



MSC FISHERY SURVEILLANCE REPORT

Surveillance Report for Norway Spring Spawning Herring Fishery

REPORT No. 003 - 2010

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The objective of this project has been the first surveillance audit of the Norway Spring Spawning herring fishery caught by purse-seine and midwater trawl.

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Abbreviations

CEFAS	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
CPUE	Catch per unit effort
DNV	Det Norske Veritas
EEF	Norwegian Seafood Export Council
ETP	Endangered, threatened and protected species
EU	European Union
HCR	Harvest Control Rule
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IMR	Institute of Marine Research, Bergen, Norway
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
NEA	North East Arctic
NFVOA	Norwegian Fishing Vessel Owners Association (Fiskebåtredernes Forbund)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NINA	Norwegian Institute for Nature Research
NS	North Sea
NSI	Norwegian Seafood Industry
PI	Performance Indicator
TAB	Technical Advisory Board
TAC	Total Allowable Catch

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION

This report contains the findings of the first surveillance audit for the Norway Spring Spawning herring fishery, caught by Purse-seine and pelagic trawl. The client for this certification is Norges Sildesalgslag and the surveillance audits are being co-ordinated by Norwegian Seafood Export Council (EFF).

The purpose of this annual Surveillance Report is:

1. To establish and report on any material changes to the circumstances and practices affecting the original complying assessment of the fishery;
2. To monitor the progress made to comply with any “conditions” raised and described in the Public Report of 30th April 2009 and in the corresponding Action Plan drawn up by the client;
3. To monitor any actions taken in response to any “recommendations” made in the Public Report;
4. To re-score any Performance Indicators (PIs) where practice or circumstances have materially changed during the intervening year, focusing on those PIs that form the basis of “conditions” raised

As conditions are closed out (i.e. actions are completed), future surveillance assessments will focus more and more on the overall ongoing operation of the fishery in relation to the MSC Principles and Criteria.

1.1 Name and contact information for the certified fishery:

Client name	Norges Sildesalgslag and Norwegian Seafood Export council (EFF)
Contact person	Rigmor Abel / Knut Torgnes
Address	Eksportutvalget for fisk AS Strandveien 106 Postboks 6176 9291 Tromsø Norway
Telephone	+ 47 77 60 33 33
Fax	+ 47 77 68 00 12
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1.2 General background about the fishery.

Norges Sildesalgslag is a sales organization for the Norwegian pelagic fisheries. In this context they coordinate the process of certification and certificate maintenance for Norway Spring Spawning herring fishery. Norges Sildesalgslag, in this respect represents the whole Norwegian fleet for pelagic fisheries. The Norwegian Seafood Export Council co-ordinates the surveillance audits.

Norges Sildesalgslaget is one of Europe's most important marketplaces for firsthand sales of pelagic fish. The marketplace is owned and run by Norwegian fishermen. The fleet consist of 800 – 1000 vessels. The catch is sold by electronic auction. Norges Sildesalgslaget has a central role in this auction. Both Norwegian and foreign fishermen sell their fish through this marketplace which is open for bids from Norwegian and foreign buyers. Catch data are instantly reported to governmental bodies, providing high quality input for resource control purposes.

Norges Sildesalgslag sends out information to their members whenever there is a change in regulations, and also informs them when they are pushing for regulative changes. They are active in a number of reference groups and see this as an opportunity to contribute to further development in the field, eg in terms of input for data modelling. Cooperation between the Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs, the Directorate of Fisheries and the Institute of Marine Research is reported as being good. They have a running correspondence with IMR, and give input on research topics. They also try to influence the government to grant more resources for stock assessments since this is crucial to the setting of quota, and promote the view that sustainability and accuracy is in the interest of the fisheries industry as well.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal affairs also involve the fishing industry in hearings when all new proposals are discussed, but there have been no cases registered for the pelagic fisheries in the past one and a half years.

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2 THE CERTIFICATION/ASSESSMENT PROCESS

2.1 Previous Assessment.

2.1.1 Summary of the original assessment

The intent of Norges Sildesalgslag to become MSC certified for their Norwegian Spring Spawning herring fisheries by purse-seine and pelagic trawl was announced in January 2008, and they received their certificate on 30th April 2009. The original assessment was performed by Moody Marine Ltd. in the period January 2008 to April 2009. The assessment comprised of G. Pilling, J. Nichols, A. H. Hoel, A. Hough & S. Davies. Consultation for Scoring Indicators and guideposts was in February 2008. 62 stakeholders were identified and consulted during the assessment process.

The fishery attained a score of 80 or more against each of the MSC Principles and did not score less than 60 against any MSC Criteria. Scope of certification is up to the point of landing and chain of custody commences from point of sale. Two conditions were set at the initial certification covering the two specified gears.

The conditions set relate to the following issues:

1. **SLIPPAGE - BOTH GEARS:** Reporting programmes should be initiated to provide comprehensive and verifiable estimates of the extent of discarding (notably slippage) of the target species and, as far as possible, by-catches..
2. **BY-CATCHES- BOTH GEARS:** Sampling programmes should be initiated to provide statistically robust estimates of the by-catch of all species, including estimates of discards.

No recommendations were set at the initial certification.

2.2 The first surveillance audit process:

The assessment process for this surveillance audit was performed according to the requirements set out in the MSC Fisheries Certification Methodology.

The surveillance audit was announced on the MSC website on 9th April 2010 followed by a supporting notice to stakeholders issued by the MSC on the same date. Direct e-mail notification was also sent to the stakeholders that had previously been identified for this fishery on 10th April 2010, inviting interested parties to contact the audit team.

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Sandhya Chaudhury, DNV Lead auditor and Independent expert Graham Piling conducted an on-site meeting first with the client and then with the Institute for Marine Research and the Fisheries Directorate in Bergen, Norway on Tuesday 11th May 2010. The meeting with the Ministry for fisheries and coastal Affairs took place on Wednesday 12th May 2010 in Oslo, Norway. Further details of meetings as well as details of other information consulted in the assessment process can be found under chapter 4 (information sources).

3 RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Development in the Norwegian spring-spawning herring stock, the fishery on the stock and the management of the fishery.

The latest advice on the North Sea herring stock was released by ICES ACOM in 2009. Fishing mortality was at the target set by the management plan. Spawning stock biomass was above the precautionary level. Based on the most recent estimates of SSB (in 2009) ICES classifies the stock as having full reproductive capacity. Based on the most recent estimate of fishing mortality (in 2008) ICES classifies the stock as being harvested sustainably.

The stock contains a number of good year classes. In the last 10 years, four large year classes have been produced (1998, 1999, 2002 and 2004). However, the available information indicates that year classes after 2004 have been of low abundance.

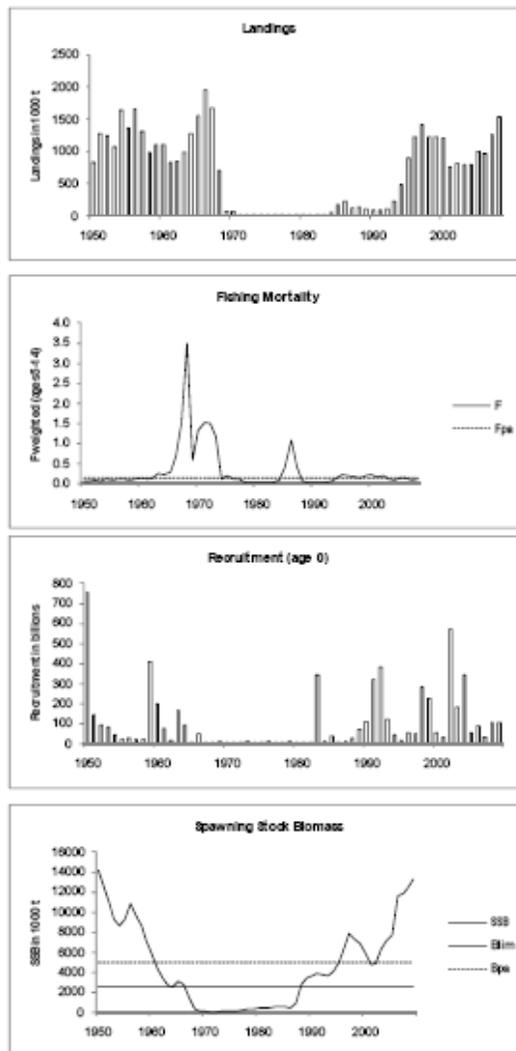
The EU, Faroe Islands, Iceland, Norway, and Russia agreed in 1999 on a long-term management plan. ICES considers that this agreement is consistent with the precautionary approach.

Advice based upon MSY reference points has not yet been generated.

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Herring in the Northeast Atlantic (Norwegian spring-spawning herring). Summary of stock assessment: landings, fishing mortality, recruitment, and SSB. Data prior to 1988 are from the 2006 assessment year.

ICES advice for 2010 comes from the agreed management plan.

3.2 Status of certification recommendations

Under Policy Advisory 12: Further Guidance on Scoring Reference Points in Principle 1, the status of all stocks under certification must be related to MSY levels. The latest ICES advice for this stock currently relies on the precautionary and limit reference points. The following table updates PI1.1 in light of the PA12 guidance.

PI	Score	Rationale
1.1.1	80	<p>The latest ICES assessment indicates that the stock is above the level at which recruitment will be impaired (B_{lim}). This fulfils the requirements of the first scoring issue under SG80.</p> <p>The assessment also indicates that the fishing mortality on the stock has been below the F_{MSY} level for the last two years, but the stock is just</p>

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		<p>below the B_{MSY} target.</p> <p>Therefore the stock is at or fluctuating around its target reference point, and where it is highly likely that the stock is above the point where there is an appreciable risk of recruitment being impaired. Given that the stock has only just reached this level, as per the FAM V2 guidance, a score of 80 is given.</p>
1.1.2	90	<p>Reference points are appropriate for the stock and can be estimated: A biomass limit reference point has been established using stock-recruit data as the point where impaired recruitment is likely. B_{pa} and F_{pa} have been set at a level above B_{lim} taking uncertainty into account (F_{lim} has not been estimated). This fulfils the requirements of the first scoring issue under SG100.</p> <p>The limit reference point (B_{lim}) is set above the level at which there is an appreciable risk of impairing reproductive capacity, selected at a level above the lowest point at which no affect on recruitment was observed. This is reasonable practice, and as the underlying basis for the harvest control rule has been shown by ICES to be precautionary. Therefore the 100 scoring guidepost is met for this scoring issue.</p> <p>The new ICES MSY reference points provide target reference points such that the stock is maintained at a level consistent with B_{MSY} or some measure or surrogate with similar intent or outcome. This fulfils the requirements of the third scoring issue under SG80.</p> <p>Herring is not considered a low trophic level species (Fishbase trophic level = 3.23, based upon diet studies). Therefore the fourth scoring issue is not assigned a score.</p> <p>Following the FAM V2 guidance, this PI receives a score of 90 because the requirements of two scoring issues are fulfilled at the 100 level, and one at the 80 level.</p>
1.1.3	80	<p>There is a tested management plan in place that aims to maintain the stock at the management target levels. This fulfils the requirements of the first scoring issue under SG80.</p> <p>This management plan has been revised to take into account of recent poor recruitments (revised November 2008). ICES has evaluated this management plan and concluded that the plan is consistent with the precautionary approach. This plan uses the management target reference points discussed in 1.1.2. This fulfils the requirements under SG80.</p> <p>Therefore this PI receives a score of 80, as both SG80 scoring issues are met. Further evidence of stock recovery, despite recent low recruitments, would lead to a higher score.</p>

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CONDITION 1: Slippage

Action required: Reporting programmes should be initiated to provide comprehensive and verifiable estimates of the extent of discarding (notably slippage) of the target species and, as far as possible, by-catches. Information should be sufficient to allow statistically robust estimates of quantity, location and date and to allow an assessment of the impacts of slippage in relation to the distribution, ecology and abundance of the populations affected.

Timescale: Reporting program protocols should be designed and initiated within 1 year of certification and an initial evaluation of any potential impacts completed within 3 years of certification. Where mitigation measures are required to reduce or avoid impacts, these should be fully implemented within 5 years of certification.

Relevant Scoring Indicators: 1.1.2.1 & 3.B.6.1

ACTION PLAN:

During the first year of application of this certificate, NSS, on behalf of its participating vessel owners/skippers, will enter into discussions with Directorate of Fisheries (DOF) staff and Institute of Marine Research (IMR) staff with a view to:
-drawing up and agreeing any necessary reporting formats for the recording of information on the nature and incidence of the slipping of catches

Within two years of certification, NSS will provide evidence of proactive support of research and observer monitoring of slippage.

Within three years, NSS will provide an initial evaluation of any potential impacts of the actions taken.

OBSERVATIONS:

Reports from the monitoring vessels indicate that though there are no concrete figures slippage has been less this year in comparison to earlier years. Coastal guards are definitely of the opinion that monitoring activities are further required. Norges Sildesalgslag, the Fisheries Directorate and the Coastal guard department have recorded a meeting in February 2010 as well as a meeting with the skippers in December 2009. Both meetings aimed to discuss slippage and enforcement of regulations regarding this. Norges Sildesalgslag has also been communicating with the Coastal guards resulting in Notices dt 28.01.2010; 08.02.2010 and 15.02.2010 to the fishermen regarding access to fish and thereby avoiding possibilities of slippage.

In the February 2010 meeting Norges Sildesalgslag has put forward a proposal for reporting of slippage through electronic logbooks. This was to be initiated from April 2010 according to Regulation 17 regarding reporting, but has been delayed with new dates set for 2011. Presently, all bycatch/retained catch figures are from the NSS electronic delivery notes.

By law all catches should be brought to shore and it is illegal to slip catches where there is a risk that the fish will die as a result of the catching process. During this first year of certification NSS has held meeting with directorate and coastguard to discuss methods for avoiding slippage during catches where there might be herring mortality and also to avoid big catches so as to hinder the breaking of nets. Risk-based approach to

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monitoring by coastguard and slippage is one of the most important areas to monitor. The coast guard has used 2 vessels and an airplane to monitor the fleet during the season. These coastguard vessels have been present in the fishing area for the entire season and along the entire coastline from the Barents sea till the end of season in the southern coast of Norway.

Norges Sildesalgslag is also involved in the establishment of a new group called Centre for Research-based Innovation in Sustainable fish capture and Pre-processing technology (CRISP). CRISP will be an independent unit of IMR and will act on slippage issues too. CRISP aims also to reduce negative environmental impacts, and un-encountered mortality in the purse seine fleet. CRISP has a budget of 500,000 NOK over 5 yrs. and covers Norwegian spring spawning herring.

IMR has 7 vessels operating as Reference fleet in the pelagic sector. The fleet takes samples from herring, blue whiting, mackerel, horse mackerel and others, sampling length and weight from 50 samples in every second catch from purse seiners and trawlers. 50 fishes are frozen from each trawl for later sampling. Each catch is logged in eelogbooks, including bycatch and discharge.

CONCLUSION: The results from the audit indicate that this condition is currently on target through the documented communication between Norges Sildesalgslag, Fisheries Directorate and the Coastal guards. Reporting formats have been proposed and regulated. As indicated in the action plan progress towards achieving the next milestones will be reviewed during the next audits. This condition will not be rescored until after the third surveillance audit.

CONDITION 2: By-catches

Action required: Sampling programmes should be initiated to provide statistically robust estimates of the by-catch of all species, including estimates of discards. Information should be sufficient to allow an assessment of the impacts of by-catches in relation to the distribution, ecology and abundance of the species and populations affected (commercial and non-commercial fish, mammals and birds).

The potential impact of non-target species removals on the populations affected and the wider ecosystem should be evaluated.

Where assessments of impacts on by-catches are shown to be significant, and for all species identified as PET, appropriate measures to reduce by-catches to acceptable and precautionary levels shall be developed and implemented.

Timescale: Sampling programmes should be designed and initiated within 12 months of certification and an initial evaluation of any potential impacts completed within 3 years of certification. Where mitigation measures are required to reduce or avoid impacts, these should be identified within 3 years of certification and fully implemented within 5 years of certification.

Relevant Scoring Indicators: 2.1.2.2, 2.2.1.2, 3A.3.4, 3B.1.1 & 3.B.6.1

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ACTION PLAN:

By the time of the first surveillance audit, NSS will provide the Certification Body with evidence that it has in co-operation with Norwegian Fishermen's Association and Directorate of Fisheries designed and initiated regular sampling programmes of Norwegian Spring Spawning Herring Fisheries catches to provide statistically robust estimates of the by-catch of all species.

Within three years, NSS will provide an initial evaluation of any potential impacts of the actions taken.

OBSERVATIONS:

By-catch figures are available from Norges Sildesalgslag, by gear and target species. These are derived from the delivery notes that NSS obtain, including via the NSS inspectors monitoring during landing process. NSS is working with IMR on monitoring by-catch and has proposed that statistical analysis from delivery notes be compared with vessels monitored by DoF and reference fleet. Statistical analysis information is also available directly from NSS as well as from CRISP.

According to NINA report 382 current fisheries/gears are not seen as a major issue for birds, although work is ongoing.

The Regulations amending the regulations relating to sea-water fisheries, Section 48, prohibits the discarding of fish and now excludes the discarding of a large number of dead and dying fish. These catches must now be enumerated. This new legislation provides the statistically robust sampling system required within 12 months of certification.

Implementation of the new legislation is currently being tested through the Norwegian 'reference fleet', which will provide information on the best method to implement this regulation across all vessels. This reference fleet includes pelagic vessels comparable with those of the current certification. Full implementation of the regulation on NSS vessels over the coming years will allow the initial evaluation of the potential impact of non-target species removals on the populations affected.

CONCLUSION:

The results from the audit indicate that this condition is currently on target through the implementation of the new regulations from April 2009. As indicated in the condition, the analysis of the data should be performed within 3 years to identify bycatch levels of concern, and progress towards this will be reviewed during the next audit.

3.3 Any consequential rescoring of performance indicators

PI	Condition	Gears	Rescoring
1.1.2.1	1	Purse-Seine & Pelagic Trawl	Not rescored
2.1.2.2	2	Purse-Seine & Pelagic Trawl	Not rescored
2.2.1.2	2	Purse-Seine & Pelagic Trawl	Not rescored

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3A.3.4	2	Purse-Seine & Pelagic Trawl	Not rescored
3B.1.1	2	Purse-Seine & Pelagic Trawl	Not rescored
3.B.6.1	1 & 2	Purse-Seine & Pelagic Trawl	Not rescored

3.4 Conclusions

Norges Sildesalgslag has taken appropriate measures to address the conditions of certification raised during the MSC certification assessment and therefore remains compliant with its MSC certification. Satisfactory and timely progress has been made in progressing the conditions for this certification. MSC Certification should therefore continue, subject to satisfactory compliance with outstanding conditions, and surveillance audits continue to the same schedule.

This can be summarized as follows:

1. Conditions where requirements are deemed to have been met on target but which will be reviewed at the next surveillance audit prior to closure.

Condition: 1 & 2.

2. Conditions which are considered to be on-target and which will be subject to full review in future surveillance audits

Conditions: None

3. Conditions where work is currently falling behind target and which will be subject to full review at the next surveillance audit.

Conditions: None

4 INFORMATION SOURCES

Meetings:

- 1) Knut Torgnes, Norges Sildesalgslag -11th May 2010.
- 2) Sverre Johansen, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal affairs – 12th May 2010
- 3) Anna Magnussen, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal affairs - 12th May 2010
- 4) Thorbjørn Thorvik, Senior Advisor, The Directorate of Fisheries – 11th May 2010
- 5) Katherine Kannelønning, Legal Advisor, The Directorate of Fisheries – 11th May 2010
- 6) Thord Monsen, Legal Advisor, The Directorate of Fisheries – 11th May 2010
- 7) Modulf Overvik, Senior Advisor, The Directorate of Fisheries – 11th May 2010
- 8) Per Wagensten, Advisor, The Directorate of Fisheries – 11th May 2010
- 9) Erling Kåre Stenevik, Scientist, Institute of Marine Research – 11th May 2010
- 10) Svein A. Iversen, Scientist, Institute of Marine Research – 11th May 2010

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- 11) Aud Vold, Scientist, Institute of Marine Research – 11th May 2010
- 12) Cecilie Kvamme, Scientist, Institute of Marine Research – 11th May 2010
- 13) Sigbjørn Mehl, Scientist, Institute of Marine Research – 11th May 2010
- 14) Åge Fotland, Scientist, Institute of Marine Research – 11th May 2010

Reports etc

1. ICES Advice 2009, Section 3.4.4 and 6.4.12
2. NINA report 382

Standards and Guidelines used:

1. MSC Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing
2. MSC Fishery Certification Methodology Version 6.1 May 2010
3. TAB Directives – all
4. www.fisheries.no (portal for the Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs)

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