

**Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Year 3 Surveillance Report**

**Mussel translocation into the Oosterschelde**

**On behalf of**

**The Vereniging van Importeurs van Schelpdieren**

**Prepared by**

**Control Union Pesca Ltd**

**April 2019**

**Authors:       Chrissie Sieben  
                      Dr. Jo Gascoigne**

Control Union Pesca Ltd  
56 High Street, Lymington  
Hampshire SO41 9AH  
United Kingdom  
Tel: 01590 613007  
Fax: 01590 671573  
E-mail: [infopesca@controlunion.com](mailto:infopesca@controlunion.com)  
Website: [www.cupesca.com](http://www.cupesca.com)

## Contents

CONTENTS.....	2
GLOSSARY .....	3
1 GENERAL SUMMARY .....	4
2 BACKGROUND.....	5
2.1 Translocation sources .....	5
2.2 Management of the translocations .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.3 Traceability.....	8
3 ASSESSMENT PROCESS .....	8
4 RESULTS AND CONCLUSION .....	9
5 EVALUATION RESULTS .....	10
5.1 Principle Level Scores.....	10
5.2 Summary of PI Level Scores .....	10
6 REFERENCES .....	11

## Glossary

Acronym	Definition
BB	Big Bag
FCR	Fisheries Certification Requirements and Guidance
IPI	inseparable or practicably inseparable
LNv	Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit (Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality)
MEC	ME Certification Ltd
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
PCR	Public Certification Report
SASI	Schelpdier Afhankelijke Soorten Inventarisatie (Shellfish dependent species inventory)
SIMP	Shellfish Import Monitoring Protocol
SSPO	Swedish Shellfish Producer Organisation
TAC	Total Allowable Catch

## 1 General summary

<b>Fishery name</b>	Mussel translocation into the Oosterschelde		
<b>Unit(s) of assessment</b>	Species: <i>Mytilus edulis</i> Geographical range: Northwest Europe Method of capture: Dredge Stock: N/a Client group: Members of the Vereniging van Importeurs van Schelpdieren. Other eligible fishers: None		
<b>Date certified</b>	27 January 2016	<b>Date of expiry</b>	27 January 2021
<b>Surveillance level and type</b>	Surveillance level 1, on-site surveillance audit  Please note this surveillance level was revised in line with the FCRv2.0 as the standard surveillance level stated in the Public Certification Report conformed to the CRv1.3		
<b>Date of surveillance audit</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> February 2019		
<b>Surveillance stage (tick one)</b>	1st Surveillance		
	2nd Surveillance		
	3rd Surveillance	X	
	4th Surveillance		
	Other (expedited etc)		
<b>Surveillance team</b>	Lead assessor: Chrissie Sieben Assessor: Jo Gascoigne		
<b>CAB name</b>	Control Union Pesca (CU Pesca)		
<b>CAB contact details</b>	<b>Address</b>	56 High Street Lymington Hampshire SO41 9AH United Kingdom	
	<b>Phone/Fax</b>	Tel: +44 1590 613007 Fax: +44 1590 671573	
	<b>Email</b>	ctodd@controlunion.com	
	<b>Contact name(s)</b>	Charlotte Todd	
<b>Client contact details</b>	<b>Address</b>	Vereniging van Importeurs van Schelpdieren 's-Gravenpolderseweg 72 4462 CH Goes The Netherlands	
	<b>Phone/Fax</b>	+31 626714619	
	<b>Email</b>	secretariaat@visfederatie.nl	
	<b>Contact name(s)</b>	Paulien Prent	

## 2 Background

This report outlines the process and outcome of the third annual surveillance audit for Mussel translocation into the Oosterschelde after certification in 2016. The fishery is conducted by members of the by members of the Vereniging van Importeurs van Schelpdieren.

Since certification in 2016, the fishery continues to operate in the same way and there have been no changes to the fishery. A detailed background to the fishery, including a description of the fisheries and the activities carried out, is provided in the [PCR](#) (Gascoigne et al, 2016).

No changes in the following have occurred to those outlined in that report:

- Unit of Certification;
- Scientific base of information, including stock definition and information base;
- Operation of the fleet in the fishery;
- Management systems;
- Fishery regulations;
- Changes to how traceability is conducted within the fishery.

The fishery was certified by ME Certification Ltd. (now CU Pesca) on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 with no conditions or recommendations. This report therefore focuses on any changes that have occurred since the reassessment and Year 2 surveillance.

### 2.1 Translocation sources

The translocated mussels are imported from MSC-certified fisheries elsewhere in Northwest Europe and are placed in the Oosterschelde on holding plots for short periods of time for purposes of depuration/stockage where they become part of the MSC certified “Netherlands blue shell mussel fishery” (MEC-F-021). At the time of the initial assessment, the mussels were imported from the following MSC-certified fisheries:

- North Menai Strait mussels (Wales, UK)
- Exmouth mussels (Devon, UK)
- Irish bottom-grown mussels (Ireland)
- Northern Irish bottom-grown mussels (Northern Ireland, UK)
- Denmark blue-shell mussel dredge (Denmark)
- Isefjord and East Jutland blue-shell mussel (Denmark)
- Royal Frysk Jutland blue-shell mussel dredge (Denmark)
- Seafood Romo East Jutland and Isefjord blue-shell mussel dredge (Denmark)
- VMI East Jutland blue-shell mussel dredge (Denmark)
- Germany lower Saxony mussel dredge and culture

The Exmouth mussel fishery withdrew its certification in September 2016 (as covered in the Year 1 surveillance), and the Royal Frysk Jutland fishery has been withdrawn in March 2017. Although

mussels from these fisheries can still be imported into the Oosterschelde, they are no longer sold as MSC. There have been no imports from non-MSC areas in 2017 and 2018.

The Schleswig-Holstein blue shell mussel fishery was certified in October 2016 and is now also being used as a source fishery. This fishery was added to the list at the time of the first surveillance audit in March 2017. No changes in scoring were required based on the geographical proximity of this fishery to other already assessed fisheries in Lower Saxony and Denmark.

In February 2017, the Vereniging van Importeurs van Schelpdieren obtained a license to import mussels from the Swedish West Coast, covered by the SSPO Swedish West Coast Rope Grown mussel fishery. This fishery was added to the list at the time of the second surveillance audit in March 2018. No changes in scoring were required based on the geographical proximity of this fishery to other already assessed fisheries in Germany (Lower-Saxony, and Schleswig-Holstein) and Denmark.

A member from the Swedish Shellfish Producer Organisation (SSPO) decided in the summer of 2018 to split off from the SSPO, which meant that they needed to be assessed separately against the MSC Fisheries Certification Requirements (v2.0) to qualify for MSC certification. This Scanfjord Swedish rope grown mussel fishery has been certified on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2019 (Seip and Hønneland, 2019), and has been added to the list of source mussels. The Scanfjord fishery remains identical to the SSPO West Coast Rope Grown mussel fishery, and no changes in scoring were required.

The Isefjord and East Jutland Danish blue shell mussel and Vilsund Blue East Jutland blue shell mussel fisheries were combined within the certification of DFPO Inner Danish Waters blue shell mussels in May 2017.

The current list of MSC-certified fisheries that are used as a source by members of the Vereniging van Importeurs van Schelpdieren is as follows:

- Ireland bottom-grown mussels (Ireland)
- Northern Ireland bottom-grown mussels (Northern Ireland, UK)
- North Menai Strait mussels (Wales, UK)
- DFPO Inner Danish Waters blue shell mussels (Denmark)
- Limfjord blue shell mussel (rope grown) (Denmark)
- DFPO Limfjord Mussel and Cockle Fishery (Denmark)
- Seafood Romo East Jutland and Isefjord blue-shell mussel dredge (Denmark)
- Germany lower Saxony mussel dredge and culture (Germany)
- Schleswig-Holstein blue shell mussel (Germany)
- SSPO Swedish West Coast Rope grown mussel (Sweden)
- Scanfjord Swedish Rope grown mussel (Sweden)

## **2.2 Principle 1**

This fishery certificate relates to translocation activities only – harvesting is covered by the aforementioned source and end fisheries. No catch data are therefore presented here. The mussel fisheries are not managed by Total Allowable Catch (TAC).

For Principle 1, only the Performance Indicator (PI) 1.1.4 (Genetic outcome) was scored in this fishery. Three species of *Mytilus* occur in Western Europe – the common, blue, blue-shelled or European mussel *Mytilus edulis*, the Mediterranean mussel *M. galloprovincialis* and the Baltic mussel *M. trossulus*. The source areas present a mixture of genotypes – those from the North Sea and Irish Sea are largely or completely *M. edulis*, while those from the Channel and the west coast of Ireland may include some *M. galloprovincialis* or hybrids. There is, however, for the moment, no evidence of *M. galloprovincialis* individuals in wild mussel populations from the Oosterschelde or the Wadden Sea, despite the fact that mussels have been coming into the Oosterschelde from the UK and Ireland for several decades. It is noted however that some *M. galloprovincialis* alleles are present in the population at low frequency, while *M. trossulus* alleles may also be present (Gascoigne et al., 2016).

In 2015 a survey program was conducted, focusing on the genetic profiling of the mussel populations in the Netherlands (Dutch Delta region and the Wadden Sea), to enable the detection of changes in the genetic composition within these populations over time. The study did not give an indication that the mussel industry has had any influence on the genetic profiles of mussel populations in The Netherlands – this is discussed in more detail in the Year 1 Surveillance report (Sieben and Gascoigne, 2017). Although at the time it was stated that the study would be continued with an increased sample size, this does not yet appear to have taken place. This will therefore need to be followed up on during the Year 4 surveillance.

### **2.3 Management of the translocations (Principle 3)**

At the time of the initial assessment, the regulations affecting translocations of shellfish into the Oosterschelde were set out in the Policy Decisions by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture, and Innovation<sup>1</sup> (2012). A new policy was agreed in June 2017 by the County Council of the Province of Zeeland, which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018. The new policy from the Province of Zeeland adopts a more precautionary, risk-based approach, and allows for more control and regulation of all shellfish translocations (not just mussels).

There have been no changes to the management of the fishery since the implementation of the new policy. The translocation of mussels into the Oosterschelde still follows the same method: translocation is possible with a Nature Conservation (Natura2000) license from the Ministry of LNV, to allow for risk management. Each license is based on an appropriate assessment, in which a risk assessment is included. The risk assessment is derived from SASIs (schelpdier afhankelijke soort inventarisatie: an inventory of species associated with shellfish). The SASIs are part of a larger system of risk management, and are required based on the SIMP (Shellfish Import Monitoring Protocol). A 'Big Bag' species inventory (BB) is also carried out, following the protocol outlined in the SIMP. Big bag inventories involve sampling of the Big Bags upon arrival in Yerseke. For the BB inventory, sampling is carried out for 2.5% of all imports from a given source fishery (see Gittenberger, 2018). Currently, this comes out at roughly 2-3 samples per region. Samples are being taken from January-June and July-December (each period with its own reports, as evidenced by the team). The results of the sampling feed into a risk-based assessment process, which can stop imports or can increase (or reduce) the level of sampling in response to the perceived risk of undesirable introductions. The results are also sent to the Ministry of LNV as part of the licenses conditions. So far, there has been no need to either stop imports from a certain area or change the sampling level.

---

<sup>1</sup> the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture, and Innovation has been renamed several times since 2012, and is currently known as the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV).

For mussel translocations, several Nature Conservation licenses exist, each tied to specific source-areas, and each with their own SASI. Each license is valid for four years, whereas a SASI is valid for three years. In 2018, the licenses for several Irish and UK areas (Exmouth, Glengarriff, Morecambe Bay, Swansea Bay, Waterford Harbour and Youghal Bay: license nr: DGAN-NB/18148570), as well as the Danish area of Jutland (license nr: DGAN-NB/18148384) were renewed.

No sanctions have been issued or licenses withdrawn since the initial assessment.

## 2.4 Traceability

There have been no changes to the traceability for this fishery. Each Big Bag with mussels that is brought to Yerseke from outside The Netherlands needs to have proper documentation. Both the Nature Conservation licenses from the Ministry of LNV and the new policy from the Province of Zeeland require that the Mussel auction (on behalf of the control authority) is notified of each imported lot for which a SASI is needed, and that documentation is provided (including registration documents and transport documents).

## 3 Assessment Process

This fishery was certified on the 27th January 2016 by ME Certification (MEC, now Control Union Pesca – CU Pesca). The initial assessment team consisted of Dr Jo Gascoigne (Team Leader, Principle 1), Chrissie Sieben (Principle 2) and Ulf Löwenberg (Principle 2, Principle 3).

This fishery was originally certified against MSC Certification Requirements version 1.3. Under CR 1.3 the fishery scored 2 from Table C3 (27.22) and therefore was listed as ‘Normal Surveillance Level’ in Table C4. However, given that all PIs scored above 80 (and hence no conditions), there were no recommendations by the assessment team during the initial assessment and initial discussions with the client indicate no issues of concern, a surveillance level of 1 was awarded in accordance with the MSC FCR v2.0 (7.23.2). Level 1 is the minimum level of surveillance requiring 1 on-site audit, 1 off-site audit and 2 reviews of information.

The year 3 surveillance audit consisted of an on-site audit, carried out by Chrissie Sieben (Team Leader) with remote support from Jo Gascoigne. The surveillance audit was formally announced on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019, and stakeholders were invited by e-mail to submit information or comments on the fishery. Mascha Dedert, Programmamanager Deltawateren/ Secretaris Coalitie Delta Natuurlijk, initially expressed interest in joining the surveillance site visit, but was unable to attend. No other stakeholder comments were received.

The site-visit took place on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019 in Yerseke, The Netherlands. Chrissie Sieben (Team Leader) met with Jaap de Rooij, the secretary / treasurer for the Vereniging van Importeurs van Schelpdieren, representing the client.

The aim of the audit was to review any changes that may have occurred since the initial assessment and which may lead to changes in the scoring. Each Principle was looked at in detail, the results of which are presented in the sections above.

This fishery does not overlap with any others in the MSC programme; harmonisation was therefore not required.

This fishery remains in conformity with the MSC scope requirements (FCR 7.4):

- The fishery does not target amphibians, birds, reptiles or mammals;

- The fishery does not use poisons or explosives;
- The fishery does not operate under a controversial unilateral exemption to an international agreement;
- The client group does not include an entity that has been successfully prosecuted for a forced labour violation in the last 2 years;
- The fishery management framework includes a mechanism for resolving disputes and the fishery is not overwhelmed by disputes.
- No inseparable or practicably inseparable (IPI) stocks are caught in this fishery;
- The fishery is not an Introduced Species Based Fishery as per the MSC FCR 7.4.4;
- The fishery meets the scope criteria for an enhanced fishery, as explained detailed in Gascoigne et al. (2016).
- There are no other eligible fishers in this assessment. The Unit of Certification (UoC) is therefore the same as the Unit of Assessment (UoA).

The surveillance was carried using the MSC Fisheries Certification Requirements v2.0 for procedural stages and the MSC Certification Requirements v1.3 (Annex CB) for scoring.

## **4 Results and conclusion**

This fishery was certified with no conditions. As indicated in Section 2, there have been no significant changes warranting a rescoring of performance indicators. Other than the changes in source fisheries mentioned, there have been no material changes in the traceability system for this fishery, including its ability to segregate MSC from non-MSC mussels.

The audit team confirms that this fishery continues to conform to the MSC Principles and Criteria for sustainable fishing. No new conditions or recommendations have been raised. No Performance Indicators have been rescored. The surveillance plan has not been revised and remains at Level 1.

The audit team recommends that this fishery should remain certified.

## 5 Evaluation Results

### 5.1 Principle Level Scores

The final principal scores are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1. Final Principle Scores**

Principle	Score
Principle 1 – Target Species	80
Principle 2 – Ecosystem	98.3
Principle 3 – Management System	83.8

### 5.2 Summary of PI Level Scores

Principle	Component	PI number	Performance Indicator	Score
1	Outcome	1.1.4	Genetic outcome	80
2	Translocation	2.6.1	Outcome	100
		2.6.2	Management	95
		2.6.3	Information	100
3	Governance and Policy	3.1.1	Legal and customary framework	85
		3.1.2	Consultation, roles and responsibilities	80
	Fishery-specific management system	3.2.2	Decision-making processes	85
		3.2.3	Compliance and enforcement	85

## 6 References

Gascoigne, J., C. Sieben and U. Löwenberg, 2016. MSC Public Certification Report (PCR) For the Mussel translocation in the Oosterschelde fishery By members of the Vereniging van Importeurs van Schelpdieren. ME CERTIFICATION LTD.

Gittenberger, A., 2018. Shellfish import monitoring protocol, fourth version (with corrections). GiMaRis 2018\_09

Ministry LNV, 2012. Policy Decisions by the Minister of Economic Affairs, Agriculture, and Innovation (full title: Beleidsregels van de Staatssecretaris van Economische Zaken, Landbouw en Innovatie van 6 juni 2012, nr. 267278, houdende vaststelling van beleidsregels inzake schelpdierversplaatsingen)

Ministry LNV, 2018. Nature Conservation license Ireland and UK areas: Verwateren importmosselen IRL en VK; Oosterschelde. DGAN-NB/18148570: <https://vergunningenbank.overheid.nl/wet-natuurbescherming/verwateren-importmosselen-irl-en-vk-oosterschelde-3>

Ministry LNV, 2018. Nature Conservation license Denmark: Verwateren importmosselen Jutland DK; Oosterschelde. DGAN-NB/18148384: <https://vergunningenbank.overheid.nl/wet-natuurbescherming/verwateren-importmosselen-jutland-dk-oosterschelde>

Province Zeeland, 2017. Policy Decision with regards to the draining of processing water, and the dumping of cultch in the Oosterschelde (full title: Besluit van gedeputeerde staten van Zeeland houdende de Beleidsregelsinzake lozing van proceswater en storten van tarra in de Oosterschelde. Besluit van Gedeputeerde Staten van Zeeland van 4 juli 2017, nummer 17014114)

Seip, C., G. Hønneland, 2019. Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Public Certification Report Scanfjord Swedish Rope Grown Mussel Fishery On behalf of Scanfjord Mollösund AB Prepared by Control Union Pesca Ltd

Sieben, C., J. Gascoigne, 2018. Second Annual Surveillance Report Mussel translocation into the Oosterschelde On behalf of The Vereniging van Importeurs van Schelpdieren Prepared by ME Certification Ltd.