

**DNV GL Business Assurance Norway AS  
Norway sand eel, pout and North Sea sprat  
fishery**

**MSC Inseparable or Practically Inseparable  
(IPI) Announcement**

# 1 Marine Stewardship Council IPI announcement

**Table 1 – Inseparable or practicably inseparable (IPI) catches**

1	Description of the stocks identified as Inseparable or Practically Inseparable (IPI) and confirmation they are within scope of IPI
	<p>It is not commercially feasible to separate the non-target IPI stock due to the practical operation of this reduction fishery.</p> <p>None of the IPI stocks mentioned in the 8 UoC's are endangered, threatened or protected species or MSC certified separately.</p> <p><b>1. UoA 1-3:</b> (different sandeel stocks-bottom trawl):  99.11% of the catch in 2018 is the targeted sand eel. Other species in the catch do not make 2% of the total combined catches of target and IPI stock(s) for the UoA and not even a 0.4% individually. Other species present in the catch which are IPI (but not reaching the 2% threshold catch level) are greater argentine, lesser argentine, whiting, silver pout, white hake, witch flounder, mackerel, gurnard, squid and American plaice while the MSC certified blue whiting, saithe, herring, cod, haddock, sprat and Norway pout are not IPI.</p> <p>All IPI species in the sandeel UoC's are considered as minor species and therefore there is no need of modifications in the default assessment tree. Minor primary and secondary species in the catch were already evaluated during the initial assessment of the fishery, resulting in scores above SG80 for PI 2.1.1. and PI 2.2.1. Minor primary species obtained a score of 100 since the stock status of all of them was in a safe biological condition. Minor secondary species did not obtain a score of 100 based on the lack of evidence that the fishery is not hindering these species, regardless of the small quantities taken by the UoA.</p> <p><b>2. UoA 4</b> (pout-bottom trawl):  Norway pout comprises about 80% of total catches (small differences in different years) in this UoC. Catch composition for the past 3 years for the reduction fishery of Norway pout with the bottom trawl fishing gear shows that there are catches above the 2% threshold of blue whiting, horse mackerel, greater argentine, whiting and herring. The total combined proportion of these species exceeds the 15% by weight of the total combined catches of target and IPI stocks for the UoC. However, since the NEA blue whiting and North Sea herring stocks are MSC certified in the fishing grounds of this UoC (as well as the stocks of saithe, cod, haddock, hake and ling), these species do not meet the requirements of IPI catches and are not taken into consideration here. Non-MSC certified species present in the catch of UoC 4 are lesser argentine, silver pout, white hake, witch (flounder), velvet belly lantern shark, mackerel, gurnard, monkfish and pollack and account for less than a 15% but more than a 2% of the total combined catches of target and IPI stock(s) for the UoA. The definition of IPI species as described in FCP 7.5.8.1 applies to these non-certified horse mackerel, greater argentine and whiting present in the catch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Horse mackerel:</b> According to ICES 2019 advice on Horse mackerel (<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>) in Subarea 8 and divisions 2.a, 4.a, 5.b, 6.a, 7.a–c, and 7.e–k (the Northeast Atlantic), SSB has been declining since 2007 and has been around MSY Btrigger since 2014. Fishing mortality has decreased since 2013 and is currently below FMSY. ICES assesses that fishing pressure on the stock is above FMSY, between Fpa and Flim; spawning stock size is below MSY Btrigger, between Bpa and Blim. The assessment method was changed in 2017 and shows the same trend in the stock development as the previous assessment, but rescales the absolute level of SSB and F, with a downward revision in spawning-stock biomass and an upward revision in F. The stock reference points were revised in August 2019 (ICES, 2019a), from 911 587 to 1 168 272 tonnes for MSY Btrigger and 0.108 to 0.074 for FMSY. The biomass reference points were derived from the lowest biomass estimate (SSB in 2003) from the stable period where there was no indication of reduced recruitment. Average landings by the UoC in 2016–2018 were 879 tons. Landings by the UoC in 2018 were 341 tons. ICES estimated catch in 2018 for the stock were 101672 tons</li> <li>• <b>Greater argentine:</b> According to ICES 2019 advice on Greater silver smelt (<i>Argentinasilus</i>) in subareas 1, 2, and 4, and in Division 3.a (Northeast Arctic, North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat), fishing pressure on the stock is below FMSY proxy; no reference points for stock size have been defined for this stock. ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, catches should be no more than 10 270 tonnes in each of the years 2020 and 2021. Landings in the whole area in 2018 were 23 861 tonnes. Landings by the UoC in 2018 were 691 tons.</li> </ul>

• **Whiting:** According to ICES 2019 advice on Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*) in Subarea 4 and Division 7.d (North Sea and eastern English Channel), fishing pressure on the stock is above FMSY, but below Fpa and Flim; spawning-stock size is below MSY Btrigger and Bpa, but above Blim. When the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2020 should be no more than 22 082 tonnes. Total catch in the whole area in 2018 in the North Sea was 22 160 tons. Landings by the UoC in 2018 were 678 tons.

### 3. **UoA 5** (pout- midwater trawl and purse seine)

Norway pout comprises of about 90% of total catches (small differences in different years) for this UoA. Catch composition for the past 2 years for the reduction fishery of Norway pout with the midwater trawl and purse seine fishing gears show that there are catches above the 2% threshold of blue whiting and horse mackerel. There are some other species in the catch in proportions lower than the 2% threshold. The total combined proportion of the non-target species (greater and lesser argentine, whiting, silver pout, white hake and gurnard) do not exceed the 15% by weight of the total combined catches of target and IPI stocks for the UoA.

The stock of NEA blue whiting is MSC certified in the UoC fishing grounds and therefore does not meet the requirements of IPI catches as described in FCP7.5.8.1. Other stocks already certified in the fishing grounds of the UoC are saithe and herring.

Horse mackerel comprised a 2.2% of the total catch in 2017. According to ICES 2018 advice on Horse mackerel (*Trachurus trachurus*) in Subarea 8 and divisions 2.a, 4.a, 5.b, 6.a, 7.a–c, and 7.e–k (the Northeast Atlantic), its SSB has been declining since 2007 and has been around MSY Btrigger since 2014. Fishing mortality has decreased since 2013 and is currently below FMSY. ICES assesses that fishing pressure on the stock is below FMSY and Fpa and Flim; and spawning stock size is below MSY Btrigger and between Bpa and Blim. ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2019 should be no more than 145 237 tonnes. ICES estimated catch in the whole area in 2017 was 82 961 tons. Landings by the UoC in 2017 were 93 tons.

### 4. **UoA 6-8** (sprat – bottom trawlers, midwater trawls & purse seiners)

UoC 6 has a target species catch between 95-99% with MSC certified herring catches of 3.5%. Non-MSC certified species present in the catch are horse mackerel, whiting, witch (flounder), mackerel, gurnard and anchovy. All these stocks meet the requirements for IPI species set in FCP 7.5.8.1 as well as 7.5.11.b as the catch proportion of IPI stocks is less than or equal to 2% and the total catch of IPI stocks in the UoA does not create a significant impact on the IPI stocks as a whole.

UoC 7 has a target species catch between 95-99% with MSC certified herring catches of 3.5%. Non- MSC certified species present in the catch are horse mackerel, greater argentine, lesser argentine, whiting, silver pout, witch (flounder), mackerel and gurnard. All these stocks meet the requirements for IPI species set in FCP 7.5.8.1 as well as 7.5.11.b as the catch proportion of IPI stocks is less than or equal to 2% and the total catch of IPI stocks in the UoA does not create a significant impact on the IPI stocks as a whole.

UoC 8 has a target species catch between 98.44-100%. MSC certified herring is the only other species in the catch and therefore there is no IPI in this UoC.

In conclusion <2% threshold IPI species, are Horse mackerel, whiting, greater argentine, lesser argentine, silver pout, white hake, witch (flounder), mackerel, gurnard, squid, anchovy, velvet belly lantern shark, monkfish, pollack and American plaice.

The >2% but <15% threshold IPI species are relevant only for UoC 4 & 5 and are horse mackerel (both UoC's) and greater silver smeltand whiting for UoC 4.

**2a** Rationale to indicate fish and fish products from IPI stocks may enter further chains of custody

Horse mackerel, whiting, lesser argentine, silver pout, white hake, witch flounder, mackerel, gurnard, squid, anchovy and American plaice were evaluated during the initial assessment of the fishery as minor primary while greater argentine as secondary, and scored under PI 2.1.1 and PI 2.2.1, achieving a score above SG80. There is therefore, no need of modifications to the assessment tree.

As described in the summary of ICES advice for the different IPI Stocks, for all species Fishing mortality is below Flim and Spawning Stock biomass is above Blim thereby ensuring that the requirements set in Annex PA1.4.2 are met.

	<p>IPI stocks above the 2% threshold are not poorly known, as there is ICES advice for all of them. As for IPI species below the 2% threshold, there is room for improved knowledge for some of them which are not covered by ICES advice but the small quantities taken by the UoC's are not expected to hinder the recovery of those species should they be in a poor biological situation.</p> <p>The main measures for preventing recovery is the limited catches of these stocks taken by the UoC.</p> <p>The fishery has sufficient systems of tracking and tracing to ensure all fish and fish products identified and sold as certified by the fishery client originate from an appropriate UoC and fish and fish products from the UoC may enter into certified chains of custody and be eligible to be sold as MSC certified or carry the MSC ecolabel.</p> <p>All IPI catches meet the requirements of FCP v2.1 § 7.5.11.b (the catch proportion of IPI catches is less than 2% and the total catch by the UoA does not create a significant impact to the different IPI stocks as a whole).</p> <p><b>As per PA 7.5.11.a, it is confirmed that fish or fish products to be considered as coming from IPI stocks may enter chain of custody subject to annex PA and the requirements set at PA 1.4.2, which are met.</b></p>
2b	Rationale to indicate fish and fish products from IPI stocks may enter further chains of custody with an exemption to additional assessment requirements
	NA

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