Progress on Condition [Year 2]	This condition remains open only in relation to grey skate / longline and Danish seine. Same as for Condition 1. The new data from surveys and bycatch provides an objective basis for confidence that the management for grey skate is working. On this basis, as well as for the purpose of harmonisation with the cod/haddock assessment, it was concluded that the condition should be closed.
Status of condition after Year 2 audit	Closed

Table 8: Condition 3

	Insert relevant PI number(s)	Insert relevant scoring issue/ scoring guidepost text	Score
Performance Indicator(s) & Score(s)	PI 2.4.1 – Bottom trawl	<u>Scoring Issue a</u> "The fishery is highly unlikely to reduce habitat structure and function to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm."	75
Condition	By the fourth surveillance audit necessary conservation and management measures for all vulnerable marine habitats shall be in place and implemented, such that the trawl fishery does not cause serious or irreversible harm to habitat structure, on a regional or bioregional basis, and function.		
Updated Milestones	At the End of Year 1 (first surveillance audit): There shall be evidence of the Client's plan to evaluate potential damage to deep-sea sponge aggregations and corals. There shall be evidence of engagement with the Marine Research Institute (MRI) with the goal of evaluating potential damage to all vulnerable habitats by fishing activities. If MRI is unable to provide support for the implementation of the plan, the fishery shall prepare the plan on the basis of other means (e.g. independent consultants or scientists or other means as appropriate). The plan may include an Environmental Impact Assessment or other similar analysis. Score 75 At the End of Year 2 (second surveillance audit): By the end of Year 2 there shall be evidence of ongoing work towards the implementation of the plan; i.e. collecting data and developing options as required for conservation and management measures to all vulnerable habitats, such that the fishery does not cause serious or irreversible harm to habitat structure, on a regional or bioregional basis, and function. Score 75 At the End of Year 3 (third surveillance audit): Continue to collect data, and evaluate the data and options developed in year 2. These options may be developed with the support of MRI,		lient's plan to shall be al of evaluating e to provide on the basis of propriate). The is. Score 75 all be evidence nd developing ble habitats, ucture, on a valuate the data pport of MRI, or e closed areas,

	move on thresholds or other actions as appropriate, but should be sufficient to ensure that there serious and irreversible harm to sponges and coral gardens is highly unlikely. Score 75
	At the End of Year 4 (fourth surveillance audit): Evaluate management options and finalise and agree on conservation and management measures as required. By the end of the year a partial strategy for the protection of deep-sea sponge aggregations and coral gardens from trawling shall be agreed upon and implemented, either at client group level or at a higher level. Score 80.
	A formal commitment to the agreed upon conservation and management measures shall remain in place for the duration of the certification period.
	Year 1
	ISF will engage MRI for data and information on potential damages caused by bottom trawling on all vulnerable habitats. In the event that MRI cannot provide the information and data, ISF will commit to work with an outside researcher. ISF will engage their members to agree upon and implement methods of benthic bycatch monitoring by ISF member vessels, as agreed with WWF during the objections process.
	<i>Improvements:</i> All available information on coral gardens and deep-sea sponge habitats' interaction with this fishery will be brought together. Data gaps will be clearly identified. Direct monitoring of the impacts of this fishery will be in preparation.
	Auditing: At the Year 1 audit, ISF will present i) evidence of engagement with MRI on habitat mapping and trawl impacts (e.g. meeting agendas and summaries or similar); ii) the data available from previous mapping (e.g. MRI reports or similar); iii) information on mapping projects underway or planned by MRI; iv) evidence of engagement with ISF members on benthic bycatch monitoring (e.g. meeting agendas etc.).
	Year 2
Updated Client Action Plan	Based on findings in year 1, ISF will meet with MRI and request an engagement by MRI to conserve vulnerable habitats and ask for options and plans to prevent serious or irreversible harm to habitat structures, if necessary. ISF will engage their members to agree upon and implement methods of benthic bycatch monitoring by ISF member vessels, as agreed with WWF during the objections process.
	<i>Improvements:</i> Implementation of a monitoring plan will have begun to monitor impacts on coral gardens and sponges and reduce them to acceptable levels as required.
	Auditing: At the Year 2 audit, ISF will present evidence from the monitoring efforts.
	Year 3
	ISF will meet with MRI to discuss findings from annual research on sponge and coral incidents. The meeting is intended to review statistics and discuss alternative actions, if needed. ISF will meet with members of the client group to discuss the condition and ask for feedback on actions made by each member to address the condition. The actions will be formalized into a plan, intended for engagement by members of the client group to meet the condition. To purpose is to ensure that serious or irreversible harm to sponges and coral gardens becomes a highly unlikely causes of bottom trawling.
	<i>Improvements:</i> The plan, if required, is updated according to the results of ongoing monitoring, and agreed by ISF and all relevant parties.
	Auditing: At the Year 3 audit, ISF will present an action plan, with evidence that it has been agreed by all participating parties (e.g. a signed agreement, meeting minutes, letters of support etc.)
	Year 4

	ISF will meet with members from the client group to discuss effects of actions taken in year 3 and adjust for improved efficiency, as needed. The goal is to protect deep sea sponge aggregations and coral gardens from impacts of trawling and seek an agreement among the members of the client group to this type of conservation. The actions of Year 4 are contingent on the outcome of findings showing whether and how conservation actions are required. If a plan has been proven necessary and agreed upon in year three, ISF will monitor the implementation of the plan in year 4 in cooperation with the members of the client group. <i>Improvements:</i> If required, the plan is implemented; it is updated as new information is available. <i>Auditing:</i> At the Year 4 audit, ISF will present the updated plan if necessary, with evidence of implementation (e.g. benthic logbook data, MRI report or other similar).	
Status of condition after Year 1 audit	Behind target	
Progress on Condition [Year 2]	MFRI continued the work of habitat mapping in 2016, with a cruise on the RV Bjarni Sæmundsson from 20 June – 1 July. Areas identified by remote sensing (multibeam echosounder) were investigated with underwater cameras. The areas covered in 2016 are shown in the first figure below (red dots are camera positions). The total area mapped to date is given in the second figure below (first figure provided by MFRI, second from http://www.hafro.is/undir.php?ID=10&REF=2).	

	-32° -28° -24° -20° -16° -12° -8°
	68° Drekasvæði Hali
	66° Vitural Vesturdigo
	64° Jökulbaki 64°
	62° -28° -24° -20° -16° -12°
	In addition, ISF have started a project for their members to report VME bycatch (hard and soft corals and sponges) in the electronic logbooks. Currently, the project is running as a pilot with the HB Grandi, owner of the four largest redfish vessels. ISF met with MFRI and Trackwell, a company designing the logbook software, in April 2016 to evaluate how this information could be added to the logbook. Trackwell adapted the interface to include this information for the four HB Grandi vessels, and the data are reported directly to MFRI (as other logbook data).
	The pilot has been successful, with no problems reported by the vessels or MFRI, and it is due to be rolled out across the ISF fleet. So far, data has only been collected by the four HB Grandi vessels (the Ásbjörn, Helga María, Ottó N. Þorláksson and Sturlaugur H. Böðvarsson) and no bycatch of corals or sponges has been reported so far. This is not particularly surprising, since reportedly vessels have for many years logged and avoided areas of coral and sponges, because they damage gear. The new logbook interface, due to be rolled out for the ISF fleet, is shown in Appendix 2.
Status of condition after Year 2 audit	Based on the revised milestones and action plan, the condition is on target .

Table 9: Condition 4

	Insert relevant PI number(s)	Insert relevant scoring issue/ scoring guidepost text	Score
Performance Indicator(s) & Score(s)	PI 2.4.2 – Bottom trawl	<u>Scoring Issue b</u> "There is some objective basis for confidence that the partial strategy will work, based on information directly about the fishery and/or habitats involved."	75

Condition	By the fourth surveillance audit necessary conservation and management measures for deep- sea sponge aggregation and coral gardens shall be in place and implemented, such that there is a partial strategy in place and implemented for these habitat types specifically, ensuring that the trawl fishery does not cause serious or irreversible harm to habitat structure and function in Icelandic waters. This condition may be implemented together with Condition 3.		
	At the Find of Very 1 (first curve)llance cudit). There shall be suidened of the Client's plan to		
	At the End of Year 1 (first surveillance audit): There shall be evidence of the Client's plan to evaluate potential damage to deep-sea sponge aggregations and corals. There shall be evidence of engagement with the Marine Research Institute (MRI) with the goal of evaluating potential damage to all vulnerable habitats by fishing activities. If MRI is unable to provide support for the implementation of the plan, the fishery shall prepare the plan on the basis of other means (e.g. independent consultants or scientists or other means as appropriate). The plan may include an Environmental Impact Assessment or other similar analysis. Score 75		
Updated	At the End of Year 2 (second surveillance audit): By the end of Year 2 there shall be evidence of ongoing work towards the implementation of the plan; i.e. collecting data and developing options as required for conservation and management measures to all vulnerable habitats, such that the fishery does not cause serious or irreversible harm to habitat structure, on a regional or bioregional basis, and function. Score 75		
Milestones	At the End of Year 3 (third surveillance audit): Continue to collect data, and evaluate the data and options developed in year 2. These options may be developed with the support of MRI, or may be developed within the client group, as appropriate. Options may include closed areas, move on thresholds or other actions as appropriate, but should be sufficient to ensure that there serious and irreversible harm to sponges and coral gardens is highly unlikely. Score 75		
	At the End of Year 4 (fourth surveillance audit): Evaluate management options and finalise and agree on conservation and management measures as required. By the end of the year a partial strategy for the protection of deep-sea sponge aggregations and coral gardens from trawling shall be agreed upon and implemented, either at client group level or at a higher level. Score 80.		
	A formal commitment to the agreed upon conservation and management measures shall remain in place for the duration of the certification period.		
	Year 1		
	ISF will engage MRI for data and information on potential damages caused by bottom trawling on all vulnerable habitats. In the event that MRI cannot provide the information and data, ISF will commit to work with an outside researcher. ISF will engage their members to agree upon and implement methods of benthic bycatch monitoring by ISF member vessels, as agreed with WWF during the objections process.		
Updated Client Action	<i>Improvements:</i> All available information on coral gardens and deep-sea sponge habitats' interaction with this fishery will be brought together. Data gaps will be clearly identified. Direct monitoring of the impacts of this fishery will be in preparation.		
Plan	Auditing: At the Year 1 audit, ISF will present i) evidence of engagement with MRI on habitat mapping and trawl impacts (e.g. meeting agendas and summaries or similar); ii) the data available from previous mapping (e.g. MRI reports or similar); iii) information on mapping projects underway or planned by MRI; iv) evidence of engagement with ISF members on benthic bycatch monitoring (e.g. meeting agendas etc.).		
	Year 2		
	Based on findings in year 1, ISF will meet with MRI and request an engagement by MRI to conserve vulnerable habitats and ask for options and plans to prevent serious or irreversible habitat structures, if necessary, ISE will engage their members to agree upon and		

implement methods of benthic bycatch monitoring by ISF member vessels, as agreed w WWF during the objections process	
	<i>Improvements:</i> Implementation of a monitoring plan will have begun to monitor impacts on coral gardens and sponges and reduce them to acceptable levels as required.
	Auditing: At the Year 2 audit, ISF will present evidence from the monitoring efforts.
	Year 3
	ISF will meet with MRI to discuss findings from annual research on sponge and coral incidents. The meeting is intended to review statistics and discuss alternative actions, if needed. ISF will meet with members of the client group to discuss the condition and ask for feedback on actions made by each member to address the condition. The actions will be formalized into a plan, intended for engagement by members of the client group to meet the condition. To purpose is to ensure that serious or irreversible harm to sponges and coral gardens becomes a highly unlikely causes of bottom trawling.
	<i>Improvements:</i> The plan, if required, is updated according to the results of ongoing monitoring, and agreed by ISF and all relevant parties.
	Auditing: At the Year 3 audit, ISF will present an action plan, with evidence that it has been agreed by all participating parties (e.g. a signed agreement, meeting minutes, letters of support etc.)
	Year 4
	ISF will meet with members from the client group to discuss effects of actions taken in year 3 and adjust for improved efficiency, as needed. The goal is to protect deep sea sponge aggregations and coral gardens from impacts of trawling and seek an agreement among the members of the client group to this type of conservation. The actions of Year 4 are contingent on the outcome of findings showing whether and how conservation actions are required. If a plan has been proven necessary and agreed upon in year three, ISF will monitor the implementation of the plan in year 4 in cooperation with the members of the client group.
	<i>Improvements:</i> If required, the plan is implemented; it is updated as new information is available.
	Auditing: At the Year 4 audit, ISF will present the updated plan if necessary, with evidence of implementation (e.g. benthic logbook data, MRI report or other similar).
Status of condition after Year 1 audit	As for Condition 3; behind target
Progress on Condition [Year 2]	As for Condition 3
Status of condition after Year 2 audit	Based on revised milestones and action plan, the condition is on target.

Table 10: Condition 5 Ling

	Insert relevant PI number(s)	Insert relevant scoring issue/ scoring guidepost text	Score		
Performance Indicator(s) & Score(s)	PI 1.1.2 – Reference points	<u>Scoring Issue b</u> "The limit reference point is set above the level at which there is an appreciable risk of impairing reproductive capacity."	75		
Condition	A limit reference point needs to be defined such that it is above the point where there is significant risk of impairing reproductive capacity. This might be achieved by providing scientific evidence within 4 years that the B _{loss} , or an alternative higher biomass, being used as the limit reference point is sufficiently precautionary consistent with MSC requirements.				
Milestones	 It is recognized that re-evaluation of the reference point may require another benchmark assessment. Therefore, timing for setting a new reference point, or justifying the current reference point, may need to fit into the ICES stock assessment cycle. Year 3: Evidence is available indicating reassessment of the current limit reference point. Score 75. Year 4: Justification is provided for the current or new point that it is precautionary, so that if the stock is at or above this point, there is a low risk of recruitment impairment. Score 80. 				
Client Action Plan	 Year 1 and 2: Engage with the MRI in improving sustainable fisheries of Iceland. The client group shall engage with the MRI and outline an approach to meeting the conditions imposed by the MSC Certification Requirements. Specifically, evaluating the rational for the current limit reference point for ling fisheries, and subsequently re-evaluate the reference point, as needed. And, if needed, consider internal options evaluate scientific evidence that the current Bloss is sufficiently precautionary and consistent with the MSC requirements. Internal options can include client initiated co-operation between the fishing industry and the MRI (e.g. hire an outside consultar cooperate with the University of Iceland, and/or implement new practices among IS members). Further, the client group aims to establish a basis for developing improvistrategies for the management of resources utilized by ISF vessels. ISF will record th process and maintain a log of all interactions where the action plan is being discussed and carried out in cooperation with all parties, e.g. MRI, MII, and Directorate of Fisheries, Universities, independent consultants and ISF members. Year 3 (year 4 of saithe): ISF shall ensure that options developed in year 2 are evaluated in year three as possible changes to the limit reference point have been modified or proven as precautionary. Consult with all members of the client group an MRI if needed on proposed options. Among the options considered are to hire an outside consultant, cooperate with the University of Iceland, and implement new practices among ISF members. ISF will record the process and maintain a log of all interactions developed in year 3 of all interactions where the action plan is being discussed and carried out in cooperation with all parties, e.g. MRI, MII, and Directorate of Fisheries, Universities, independent consultants and ISF members. Year 3 (year 5 of saithe): Follow up on implementation of a new reference point if needed, developed in yea				

	<u>CAB assessment of progress</u> : The CAB will assess progress of the condition by reviewing evidence supplied by the client and interviews with all parties involved as needed.
Progress on Condition [Year 1]	Since the original rationale for this condition was written, it was found that B _{lim} was set at 8,600, not 8,100 t. The value of 8,600 t is based on the median of the lowest SBB (ICES 2016a). A change from 8,100 t to 8,600 t in B _{lim} does not materially affect the condition. As per the CAP, ISF has provided a log documenting interactions regarding this condition in the past year (see Attachment x). As noted in the milestone section (above) it is recognized that re-evaluation of the reference point may require another benchmark assessment, and this would likely require scheduling according to the ICES stock assessment schedule. A new benchmark assessment for ling has not yet been scheduled.
Status of condition	On-target

Table 11: Condition 6 Ling

	Insert relevant PI number(s)	Score				
Performance Indicator(s) & Score(s)	PI 1.2.2 – Harvest control rules and tools	<u>Scoring Issue a</u> "Harvest control rules design and application."	75			
Condition	A well-defined harvest control rule should be put in place that is consistent with the harvest strategy and defines how the exploitation rate will be reduced as the stock approaches the limit reference point. Evidence should be provided that the HCR is precautionary within 4 years.					
Milestones	It is recognised that changes to the harvest control rule may require another benchmark assessment. Therefore timing may need to fit into the ICES stock assessment cycle. Year 3: Evidence is available indicating reassessment of the harvest control rule. Score 75. Year 4: A new harvest control rule is adopted that reduces exploitation as the limit reference point (see condition 1) is approached. Score 80					
Client Action Plan	 reference point (see condition 1) is approached. Score 80. 1. Years 1 and 2: Engage with MRI and MII for establishing a harvest control rule (HCR) including how the exploitation rate will be reduced as the stock approaches the limit reference point. The client group shall engage with the MRI and outline an approach to meeting the conditions imposed by the MSC Certification Requirements. Specifically, evaluating a possible HCR, including evaluation of a limit reference point as set out in Condition 1 above. The client group aims to establish a basis for developing improved strategies for the sustainable management of resources utilized by ISF vessels. ISF will record the process and maintain a log of all interactions where the action plan is being discussed and carried out in cooperation with all parties, e.g. MRI, MII, and Directorate of Fisheries, Universities, independent consultants and ISF members. 2. Year 3 (year 4 of saithe): Follow up on results of engagement in year 1 and 2 regarding a harvest control rule. The client group promotes the necessity for a harvest control rule, ensuring reduced exploitation rates as the stock approaches a limit reference point. The client will conduct an evaluation of a harvest control rule, either through MRI or internal options as set out above. The actions in year 3 are dependent on outcomes in previous years. If a clear and precautionary HCR is implemented by the MII in previous years, there is no need for further actions. If not, ISF will seek support within the client group to further look for alternatives to develop 					

	cooperation with all parties, e.g. MRI, MII, and Directorate of Fisheries, Universities, independent consultants and ISF members.
	 Year 4 (year 5 of saithe): Implement measures developed and evaluated in year This may need to fit into ICES assessment cycle. ISF will record the process and maintain a log of all interactions where the action plan is being discussed and carried out in cooperation with all parties, e.g. MRI, MII, and Directorate of Fisheries, Universities, independent consultants and ISF members.
	<u>CAB assessment of progress</u> : The CAB will assess progress of the condition by reviewing evidence supplied by the client and interviews with all parties involved as needed.
Progress on Condition [Year 1]	As per the CAP, ISF has provided a log documenting interactions regarding this condition in the past year. As noted in the milestone section (above) it is recognized that re-evaluation of the reference point may require another benchmark assessment, and this would likely require scheduling according to the ICES stock assessment schedule. A new benchmark assessment for ling has not yet been scheduled.
Status of condition	On-target

Table 10: Recommendation 1

Performance	Insert relevant PI number(s)	Insert relevant scoring issue/ scoring guidepost text	Score		
Indicator(s) & Score(s)	PI 2.3.1		N/A		
Recommendation	Skippers of all vessels in the client fleet should be required to record all bycatch and ETP species (i.e. birds, marine mammals, elasmobranchs) caught, irrespective of whether they are landed or viable individuals returned back to sea.				
Milestones	n/a				
Client action plan	Iceland Sustainable Fisheries will raise the issue through dialogue with the MRI, MII and other stakeholders. Board members of ISF as well as members of the companies that own ISF have seat in number of boards and committees in the seafood industry in Iceland and will use that platform to get the message out.				
Progress on Recommendation [Year 2]	Fishermen have been made aware of the issue through discussion and the media, and ISF report that they are becoming more supportive. MFRI confirm (letter from Guðjón Már Sigurðsson, 16/8/16) that last year saw a surge in returns, and this year also looks promising.				
Status of recommendation	n/a				

5. Conclusion

The audit conclusion is that two conditions are now closed and four are on target. The fishery **should** remain certified for another year.

Surveillance level remains the same from last year.

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Appendices

Appendix 1:

Re-scoring evaluation tables (2.1.1 and 2.1.2 for grey skate; Conditions 1 and 2)

Evaluation Table for PI 2.1.1

PI 2.1.1		The fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the retained species and does not hinder recovery of depleted retained species			
Scoring	g Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100	
а	Guidepost	Main retained species are likely to be within biologically based limits (if not, go to scoring issue c below).	Main retained species are highly likely to be within biologically based limits (if not, go to scoring issue c below).	There is a high degree of certainty that retained species are within biologically based limits and fluctuating around their target reference points.	
	Met?	go to c	go to c	No	
	Justification	Grey skate (<i>Raja (Dipturus) batis</i>) is listed as critically endangered by IUCN (althebraic this is based on data from elsewhere in NW Europe). Stock status in Iceland known.			
b	Guidepost			Target reference points are defined for retained species.	
	Met?			No	
	Justification	Target reference points are not defined for grey skate.			
c	Guidepost Met?	If main retained species are outside the limits there are measures in place that are expected to ensure that the fishery does not hinder recovery and rebuilding of the depleted species.	If main retained species are outside the limits there is a partial strategy of demonstrably effective management measures in place such that the fishery does not hinder recovery and rebuilding.		



PI 2.1.1		The fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the retained species and does not hinder recovery of depleted retained species				
		 Figure: Landings of grey skate (tonnes), 2004-2014; 1=longline fishery, 5=Danish seine (Note: Discarding is not allowed). Figure provided by MFRI. In relation to harmonisation, the audit team noted that the cod and haddock re-assessment have not identified grey skate as a 'main' bycatch (secondary) species on the basis of vulnerability in the cod and haddock fishery, the reasons being i) that the proportion of grey skate taken with cod and haddock (as well as saithe) is very low and ii) that there is in fact no particular evidence of severe depletion of the Icelandic stock – although the species is known to have low resilience to fishing pressure, assumptions that the stock is endangered may have carried over from the NW Europe context. On this basis, the audit team agrees with scientists and managers in Iceland, as well as preliminary conclusions from the ISF cod and haddock re-assessments, that the existing management measures and fishing strategies constitute a demonstrably effective partial strategy for grey skate. SG80 is met. 				
d	Guidepost	If the status is poorly known there are measures or practices in place that are expected to result in the fishery not causing the retained species to be outside biologically based limits or hindering recovery.				
	Met?	Yes				
	Justification	There are measures in place for all species such as monitoring and verification of all catches at landing, discard bans, and areas which have been closed for decades, effectively serving as MPAs. Although these measures are not designed for the purpose of protecting grey skate it can be expected that a long term closure of relatively large areas of seabed in Icelandic waters has lowered the fishing mortality of grey skate, as suggested by the survey and bycatch data presented in scoring issue c.			on of all decades, for the osure of nortality scoring	
Refere	nces	Anon 2013, ICES 2012; IC	CES 2013d; Regulation 754	/2010		
OVERA	LL PERFOR	MANCE INDICATOR SCORE:			80	
CONDI		BER (if relevant):			n/a	

Evaluation Table for PI 2.1.2

PI 2.1	.2	There is a strategy in place for managing retained species that is designed to ensure the fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to retained species			
Scoring	g Issue	SG 60	SG 80	SG 100	
а	Guidepost	There are measures in place, if necessary, that are expected to maintain the main retained species at levels which are highly likely to be within biologically based limits, or to ensure the fishery does not hinder their recovery and rebuilding.	There is a partial strategy in place, if necessary, that is expected to maintain the main retained species at levels which are highly likely to be within biologically based limits, or to ensure the fishery does not hinder their recovery and rebuilding.	There is a strategy in place for managing retained species.	
Met?		Yes	Yes	No	
		The Fisheries Management Act requires that all catches shall be landed. All the in Iceland by the Icelandic fishing fleet must be weighed and reported in authorities are responsible for the correct weighing and recording of the cat fishing vessels keep special log books of catch statistics (such as location, of catch quantity) and inspectors from the Directorate of Fisheries have access to In addition, closure of fishing areas is an important part of the quota manage in order to protect spawning grounds and juvenile fish. These measures for manage impact of the fishery on retained species. Many of the retained species are managed by the MRI through TACs			
	5	weight and their managem	ient measures would be cons	idered as a strategy at the 100 level.	
	Justificati	However, for other vulnerable species the measures in place include monitoring of landings, spatial and/or temporal closures and bans on discards. These measures form a partial strategy at the 80 level.			
Guidepost		The measures are considered likely to work, based on plausible argument (e.g., general experience, theory or comparison with similar fisheries/species).	There is some objective basis for confidence that the partial strategy will work, based on some information directly about the fishery and/or species involved.	Testing supports high confidence that the strategy will work, based on information directly about the fishery and/or species involved.	
	Met?	Yes	Yes	No	

PI 2.1.2		There is a strategy in place for managing retained species that is designed to ensure the fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to retained species			
		SG80: Most of the retained species are monitored by MRI surveys. Strategies for many of the retained species are therefore comparable to those for the target species. Information about the retained species could be directly obtained from the DF database. Information on retained species is based on landed catch and MRI surveys as well as fishermen's logbooks. Fishing efforts are limited by quota, area closures to protect undersized fish as well as and gear specific closures, minimum mesh sizes and regulated use of sorting grids. Closures, mesh size, sorting grids and minimum landing size are monitored by the Coast Guard. The availability of information about the fishery provides direct evidence that the strategy is working			
		The stock status and track record of the main retained species and many of the minor retained species, show that the management strategy of these species is working. In addition, there are examples of species, such as cod, that recovered from very low levels under the Icelandic Fisheries Management system.			
		The team concluded that, based on the new actions taken by the authorities (respect for scientific advice, discussions on further rebuilding requirements), and considering the example of successful rebuilding of other stocks on the same basis, measures are considered likely to work (scientific advice based on assessment of the stock concerned, evidence o new actions by the authorities in relation to the fishery concerned, and evidence that sucl actions have been successful in other, similar situations).			
	Justification	Although the measures in place are not designed for the purpose of protecting vulnerable species, such as grey skate, it can be expected that a long-term closure of relatively large areas of seabed in Icelandic waters has lowered the fishing mortality of these species. Survey and bycatch data (see 2.1.1 scoring issue c) provides an objective basis for confidence that the partial strategy in place will work for grey skate.			
C	Guidepost		There is some evidence There is clear evidence that the that the partial strategy is being implemented successfully.		
	Met?		Yes	No	
SG80: The quota system ensures implement database, the Coast Guard and logbook ret being implemented successfully. The discar some decades, and studies show a decreas during spawning and closures to protect un The minister of fisheries has presented a together with relevant parties in the fish scientific fisheries advice and the authoritie ensuring responsible fisheries management indicating that the authorities are determ related to vulnerable species.			nsures implementation of th and logbook returns provide sofully. The discard ban and o s show a decrease in discards res to protect undersized fish has presented a statement arties in the fishing industr and the authorities' decisions eries management. ² In rece ral management plans in or rities are determined to mee- ies.	e strategy. Information from the DF e evidence that the partial strategy is fficial weighing has been in place for s (Pálsson et al. 2013). Area closures have also been in place for decades. on responsible fisheries in Iceland, ry, where conformity between the on the TAC is the principal factor for nt years Icelandic authorities have der to secure sustainable fisheries et their obligations, including issues	

² <u>http://www.fisheries.is/management/government-policy/responsible-fisheries/nr/62</u>

PI 2.1.2		There is a strategy in place for managing retained species that is designed to ensure the fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to retained species				
d	too There is some evident strategy is achieving objective.		There is some evidence strategy is achieving its objective.	that the s overall		
	Met?			No		
	Justificatio n	Many of the retained sp measures including surveil not provide TAC advice o Therefore a score of 100 ca	ecies stocks are well mana lance, verified landings, and o n some of the lesser retain annot be justified.	ged through the TAC's and other discard bans. However, the MRI does ed species which are not targeted.		
e	Guidepost	It is likely that shark finning is not taking place.	It is highly likely that shark finning is not taking place.	There is a high degree of certainty that shark finning not taking place.		
	Met?	Yes Yes Yes		Yes		
	Justification	Various shark species are reported on occasion as retained species. Vessels are required to have VMS (although not video linked), and fishermen are required to land all species intact, with dockside verification of the catch. In Iceland, there is a domestic market for shark flesh and sharks are landed whole. It is thus the flesh rather than the fins that is valuable.				
Refere	nces	Pálsson et al. 2013				
OVERA	LL PERFOR	MANCE INDICATOR SCORE:			80	
CONDI	TION NUM	IBER (if relevant):			n/a	

Appendix 2.	Electronic logboo	k adapted to	o collect coral	and sponge data

E	Afurðastjóri				-		×
	Afurðaskráning - Hol 18 - 06:11						
D	rag a column head	er here to group l	by that column				
	Afurð	Fjöldi	Skráð meðalþyngd (kg)	Nafn	Þyngd (kg)	Afli (kg)	
*			Click here to add a new	row			
>	1 -	200	4,2	Þorskur	58.000 kg		58.000 kg
	2	108		Ýsa	31.320 kg		31.320 kg
	9	2		Steinbítur	580 kg		580 kg
	10	2		Langhali	580 kg		580 kg
	19	11		Gulllax	3. 190 kg		3.190 kg
-144	W $($ Record 1 of 5 \rightarrow W $+$ $ \rightarrow$ \checkmark X						
K	S S	vampur kg			Skrá í Afladagbók		oka