

CANTABRIAN SEA PURSE SEINE ANCHOVY FISHERY

Certificate number: MSC-F-31181
Previous Certificate number F-BV-00466



Credits picture: www.ec.europa.

First Surveillance Report



Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)	Bureau Veritas Certification Holding SAS
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Fishery client	OPEGUI, OPACAN, OPESCAYA, CERCO ASTUR, Sociedad Cooperativa Gallega del Mar Santa Eugenia
Assessment Type	First Surveillance
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Date	December 2021

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2 Glossary

Concepts and terms:

CPRDR	Client and Peer Review Draft Report
B_{lim}	Limit reference point for spawning stock biomass (SSB)
B_{pa}	Precautionary reference point for spawning stock biomass (SSB)
B_{MGT}	Biomass set as the objective to be achieved at the fishery Management Plan
B_{MSY}	Spawning stock biomass (SSB) that results from fishing at FMSY for a long time
B_{trigger}	Value of spawning stock biomass (SSB) that triggers a specific management action
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
DEA	Diario Electrónico de Abordo (or Onboard Electronic Logbook)
ETP	Endangered, threatened and protected species
F_{lim}	Limit reference point for fishing mortality
FMGT	Fishing mortality set as the objective to be achieved at the fishery management plan
F_{MSY}	Fishing Mortality at Maximum Sustainable Yield
F_{pa}	Precautionary reference point for fishing mortality
FCR	Fisheries Certification Requirements
HCR	Harvest Control Rule
MAP	Multi-annual Fishery Management Plan
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield. The largest average catch or yield that can continuously be taken from a stock under existing environmental conditions
MSY B_{Trigger}	A biomass reference point that triggers a cautious response within the ICES MSY framework
SSB	Spawning stock biomass. Total weight of all sexually mature fish in the stock
SSB_{MGT}	Spawning-Stock Biomass trigger level included into management plan
SSB_{MSY}	Spawning-stock Biomass at Maximum Sustainable Yield
SWWAC	South West Waters Advisory Council
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System

Organizations:

AZTI	Basque Technological Centre in Marine and Food innovation
BV	Bureau Veritas
CERCO ASTUR	Association of purse seiners owners of the Principality of Asturias (Asociación de Armadores de Cerco del Principado de Asturias)
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GFCM	Scientific Advisory Committee of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IEO	Spanish Institute of Oceanography (Instituto español de Oceanografía)
IFREMER	Institute Français pour la Recherche de la Mer
MAPA	Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación (active since 2018. Its functions were formerly carried out by the Ministerio de Agricultura y Pesca, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente – MAPAMA)

NEAFC	North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
OPACAN	Producer's organization of coastal fisheries from Cantabria (Organización de productores artesanales de Cantabria)
OPEGUI	Producer's organization of coastal fisheries from Guipuzcoa (Organización de productores de pesca de bajura de Guipuzcoa)
OPESCANTABRICO	Producer's organization of the NW Cantabrian Sea fishing sector (Organizaciones de Productores del Sector Cantábrico Noroeste)
OPESCAYA	Producer's organization of coastal fisheries from Bizkaia (Organización de Productores de pesca de bajura de Bizkaia)
OSPAR	Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
STECF	Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries
SGP	Spanish General Secretariat for Fisheries (Secretaría General de Pesca)
SWWAC	South West Waters Advisory Council
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

3 Executive summary

The client group includes all the vessels integrated in the Basque producer's organizations (OPEGUI and OPESCAYA) which are at the same time members of the Basque Federations "Federación de Cofradías de Guipuzcoa & Federación de Cofradías de Vizcaya", and in the following producer's organizations: OPACAN, Sociedad Cooperativa Gallega del Mar Santa Eugenia and CERCOASTUR aggrupation. An up-to-date vessel list can be found on the MSC website, or by contacting Bureau Veritas.

This report was prepared by Bureau Veritas Iberia. The assessment team for this surveillance audit was comprised by Luis Ambrosio (covering Principle 3), Giuseppe Scarcella (covering Principle 1), Celia Álvarez Doncel (responsible for Principle 2) and Carmen Morant (who acted as team leader). A short BIO of each of them is published in the Announcement of the fishery.

After the site visit, Celia Álvarez Doncel was replaced by Gemma Quílez. An email announcing this change was sent to all stakeholders on the 9th of December 2021. Her BIO can be found below:

Gemma Quílez (PhD), holds a Biology degree from Barcelona University (Spain), an MSc in Natural Resource Management from Leicester University (UK) and a PhD in Marine Biology from Newcastle upon Tyne University (UK).

She has around 20 years of experience working in Marine Biology, Marine Ecology, Marine Conservation Biology and Fisheries. In 1998, she did her MSc thesis on neritic and oceanic fish larvae from the Irish Sea. From 1999 to 2001 she worked at the ICM-CSIC (Marine Science Institute) of Barcelona (Spain) on trophic ecology of pelagic species larvae and participated in different oceanographic cruises on board the RV García del Cid. In 2004, while doing her PhD on Marine Invasive species, she was employed at the Fisheries Research Institute of Kavala, Greece, to conduct a study on trophic ecology of anchovy larvae. Also, during her PhD (2001-2006), she participated on several research cruises on board the RV Bernicia. Once she finished her PhD she went to work on marine invasive species for the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (USA) until 2010.

From 2010 until 2016, she worked as fisheries policy officer for the Mediterranean Programme of WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) in Barcelona, Spain. As such she worked on fisheries regional and international policy processes (e.g., GFCM, ICCAT, MedAC), mostly on Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna and at ICCAT, both at a scientific and policy level. She also participated in the creation and in the following functioning of the co-management committee of the Catalan sandeel fishery.

Since 2010 until present she has been working studying the biology, ecology and population dynamics of Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna and being deeply involved in the stock assessment of the species at ICCAT level.

In addition, from 2008 until 2018 she has been one of the two the Spanish representatives at two ICES working groups (WGBOSV - Working Group on Ballast and Other Ship Vectors, and WGITMO - Working Group on Introductions and Transfers of Marine Organisms).

Her experience (over 8 years) studying the biology, ecology and population dynamics of Atlantic bluefin tuna, deeply involved with ICCAT, as well as her previous work on trophic ecology of pelagic species larvae, proves her capacity to meet the qualification and competency criteria for PC3 (i) Fishing impacts on aquatic ecosystems. Her 6 years as WWF fisheries officer working on fisheries policy processes (mostly on Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna) and on the co-management of the Catalan sandeel, proves her capacity to meet the qualification and competency criteria for PC3 (ii) Fishery management and operations. She complies with Annex PC of the MSC Fisheries Certification Process v2.1. She does not have a conflict of interest with the fishery.

This fishery was initially assessed against MSC Certification Requirements v1.3 and got the MSC Fisheries certificate on March 24, 2015. Three conditions were set for this fishery during the initial assessment and two out of these three conditions were closed at the Third and Fourth surveillance audits of the first certification cycle. One condition against PI 2.3.3 remained open at the Fourth surveillance and was closed after the information gathered by the team at the site visit. The reassessment of the fishery was done following the MSC Fisheries Certification Process version 2.1. No conditions remained opened at the time of the re-certification.

The current surveillance audit was conducted against FCP v2.2 and the MSC Surveillance Reporting Template v2.1 was used to elaborate this report.

As a result of the current surveillance audit, only one PI (i.e., PI 2.1.1) was re-scored (see **section 5.2**) and even though no conditions were set (see **section 5.3**), two recommendations are open (see **section 5.1.3**).

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

Table 3.1. Scores obtained by the fishery for each MSC Principle as published at the PCR and subsequent surveillance audits.

Final Principle Scores		
Principle	Score (PCR)	Score (1SA)
Principle 1 – Target Species	90.0	=
Principle 2 – Ecosystem	86.3	=
Principle 3 – Management System	96.9	=

Table 3.2. PIs scores of the certified fishery as published at the PCR and subsequent SAs (in orange scores below 80, meaning a condition was raised for that PI).

Principle	Component	Performance Indicator (PI)		PCR	1SA
One	Outcome	1.1.1	Stock status	90	=
		1.1.2	Stock rebuilding		
	Management	1.2.1	Harvest strategy	85	=
		1.2.2	Harvest control rules & tools	85	=
		1.2.3	Information & monitoring	90	=
	1.2.4	Assessment of stock status	100	=	
Two	Primary species	2.1.1	Outcome	95	=
		2.1.2	Management strategy	80	=
		2.1.3	Information/Monitoring	95	=
	Secondary species	2.2.1	Outcome	80	=
		2.2.2	Management strategy	80	=
		2.2.3	Information/Monitoring	85	=
	ETP species	2.3.1	Outcome	90	=
		2.3.2	Management strategy	80	=
		2.3.3	Information strategy	80	=
	Habitats	2.4.1	Outcome	90	=
		2.4.2	Management strategy	80	=
		2.4.3	Information	85	=
	Ecosystem	2.5.1	Outcome	100	=
2.5.2		Management	80	=	
2.5.3		Information	95	=	
Three	Governance and policy	3.1.1	Legal &/or customary framework	100	=
		3.1.2	Consultation, roles & responsibilities	100	=
		3.1.3	Long term objectives	100	=
	Fishery specific management system	3.2.1	Fishery specific objectives	90	=
		3.2.2	Decision making processes	100	=
		3.2.3	Compliance & enforcement	95	=
		3.2.4	Monitoring & management performance evaluation	90	=

The main strengths of this assessment process are as follows:

- The strong stock status of the target stock has been maintained in the current surveillance and no P1 re-scoring has been deemed necessary.
- An adequate management system is applied under the EU CFP framework, with no changes from the PCR.
- It is still a highly selective fishery with anchovy accounting for more than 90% of UoA catches.
- There are still negligible interactions with ETP species.

On the other hand, the weaknesses:

- Two recommendations are opened, based on:
 - Recommendation #1: no data are available from observers for 2020, and the only fleet that recorded interactions with ETPs in their logbooks in 2019 and 2020 was the Cantabrian fleet; and
 - Recommendation #2: no data were obtained from the Asturian fleet, and information on infractions from the Secretaría General de Pesca, was received late and could not be used for the current assessment.
- The EC proposed a long-term management plan in 2009 for this fishery. However, the EU did not formally adopt the plan. This plan is *de facto* in force, as it is the basis for setting the annual TAC for the species and is therefore implemented, but not formally.

The assessment team concludes that **the MSC Certificate for this fishery shall remain active**, subject to the agreed annual surveillance schedule.

4 Report details

4.1 Surveillance information

Table 4.1 – Surveillance information

1	Fishery name	
	CANTABRIAN SEA PURSE SEINE ANCHOVY FISHERY	
2	Unit(s) of Assessment (UoA)	
	Target stock	European anchovy, <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i> ,
	Fishing Area	ICES Subarea VIII (Bay of Biscay)
	Fishing method	Purse seine
	Fishing operators	Basque producer's organizations (OPEGUI and OPESCAYA) which are at the same time members of the Basque Federations "Federación de Cofradías de Guipuzcoa & Federación de Cofradías de Vizcaya" and in the following producer's organizations: OPACAN, Sociedad Cooperativa Gallega del Mar Santa Eugenia and CERCOASTUR aggrupation. An up to date vessel list can be found on the MSC website, or by contacting Bureau Veritas
	Other eligible fishers	The client group decided to leave open the certificate to other Spanish vessels authorized to operate in ICES Subareas 8a, b and c by the Spanish General Secretariat for Fisheries. The conditions are established in a certificate sharing (https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/cantabrian-sea-purse-seine-anchovy-fishery/@assessments). The members of the client group prepared a statement published on the MSC website on 19 th July 2019.
3	Date certified	Expiry date*
	24 March 2015	19 October 2025
*Due to the MSC Covid-19 Derogation of 27 March 2020, the certificate of the fishery was extended 6 months. Consequently, the updated expiry date is now the 19th of October 2025.		
4	Surveillance level and type	
	Level	The surveillance level determined in the PCR was that surveillance audits shall take place according to the default surveillance level (level 4) indicated in MSC FCP v2.2 Table 5 (see Appendix 7.3 for more details).
	Type	Current surveillance audit was carried out as an on-site audit (see Appendix 7.1.1 for more details).
5	Surveillance number	
	1st Surveillance	x

	2nd Surveillance	
	3rd Surveillance	
	4th Surveillance	
	Other (expedited etc)	
6	Surveillance team leader ¹	
	Carmen Morant Sánchez	
7	Surveillance team members ²	
	Giuseppe Scarcella, Gemma Quílez ³ and Luis Ambrosio	
8	Audit/review time and location	
	The on-site surveillance audit was carried out on October 27-28,2021 at the client´s facilities (see Appendix 7.1.1 for further details).	
9	Assessment and review activities	
	During the site visit, the team conducted assessment activities in accordance with FCP 7.28.15-18. In the case of the current fishery the team concentrated in: (i) checking for any relevant modification affecting the fishery. See Appendix 7.1.1 for details on the people interviewed and for details on the stakeholder engagement strategy, and Appendix 7.1.2 for details on topics discussed during the site visit and other stakeholder inputs. Harmonization activities with overlapping fisheries are described in Appendix 7.4 .	
10	Stakeholder opportunities	
	<p>The MSC Template for Stakeholder input into Surveillance Audits can be found in the following link: https://www.msc.org/for-business/certification-bodies/supporting-documents/Index?search=stakeholder+</p> <p>BV team holds interviews and actively seeks the view of stakeholders and surveillance audit participants to ensure that the team is aware of any stakeholder concern. An email was sent to all stakeholders involved in the fishery on the 20th of September providing details of the scheduled site visit and deadline to send their inputs and comments. They were also informed that meetings can take place either remotely or in person according to FCP v2.2 7.28.15 b.</p>	

4.2 Background

4.2.1 Personnel involved in science, management or industry

^{1,2} See the Surveillance announcement at the MSC website for more details on how the team meets the competency criteria and the areas that they are responsible for.

³ Gemma Quílez replaced Celia Álvarez after the site visit. See her BIO and how she meets the competency criteria and the area that she is responsible for in **section 3. Executive summary**.

No modifications were found in the personnel and institutions involved in science (ICES, AZTI, IEO.), management or industry.

4.2.2 Certified fleet and client group

The list of vessels that are entitled to use the certificate is regularly updated in the MSC website (available at: <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/cantabrian-sea-purse-seine-anchovy-fishery/@assessments>) separately from the certificate. The members of the client group review the list before the beginning of the fishing season to include or exclude vessels from the UoC. The main reasons for the inclusions are new acquisition, modification of the vessels name, change of ownership, and for exclusions, due to scrapping or selling of the vessels. The latest list is published in the MSC website (available at: <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/cantabrian-sea-purse-seine-anchovy-fishery/@assessments>).

All the vessels are integrated in the Basque producer's organizations (OPEGUI and OPESCAYA) which are at the same time members of the Basque Federations "Federación de Cofradías de Guipuzcoa & Federación de Cofradías de Vizcaya", and in the following producer's organizations: OPACAN, Sociedad Cooperativa Gallega del Mar Santa Eugenia and CERCOASTUR aggrupation.

4.2.3 Fishery management and regulatory framework

The Cantabrian anchovy fishery certified under the MSC has not undergone any change in the management model. Therefore, it is not considered necessary to modify the criteria set out in the public certification report (PCR) of the recertification process carried out in 2020.

The fishery management mechanisms remain the same as those assessed in the recertification and there are no changes in the performance of each of them that would change the result of the score awarded in 2020.

In the reassessment, all seven MSC Principle 3 indicators scored above SG80, achieving an overall score for this Principle of 96.9.

Although, as mentioned above, there are no changes in the scoring elements, there are elements that, due to their relevance, should be taken into account. The first is in relation to the specific objectives of the fishery (PI3.2.1) and, although in the period between the recertification and this first monitoring, a new anchovy stock assessment for 2020 has been published (see **section 4.2.6**), there are no changes in the stock trend of the population. The Principle 1 performance indicators maintain their scores unchanged.

In relation to Principle 2, even though some amendments have been done to the PI2.1.1 rationales (see **section 5.2**), no changes to the original scoring for any of the performance indicators have been found. Therefore, the score indicated in PI3.2.1 for this Principle is maintained.

4.2.4 Compliance

In relation to PI3.2.3, no updated fleet control and monitoring information has been provided in time by the authority in charge. The Cantabrian anchovy fishery is carried out by a fleet from four different Autonomous Regions (Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria and the Basque Country). The Autonomous Regions are only competent to control fishing activities that take place in inland waters, as well as issues arising from landing and marketing once the fish is landed in their ports. Control in the Exclusive Economic Zone is the exclusive competence of the General Secretariat for Fisheries (SGP), which belongs to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of the Spanish Government. The SGP carries out the control of vessels through the VMS and of catches through the Electronic Logbook. Data from both systems are received and processed by the SGP.

In this scenario, the Autonomous Regions coordinate with the central administration to send the notes of first sale of the fish caught. These notes are sent from the Autonomous Regions to the General Secretariat for Fisheries to be checked against the Electronic Logbook data.

During the recertification process of the fishery, data were requested and received from the Autonomous Regions involved and from the SGP. However, in the current surveillance process, during the site-visit and the subsequent period for receiving information, the SGP did not send updated data. They were received several days later than the period

stipulated by the MSC for this purpose (i.e., according to FCP 7.17.1.1a “*If the CAB and any participant at the site visit agree in writing that information will be made available after the site visit, the CAB shall accept this information up to 30 days after the last day of the site visit*”). Therefore, they could not be taken into account in the assessment of the current surveillance audit.

Indicator PI3.2.3 was scored 95 in the recertification process and during the first certification cycle it always scored above SG80.

In relation to the Autonomous Regions, information related to infringements has only been received from the Basque Country. This information from the Directorate of Fisheries indicates that there were no infringements in the time period considered in the current surveillance assessment.

From past records of MSC certification and monitoring processes, evidences have showed that this fishery has not a lack of control of fishing activities resulting in systematic non-compliance. Even though, the team has not received information on this issue during this surveillance process (apart from the Basque autonomous region), based on past assessments, the team believes that the situation has remained the same in 2019 and 2020. However, it is necessary for the assessors to have this information to be able to assess properly the fishery.

Therefore, a recommendation has been established regarding the lack of information received by the stakeholders (see **section 5.1.3 – Recommendation #2**).

4.2.5 Traceability issues

The traceability system remains the same as in the initial assessment. The change of ownership relates to the first point of sale which, in the case of this fishery, happens at the auction point ('lonja') held at the different authorized ports. The personnel working at the auction points (contracted by the 'Cofradías') are in charge of identifying the vessel and the product to be sold. In addition, they issue a certificate to the buyers with the name of the certified vessel/s, date and quantity of anchovy purchased. The next ownership will need the MSC Chain of Custody certificate.

The certificate holders validate the list of vessels before commencing the anchovy season in order to communicate the updated information to the 'Cofradías' and points of landings.

4.2.6 Scientific based information related to P1

Status of the stock

The assessment of the Bay of Biscay anchovy (Subarea 8) was conducted in November 2020 and published in December 2020 (ICES, 2020a; b). As confirmed by ATZI and IEO scientists the 2021 assessment will be available at the end of December 2021 and is not going to be used in the present surveillance report.

In 2020, the final assessment of the stock was conducted in the framework of WGHANSA 2020. The assessment presented below follows the same approach as in previous years (i.e.: Bayesian two-stage biomass based model (CBBM)), which entails changes in both the methodology used for projecting the population forward and establishing catch options and in the terminology in which the assessment and consequent advice is given. The state of the stock was given in terms of spawning biomass, recruitment was understood as biomass at-age 1 at the beginning of the year and management options may be given in terms of catches. Due to the Bayesian framework, all the results were given in stochastic terms and deterministic point estimates were replaced by summary statistics of the posterior distributions of the parameters, such as medians and percentiles.

The input data entering the assessment of the anchovy stock consisted of:

- total biomass estimated by DEPM and acoustic surveys (BIOMAN and PELGAS) with their corresponding coefficients of variation.
- proportion of the biomass at-age 1 estimated by the DEPM and acoustic surveys (BIOMAN and PELGAS).
- juvenile abundance index from JUVENA.
- total catch by semester.
- proportion (in mass) of age 1 in the catch by semester (in 2020 only for the first semester).

- growth rates by age estimated from the weights-at-age of the stock.

The historical series of spawning–stock biomass (SSB) is shown in Figure . According to the model output SSB increased from 121,000 t in 2019 to 174,000 t in 2020. In addition, the harvest rate decreased from 0.22 in 2019 to 0.149 in 2020.

Due to the Covid-19 disruption, the PELGAS acoustic survey was not carried out in 2020. Along with the BIOMAN Daily Egg Production Method (DEPM) survey, this is one of the spring surveys that provides estimates of total biomass and age structure in the stock assessment model. The stock annex was applied as in previous years, except without the PELGAS 2020 data. The lack of PELGAS data is expected to have an impact on the assessment results, but the exact extent of this impact cannot be quantified. A sensitivity analysis was conducted in which the stock assessments for the last three years were repeated with the removal of the terminal year’s indices from PELGAS. This showed larger uncertainty in estimates for all three years. The maximum absolute change for R, SSB, and HR was up to 2%, 3%, and 10% in the 2017, 2018, and 2019 assessments respectively. However, the impact of this uncertainty on advised catches for 2021 is considered to be minimal because the management plan has a cap on advised catches when biomass is high, as is currently the case. IEO and ATZI scientists interviewed during the site visit also confirmed this.

The current assessment has resulted in an upwards revision of the 2020 recruitment (age 1) estimate (Figure 4.2.3.1.3.2). In 2019 the JUVENA survey could not cover the whole distribution, and the recruitment for 2020 was considered to be slightly underestimated. The 2020 biomass estimate from the DEPM survey is the highest of the time-series (334,300 t), well above the next highest value (223,200 t) observed in 2019. Seventy-six percent of the total biomass in BIOMAN 2020 corresponds to age 1.

As evidenced before, the SSB in 2020 is estimated to be 44% larger than that in 2019. The advised catch for 2021, however, is only 3.5% larger than the advised catch for 2020 because it corresponds to the maximum TAC level allowed in the management strategy.

Some French catches are usually taken in Subarea 7, near the border to Subarea 8 (ICES rectangles 25E4 and 25E5) and are considered to belong to the same stock and fishery. These catches typically represent less than 2% of the total stock catches and according to ICES (2020) should be taken into consideration in managing the fishery.

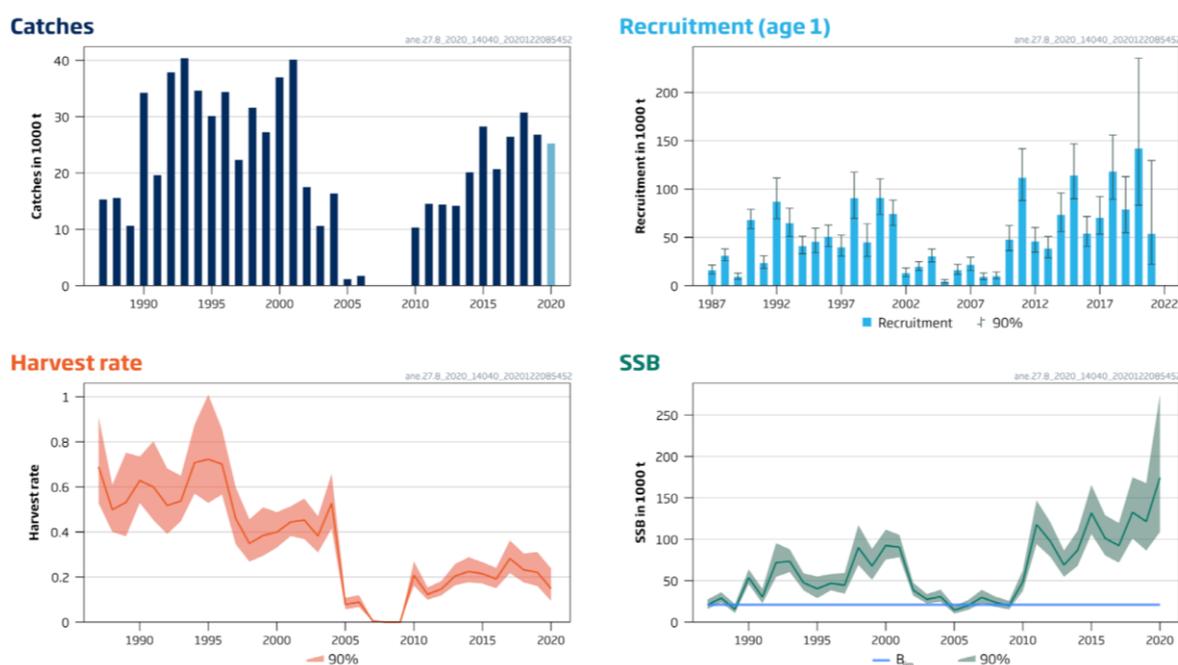


Figure 4.2.3.1 Anchovy in Subarea 8. Summary of the stock assessment. Trends in catch (the 2020 lighter blue bar is a preliminary estimation), recruitment (age 1 biomass, estimated on January 1), harvest rate (catch/SSB), and spawning–stock biomass (estimated in mid-May). Source: ICES, 2020a.

Taking into account the increasing pattern of stock status, the scoring of P1.1.1 remains unchanged as in the PCR of the reassessment.

During the site visit, IEO scientists gave an explanation of the conclusion reached at the PCR about the fact that anchovy in the Bay of Biscay was not considered a key LTL species. The ecosystem model developed by Corrales et al. (2022) corresponds to the years 2000-2003, when the anchovy biomass was low, but currently the biomass of the anchovy in the Bay of Biscay is much higher than in years 2000-2003. The authors believe that anchovy currently has a fairly important role in the ecosystem, since it has helped to sustain populations of larger predators (e.g., the biomass of hake, albacore and bluefin tuna have increased since 2000-2003). Therefore, even though they do not completely agree that one of the criteria of the MSC Fisheries Standard (v2.01 Annex SA 2.2.9) to define an LTL stock is not applicable for anchovy in the Bay of Biscay (i.e., a large proportion of the trophic connections in the ecosystem involve this stock, leading to significant predator dependency), the authors agree that criteria ii and iii do in fact not apply for anchovy in the Bay of Biscay. Thus, it is correct to continue to not consider the stock as a key LTL.

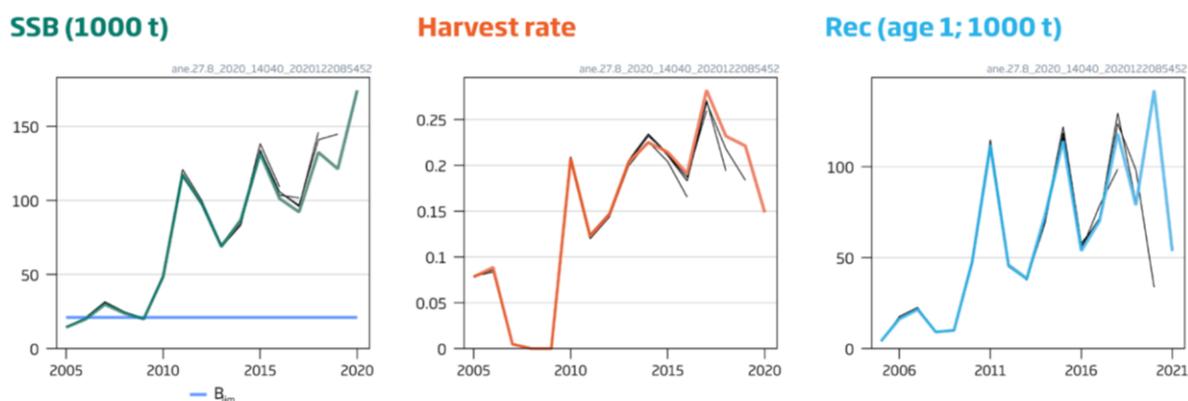


Figure 4.2.3.1 Anchovy in Subarea 8. Historical assessment results. Source: ICES, 2020a.

Management of the stock

In 2013 and 2014, the STECF evaluated a set of harvest control rules for the management of the Bay of Biscay anchovy stock (STECF, 2013; STECF 2014). The European Commission, EU Member States and stakeholders chose harvest control rule named G4 with a harvest rate of 0.45. ICES reviewed this harvest control rule in 2015 and concluded that it was precautionary (Annex 5 in ICES, 2016). Subsequently, in December 2015, ICES advised that “when the management plan is applied, catches in 2016 should be no more than 25,000 tonnes”. In January 2016 the Council established the TAC in 2016 for the Bay of Biscay anchovy stock at 25,000 tonnes (Council Regulation No 72/2016).

In May 2016, based on the good state of the stock, the South Western Waters Advisory Council (SWWAC) asked for a change in the harvest control rule used for management to rule G3 with a rate of exploitation of 0.4 and an increase of the fishing opportunities for 2016 from 25,000 to 33,000 t (SWWAC Advice 101 released on 05/05/2016). In June, the Council increased the 2016 TAC to 33,000 t (Council Regulation No 891/2016), on the basis that “The stock biomass and recruitment of anchovy in the Bay of Biscay are among the highest in the historical time-series, thus allowing a higher precautionary TAC in 2016 in accordance with the management strategy assessed by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) in 2014”.

This new harvest control rule formed the basis of the ICES advice and the TAC subsequently established by the Council from 2017 onwards. In January 2020, the Council established the TAC in 2020 for the Bay of Biscay anchovy stock at 31,892 tonnes (Council Regulation No 123/2020), from which 90% corresponded to Spain and 10% to France. However, these percentages might be modified due to bilateral agreements between countries, but this did not occur in 2020.

According to the European Commission Regulation No. 185/2013, the deductions from the anchovy fishing quota allocated to Spain because of overfishing of mackerel quota in 2009 shall be applied from 2016 to 2023. This supposes a reduction of 3,696 tonnes in the 2020 Spanish quota of Bay of Biscay anchovy.

Regarding the landing obligation regulation that aims at progressively eliminate discards in all Union fisheries, in October 2014 the European Commission established a discard plan for certain pelagic species in southwestern waters (Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No. 1394/2014). This includes an exemption from the landing obligation for

anchovy caught in artisanal purse-seine fisheries based on evidence of high survivability and *de minimis* exemptions in both the pelagic trawl fishery and purse seine fishery from 2015 to 2017. In November 2017, these exemptions were extended up to 2020 (Commission Delegated regulation No. 188/2018). During the site visit both the management authorities and other stakeholders confirmed that no changes occurred last year to this management system and confirmed that catches in 2020 were below the TAC. Therefore, the scorings of PI 1.2.1 and PI 1.2.2 remain unchanged.

In terms of data collection and assessment method, it is evidenced in WGHANSA 2020 report (ICES, 2020b) that fishery dependent data were routinely collected as well as most of the survey data, except for PELGAS as mentioned before. However, this did not create any particular issue taking into account the Bayesian assessment approach used. Therefore, PI 1.2.3 and PI 1.2.4 scores remain unchanged.

4.2.7 Scientific based information related to P2

4.2.7.1 Basque, Galician and Asturian vessels' logbooks and observers' data analysed by AZTI

AZTI has recently published a paper on the Spanish MSC-certified purse-seine fleet operating in the Bay of Biscay (ICES Subarea 27.8) during the years 2016–2019 (Ruiz et al., 2021). Data from logbooks as well as from an onboard data collection programme were used to obtain the landings and estimate discards and interactions with ETPs⁴. This study considered the species selectivity and the effect of fishing activities on the pelagic community by assessing the interactions with the endangered, threatened and protected (ETP⁴) species and estimating the discard sizes. For the purpose of this study, the *metiers* were defined by grouping similar catch profiles, using hierarchical agglomerative cluster analysis. Four *metiers* were defined, three monospecific, i.e., "anchovy", "sardine" and "mackerel", and a mixed *metier* ("mix"), with Atlantic chub mackerel and horse mackerel as the main species (Ruiz et al., 2021). For the current surveillance audit, only the *metier* "anchovy" was used.

It is important to note that no data from 2020 (neither from observers – due to the Covid19 pandemic no observers could board the vessels - nor from logbooks) were available from the Basque, Galician and Asturian vessels. As a recommendation was already raised regarding this issue, this will be closely monitored during next year's surveillance audit (see **Recommendation #1** from **Section 5.1.3** for further details).

i) Logbook data

According to the PCR, published on April 20th, 2020 (available at <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/cantabrian-sea-purse-seine-anchovy-fishery/@assessments>), the anchovy fishery is a highly selective one, where the target species constitutes between 84 and 97% of the total annual landings, and with an average of 91.77% between 2016 and 2018 (**Table 7.3.1.4.1** from PCR). This is confirmed from the results of Ruiz et al (2021), where anchovy has an average of 97.62% of the total annual landings between 2016 and 2019 (**Table 4.2.7.1**).

Table 4.2.7.1 Species composition (average landing) from the Spanish vessels catching anchovy and landing in Basque Ports between 2016 and 2019. Source: Ruiz et al., 2021.

species	anchovy
<i>anchovy</i>	97.62%
<i>mackerel</i>	0.90%
<i>sardine</i>	0.40%
<i>chub mackerel</i>	0.31%
<i>horse mackerel</i>	0.27%
<i>Mediterranean horse mackerel</i>	0.25%
<i>Bogue</i>	0.13%
<i>Atlantic bonito</i>	0.04%
<i>Other species</i>	0.09%

⁴ Please, note that the definition of endangered, threatened and protected (ETP) species in Ruiz et al (2021) is not how MSC defines ETPs.

ii) Observers' data

As mentioned above, the study by Ruiz et al (2021) estimated discards and interactions with ETPs⁴ from observers' data. These data were collected within the framework of the DCF, where observers collect biological data for main commercial species for stock assessment purposes, and under a monitoring program financed by the industry itself, in response to the MSC requirements. For the first two years the data were exclusively collected within the framework of the DCF, which have limited resources being shared with the monitoring of other fisheries presumed to have larger discard rates than purse seining. In 2018 and 2019 the DCF was supplemented by an additional monitoring program financed by the industry itself (with a maximum support in 2018), in response to the MSC requirements (Ruiz et al., 2021).

Catch composition

Table 4.2.7.3 shows the proportion of the different catch fractions (i.e., retained, slipping, and discarded) observed at sea. The anchovy purse-seine fleet studied by Ruiz et al (2021) avoided unwanted catches mostly by slipping (11.83 % of the catch) and only rarely by discarding the fish already hauled on board (1.10 % of the catch), with 87.06 % of the catch being retained (**Table 4.2.7.3**), in agreement with the values shown in the PCR (available at <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/cantabrian-sea-purse-seine-anchovy-fishery/@@assessments>).

Sampling conducted by observers during the four years of the Ruiz et al (2021) study demonstrated that the discards were scarce both as a proportion (discards compared to landings) and in absolute terms (estimates of total weight discarded). The proportion of fish discarded only exceeded 1% for the landings recorded in 2019 (i.e., 2.33%) (**Table 4.2.7.3**). The rates of discards (Dr%) would fall into the lowest values of purse seines fisheries included in the latest assessment of global fish discards (Pérez Roda et al., 2019); this assessment showed that globally the discard rate for this gear was, on average, 4.7 % of the total catch. The discard rate obtained in this study is also lower than the values reported for the Mediterranean purse seiners (approximately 4.6 % and 2.2 % in the Aegean and the Ionian Sea, respectively; Tsagarakis et al., 2012). Moreover, it is below the values obtained by Pérez et al. (1996) for this purse-seine fishery in the nineties, which showed the discard rates above 5% (horse mackerel, 6.5 % and sardine, 6%). There might be several reasons for the reduction in the discards over the last 30 years. One of these reasons might be a relative revalorisation of some (previously poorly valued) species over the traditionally preferred (like sardine and horse mackerel vs anchovy), which would encourage their retention. The new automatic storing procedures might have also helped, by pumping the fish from the nets into the boxes in the ship hold, thus discouraging sorting and discarding. These modern fishing procedures clearly favour slipping over discarding. Nevertheless, very low (almost negligible) rates of discards are not uncommon in the purse-seine fleets. They have also been observed in the neighbouring Portuguese fleet (Feijó et al., 2018; Stratoudakis and Marçalo, 2002) and in other fisheries all over the world (e.g., in Chile or Australia; see examples in Pérez Roda et al., 2019). Midwater trawlers (MWT), also exploiting pelagic fish, have been reported to discard globally about 19 % of their catches (Pérez Roda et al., 2019). The MWTs operating in the Bay of Biscay and Southeast Atlantic discard approximately 26 % of the catch (Melnychuck et al., 2001; Morizur et al., 1996a). It can, therefore, be concluded that the purse-seine fishery studied here is among the most selective harvesting in the pelagic domain of the Bay of Biscay (Ruiz et al., 2021).

Table 4.2.7.3 Proportion of discards, slipping and retained catch during the observed trips by year. Source: Ruiz et al., 2021.

	discarded	retained	slipping
anchovy	1.10 %	87.06 %	11.83 %
2016	0.02%	96.05 %	3.94 %
2017	0.56 %	90.40 %	9.04 %
2018	0.79%	90.32 %	8.89 %
2019	2.33 %	75.64 %	22.02 %

Figure 4.2.7.1 shows a boxplot of the quantities slipped, by trip and species. In the "anchovy" metier, the main slipped species was the target species itself (anchovy). It accounted for more than 64 % of the total slipping (in weight) and occurred in 20 % of the trips (**Table 4.2.7.3**).

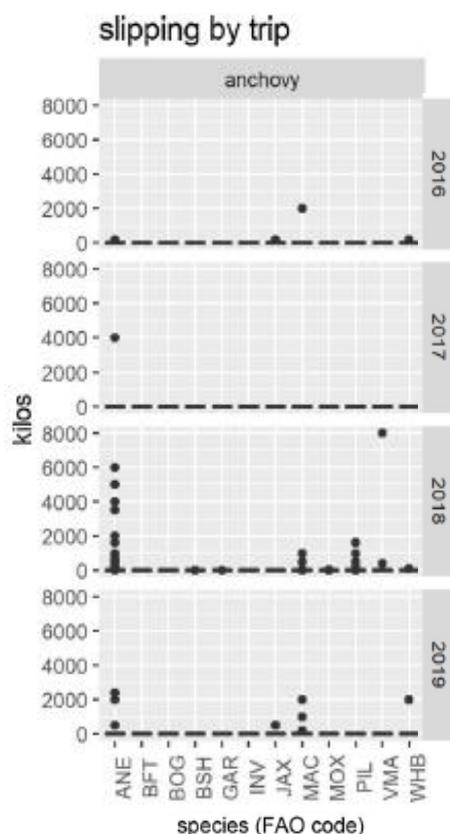


Figure 4.2.7.1 Boxplot of the quantities (kg) released during the observed trips while the catch was still in the water (slipping) by year. Each point represents the total weight slipped by trip (kg); species are represented by their FAO codes (ANE- anchovy; BFT- bluefin tuna; BSH- blue shark; GAR- garfish; INV-invertebrates; JAX- *Trachurus* sp.; MAC- mackerel; MOX - sunfish; PIL - sardine; VMA- chub mackerel; WHB - blue whiting;). Source: Ruiz et al., 2021.

Total discard estimates

Table 4.2.7.4 shows the estimated total discards by year, and **Table 4.2.7.5** show the same information by species.

The sampling conducted by the observers (Ruiz et al., 2021) demonstrated that the larger the sampling programme, the greater the number of species that appear in discards (even though the overall numbers are small) (**Tables 4.2.7.4** and **4.2.7.5**). This was noticeable in 2018 and 2019 when the greatest sampling effort was deployed. Sunfish is the only species seen in the discards every year (**Table 4.2.7.5**). In the "anchovy" *metier*, 54 % (408 t) of the estimated biomass discarded during the study period corresponded to mackerel, although this is also related to an increase in discarding activities recorded in 2019. The next most discarded species were the blue whiting (16 %) and the anchovy (6 %). The latter was a result of a punctual but large anchovy discard (Ruiz et al., 2021).

Table 4.2.7.4 Observer coverage and total discards by year (all species combined), including 95 % Confidence Interval (CI) and the proportion of the discarded component. Source: Ruiz et al., 2021.

year	total_trips	observed trips	observer coverage (%)	TOTAL landings (t)	proportion discarded (%)	TOTAL discards (t)	interval 95 low	interval 95 high
2016	2830	11	0.39	14,480	0.02	3.2	1.31	5.09
2017	3238	8	0.25	17,877	0.56	100.77	44.43	157.12
2018	2815	61	2.17	17,462	0.94	165.68	152.69	178.67
2019	2695	23	0.85	16,051	3.19	529.01	429.83	628.19

Table 4.2.7.5 Total discards estimated by year and species, including 95 % Confidence Interval (CI). In addition, the following values are presented per year/species: mean discarded quantity per trip, the proportion of sets in which that species is discarded (occurrence), the total landing of that species (if any) and specific discard ratio (discards/total catches). Source: Ruiz et al., 2021.

Year	Species	Mean discard by trip (kg)	STD	Occurrence %	Total discards (t)	CI 95 low (t)	CI 95 high (t)	Total landing (t)	Discard ratio
2016	Sunfish	0.86	2.86	0.09	2.44	1.00	3.88	NA	NA
2016	Blue shark	0.27	0.89	0.09	0.76	0.31	1.21	NA	NA
2017	Sunfish	4.7	10.01	0.25	15.2	7.26	23.14	NA	NA
2017	Blue whiting	25	70.71	0.12	80.95	24.86	137.04	NA	NA
2017	Blue shark	1.43	2.14	0.5	4.62	2.92	6.32	NA	NA
2018	Anchovy	16.47	128.03	0.03	46.36	34.90	57.82	17136.58	0
2018	Bluefin tuna	2.75	21.45	0.02	7.73	5.81	9.65	NA	NA
2018	Trachurus sp.	0.6	2.97	0.08	1.69	1.42	1.96	NA	NA
2018	Bogue	2.16	14.23	0.05	6.09	4.82	7.36	18.75	0.25
2018	Mackerel	9.01	21.37	0.3	25.36	23.45	27.27	93.34	0.21
2018	Blue whiting	8.41	43.52	0.13	23.67	19.77	27.57	NA	NA
2018	Sardine	5.2	23.62	0.08	14.63	12.52	16.74	27.41	0.35
2018	Blue shark	0.33	1.54	0.05	0.92	0.78	1.06	NA	NA
2018	Sunfish	4.11	8.02	0.48	11.58	10.86	12.30	NA	NA
2018	Garfish	1.71	4.69	0.2	4.8	4.38	5.22	NA	NA
2018	Common stingray	0.07	0.51	0.02	0.18	0.13	0.23	NA	NA
2018	Hake	0.3	1.09	0.08	0.85	0.75	0.95	NA	NA
2018	Shortfin mako	0.08	0.64	0.02	0.23	0.17	0.29	NA	NA
2018	Invertebrates	1.97	15.36	0.02	5.54	4.16	6.92	NA	NA
2018	Chub mackerel	5.7	31.2	0.15	16.04	13.25	18.83	77.26	0.17
2019	Blue whiting	8.63	18.37	0.43	23.26	19.06	27.46	NA	NA
2019	Trachurus sp.	5.87	17.49	0.17	15.82	11.82	19.82	NA	NA
2019	Bogue	0.04	0.21	0.04	0.12	0.07	0.17	10.24	0.01
2019	Invertebrates	1.22	5.84	0.04	3.28	1.95	4.61	NA	NA
2019	Garfish	14.88	29.88	0.65	40.11	33.28	46.94	NA	NA
2019	Sardine	1.74	7.32	0.13	4.7	3.03	6.37	44.49	0.1
2019	Blue shark	2.65	6.34	0.17	7.14	5.69	8.59	NA	NA
2019	Mackerel	151.39	439.94	0.74	408	307.47	508.53	185.68	0.69
2019	Common stingray	0.01	0.06	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.05	NA	NA
2019	Bluefin tuna	0.87	4.17	0.04	2.34	1.39	3.29	NA	NA
2019	Hake	0.54	0.98	0.3	1.46	1.24	1.68	NA	NA
2019	Sunfish	8.43	20.36	0.43	22.73	18.08	27.38	NA	NA
2019	Greater weever	0	0.02	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.01	NA	NA

Overall, given the negligible discard rates, the impact of the studied purse seine fishery on the main species of the pelagic ecosystem should be very low, assuming a high level of survival of the slipped fish (Ruiz et al., 2021). The extent of survival depends on several factors such as the species being slipped, the maximum crowding densities and crowding time before slipping (Marçalo et al., 2019). The survival after slipping in this fishery has been examined in field experiments (Arregi et al., 2014; STECF, 2014). The results have shown that at the typical crowding level, the survival rates for the most common species were high (horse mackerel: 89.7–100 %; anchovy: 54.2–97.8 %; sardine: 83.9–100 % and Atlantic chub mackerel: 100 %), but the variability for the mackerel was large (3–100 %). Despite the ban on slipping in the CFP of the EU fisheries (EU, 2013), an exception has been granted to this fleet for slipping of all these species, under the High Survival Exception provided in the Article 2 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1394/2014. Thus, the available studies on the slipping practices in this fleet show a minimal impact on the unwanted species.

Interaction with the ETP4 species

Ruiz et al (2021), independently of the *metier*, identified 19 taxa (16 species) and 2 taxa (1 species) of seabirds and marine mammals, respectively, attending (seen around) purse seiners during 266 out of 482 monitored fishing operations (**Table 4.2.7.6**). From these, only one was found entangled in the fishing net in 2018, a yellow-legged gull (*Larus michahellis*). The bird was released alive and uninjured (see its report also in the PCR, available at <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/cantabrian-sea-purse-seine-anchovy-fishery/@@assessments>). Ruiz et al (2021) did not detect any other bycatch of protected species⁴.

However, as mentioned above, this species, even though it is an 'out-of-scope' species, is not listed in the IUCN Red List as Vulnerable, Endangered, nor Critically Endangered, therefore, it is not considered as an ETP species according to MSC.

Table 4.2.7.6 List of protected species⁴ (as defined by Ruiz et al., 2021) associated with purse-seine fishing and the number of fishing operations (FOS), occurrence in fishing operations (OCC, %), the mean (\pm SD) group size (GS), the total number of individuals per species/taxon (TOT) and the number of fishing operations where the bycatch occurred (BYC). Source: Ruiz et al., 2021.

Group	Common name	Scientific name	Code	FOS	OCC (%)	GS	TOT	BYC
Seabirds	Yellow-legged gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	LARMIC	238	49.38	32.03 \pm 66.27	7624	1
	Gull		LARSPP	86	17.84	27.7 \pm 71.21	2382	0
	Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	LARFUS	75	15.56	11.65 \pm 25.09	874	0
	Northern gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	MORBAS	46	9.54	3.78 \pm 5.48	174	0
	Great black-backed gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	LARMAR	5	1.04	1 \pm 0	5	0
	European herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	LARARG	3	0.62	1.33 \pm 0.58	4	0
	Balearic shearwater	<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>	PUFMAU	3	0.62	59.33 \pm 100.17	178	0
	Sandwich tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	STESAN	3	0.62	1.67 \pm 0.58	5	0
	Great skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	STESKU	3	0.62	1 \pm 0	3	0
	Northern fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	FULGLA	2	0.41	1 \pm 0	2	0
	Mediterranean gull	<i>Ichthyaeus melanocephalus</i>	LARMEL	2	0.41	6.5 \pm 4.95	13	0
	Great shearwater	<i>Ardenna gravis</i>	PUGGRA	2	0.41	1 \pm 0	2	0
	Small shearwater		PUSPSP	2	0.41	1 \pm 0	2	0
	Common guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	URIAAL	2	0.41	1 \pm 0	2	0
	Cory's shearwater	<i>Calonectris borealis</i>	CALBOR	1	0.21		3	0
	Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	FRAART	1	0.21		1	0
	Sooty shearwater	<i>Ardenna grisea</i>	PUGGRI	1	0.21		3	0
	Common tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	STEHIR	1	0.21		1	0
	Tern		STESPP	1	0.21		3	0
	Mammals	Long-finned pilot whale	<i>Globicephala melas</i>	GLOMEL	2	0.41	23 \pm 0	46
Dolphin			DELSPP	1	0.21		26	0

4.2.7.2 Cantabrian fleet data

The Cantabrian fleet (OPACAN) shared with the assessment team their data on interactions with ETPs for the years 2019 and 2020 (using AZTI's forms). From these, it can be concluded that there have been no interactions of the Cantabrian fleet with ETPs during 2019 or 2020.

As for the Basque, Galician and Asturian fleets (see **Section 4.2.7.1**), due to the Covid19 pandemic, no observers were able to go onboard the Cantabrian vessels in 2020, therefore no observers' data were available for this surveillance audit. As a recommendation was already raised regarding this issue, this will be closely monitored during next year's surveillance audit (see **Recommendation #1** from **Section 5.1.3** for further details).

4.2.7.3 Asturian fleet data

No data were provided to the assessment team from the Asturian fleet for 2019 or 2020. As a result, a new recommendation has been raised (see **Recommendation #2** from **Section 5.1.3** for further details).

4.2.7.4 Primary species

The following are the different stocks classified as Primary components during the PCR (available at: <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/cantabrian-sea-purse-seine-anchovy-fishery/@@assessments>):

- 1 main primary stock: mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*).
- 8 minor primary stocks: sardine Bay of Biscay (*Sardina pilchardus*); sardine Iberian (*Sardina pilchardus*); horse mackerel (*Trachurus trachurus*); hake (*Merluccius merluccius*); blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*); bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*); and the two sharks: blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) and shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*).

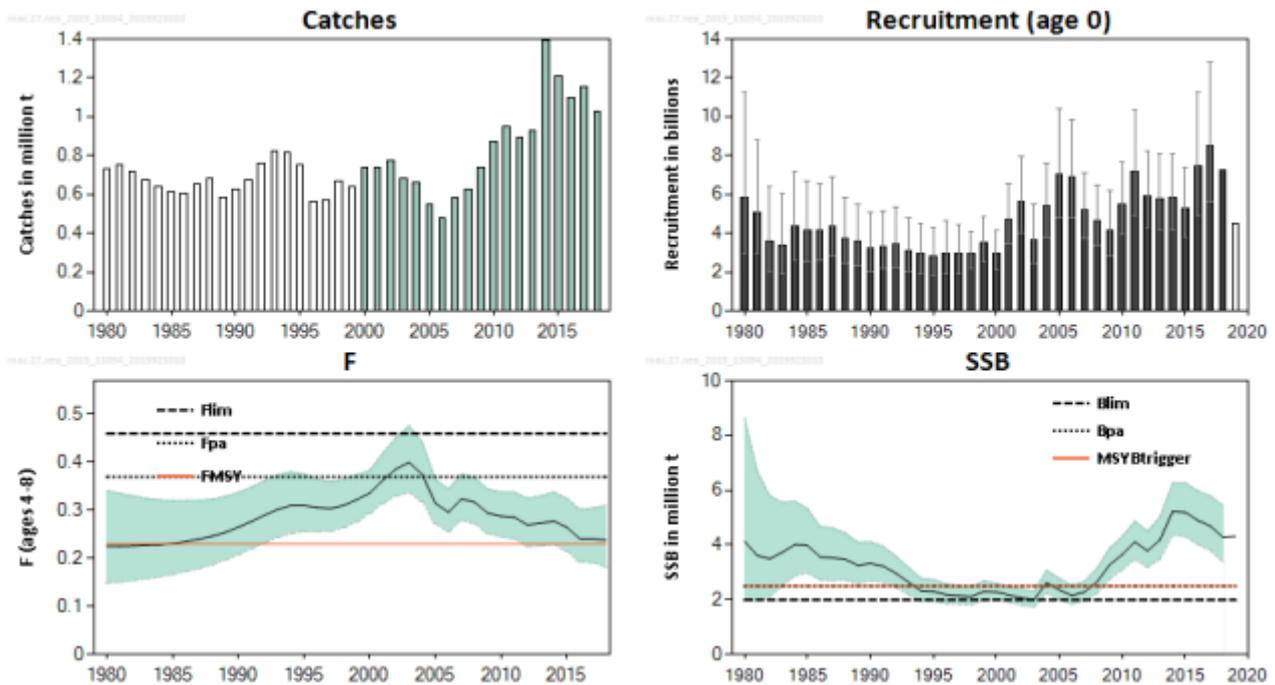
a) *Main primary stock*

Northeast Atlantic Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*)

This is the only Main primary species.

ICES evaluated a management strategy for mackerel in 2017. Since the interbenchmark in 2019, the fishing mortality reference points have been changed and FMSY is now estimated to be higher than the target F in the management strategy (FMSY = 0.23; FMGT = 0.21) (ICES, 2019a). ICES has been requested by EU, Norway, and Faroe Islands to advise on the long-term management strategy for mackerel. The latest ICES advice was published on October 1, 2019 (ICES, 2019a). According to this assessment, fishing pressure on the stock is above FMSY and below Fpa and Flim; the spawning-stock size is above MSY Btrigger, Bpa, and Blim (Figure 4.2.7.4.1).

Even though the overall outcome is the same as the one that was included in the PCR (based on ICES, 2019b), and no re-scoring has been conducted, some minor amendments have been carried out during the current surveillance for PI 2.1.1 SI(a) (see Section 5.2).



	Fishing pressure			Stock size			
		2016	2017	2018	2017	2018	2019
Maximum sustainable yield	F_{MSY}	✗	✗	✗ Above	$B_{trigger}$	✓	✓ Above trigger
Precautionary approach	F_{pa}, F_{lim}	✓	✓	✓ Harvested sustainably	B_{pa}, B_{lim}	✓	✓ Full reproductive capacity
Management plan	F_{MGT}	—	—	— Not applicable	B_{MGT}	—	— Not applicable

Figure 4.2.7.4.1 Northeast Atlantic Mackerel. Stock status and trends. Source: ICES (2019a).

b) *Minor primary stocks*

Sardine (*Sardina pilchardus*) in divisions 8.a–b and 8.d (Bay of Biscay)

Compared to the previous stock assessment (ICES, 2018) included in the PCR, the Bay of Biscay sardine stock status has improved according to its latest stock assessment (ICES, 2020c) (Figure 4.2.7.4.2), however, its overall outcome is the same. Nevertheless, and even though no re-scoring has been conducted, some minor amendments have been carried out during the current surveillance for this element in PI 2.1.1 SI(b) (see Section 5.2).

The latest stock assessment (ICES, 2020c) found that the spawning–stock biomass (SSB) has been relatively stable since 2012 and is above MSY Btrigger, Bpa, and Blim in 2019. Fishing mortality has been above FMSY but below Fpa and Flim since 2015. Recruitment is estimated to be above the average in the time-series in 2019 (Figure 4.2.7.4.2).

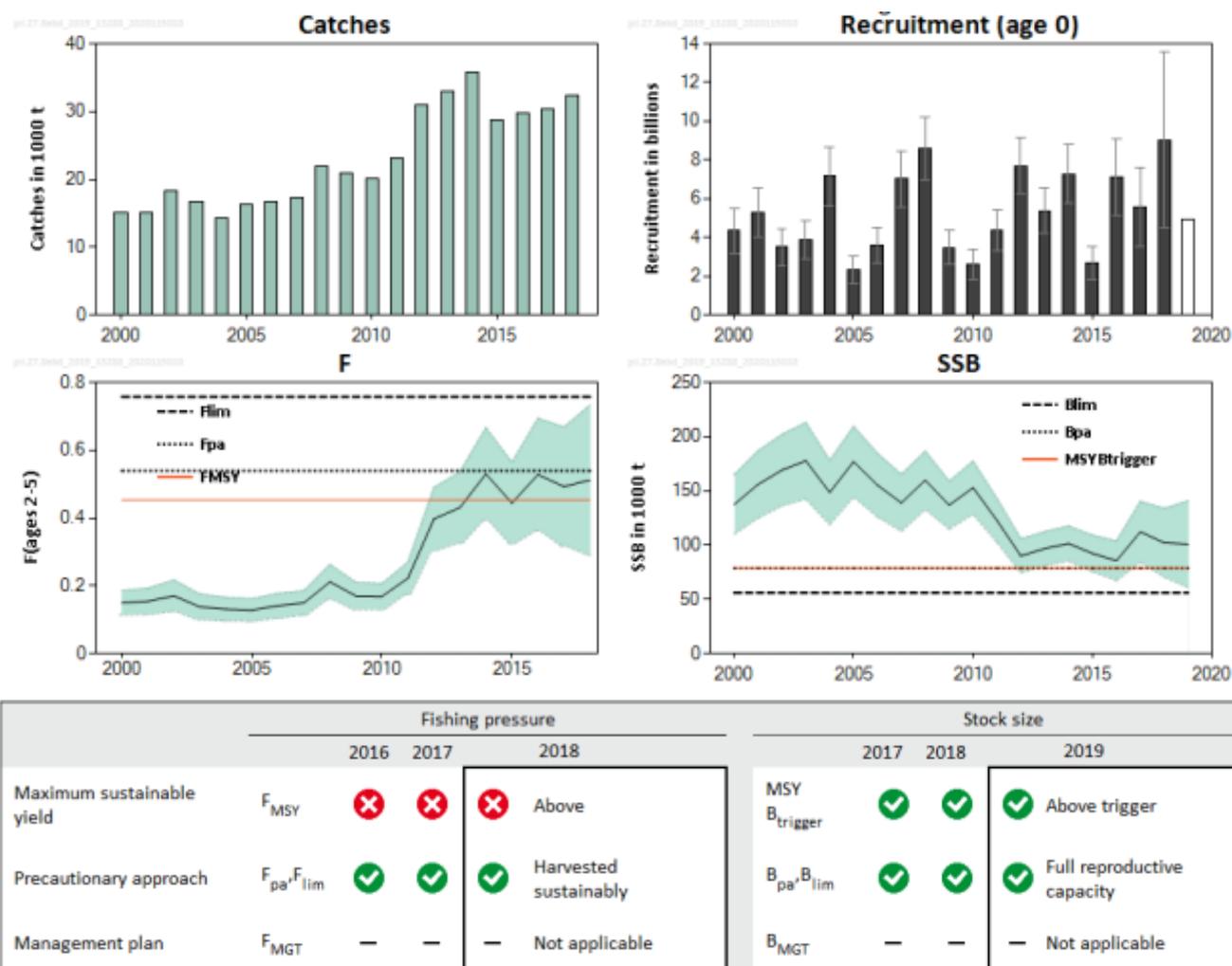


Figure 4.2.7.4.2 BoB Sardine. Stock status and trends. Source: ICES (2020a).

Sardine (*Sardina pilchardus*) in divisions 8.c and 9.a (Cantabrian Sea and Atlantic Iberian waters)

ICES received a special request from Portugal and Spain (ICES, 2021a) to update the catch advice for 2021 based on the most recent data available for the stock assessment conducted in May 2021. With this update (ICES, 2021b), fishing pressure on the stock has been found below FMSY and spawning–stock size is above MSY Btrigger, Bpa, and Blim (Figure 4.2.7.4.3).

ICES evaluated an HCR that is proposed to be part of a management plan for 2021–2026 and found it be precautionary with maximum allowed catches between 30 000 and 50 000 tonnes (ICES, 2021 a). For 2021, the European Commission requested ICES to provide advice based on the MSY approach and include the HCR in other catch scenarios.

As this is a significant change from the PCR, PI 2.1.1 SI(b) has been amended and re-scored for this element during the current surveillance audit (see **Section 5.2**).



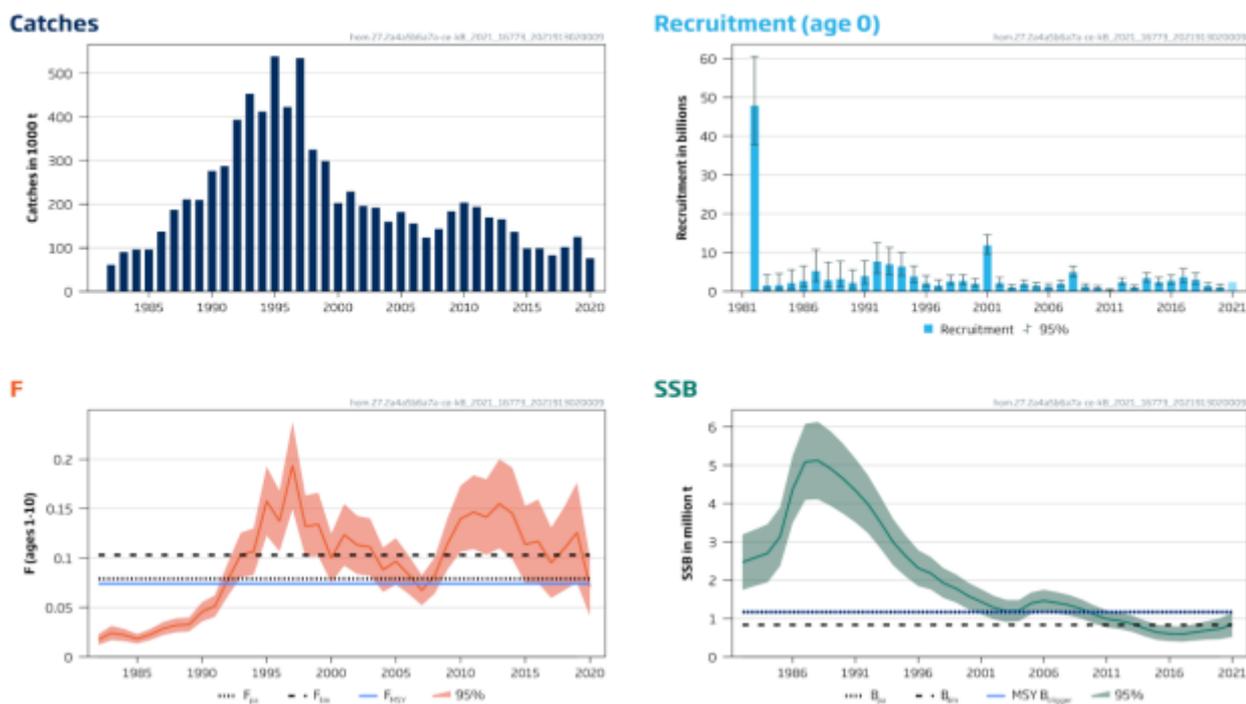
	Fishing pressure				Stock size						
	2018	2019	2020		2019	2020	2021				
Maximum sustainable yield	F _{MSY}	✓	✓	✓	Appropriate	MSY	B _{trigger}	✗	✓	✓	Above trigger
Precautionary approach	F _{pa} , F _{lim}	✓	✓	✓	Harvested sustainably	B _{pa} , B _{lim}		○	✓	✓	Full reproductive capacity
Management plan	F _{MGT}	—	—	—	Not applicable	B _{MGT}		—	—	—	Not applicable

Figure 4.2.7.4.3 Iberian sardine. Stock status and trends. Source: ICES (2021b) and <http://standardgraphs.ices.dk/ViewCharts.aspx?key=14580>.

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)

According to the latest stock assessment (ICES, 2021c), fishing pressure on the stock is below FMSY (although it has been above FMSY since 2009 and until 2019) and spawning-stock size is below MSY B_{trigger} and between B_{pa} and B_{lim} (**Figure 4.2.7.4.4**). Moreover, ICES is not aware of any agreed precautionary management plan for horse mackerel in this area.

Overall, the outcome is very similar to the one that was included in the PCR; therefore, no re-scoring has been conducted, however, some minor amendments have been done in PI 2.1.1 SI(b) for this element (see **Section 5.2**).



		Fishing pressure			Stock size			
		2018	2019	2020	2019	2020	2021	
Maximum sustainable yield	F_{MSY}	✘	✘	✔ Below	$MSY B_{trigger}$	✘	✘	✘ Below trigger
Precautionary approach	F_{pa}, F_{lim}	✘	✘	✔ Harvested sustainably	B_{pa}, B_{lim}	✘	✘	⚠ Increased risk
Management plan	F_{MGT}	—	—	— Not applicable	B_{MGT}	—	—	— Not applicable

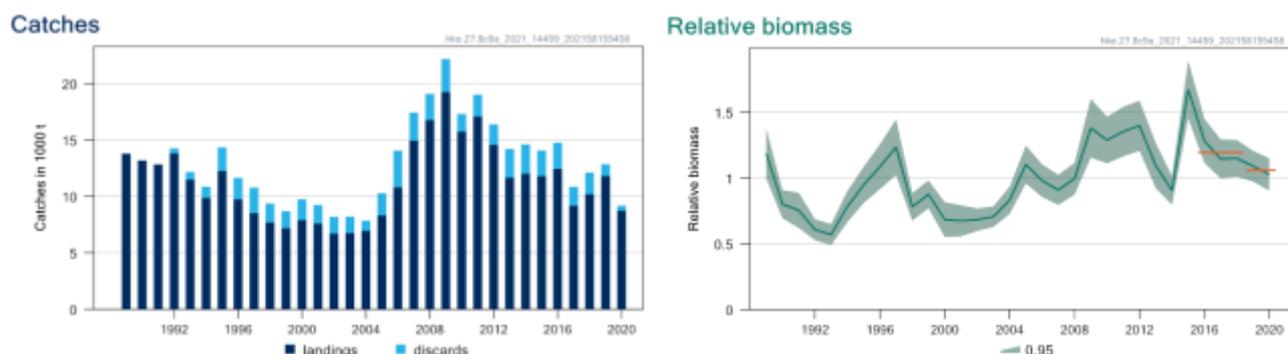
Figure 4.2.7.4.4 Northeast Atlantic horse mackerel. Stock status and trends. Source: ICES (2021c) and <http://standardgraphs.ices.dk/ViewCharts.aspx?key=16773>.

Hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) in divisions 8.c and 9.a, Southern stock (Cantabrian Sea and Atlantic Iberian waters)

The latest ICES advice for the Cantabrian Sea and Atlantic Iberian waters hake was published on 30 June 2021 (ICES, 2021d).

Since 2020, because of a strong retrospective pattern in the GADGET length-based model, the basis for the advice has changed from category 1 to category 3 (ICES, 2012) using the ICES precautionary approach (ICES, 2020d). As no reference points are defined for this category 3 assessment, ICES cannot assess the stock and exploitation status relative to maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and precautionary approach (PA) reference points (ICES, 2020d; 2021d) (**Figure 4.2.7.4.5**). The catch advice, however, has decreased because the stock size indicator has declined in the last 5 years (ICES, 2021d).

Due to this significant change from the PCR, this element has been re-assessed and its rationale amended in PI 2.1.1 SI(b) (see **Section 5.2**).



		Fishing pressure			Stock size					
		2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020			
Maximum sustainable yield	F _{MSY}	?	?	?	Undefined	MSY B _{trigger}	?	?	?	Undefined
Precautionary approach	F _{pa} , F _{lim}	?	?	?	Undefined	B _{pa} , B _{lim}	?	?	?	Undefined
Management plan	F _{MGT}	—	—	—	Not applicable	B _{MGT}	—	—	—	Not applicable
Qualitative evaluation	-	?	?	?	Unknown	-	→	↘	↘	Decreasing

Figure 4.2.7.4.5 Cantabrian Sea and Atlantic Iberian waters hake. State of the stock and fishery relative to reference points. Source: ICES (2021d) and <http://standardgraphs.ices.dk/ViewCharts.aspx?key=14459>.

Blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14 (Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters)

According to the latest stock assessment (ICES, 2020e), Fishing mortality (F) is estimated to be above F_{MSY} since 2014, although below F_{pa} and F_{lim}. Spawning-stock biomass (SSB) has been decreasing since 2018; however, it is estimated to remain above MSY B_{trigger} and above B_{pa} and B_{lim}. Recruitment (R) from 2017 to 2020 is estimated to be low, following a three-year period of high recruitment (**Figure 4.2.7.4.6**).

As this outcome is the same as the one published in the PCR, no re-scoring has been carried out during the current surveillance audit for this element, although minor amendments have been done to the rationale of PI 2.1.1 SI(b) for this element (see **Section 5.2**).

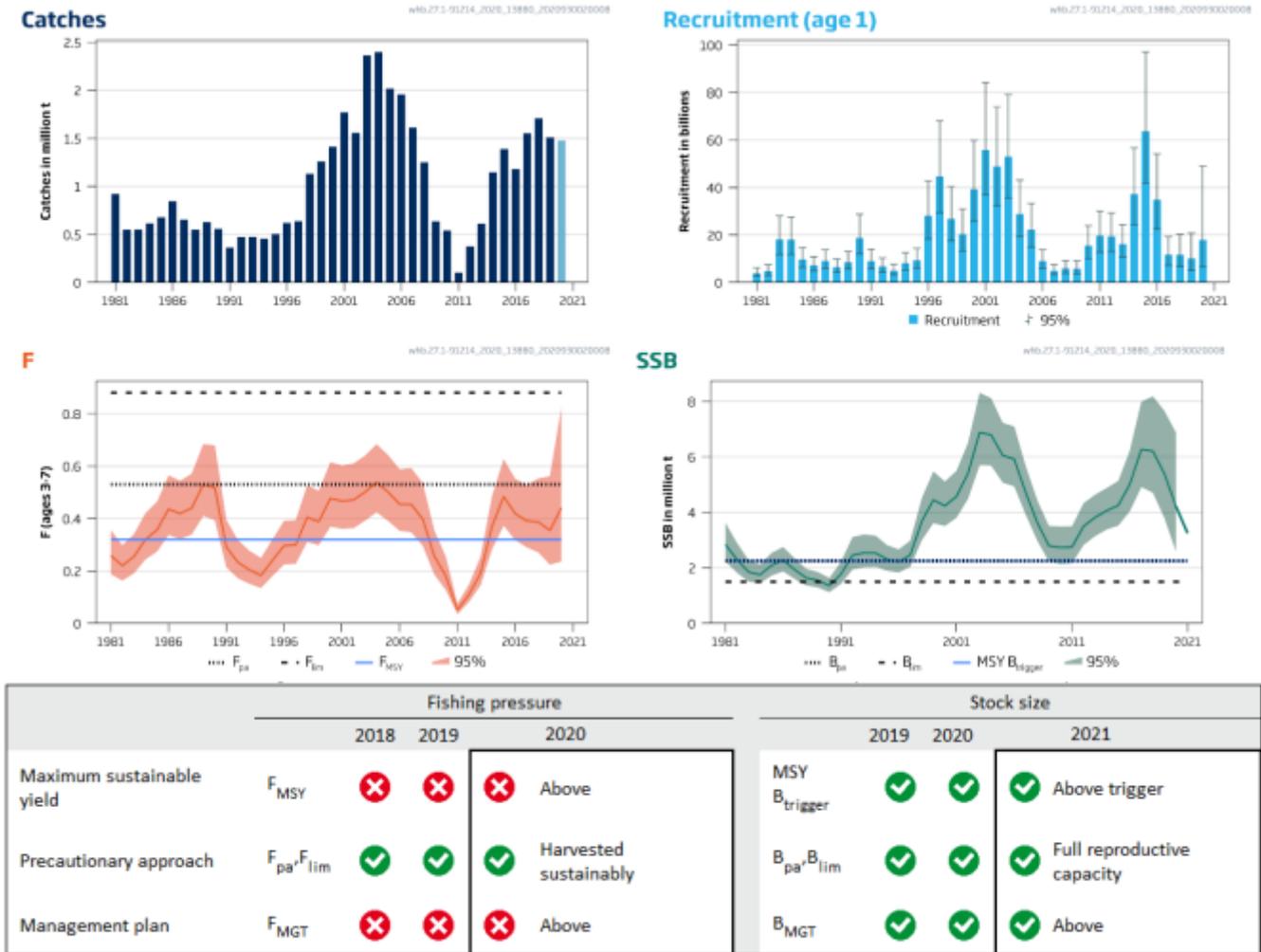


Figure 4.2.7.4.6 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Stock status and trends. Source: ICES (2020e).

Bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) East Atlantic and Mediterranean stock

An update assessment was carried out for the East Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna stock in 2020 (ICCAT, 2020). Based on this update, the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna biomass reaches 873,000 t in 2018, which is the highest estimate ever and 30% above the maximum in the 1970s. The ASAP model estimated stock biomass to be 583,000 t in 2018. However, the uncertainty regarding the magnitude of the recent SSB increase estimated by the VPA is even higher than in the 2017 VPA assessment due to considerable instability in the recruitment estimates. Recruitment shows an antagonistic pattern between assessments years, being high in recent years but decreasing in 2018 in the 2000 assessment, while the opposite is true for the 2017 assessment (Figure 7.3.1.8).

At the end, the SRCS concluded that the VPA models tested were not sufficiently reliable to be used as the basis for management advice. However, the available data do clearly indicate that the biomass of the East Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna has increased since the late 2000s, is high at present, and that there are no concerns that overfishing may be occurring under the current TAC (36,000 t in 2020; ICCAT, 2020). Therefore, the outcome for this element is the same as the one published in the PCR. Thus, no re-scoring has been carried out during the current surveillance audit for this element, although amendments in its rationale have been done in PI 2.1.1 SI(b) for this element (see Section 5.2).

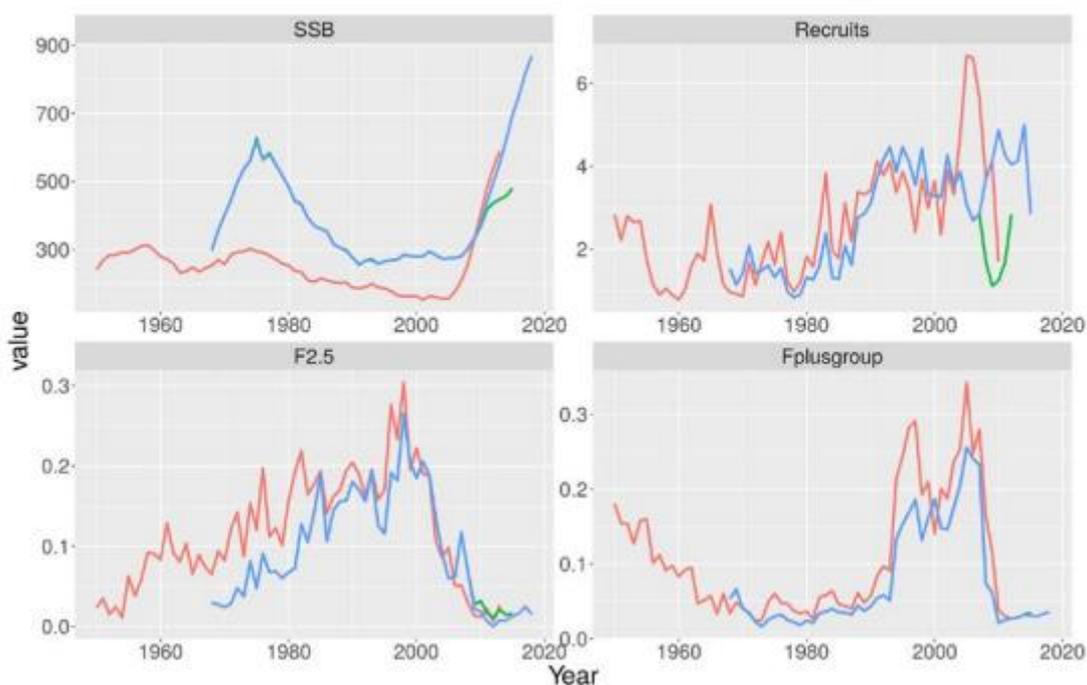


Figure 7.3.1.8 Comparison of the trends in spawning stock biomass (SSB), Recruitment (Recruits), fishing mortality for ages 2 to 5 (F2.5) and for the plus group (Fplusgroup), and time series of F-ratio obtained for the base cases in 2020 (Run135, blue), 2017 (green), and 2014 (red). Source: ICCAT, 2020.

North Atlantic Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*)

No new stock assessment has been carried out since 2015 and the next one is expected to be conducted in 2022 (see <https://www.iccat.int/en/assess.html>). Therefore, as there have been no changes since the publication of the PCR, no amendments or re-scoring have been carried out during the current surveillance audit for this element.

North Atlantic Shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*)

No new stock assessment has been carried out since 2019 and the date for the next one is still to be determined (see <https://www.iccat.int/en/assess.html>). Therefore, as there have been no changes since the publication of the PCR, no amendments or re-scoring have been carried out during the current surveillance audit for this element.

4.2.7.5 Secondary species

As seen in **Section 4.2.7.3**, 9 stocks were classified as primary during the PCR, all the other species, which were not considered ETP species (see **Section 4.2.7.5**) were classified as 'Secondary' components (see **Table 7.3.1.5.1** from the PCR, available at: <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/cantabrian-sea-purse-seine-anchovy-fishery/@@assessments>). The resulting list included a total of 31 species.

According to all the different sources of information consulted, catches for all the above-mentioned species would fall below the threshold to be considered 'Main' subcomponents. Therefore, all 31 secondary elements were classified as 'Minor' subcomponents for the purpose of the assessment. All these were classified as data deficient against FCP 7.7.3. Hence, given the insignificant changes in the catch characteristic of the fishery for 2019, and the supporting science for the secondary species, there are no changes to the P2 PI 2.2.x scoring.

4.2.7.6 ETP species

As explained above, no ETP species were reported from the Spanish vessels' landings in Basque ports (See **Section 4.2.7.1** and **Table 4.2.7.6**), nor from the Cantabrian fleet (**Section 4.2.7.2**).

4.3 Version details

Details on the version of the fisheries program documents used for this assessment are presented in **Table 4.3**, as required in the 'MSC Surveillance Reporting Template v2.1'.

Table 4.3 – Fisheries program documents versions

Document	Version number
MSC Fisheries Certification Process	Version 2.2, 25 March 2020 (25 September 2020)
MSC Fisheries Standard	Version 2.01, 31 August 2018
MSC General Certification Requirements	Version 2.4.1, 7 May 2019 (28 September 2019)
MSC Surveillance Reporting Template	Version 2.01, 28 March 2019 (28 March 2019)

5 Results

5.1 Surveillance results overview

5.1.1 Summary of conditions

There are no conditions opened for the Cantabrian Sea Purse seine anchovy fishery.

5.1.2 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and catch data

For the 2020 fishing season TAC was set at 31,892 t (Council Regulation (EU) 2020/123), 90% of which was allocated to Spain (28,710 t) and the remaining 10% to France (3,182 t) (**Table 5.1.2.1**). These percentages might be modified due to bilateral agreements between countries, but this did not occur in 2020.

Table 5.1.2.1 EU TAC set for anchovy in ICES 8 set for 2020, together with the Spanish and French quotas. Source: Council Regulation (EU) 2020/123.

Country	TAC (t)
Spain	28,703
France	3,189
EU	31,892
TAC	31,892

According to the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 185/2013, the deduction from the anchovy fishing quota allocated to Spain because of overfishing of mackerel quota in 2009 shall be applied from 2016 to 2023. This supposes a reduction of 3,696 tonnes in the 2020 Spanish anchovy (zone VIII) quota. Moreover, as a result of the bilateral Agreement of Bilbao signed in 2020 by the Spanish and French fleets, the Spanish fleet ceded to the French one 3% of the TAC + 100 t (i.e., 1,056.76 t). As a result, the **adapted quota** for Spain for 2020 was **23,950.24 t (Table 5.1.2.2)**.

In addition, as a result of the interannual flexibility⁵ (Regulation EU 847/96) 2,700 t were added and 50% of it (i.e., 1,350 t) were ceded to France. Bringing the **final quota** to **25,915 t (Table 5.1.2.2)**.

Table 5.1.2.2 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and catch data. Source : Council Regulation (EU) 2020/123, Council Regulation (EU) 2019/124, Regulation (EU) 847/96, Regulation (EU) 185/2013, Client, SGP.

	Year	Amount
TAC	2019	33,000 t
	2020	31,892 t
Spanish share of TAC	2019	29,700 t
	2020	28,703 t Adapted quota: 24,565 t Final quota: 25,915 t
UoA share of TAC	2020	There is no further quota allocation

⁵ In the case a Member State does not reach its adapted (net) quota, the unfished tonnes (up to a maximum of 10% of the net quota) can be added to the quota of the next of the year.

Spanish catches	2019	24,809.14 t
	2020	25,095 t
Total green weight catch by UoC (Source: Clients)	2020	OPACAN: 7,306.26 t OPESCAYA: 1,093.28 t OPEGUI: 5,771.99 t COOPERATIVA GALLEGA: 1.29 t CERCOASTUR: (Not shared with the assessment team) TOTAL: 14,172.82 t

5.1.3 Recommendations

Recommendation #1

As explained in the PCR (Section 9.1.1 – Previous assessments), a condition that was behind target during the initial assessment (Condition 2 regarding ETP species information) remained opened after the 4th Surveillance. Nevertheless, after the re-assessment site visit, and after having interviewed the client it was clear that this condition could be closed.

However, and bearing in mind that the interactions with ETP species and discards data should be consistent, detailed and complete, the assessment team recommended the following for the UoA fleet:

- o There should be an improvement in terms of the consistency, homogeneity and quality of the data collected at sea.

In 2020, due to the Covid19 pandemic, no observers could go onboard the Clients' vessels (see **Sections 4.2.7.1** and **4.2.7.2**), therefore, there are no data available from observers for that year. Moreover, the only fleet that recorded interactions with ETPs in their logbooks in 2019 and 2020 was the Cantabrian fleet. However, as this is a key issue for which is mandatory to get data to comply with MSC requirements to properly assess PI 2.3.X and as there already was an open condition in the initial assessment, the assessment team will closely monitor this issue during the next surveillance audit and if no improvements are observed (i.e., no data from observers are available or no interactions with ETPs are recorded in the fleet logbooks), a condition will be raised.

Recommendation #2

During the current surveillance, and despite having requested it several times:

- (i) No data were obtained from CERCOASTUR (i.e., one of the clients),
- (ii) Information on infractions from the Subdirección General de Vigilancia y Lucha contra la Pesca Ilegal from the Secretaría General de Pesca (i.e., the Spanish administration), was received late and could not be used for the current assessment,
- (iii) Only data from the Basque country autonomous region was received.

The assessment team, therefore, has decided to open a recommendation for both, Clients and Stakeholders, to send the requested information in due time. This will be closely monitored during the next surveillance audit, and if this issue persists, a condition / conditions will be raised.

5.2 Re-scoring Performance Indicators

Changes made to the PCR rationales are identified by adding text in **blue**, while outdated parts of the PCR rationales are **crossed-out**.

Evaluation Table for PI 2.1.1 – Primary species outcome

PI 2.1.1		The UoA aims to maintain primary species above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI) and does not hinder recovery of primary species if they are below the PRI		
Scoring Issue		SG 60	SG 80	SG 100
a	Main primary species stock status			
	Guide post	Main primary species are likely to be above the PRI. OR If the species is below the PRI, the UoA has measures in place that are expected to ensure that the UoA does not hinder recovery and rebuilding.	Main primary species are highly likely to be above the PRI. OR If the species is below the PRI, there is either evidence of recovery or a demonstrably effective strategy in place between all MSC UoAs which categorise this species as main , to ensure that they collectively do not hinder recovery and rebuilding.	There is a high degree of certainty that main primary species are above the PRI and are fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY.
	Met?	Yes	Yes	No
Rationale				

The seine fishery under certification targets a variety of species during the year depending on the season and area: *Sardina pilchardus*, *Engraulis encrasicolus*, *Trachurus trachurus*, *Scomber colias*, *Scomber scombrus*, with all of these species usually representing over 5% of the total landings of this fishery per year (2016-2018) (Table 7.3.1.4.1). However, when the vessels are targeting anchovy (corresponding to an average of 91.77% of landings in 2016-2018), the main retained species are: *Scomber scombrus* (3.32%), *Sardina pilchardus* (2.88%), *Scomber colias* (0.63%) and *Trachurus trachurus* (0.58%) (Table 7.3.1.4.1).

According to MSC Fisheries Standard SA3.4.2, species accounting ≥5% in weight (or 2% in the case of less resilient species) of the total catch are considered ‘Main’, therefore, the only **main primary species** in the by-catch is identified as mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*) (Tables 7.3.1.4.1 and 7.3.1.5.1).

As mentioned in Section 7.3.1.5.1, there is no evidence of a significant reduction in recruitment at low SSB within the time series for mackerel (ICES, 2019b). The most recent re-examination of reference points at the benchmark assessment in 2017 concluded that the previous basis for the biomass limit level, B_{loss} , the lowest SSB in the time series, remained valid. The re-evaluation of the time series for SSB at that benchmark assessment revised the biomass limit reference point to 1.94 million tonnes based on the estimate of SSB in 2002. The biomass limit level was re-visited at the inter-benchmark meeting in 2019 and changed to 1.99 million t based on B_{loss} in 2003 (ICES, 2019c).

The estimate of SSB at spawning time in ~~2017~~ 2018 from the ~~inter-benchmark~~ assessment in 2019 was ~~4,387,307~~ 4,279,185 t (+5,423,622 5,435,312 t / -3,549,005 3,368,975 t) (ICES, 2019a). The SSB estimate is well above the biomass limit level, B_{lim} , and above the revised biomass precautionary approach, B_{pa} , reference point (2.5 Mt). This B_{pa} reference point is set at a level with a high probability of the stock being above B_{lim} . The lower 95% probability estimate of SSB in ~~2017~~ 2018 was ~~3,549,005~~ 3,368,975

t. Therefore, it is highly likely (>80% probability) that the SSB is currently above the point where recruitment might be impaired. **SG60 and SG80 are, therefore, met.**

The lower confidence level estimate of SSB (2.5th percentile) of ~~3,549,005~~ **3,368,975** t is well above the biomass limit level 1.99 million t and there is therefore a high degree of certainty (95% probability) that SSB is above the point of recruitment impairment.

ICES does not define B_{MSY} as a reference point for this stock, MSC guidelines (SA 2.2.4) state that fishing mortality should be used as a proxy i.e., B_{MSY} can assume to be achieved through consistent maintenance of F at or below F_{MSY} (F 0.23 for this stock).

Fishing mortality in ~~2017~~ **2018** was estimated at F ~~0.287~~ **0.24** (95%p ~~0.225~~ **0.182** – ~~0.366~~ **0.31**). Fishing mortality has ranged between F ~~0.28~~ **0.24** and F 0.40 over the past ~~twenty~~ **thirty** years (mean: F ~~0.32~~ **0.30**) but with the SSB steadily increasing since 2006 (Figure 4.2.7.4.1). It is clear for this stock that fishing mortality has been above F_{MSY} (F0.23) since 1986 (ICES, 2019a). Therefore, there is not a high degree of certainty that the stock has been fluctuating around its target reference point or has been above it over recent years, therefore, **SG100 is not met.**

Minor primary species stock status			
b	Guide post		Minor primary species are highly likely to be above the PRI. OR If below the PRI, there is evidence that the UoA does not hinder the recovery and rebuilding of minor primary species.
	Met?		Sardine BoB: Yes Sardine lb: No Yes Horse mackerel: No Hake: Yes No Blue whiting: Yes Bluefin tuna: Yes Blue shark: Yes Shortfin mako: Yes
Rationale			

Pilchard/Sardine in Bay of Biscay (8.a–b and 8.d) (ICES, ~~2018b~~ **2020a**): The stock is assessed annually by ICES and found at the most recent assessment from ~~2018~~ **published in December 2020** to be well above B_{lim} . An aged-based assessment, using Stock Synthesis 3 (SS3) model has been carried out for this stock. Stock biomass has never been below $MSY B_{trigger}$ and in ~~2017~~ **2018** it was estimated to be ~~24%~~ **30%** above $MSY B_{trigger}$. As $MSY B_{trigger}$ is defined as the biomass where there is a 5% chance of recruitment impairment, then **SG 100 is met.**

Iberian Pilchard/Sardine (8.c – 9.a) (ICES, 2018c): The stock is assessed annually by ICES and found at the most recent assessment from 2018 to be below B_{lim} , (at reduced reproductive capacity). The management plan is not precautionary and there is no evidence that the UoA is not hindering recovery. **SG100 is not met.**

Iberian Pilchard/Sardine (8.c – 9.a) (ICES, 2021b): The stock is assessed annually by ICES and found at the most recent assessment from 2021 to be above $MSY B_{trigger}$, B_{pa} and B_{lim} (Figure 4.2.7.4.3). Moreover, ICES evaluated an HCR that is proposed to be part of a management plan for 2021–2026 and found it be precautionary with maximum allowed catches between 30 000 and 50 000 tonnes (ICES, 2021a). For 2021, the European Commission requested ICES to provide advice based on the MSY approach and include the HCR in other catch scenarios. Therefore, **SG100 is met.**

Horse mackerel in the Northeast Atlantic (ICES, ~~2018d~~ **2021c**): The stock is assessed annually by ICES and found at the most recent assessment from ~~2018~~ **2021** to be at B_{lim} **below $MSY B_{trigger}$ and between B_{pa} and B_{lim}** , i.e., there is no high degree of certainty that the stock is above the PRI reference point (B_{lim}). The fishery in Subarea 8 is about 25% of the total catch of this horse mackerel stock and ~~the proposed management plan is not found to be precautionary~~ **ICES is not aware of any agreed precautionary management plan for horse mackerel in this area.** The stock is showing large variation between years in year-class strength, the

stock is currently increasing. Even so, with the existing management on this stock it is not found that there is evidence that the UoA is not hindering recovery. **SG100 is not met.**

Hake in Cantabrian Sea and Atlantic Iberian waters (8.c and 9.a) (ICES, 2018e): The stock is assessed annually by ICES which found at the most recent assessment from 2018 to be above $MSY_{B_{trigger}}$, B_{pa} , and B_{lim} . As $MSY_{B_{trigger}}$ is defined as the biomass where there is a 5% chance of recruitment impairment, then **SG 100 is met.**

Hake in Cantabrian Sea and Atlantic Iberian waters (8.c and 9.a) (ICES, 2021d): The stock is assessed annually by ICES. Since 2020, because of a strong retrospective pattern in the GADGET length-based model, the basis for the advice has changed from category 1 to category 3 (ICES, 2012) using the ICES precautionary approach (ICES, 2020d). As no reference points are defined for this category 3 assessment, ICES cannot assess the stock and exploitation status relative to maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and precautionary approach (PA) reference points (ICES, 2020; 2021d) (Figure 4.2.7.4.5). Therefore, as the team cannot know the status, **SG 100 is not met.**

Northeast Atlantic Blue whiting (1–9, 12, and 14) (ICES, 2018f–2020c): The stock is assessed annually by ICES which found that the spawning-stock size is above $MSY_{B_{trigger}}$ and above B_{pa} and B_{lim} , even though it has been decreasing since 2018, it is estimated to remain above $MSY_{B_{trigger}}$ and above B_{pa} and B_{lim} . As $MSY_{B_{trigger}}$ is defined as the biomass where there is a 5% chance of recruitment impairment, then **SG 100 is met.**

East Atlantic and Mediterranean Bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) (ICCAT, 2019a–2020): The latest assessment (from 2017) indicated that the spawning stock biomass (SSB) peaked in the mid-1970s after increasing initially and then declined until 1991 and remained steady up to the mid-2000s. From the late 2000s, SSB exhibited a substantial increase through 2015. The extent of that increase depends on the choices of model configuration and the indices of abundance and terminal year (2014 vs 2015). This led to some concern that the model was very sensitive to adding one additional year of data (i.e. the estimating of a substantial overall increase in biomass with the addition of only the last year of data). However, compared to 2014 the extra data now available do better confirm recent stock increase though the level of increase remains difficult to quantify. The current status of the stock, and status in 2022 under a $F_{0.1}$ strategy, relative to $B_{0.1}$ depends on assumptions made for longer term future recruitment. For medium and low recruitment levels (averages taken over the years 1968–1980/1968–2012/1990–2005, for the low, medium and high scenarios, respectively), the stock is already above $B_{0.1}$, whereas for the high level it is below. An update assessment was carried out for the East Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna stock in 2020 (ICCAT, 2020). Based on this update, the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna biomass reaches 873,000 t in 2018, which is the highest estimate ever and 30% above the maximum in the 1970s. The ASAP model estimated stock biomass to be 583,000 t in 2018. However, the uncertainty regarding the magnitude of the recent SSB increase estimated by the VPA is even higher than in the 2017 VPA assessment due to considerable instability in the recruitment estimates. Recruitment shows an antagonistic pattern between assessments years, being high in recent years but decreasing in 2018 in the 2000 assessment, while the opposite is true for the 2017 assessment (Figure 7.3.1.8). At the end, the SRCS concluded that the VPA models tested were not sufficiently reliable to be used as the basis for management advice. However, the available data do clearly indicate that the biomass of the East Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna has increased since the late 2000s, is high at present, and that there are no concerns that overfishing may be occurring under the current TAC (36,000 t in 2020; ICCAT, 2020). However, moreover, as bluefin tuna is not one of the species landed or retained by the Basque, Galician or Cantabrian fleet (Tables 7.3.1.4.1 - 7.3.1.4.4 from the PCR), and it only appeared in < 0.05% of the total catch in the data from the Basque and Galician fleet taken by observers and it was always discarded (Table 7.3.1.4.2 from the PCR), the UoA is not found to hinder recovery of the stock. Thus, **SG100 is met.**

North Atlantic Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) (ICCAT, 2015): The North Atlantic Blue shark stock was assessed by ICCAT in 2015 using two different approaches: Bayesian Surplus Production Model (BSPM) and length-based age-structured models: Stock Synthesis (SS3). Both models suggested sustainable spawning stock size and fishing mortality rates relative to maximum sustainable yield. Therefore, **SG100 is met.**

North Atlantic Shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) (ICCAT, 2019b): The North Atlantic Shortfin mako stock was assessed by ICCAT in 2019 using several methods: Production models (BSP, JABBA), other models (CMSY), and Stock Synthesis models. The combined probability from all the models of being in an overfished state while still experiencing overfishing was 90%. The models agree that the northern stock was overfished and was undergoing overfishing. However, when reported in the Basque and Galician fleet (see Table 7.3.1.4.2), it was discarded and representing only 0.001% of the total catch, therefore the UoA is not found to hinder the recovery of the stock. Thus, **SG100 is met.**

References

- ◆ ICCAT, 2015
- ◆ ICCAT, 2019a

- ◆ ICCAT, 2019b
- ◆ ~~ICES, 2018b~~
- ◆ ~~ICES, 2018c~~
- ◆ ~~ICES, 2018d~~
- ◆ ~~ICES, 2018e~~
- ◆ ~~ICES, 2018f~~
- ◆ ICES, 2019a
- ◆ ICES, 2019b
- ◆ ICES, 2019c
- ◆ ICES, 2020c
- ◆ ICES, 2021a
- ◆ ICES, 2021b
- ◆ ICES, 2021c

Overall Performance Indicator score	95 (see Scoring Calculation below)
Condition number (if relevant)	N/A

PI 2.1.1 – Scoring Calculation for each scoring element.

The Combining scoring per elements set out in Table 4 was used to determine the PI score. All elements meet SG80; most achieve higher performance at SG100, and only a few fail to achieve SG100.

Main/Minor	Species	Sl a	Sl b	Element score	PI score
Main	Mackerel	80	N/A	80	95
Minor	Sardine Bay of Biscay	N/A	100	100	
Minor	Iberian Sardine	N/A	80 100	80	
Minor	Horse Mackerel	N/A	80	80	
Minor	Hake	N/A	100 80	100	
Minor	Blue whiting	N/A	100	100	
Minor	Bluefin tuna	N/A	100	100	
Minor	Blue shark	N/A	100	100	
Minor	Shortfin mako	N/A	100	100	

5.3 Conditions

5.3.1 Closed Conditions

All the conditions previously raised were assessed and closed during the first certification cycle. No conditions are opened at the time of this 1st Surveillance audit.

5.3.2 Progress against conditions

There are no conditions opened to assess their progress.

5.4 Client Action Plan

As there are no conditions opened in the Cantabrian Sea Purse seine anchovy fishery, no Client Action Plan was required from the clients.

6 References

- Arregi, L., Onandia, I., Ferarios, J.M., Ruiz, J., Basurko, O.C., 2014. Assessing fish survival from slipping in purse seine fisheries of European southern waters. AZTITecnalia, Sukarrieta 44 pp.
- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1394/2014 of 20 October 2014 establishing a discard plan for certain pelagic fisheries in south-western waters. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32014R1394>
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 185/2013 of 5 March 2013 providing for deductions from certain fishing quotas allocated to Spain in 2013 and subsequent years on account of overfishing of a certain mackerel quota in 2009. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013R0185>
- Council Regulation (EC) No 847/96 of 6 May 1996 introducing additional conditions for year-to-year management of TACs and quotas. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31996R0847>
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7 Appendices

7.1 Evaluation processes and techniques

7.1.1 Site visits

Notification of the first surveillance audit of the second cycle of certification for the Cantabrian Sea purse seine fishery was published on the MSC website on 20th September 2021. In addition, stakeholders were contacted via e-mail. This first surveillance audit of the second period of certification took place on-site the 27-28 of October. The assessment team for this first surveillance was comprised by 4 auditors.

BV sent emails to a comprehensive list of relevant stakeholders informing them about the on-site visit and encouraging them to send written comments to the team by using the template provided by MSC for stakeholder input. The email was sent to 61 different contacts, including management bodies (MAPAMA, regional Authorities, CC-Sur), fishing companies and representatives (OPEGUI, OPESCAYA, OPESCANTABRICO), research centres (AZTI, IEO,) and NGOs (Greenpeace, Oceana, WWF Spain, Ecologistas en Acción, Seo-Birdlife).

All meetings were held normally and according to the planned schedule (**Table 7.1.1**).

The P1 expert, Giuseppe Scarcella, took part in the surveillance audit remotely via Teams. The audit consisted mainly in 7 meetings, 4 of them face-to-face meeting with the clients, AZTI and Vice-Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Policy of the Basque Government representatives and 3 remotely from OPEGUI's office via Teams with IEO, SGP and Directorate-General for Fisheries of the Principality of Asturias representatives. During all the meetings that took place in the morning, Alberto Martín from MSC attended as an observer.

Table 7.1.1 Details of the meetings held during the visit for the 1SA audit of the Cantabrian sea purse seine anchovy fishery.

Date	Local time	Place/address	Attendees (Institution/Organization)	Topics
26 th October	<i>Arrival of assessment team to Bilbao</i>			
	<i>1 h drive from Bilbao airport to hotel in San Sebastián</i>			
27 th October	<i>15' drive from hotel in San Sebastián to OPEGUI's office</i>			
	10:00- 12:00	<i>OPEGUI's office Zuatzu calle, Ullia edificio 4, 20018 Donostia-San Sebastián (Guipúzcoa)</i>	Meeting with SGP de Vigilancia y Lucha Contra la Pesca ilegal and SGP de Caladero Nacional y Aguas de la Unión Europea (Remote) - Noemi Corredor Mungia - Carlos Chamizo	See below
	12:00 a 14:00	<i>OPEGUI's office</i>	Meeting with client (partially remote): - Miren Garmendia (Director of OPEGUI) and representative of OPESCAYA) - Aurelio Bilbao (Director of the Organización de productores de Vizcaya (OPESCAYA) and President of CC-Sur) - Eusebio Arantzamendi (President of OPESCAYA) - Enrique Paz (Secretary of the Federación de Cofradías de Pescadores de Cantabria (OPACAN) - Carlos Gutierrez Pedrajo (Representative of OPACAN) - Rafael Rodríguez González (CERCOASTUR)	See below
	14:00 a 15:30	Lunch		
	<i>30' drive from OPEGUI's office to AZTI's office</i>			
16:00 a 18:00	<i>AZTI's office– Herrera Kaia, Portualdea z/g 20110 Pasaia - Gipuzkoa</i>	Meeting with AZTI: - Andrés Uriarte (Senior Researcher - Sustainable Fisheries Management; member of the	See below	

			WGHANSA (Southern Horse Mackerel, Anchovy and Sardine)	
	30' drive from OPEGUI's office to hotel in San Sebastian			
	18:30 a 19:30	Assessment team meeting (partially remote)		
28 th October	15' drive from hotel in San Sebastian to OPEGUI's			
	10:00 a 12:00	OPEGUI's office	Meeting with IEO (remote): - Francisco Velasco (Researcher and representative of ACOM in ICES) - Carmen Hernández (Researcher)	See below
	12:00 a 13:00	OPEGUI's office	Meeting with Vice-Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Policy of the Basque Government - Leandro Azcue (Director of Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Basque Government).	See below
	13:00 a 14:00	OPEGUI's office	Meeting with Directorate-General for Fisheries of the Principality of Asturias r (remote) - Francisco J. González Rodríguez (General Director Fisheries of the Principality of Asturias)	See below
	14:00 a 16:00	Lunch		
	16:00 a 17:00	OPEGUI's office	Close meeting with client (partially remote): - Miren Garmendia (Director of OPEGUI) and representative of OPESCAYA) - Aurelio Bilbao (director of the Organización de productores de Vizcaya (OPESCAYA) and President of CC-Sur) - Eusebio Arantzamendi (President of OPESCAYA) - Carlos Gutierrez Pedrajo (Representative of OPACAN) - Rafael Rodríguez González (CERCOASTUR)	See below
	17:00 a 18:00	Assessment team meeting (partially remote)		
	1h drive from OPEGUI's office to hotel in Bilbao			
29 th October	30' drive from hotel in Bilbao to Airport of Bilbao			
	Assessment team flying back home			

7.1.2 Stakeholder participation

The site visit for the current surveillance audit was announced on the MSC website on the 20th of September 2021 (<https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/cantabrian-sea-purse-seine-anchovy-fishery/@@assessments>).

In addition, the notification of the surveillance audit was sent to a list of stakeholders identified during the initial assessment and revised before current surveillance audit. This list included up to 61 different contacts from management institutions (MAPA, regional Authorities, CCR Sur), fishing companies and representatives (OPEGUI, OPESCAYA, OPESCANTABRICO), research centres (AZTI, IEO,) and NGOs (Greenpeace, Oceana, WWF Spain, Ecologistas en Acción, Seo-Birdlife).

After the publication of the announcement all these stakeholders were contacted via e-mail and were encouraged to participate in the site visit and also to provide feedback to the assessment team.

The team elaborated a final list of key stakeholders to be interviewed during the site visit which were again contacted via email and telephoned in order to ensure their participation and arrange the meetings. The list of institutions and people finally interviewed during the site visit is detailed above in **Table 7.1.1**.

7.2 Stakeholder input

The stakeholder input was restricted to the information collected during the meetings held and the documents sent by the stakeholders as a result of the requests made by the team during those meetings. All the stakeholders were informed that if the CAB and any participant at the site visit agree in writing that information will be made available after the site visit, the CAB shall accept this information up to 30 days after the last day of the site visit (FCP 7.17.1.1a). No other stakeholder inputs were received by email using the MSC template provided.

Table 7.2.1 presents the main topics discussed with the stakeholders during the meetings. All relevant information collected on updates or modifications affecting the fishery is summarized in **section 4** of the current report, while harmonisation activities with overlapping fisheries are presented in **Appendix 7.4**. All documents used for the assessment are listed in **Section 6** (References).

Table 7.2.1. Details of the main topics discussed during the remote visit carried out as part of the current surveillance audit

Stakeholder	Topics discussed
Client	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvements in terms of consistency, homogeneity and quality of data collected at sea made since 2019 and specifically in the identification of ray species. - Electronic monitoring data. - Catches since 2018. - Information on discards, unwanted catches (including reasons for discarding) and post release survival. - Code of Conduct updates. - Fleet activity maps from 2018 - Participation of fishermen in decision-making processes and research on the status of the resource since 2018. - Level of compliance of the fleet (application of de minimis exemption). Record of slippage after 2018. - Changes in the vessel list. TACs and quota allocation. - New resolutions and decisions of the CC-Sud Working Group.
SGP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fleet activity maps. - Evolution of catches, use of quotas and precautionary management measures used in recent years (closure of the fishery, quota modifications, etc). - Compliance with the de minimis exemption (1% anchovy) and extension after 2020. - Modifications in decision-making mechanisms and stakeholders consulted. - Modifications in fleet inspection and control mechanisms. - Level of fleet compliance, number of infringements, causes and sanctions imposed, since 2018. - Status of the anchovy management plan, objectives and results (expected to be implemented). - Revisions made to the management plan and mechanisms.
AZTI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes in the stock assessment data and models. - Changes in stock status. - Next external review of the ICES anchovy assessment/model. - Catch composition data from 2019 (Basque, Cantabrian and Galician fleet) and Asturian from 2019. - Improvement in reporting of discard exemptions. - Changes in fishing practices to reduce discards. - Data on discards from at-sea monitoring programmes. - New information on Habitats, VMEs, stocks, MPAs in the Bay of Biscay. - New information on the trophic role of anchovy. - Percentage of observer or camera coverage in 2019, 2020 and if available 2021. - Changes in AZTI's participation and representation in ICES in relation to this fishery. - Meetings in which AZTI has participated. - Evolution of the scientific model for monitoring the fishery (campaigns, methodologies, cooperation with IFREMER, IEO, etc.). - Implementation of the Landing Obligation since 2018.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modifications in the evaluation mechanisms of the management plans.
IEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes in the stock assessment data and models. - Changes in stock status. - Next external review of the ICES anchovy assessment/model. - Catch composition data from 2019. - Improvement in reporting of discard exemptions. - Changes in fishing practices to reduce discards. - Data on discards from at-sea monitoring programmes. - New information on Habitats, VMEs, stocks, MPAs in the Bay of Biscay. - New information on the trophic role of the anchovy. - Percentage of observer or camera coverage in 2019, 2020 and if available 2021. - Changes in IEO participation and representation in ICES in relation to this fishery. Meetings in which the IEO has participated. - Evolution of the scientific model for monitoring the fishery (campaigns, methodologies, cooperation with IFREMER, AZTI, etc.). - Implementation of the Landing Obligation. - Modifications in the evaluation mechanisms of the management plans.
Basque administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting of infringements and sanctioning process. - Participation of the Cantabrian Administration in the decision-making process. - Possible modifications in the regulations affecting fisheries.
Cantabria administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting of infringements and sanctioning process. - Participation of the Cantabrian Administration in the decision-making process. - Possible modifications in the regulations affecting fisheries.

7.3 Revised surveillance program

The PCR of the reassessment stated in accordance with FCP 7.28.6, that since the fishery was facing its second certification period without any conditions, it was eligible for a reduction in the surveillance level and the number of team members.

According to the PCR report of the second certification period, BV determined that surveillance audits shall take place according to level 4 indicated in Table 5 MSC FCP v2.2 (**Table 7.3.1**). Besides, in accordance with FCP 7.28.6.2 BV proposed that a reduced team of 1 auditor could be used during the first three surveillance audits (**Table 7.3.3**). Despite this, the assessment team will consider the number of auditors needed in the next surveillances due to the new recommendations opened.

Table 7.3.1 – Fishery surveillance program

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

Table 7.3.2 – Timing of surveillance audit

Year	Anniversary date of certificate	Proposed date of surveillance audit	Justification
2, 3 & 4	19th October	Within 30 days prior to the anniversary date of the certificate.	N/A

Table 7.3.3 – Surveillance level justification

Year	Surveillance activity	Number of auditors	Justification
2	Off-site audit	1 auditor	In accordance with FCP 7.28.6.2 the CAB proposed in PCR of recertification that a reduced team of 1 auditor can be used during the first three surveillance audits.
3	On-site audit	1 auditor	In accordance with FCP 7.28.6.2 the CAB proposed in PCR of recertification that a reduced team of 1 auditor can be used during the first three surveillance audits.
4	Off-site audit	3 auditors	In accordance with FCP 7.28.6.2 the CAB proposed in PCR of recertification that a reduced team of 1 auditor can be used during the first three surveillance audits.

7.4 Harmonised fishery assessments

There are no other MSC-certified or under assessment fisheries targeting the same stock. In addition, the MSC-certified or under assessment fisheries using purse seine in the Northeast Atlantic are not in the same area, i.e., in the North Sea, Baltic Sea or Iceland and targeting mackerel, herring, sprat, haddock, hake, or saithe. The only fishery that is closer, is from Cornwall (UK) targeting sardine.

As the assessed fishery is managed by the EU, and in application of FCP 7.7.2, the assessment of P3 has taken into account other EU-Spanish fisheries, i.e., the North Atlantic albacore artisanal fishery and the Bay of Biscay purse seine sardine fishery (which is currently suspended, but due to the assessment of P1 and not that of P3).