IFFO RS V2.0

FISHERY ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND TEMPLATE REPORT

Fishery Under Assessment	**Saithe (*Pollachius virens*)**
Date	**November 2017**
Assessor	**Deirdre Hoare**

IFFO RS Ltd, Unit C, Printworks, 22 Amelia Street, London, SE17 3BZ, United Kingdom

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome				
Name:				
Address:				
Country: Norway		**Zip:**		
Tel. No.		**Fax. No.**		
Email address:		**Applicant Code**		
Key Contact:		**Title:**		
Certification Body Details				
Name of Certification Body:		**SAI Global Ireland**		
Assessor Name	**Peer Reviewer**	**Assessment Days**	**Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval**	**Whole fish / By-product**
Deirdre Hoare	Conor Donnelly	1	Surveillance	By-product
Assessment Period	2016-2017			
Scope Details				
Management Authority (Country/State)	Norway			
Main Species	Saithe (*Pollachius virens*)			
Fishery Location	Northeast Atlantic			
Gear Type(s)	Primarily bottom-trawl; also gill-net, longline, purse-seine			
Outcome of Assessment				
Overall Outcome	Pass			
Clauses Failed	None			
Peer Review Evaluation	Maintain approval			
Recommendation	Maintain approval			

Assessment Determination
There is a robust fishery management framework in Norway which is applied specifically to the saithe stocks in the assessment area, although there is some evidence that several stocks are outside the reference points. Management is supported by species-specific data collection and stock assessment. The IUCN has not categorised *Pollachius virens*, and it does not appear in the CITES appendices. There are around 12 saithe fisheries in the Northeast Atlantic which have been certified against the MSC standard. The assessment team recommends approving this byproduct material against the IFFO RS standard.
Peer Review Comments
Notes for On-site Auditor

General Results

General Clause	Outcome (Pass/Fail)
M1 - Management Framework	NA
M2 - Surveillance, Control and Enforcement	NA
F1 - Impacts on ETP Species	NA
F2 - Impacts on Habitats	NA
F3 - Ecosystem Impacts	NA

Note: This table should be completed for whole fish assessments only.

Species-Specific Results

Category	Species	% landings	Outcome (Pass/Fail)	
Category A			A1	
			A2	
			A3	
			A4	
Category B				
Category C	Saithe	NA	Pass	
Category D				

[List all Category A and B species. List approximate total %age of landings which are Category C and D species; these do not need to be individually named here]

HOW TO COMPLETE THIS ASSESSMENT REPORT

This assessment template uses a modular approach to assessing fisheries against the IFFO RS standard.

By-products

The process for completing the template for **by-product raw material** is as follows:

1. ALL ASSESSMENTS: Complete the Species Characterisation table with the names of the by-product species and stocks under assessment. The '% landings' column can be left empty; all by-products are considered as Category C and D.

2. IF THERE ARE CATEGORY C BYPRODUCTS UNDER ASSESSMENT: Complete clause C1 for **each** Category C by-product.

3. IF THERE ARE CATEGORY D BYPRODUCTS UNDER ASSESSMENT: Complete Section D.

4. ALL OTHER SECTIONS CAN BE DELETED. Clauses M1 - M3, F1 - F3, and Sections A and B do not need to be completed for a by-product assessment.

By-product approval is awarded on a species-by-species basis. Each by-product species scoring a pass under the appropriate section may be approved against the IFFO RS Standard.

SPECIES CATEGORISATION

The following table should be completed as fully as the available information permits. All species regularly* caught in the fishery should be listed along with an estimate of the proportion of the catch each species represents. The species should then be divided into Type 1 and Type 2. **Type 1 species must represent 95% of the total catch. Type 2 species may represent a maximum of 5% of the catch (see Appendix B)**.

*Species which make up less than 0.1% of landings do not need to be listed (NOTE: ETP species are considered separately). The table should be extended if more space is needed. Discarded species should be included when known.

The 'stock' column should be used to differentiate when there are multiple biological or management stocks of one species captured by the fishery. The 'management' column should be used to indicate whether there is an adequate management regime specifically aimed at the individual species/stock. In some cases it will be immediately clear whether there is a species-specific management regime in place (for example, if there is an annual TAC). In less clear circumstances, the rule of thumb should be that if the species meets the minimum requirements of clauses A1-A4, an adequate species-specific management regime is in place.

NOTE: If any species is categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List, or if it appears in the CITES appendices, it **cannot** be approved for use as an IFFO RS raw material. This applied to whole fish as well as by-products.

TYPE 1 SPECIES (Representing 95% of the catch or more)

Category A: Species-specific management regime in place.

Category B: No species-specific management regime in place.

TYPE 2 SPECIES (Representing 5% OF THE CATCH OR LESS)

Category C: Species-specific management regime in place.

Category D: No species-specific management regime in place.

Common name	Latin name	Stock	% of landings	Management	Category
Saithe	*Pollachius virens*	North East Atlantic	NA	Norway	C

Category A species are assessed through an examination of the data collection, stock assessment, management measures, and stock status relating to the species. Category B species are assessed using a risk-based assessment covering similar areas. Category C species are assessed on stock status only. Category D species are assessed using a PSA analysis as described in the relevant section of this document.

CATEGORY C SPECIES

In a whole fish assessment, Category C species are those which make up less than 5% of landings, but which are subject to a species-specific management regime. In most cases this will be because they are a commercial target in a fishery other than the one under assessment. In a by-product assessment, Category C species are those which are subject to a species-specific management regime, and are usually targeted species in fisheries for human consumption.

Clause C1 should be completed for **each** Category C species. If there are no Category C species in the fishery under assessment, this section can be deleted. A Category C species does not meet the minimum requirements of clause C1 should be re-assessed as a Category D species.

Species Name		Saithe *Pollachius virens*	
C1	**Category C Stock Status - Minimum Requirements**		
	C1.1	Fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process, OR are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.	Yes
	C1.2	The species is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy), OR removals by the fishery under assessment are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.	Yes
		Clause outcome:	Pass

Evidence

Saithe (Pollachius virens) in subareas 4 and 6, and in Division 3.a (North Sea, Rockall and West of Scotland, Skagerrak and Kattegat)

Fishery removals of saithe are included in the stock assessment process, input data includes commercial catches (international landings, BMS landings, and discards, age and length frequencies from catch sampling); survey index (IBTS Q3, ages 3–8); combined commercial index scaled to the exploitable biomass (French, German, Norwegian trawler fleets). Maturity-at-age and natural mortality are assumed to be constant. Stock weights are catch weights.

Recruitment (R) has fluctuated over time and has generally been below the long-term average since 2003. Fishing mortality (F) has been below FMSY since 2013. Spawning–stock biomass (SSB) has fluctuated without trend and has been above MSY Btrigger since 1996.

Saithe (Pollachius virens) in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds)

Fishery removals of saithe are included in the stock assessment process, input data includes commercial catches (mainly Faroese catches, ages and length frequencies from catch sampling); Faroese bottom-trawl surveys FO-GFS-Q1 and FO-GFS-Q3; annual maturity data from FO-GFS-Q1; natural mortalities set at M = 0.2.

The spawning-stock biomass (SSB) was below MSY Btrigger from 2011 to 2015, but is estimated to be above MSY Btrigger in 2016 and 2017. Estimated recruitment has been well above the long-term average since 2015. Fishing mortality (F) has been above FMSY since 1981.

Saithe (Pollachius virens) in Division 5.a (Iceland grounds)

Fishery removals of saithe are included in the stock assessment process, input data includes catch-at-age and age-disaggregated abundance indices from the spring groundfish survey.

The spawning-stock biomass (SSB) has been above MSY Btrigger since 1998 and is currently near the time-series maximum. The harvest rate (HR) has declined from 2009 and is presently below HRMSY. Recruitment (R) has been fluctuating and the average of the year classes 2006–2012 is estimated to be well above the average seen since

1980. The reference biomass (B4+) has increased since 2015 due to the 2012 year class, that is estimated to be strong.

References

ICES 2017 Saithe (Pollachius virens) in subareas 4 and 6, and in Division 3.a (North Sea, Rockall and West of Scotland, Skagerrak and Kattegat)
http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2017/2017/pok.27.3a46.pdf

Saithe (Pollachius virens) in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds)
http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2017/2017/pok.27.5b.pdf

Saithe (Pollachius virens) in Division 5.a (Iceland grounds)

http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2017/2017/pok.27.5a.pdf

Standard clauses 1.3.2.1 - 1.3.2.4

SOCIAL CRITERION

In addition to the scored criteria listed above, applicants must commit to ensuring that vessels operating in the fishery adhere to internationally recognised guidance on human rights. They must also commit to ensuring there is no use of enforced or unpaid labour in the fleet(s) operating upon the resource.

Appendix A - Determining Resilience Ratings

The assessment of Category B species described in this assessment report template utilises a resilience rating system suggested by the American Fisheries Society. This approach was chosen because it is also used by FishBase, and so the resilience ratings for many thousands of species are freely available online. As described by FishBase, the following is the process used to arrive at the resilience ratings:

"*The American Fisheries Society (AFS) has suggested values for several biological parameters that allow classification of a fish population or species into categories of high, medium, low and very low resilience or productivity (Musick 1999). If no reliable estimate of r_m (see below) is available, the assignment is to the lowest category for which any of the available parameters fits. For each of these categories, AFS has suggested thresholds for decline over the longer of 10 years or three generations. If an observed decline measured in biomass or numbers of mature individuals exceeds the indicated threshold value, the population or species is considered vulnerable to extinction unless explicitly shown otherwise. If one sex strongly limits the reproductive capacity of the species or population, then only the decline in the limiting sex should be considered. We decided to restrict the automatic assignment of resilience categories in the Key Facts page to values of K, t_m and t_{max} and those records of fecundity estimates that referred to minimum number of eggs or pups per female per year, assuming that these were equivalent to average fecundity at first maturity (Musick 1999). Note that many small fishes may spawn several times per year (we exclude these for the time being) and large live bearers such as the coelacanth may have gestation periods of more than one year (we corrected fecundity estimates for those cases reported in the literature). Also, we excluded resilience estimates based on r_m (see below) as we are not yet confident with the reliability of the current method for estimating rm. If users have independent r_m or fecundity estimates, they can refer to Table 1 for using this information*."

Parameter	High	Medium	Low	Very low
Threshold	0.99	0.95	0.85	0.70
r_{max} (1/year)	> 0.5	0.16 - 0.50	0.05 - 0.15	< 0.05
K (1/year)	> 0.3	0.16 - 0.30	0.05 - 0.15	< 0.05
Fecundity (1/year)	> 10,000	100 - 1000	10 - 100	< 10
t_m (years)	< 1	2 - 4	5 - 10	> 10
t_{max} (years)	1 - 3	4 - 10	11 - 30	> 30

[Taken from the FishBase manual, "Estimation of Life-History Key Facts", http://www.fishbase.us/manual/English/key%20facts.htm#resilience]

Appendix B – Background on the 5% catch rule

The proposed fishery assessment methodology uses a species categorisation approach to divide the catch in the assessment fishery into groups. These groups are:

- **Category A:** "Target" species with a species-specific management regime in place.
- **Category B:** "Target" species with no species-specific management regime in place.
- **Category C:** "Non-target" species with a species-specific management regime in place.
- **Category D:** "Non-target" species with no species-specific management regime in place

The distinction between 'target' and 'non-target' species is made to enable the assessment to consider the impact of the fishery on all the species caught regularly, without requiring a full assessment be conducted for each. Thus 'target' species are subjected to a more detailed assessment, while 'non-target' species are considered more briefly. For the purposes of the IFFO RS fishery assessment, 'target' and 'non-target' species are defined by their prevalence in the catch, by weight. Applicants must declare which species are considered 'target' species in the fishery, and the combined weight of these must be at least 95% of the annual catch. The remaining 5% can be made up of 'non-target' species. Note also that ETP species are considered separately, irrespective of their frequency of occurrence in the catch.

The proposed use of 5% as a limit for 'non-target' species is one area in which feedback is being sought via the public consultation. The decision to propose a value of 5% ensures consistency with other fishery assessment programmes, such as the MSC which uses 5% to distinguish between 'main' and 'minor' species (see MSC Standard, SA3.4 and GSA3.4.2); and Seafood Watch, which uses 5% when defining the 'main' species for the assessment (see Seafood Watch Standard, Criterion 2). The value is also consistent with the approached used in Version 1 of the IFFO RS Standard, in which up to 5% of the raw material could be comprised of 'unassessed' species.

Comments on this proposition are welcomed along with any other feedback on the proposed approach.