COMMUNITY CATCH

Guidance for Self-Assessment

Section 4: Recognised Species

Table of content

Section 4: Recognised Species
Objectives
Sub-section: 4.1 Fishery objectives
4.1.1 Defined Fishery Objectives for Long-Term Sustainability (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)
4.1.2 Fishery Objectives Include Long-Term Sustainability Goals
4.1.3 Enhancement Activities Must Not Compromise Stock Targets
Decision-Making and Management Controls
Sub-section: 4.2 Fishery decision-making and management controls
4.2.1 Decision-Making System Supports Fishery Management and Improvement (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)
4.2.2 Effective Decision-Making for Fishery Objectives
4.2.3 Precautionary Approach in Decision-Making
Scientific Advice and Monitoring
Sub-section: 4.3 Scientific advice and monitoring
4.3.1 Technical Advice and Performance Monitoring for Decision-Making (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)
4.3.2 Regular Estimation of Quantitative Performance Indicators
4.3.3 Evaluation of Uncertainty in Performance Indicators
Status of Stock(s)
Sub-section: 4.4 Status of Stock(s)
4.4.1 Low Risk of Stock Depletion Below Recruitment Impairment (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)
4.4.2 Fishery Meets Objectives or Has an Effective Rebuilding Plan
4.4.3 Commercial Stocks at Low Risk of Recruitment Impairment
Key Prey Species
Sub-section: 4.5 Key prey species
4.5.1 Key Prey Stock Maintained Above Target Level (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)
4.5.2 Key Prey Stock Managed for Sustainability
4.5.3 Key Prey Stock Maintained Above MSY Levels
4.5.4 Fisher Group Activities Do Not Harm Dependent Predator Populations

Introduction

This is a living document.

Some content in this document is presented in a yellow box to indicate normative language taken directly from the Community Catch Standard, including definitions and clarifications.
Text presented in a blue box represents additional guidance that is illustrative or discretionary, such as examples, further explanation, or types of acceptable evidence.

Section 4 addresses all removals from the managed stock, regardless of who is responsible.

The Fisher Group may target a single species with a particular gear or any number of different species with the same gear type (a 'multispecies' or 'mixed' fishery) - both situations can be represented in the Community Catch Initiative. There are a number of alternative approaches to managing multispecies fisheries and it is recognised that all can achieve sustainable fishing through responsible management; requirements specific to multispecies fisheries are highlighted in blue text.

Where the Fisher Group targets different stocks of the same species, these shall be evaluated separately and are effectively treated as a separate species in this process. Rigorous stock definitions are not required. However, it will be necessary to show that the unit of stock or multiple stocks being managed can be managed effectively. For example, that controls being applied will change the indicators of performance.
This section is based on an evaluation of 'The Fishery'. This is the combination of jurisdiction/management, targeted stock(s) and the totality of all fishers exploiting the stock(s) of which the Fisher Group is a part.
Assessment of the managed stock shall include cumulative fishing mortality from all sources operating within its distribution range, including the Fisher Group, and where relevant to stock management, other commercial, recreational, research, or incidental fishing activities. This is essential to inform appropriate management objectives and measures.

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that in data-limited fisheries, cumulative fishing mortality may be estimated using participatory spatial mapping, effort-based indicators, expert judgment, or risk-based tools such as PSA, provided the approach is documented and verified through an independent or peer-review process.

It is recognised that the majority of small-scale fisheries may not have access to the same levels of data collection, scientific evaluation, and research as for larger fisheries which often benefit from an economy of scale and easier logistics. Nevertheless, small scale fisheries still need to meet responsible management objectives. To take account of added complexity in monitoring these fisheries' performance, information in the form of qualitative and semi-quantitative assessment, and expert judgement, should be accepted as long as it can be verified (including through an independent review process) to ensure that the approaches adopted are reasonable and consistent with meeting the fishery objectives.

Section 4: Recognised Species

Guidance: What are Recognised Species? The Community Catch Standard defines them as species which the Fishery Client wishes to have recognised within the Community Catch Initiative and are eligible to carry the Community Catch logo. Species which are caught but not retained ('discards'), or which the Fishery Client does not wish to consider in the 'Recognised Species' category are considered under the 'Bycatches' category (Sections 5.4 to 5.6). Recognised species may be all fish, invertebrates, algae and aquatic plants; they may NOT be Threatened Species (Sections 5.1 to 5.3).
If the managed stock(s) which form the basis of the fishery management are not put forward by the Fishery Client as a 'recognised species', they shall still be considered in this section as the focus of management actions.

Question: 4.0.1.1 What is the main (managed or target) species caught? - Common name

Guidance: The Fishery Client enters the common name of the main species in the fishery. This would be the stock that forms the basis of the management of the fishery (e.g. cod).

Question: 4.0.1.2 What is the main (managed or target) species caught? - Scientific name

Guidance: The Fishery Client enters the scientific name of the main stock (e.g. Gadus morhua).

Question: 4.0.1.3 What is the amount of species sold or caught (MT)?

Question: 4.0.1.4 Are there other species (usually of commercial value) that you wish to include within the Community Catch evaluation? Add a species:

Guidance: The Fishery Client enters any other species which you wish to include in 'recognised species'. These will appear as commercially available catches in your Community Catch fishery profile. Species caught and not included here will be evaluated in Section 5.

Question: 4.0.1.5 - Is there any enhancement activity for any of the Recognised Species stocks?

Guidance: If there are any activities to increase the stock(s) (such as addition of recruits from hatcheries or transfers from other locations) or improve the habitat of any recognised species, enter details here.

☐ No
☐ Modification of habitat
☐ Release of recruits from hatchery
☐ Release of recruits from other locations
☐ Other enhancement

Objectives

Sub-section: 4.1 Fishery objectives

4.1.1 Defined Fishery Objectives for Long-Term Sustainability (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)

Objectives for the fishery have been defined. The objectives include at least one related to achieving long-term sustainability of the managed stock(s).

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that the managed stock are those stocks or species groups within the fishery that are explicitly managed to meet conservation objectives.

In multispecies fisheries, these are likely to cover only a proportion of the catch and would often be the most abundant and/or valuable species (the 'target' species). It is not expected that objectives and monitoring will be in place for every species - in most cases the target species are monitored and used to regulate the harvest. The implicit assumption is that the target species is most vulnerable to fishing activity so other species have protection as their fishing mortality relative to MSY would be less than that of the target species. All species less vulnerable than the managed target species (less vulnerable species would be those not targeted and/or which do not have particular vulnerabilities such as very low reproductive rates) require no additional management interventions. For more vulnerable species, there should be actions to a) monitor vulnerable species and b) to ensure all commercial species are above their Point of Recruitment Impairment.

Question: 4.1.1.1 Identify the objective(s) for the fishery (which should act, directly or indirectly to maintain the long-term sustainability of the managed stock(s))

Guidance: Objectives may be specific to the fishery or more high-level objectives applied by the relevant management body, Government Ministry etc., but which include the fishery of which the Fisher Group is part.

☐ Objectives are defined in a fishery or species management document
☐ Objectives are outlined in regional, national or local management documents
☐ Objectives are defined in stock assessment advice
☐ Objectives are determined and understood by all parties; these may be in a co-management agreement or similar

4.1.2 Fishery Objectives Include Long-Term Sustainability Goals

Harvest objectives for managed stock(s) are consistent with a Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) target.

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) is a target reference point that aims to maintain maximum yield (catch) over the long term. Usually there are other explicit and implicit constraints (e.g. selectivity, acceptable risk levels, recruitment fluctuations, environmental variability and trends) that determine what MSY is in practice. The precise definitions of MSY depend on population model choice and assumptions, leading to considerable flexibility in interpretation. Our interpretation is therefore one of an objective intent to meet MSY rather than one reliant on a precise definition of what MSY should be. For example, using data limited methods or proxies, an MSY state might be determined, but not considered very precise. If this is used for guidance to set fishing levels with suitable precautions, this would be interpreted as meeting the MSY objective. This should be consistent with "best scientific evidence available" (FAO CCRF para. 6.4) as well as account for the "capacity of developing countries" (FAO CCRF para. 5.1) in setting requirements. Deficiencies in scientific evidence or monitoring capacity may result in requirements to improve these. Other target reference points such as MEY with similar or better outcomes for the managed stock are acceptable.

In multispecies fisheries, it is recognised that it will not be practicable to demonstrate a verifiable MSY in many multispecies fisheries. As a result, realistic management objectives with the same intent, which aim to maintain all species above their PRI and otherwise maintain the joint stock at close to maximum productive levels (or above), are considered to be an acceptable objective.

Question: 4.1.2.1 Are the objectives for the fishery linked to maintaining the managed stock at a level consistent with a Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) target?

☐ Objectives include maintaining target species (one species) at Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) - Biomass (Bmsy) or Effort (Fmsy)
☐ Objectives include maintaining more than one species at MSY
☐ Objectives include use of proxies for MSY, such as CPUE, yield per recruit, average length etc (please specify in comment box)
☐ Objectives include use of other sustainability objectives such as Maximum Economic Yield
☐ Objectives include multispecies management of all species above a target level

4.1.3 Enhancement Activities Must Not Compromise Stock Targets

In enhanced fisheries, enhancement activities shall not compromise targets for the managed or wild stock or equivalent targets for wild stocks from which organisms for stocking are being removed.

Question: 4.1.3.1 Describe how fishery management ensures that enhancement activities do not hinder achievement of objectives for the managed stock:

Guidance: The enhanced stocks must not reduce the natural reproductive component of the stock below its target objective; i.e. the target is to maintain the natural spawning stock. In the case of salmon fisheries, if the spawning stock (or Stock Management Unit) is composed of fish from both natural and enhanced (stocking) sources, an escapement goal would be based only on the natural component, and the goal would be met in the majority (>50%) of recent years. Where individuals are removed from a wild population to stock another area (such as relocation of bivalves for growing on), then objectives for the population from which individuals are removed should also achieve long-term sustainability of the stock from which individuals are removed. This should consider all removals from the 'source' stock, not only those from the Fisher Group.

Decision-Making and Management Controls

Sub-section: 4.2 Fishery decision-making and management controls

4.2.1 Decision-Making System Supports Fishery Management and Improvement (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)

A decision-making system is in place, capable of initiating, when required, management controls, additional monitoring and/or research to improve fishery performance.

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that 'controls' are the management actions/measures that are applied to limit harvest in some way to achieve the fishery objectives. We use the term 'controls' rather than 'measures, as the latter is also widely used to describe monitoring activities, and the term 'control' also emphasizes the feedback-control mechanism which underlies responsible management.

Guidance: Controls may include species quotas, licenses/permits to fish, fishing days, area closures and restrictions on the amount of gear used.

This minimum requirement relates to institutional capacity to respond but does not specifically require management responses in relation to changes in stock (this is addressed below).

There may not be examples of management interventions taking place if these have not been required. In this case, there is only a need to show that interventions may take place if needed.

Question: 4.2.1.1 Which of the following best describes the decision-making system relevant to the fishery?

Guidance: The decision-making system is the organisations or people responsible for monitoring the fishery and implementing controls on fishing when necessary.

☐ National and International fishery management organisations manage the fishery
☐ A National fishery management organisation manages the fishery
☐ A Local fishery management organisation manages the fishery
☐ Fishery co-management (fishers and officials or other organisations)
☐ Actions by fishermen alone in response to changes in catches

Question: 4.2.1.2 Is the management able to implement one or more of the following if required?

☐ Species quotas
☐ Changes or limits in numbers of fishing licences/permits issued
☐ Restrictions on numbers of fishers or vessels
☐ Changes in allowed fishing days
☐ Regulation of vessel size or engine size/power
☐ Closures of certain areas to fishing: permanent or temporary
☐ Restrictions on amount of gear used
☐ Restrictions on types of gear used
☐ Additional monitoring, investigation or research

4.2.2 Effective Decision-Making for Fishery Objectives

The decision-making system is (or is expected) to be effective in achieving the fishery objectives.

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that harvest control rules (agreed rules which dictate an action or set of actions to be taken in response to changes in indicators, especially of stock status) may be an important tool in the decision-making process but are not necessarily a requirement. They are effective because they are testable, widely understood, and apply a response within an appropriate timeframe. An equivalent decision-making process can be accepted, but it needs to show that it can be similarly effective – for example HCRs may not be required for all stocks or lightly exploited fisheries. It should be noted that the definition of HCRs includes many rules adopted in co-managed small-scale fisheries.

Question: 4.2.2.1 Which of the following best describes the decision-making system relevant to the fishery?

Guidance: Effective decision making includes the ability to implement actions in the event that managed stocks fall below levels consistent with the management objectives.

Strategies need not be documented, as long as management clearly understands what actions are to be taken under certain circumstances and it has the ability to implement these.

Decision-making systems can be considered to be 'expected to be effective' where the same decision-making system has proven effective in other situations (such as with other stocks/fisheries) or where there are sufficiently robust mechanisms in place or available that could achieve the necessary level of management control.

☐ The management organisation has previously implemented effective fishing controls in reaction to changes in the stock status
☐ The management organisation has not implemented fishing controls, but a clear strategy is in place which is expected to be effective.

4.2.3 Precautionary Approach in Decision-Making

Decision-making adopts the precautionary approach where relevant.

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that the precautionary approach is as defined in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992. "*Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation*."

Question: 4.2.3.1 Which of the following best describes the use of the precautionary approach by the management organisation?

☐ The precautionary approach is included within national legislation, fishery management procedures or other documentation relevant to the fishery.
☐ The precautionary approach is not specifically referenced, but there is evidence from the previous management actions, or in management plans, to show that the same intent and outcome will be achieved.

Scientific Advice and Monitoring

Sub-section: 4.3 Scientific advice and monitoring

4.3.1 Technical Advice and Performance Monitoring for Decision-Making (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)

Some technical or other advice is being provided that is suitable to support the decision-making system. This advice includes monitoring of at least one performance indicator for the fishery that is suitable to inform decision-making.

Guidance: Further detail of monitoring and examples of suitable indicators is provided in 4.3.2.

Question: 4.3.1.1 Is there an organisation providing some monitoring of the fishery and/or managed stock(s) and providing advice on fishery management based on this monitoring?

☐ Fishery management organisation or scientific/technical body/institute
☐ Other official organisation(s)
☐ Fisher organisation
☐ Unofficial organisation(s) such as NGOs
☐ Fishery co-management organisation

Question: **4.3.1.2 Does this organisation monitor at least one indicator of the status of the fishery and/or managed stock?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

4.3.2 Regular Estimation of Quantitative Performance Indicators

One or more quantitative and/or verified qualitative indicators to support the fishery objectives are estimated regularly, based on sufficient data-collection, and have been shown to be good measure(s) of performance (e.g. in monitoring stock status).

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that traditional, fisher or community knowledge (local ecological knowledge) can be used for management purposes. However, it must be established that this knowledge, and any more general subjective expert opinion, is well-founded and can be tested and verified where necessary. Verification can be achieved in a number of ways, including a) using independent expert technical review to evaluate the information and recommend, where necessary, further observations be collected to test such information empirically; and b) having a documented and transparent evaluation process. Technical review is not a specific requirement but is identified as a cost-effective means of verification and/or of providing an improvement pathway for improvement.

Regularity shall be sufficient to determine changes in the indicators, relative to the scale and intensity of the fishery, such that changes can be detected in timescales relevant to the management of the fishery.

Guidance: Quantitative indicators can include, but is not limited to, fishing mortality rate, CPUE, changes in mean length/weight, fraction maturity and (such as for some crustacean fisheries) population structure with reference to reproductive potential.

Local ecological knowledge (LEK) may be an important source of evidence associated with small-scale fisheries. LEK which is supported by multiple independent sources, a risk-assessment or ongoing experience (e.g. a long-term sustainable operation) would not require further verification.

If the stock(s) is enhanced through aquaculture inputs, the indicators used should consider both the natural production and the contribution of any stocked component OR provide information on stocks from which individuals are removed for stocking purposes. The indicators used should be robust to the effects of all removals from the stock over its area of distribution. In small-scale fisheries with more comprehensive data collection, this should include discards, unreported catches and other incidental mortality. In situations without such comprehensive data, the risk posed by these sources of unreported mortality should be considered.

There should be sufficient information on stock structure, productivity and/or composition to give confidence in the suitability of the indicator(s) chosen.

Question: 4.3.2.1 What types of information are provided?

☐ Number of crew
☐ Type(s) of gear used
☐ Amount of gear used
☐ Fishing locations
☐ Catches of some species
☐ Catches of all species
☐ Discards
☐ Research projects/studies including the fishery - once, occasional or regular

Question: 4.3.2.2 What is the frequency for collection/provision of information?

☐ Daily
☐ Weekly
☐ Monthly
☐ Don't know

4.3.3 Evaluation of Uncertainty in Performance Indicators

Uncertainty in the indicators is evaluated such that it can be considered in the management of risk.

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that an important uncertainty in multispecies fisheries is that other recognised species may be more vulnerable to overfishing than the target species (such as elasmobranchs with low reproduction rates). In this case, there would be a requirement for further monitoring of the more vulnerable species, with management actions where required, to reduce risks to such vulnerable species in line with the fishery objectives. Often catch data is not recorded by species, but similar species are combined into groups. This is acceptable if:

1. All species in the group have similar vulnerability to the fishery, so the harvest is not likely to alter relative species abundance, or;
2. The most vulnerable species in the group is monitored and the objectives on harvest levels are set to take account of these most vulnerable species; and
3. There is sufficiently regular evaluation of the species composition of species groups, by sampling catches, to ensure the abundances of all species meet the fishery objectives.

It is recognised that practical separation of similar species in catches is not always possible. If all species in a group have similar vulnerability (in terms of productivity and susceptibility), then species can be practically treated as separate components of the same stock. However, there should be evidence of this, with monitoring, as necessary, to demonstrate that:

4. No species within a group is being harvested to below its limit reference point.
5. If all species have similar vulnerabilities, then the management to a target grouped MSY (based for example on a biomass dynamics model fitted to observations of abundance and yield of the species group over a time series) should arguably result in no single species being depleted below its limit.
6. If the most vulnerable species within a group is monitored (such as through length frequency sampling) and the fishing mortality can be shown to be sustainable for that species, then it can be assumed that other species are at a similar or better status.

Question: 4.3.3.1 Are there significant uncertainties in the indicators used in monitoring the fishery and/or stock? If so, provide details of how these uncertainties are being considered when evaluating information used in the fishery/stock monitoring.

Guidance: Uncertainties in the indicators being monitored can include the quality and accuracy of catch data, the quality and coverage of any biological sampling and the level of information provided by survey design and frequency.

☐ Yes
☐ No

Question: 4.3.3.2 Are all managed species identified separately, or are some grouped together during catch reporting/monitoring?

Guidance: The footnote text 'All species in the group have similar vulnerability to the fishery, so the harvest is not likely to alter relative species abundance' can be generally determined if the species in the group have similar productivity attributes (this can be checked using the Risk Assessment criteria) or are targeted (especially at specific times such as in spawning aggregations) such that one or more species are notably declining in proportion to the rest of the group.

☐ All identified
☐ Some grouped
☐ Don't know

Status of Stock(s)

Sub-section: 4.4 Status of Stock(s)

Guidance: Monitored stocks would be the managed stock(s) and also more vulnerable species subject to additional monitoring. Vulnerability should be determined based on biological characteristics (life history and productivity) AND catchability in the fishery (the extent to which the species is targeted and its distribution relative to fishing locations and gear deployment).

4.4.1 Low Risk of Stock Depletion Below Recruitment Impairment (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)

There is a low risk that any monitored stock(s) are being depleted below their point of recruitment impairment as determined through stock assessment, risk assessment and/or independent expert evaluation.

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that 'Low risk' is equivalent to a reasonable expectation, evaluated qualitatively, semi-quantitatively (such as through a risk assessment) or quantitatively. Quantitatively, this is equivalent to being below 25%ile probability.

This would apply to all species within a multispecies operation unless the catches were insignificant – i.e. species with catches, on average, <5% of the total Fisher Group catch and <30% of total fishing mortality on the stock.

Question: 4.4.1.1 Is the managed stock (or stocks if there are multiple stocks being monitored in the fishery) at low risk of being below its Point of Recruitment Impairment?

Guidance: In the absence of stock assessment or expert evaluation, a risk assessment can be used. A default Risk Assessment for Recognised Species is available HERE and further guidance can be found HERE.

The point of recruitment impairment (PRI) is set out in 4.4.3, Footnote 38 as: 'A limit reference point. This is often difficult to define but is interpreted here as an intent to maintain the spawning stock so as to ensure adequate ongoing recruitment for stock replenishment. Various international standards can be used to set this limit reference point at a precautionary level, and in general these would be considered acceptable'.
Means of determining PRI can include a level of 20% of the unfished spawning stock biomass, ½ of Bmsy or a suitable proxy value. Proxy values should be set above the level of a risk of recruitment failure, such as Bloss - the smallest spawning biomass observed in a series of annual values of the spawning biomass (Lowest Observed Spawning Stock).

☐ Yes
☐ No

4.4.2 Fishery Meets Objectives or Has an Effective Rebuilding Plan

The fishery is achieving the target performance against its objectives; the managed stock(s) are within their target region, OR a time-bound rebuilding plan, including sufficient monitoring to demonstrate effectiveness, is in place, which is expected, or is being demonstrated, to rebuild the managed stock(s) within the specified timeframe.

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that a past record of good management performance could be considered as supporting evidence of the adequacy of the management measures and the management system.

Question: 4.4.2.1 Is the monitored stock (or stocks if there are multiple stocks being monitored in the fishery) at or around its harvest objective region (as set out in 4.1.2 this region would be consistent with MSY)?

Guidance: Measures and associated timescales to restore stocks to levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield should take into account the interests of small-scale fishers.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

Question: 4.4.2.2 Is there a rebuilding plan in place which is expected to rebuild the managed stock to its objective (consistent with MSY) region within a specified timeframe?

Guidance: If a rebuilding plan is in place, then 'sufficient monitoring' should, at a minimum, require monitoring at intervals appropriate to the time-frame of the rebuilding plan, so as to determine whether or not rebuilding is occurring in line with the plan.

For stocks (or for salmon populations, Stock Management Units) which are subject to enhancement through artificial stocking, this stocking should not displace the natural stock component to below its target region. In cases where spawning escapement goals are used for wild populations, stocked fish should not be counted towards meeting these goals.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

4.4.3 Commercial Stocks at Low Risk of Recruitment Impairment

All stocks of Recognised Species are at low risk of being depleted below their Point of Recruitment Impairment (PRI).

Guidance: The Community Catch Standard explains that Point of Recruitment Impairment (PRI) is a limit reference point. This is often difficult to define but is interpreted here as an intent to maintain the spawning stock so as to ensure adequate ongoing recruitment for stock replenishment. Various international standards can be used to set this limit reference point at a precautionary level, and in general these would be considered acceptable.

For fisheries subject to enhancement, enhancement activities shall not displace the natural reproductive stock component to levels below the PRI nor present a high likelihood of compromising the diversity of wild stocks.

Question: 4.4.3.1 Are all 'recognised' commercial species identified likely to be above their Point of Recruitment Impairment (identify this for each species listed in Question 4.0.1.5)?

Guidance: In the absence of stock assessment or expert evaluation, a risk assessment can be used. A default Risk Assessment for Recognised Species is available HERE and further guidance can be found HERE.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

Key Prey Species

Sub-section: 4.5 Key prey species

4.5.1 Key Prey Stock Maintained Above Target Level (MINIMUM REQUIREMENT)

If the managed stock (or in a multi-species fishery the 'target' stock) is a key prey species, this is at LOW risk of being depleted below its target level.

Guidance: What are key prey species? The Community Catch Standard explains that key prey species are those which form the basis of the diet of one or more predator species, for all or part of their life cycle. Key prey species are classified as those small, early maturing and highly productive species dominating the biomass at lower trophic levels (i.e. there are few other species present in large proportions at low trophic levels, leading to a high likelihood of significant predator dependency).

Question: 4.5.1.1 Is the managed stock a 'key prey species'?

Guidance: Typical key prey species would be the following, assuming that they are present in very high proportions at the base of the ecosystem:

- Anchovies (Family Engraulidae
- Herrings, sardinellas, sardines, sprats, menhaden (Family Clupeidae)
- Smelt,capelin (Family Osmeridae)
- Mackerels (Genus Scomber)
- Norway pout (Trisopterus esmarkii)

☐ Yes
☐ No

Question: 4.5.1.2 Is the managed stock (or target stock if it is a multispecies/mixed fishery) at low risk of being below its harvest objective region (equivalent to MSY)?

Guidance: In the absence of stock assessment or expert evaluation, a risk assessment can be used. A default Risk Assessment for Key Prey Species is available HERE and further guidance can be found HERE.

☐ Yes
☐ No

4.5.2 Key Prey Stock Managed for Sustainability

If the managed stock (or in a multi-species fishery the 'target' stock) is a key prey species, it shall have management objectives consistent with maintaining at least a Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) target level.

Question: 4.5.2.1 Do the objectives for the fishery explicitly aim to maintain the managed stock at a level at least consistent with a Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) target?

Guidance: For key prey species an additional level of precaution is required - that such stocks be at least at, and preferably above, their MSY (or equivalent) target level.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

4.5.3 Key Prey Stock Maintained Above MSY Levels

Management of the stock is at least achieving the target performance against its objectives – the key prey species shall be, and is expected to remain, above a level equivalent to MSY.

Question: 4.5.3.1 Is the managed stock at or above its harvest objective region (as set out in 4.5.2)?

Guidance: In the absence of stock assessment or expert evaluation, a risk assessment can be used. A default Risk Assessment for Key Prey Species is available HERE and further guidance can be found HERE.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

4.5.4 Fisher Group Activities Do Not Harm Dependent Predator Populations

The scale, intensity and distribution of Fisher Group activities shall not be expected to cause severe adverse effects on populations of dependent predators: either through fishing of key prey species to levels below precautionary levels or through localised depletion of key prey species around sites and at times vital to dependent predators.

Guidance: Direct and unacceptable effects would be reductions in key prey species abundance levels, due to fishing by the Fisher Group, measured or expected to be by more than 70% - either at the stock level or through localised depletion of key prey species around sites and at times vital to dependent predators.

Question: 4.5.4.1 Does fishing take place in areas adjacent to breeding sites - such as for marine mammals (seals, sea lions) or sea birds?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

Question: 4.5.4.2 Has an evaluation (scientific investigation or expert opinion) estimated the effects of localised fishing around breeding sites and found these to be within acceptable limits?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know