



Surveillance Report

CVO Dutch North Sea Plaice and Sole Fishery

Certificate No.: **MML-F-139**

Intertek Moody Marine

26th November 2013

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1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

Scope against which the surveillance is undertaken: MSC Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing as applied to the CVO North Sea Plaice and Sole fishery

Species: Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*), sole (*Solea solea*)

Area: North Sea (ICES IVa, b & c) within North East Atlantic (FAO 27)

Method of capture:

Various trawl methods as defined in each UoC: Twinrig, outrig, flyshoot

Client Group: Cooperatieve Visserij Organisatie (CVO) member vessels.

Date of Surveillance Visit:	26th November 2013			
Initial Certification	Date: 20th December 2012	Certificate Ref: MML-F-139		
Surveillance stage	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Surveillance team:	Lead Assessor: R. Cappell Assessor(s): P1:R. Millner, P2:M. Pawson, P3:R. Cappell			
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2.0 RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report contains the findings of the first surveillance cycle in relation to this fishery.

The client's response to the Conditions of Certification was set out in a Client Action Plan (CAP), which was appended to the Public Certification Report. Progress associated with the actions set forth in the CAP was examined as a part of this surveillance audit. For each Condition, the report sets out progress to date. This progress has been evaluated by the Intertek Moody Marine (IMM) Audit Team (set out below as 'Observations' and 'Conclusion') against the commitments made in the CAP. This assessment includes a re-evaluation of the scoring allocated to the relevant Performance Indicators (PIs) in the original MSC assessment. Where the requirements of a Condition are met, the PI is re-scored at 80 or more and the Condition is "closed out".

The surveillance audit methodology, as defined in the current version of the MSC Certification Requirements is followed in this audit and so the MSC criteria for determining the level of surveillance audit that the fishery requires is followed (see Annex 3).

Information Sources:

Meetings

(NB all stakeholder from the full assessment were contacted prior to the surveillance audit taking place)

- IngerWilms, CVO
- Geert Meun, CVO
- B. Keus, Agonus consultants

Reports

CVO, 2013: Progress report on MSC Twinrig, Outrig, Flyshoot and associated attachments
22-11-2013, Rijswijk, IngerWilms, Coöperatieve Visserij Organisatie

Coers, A., Miller, D. C. M., and Poos, J. J. 2012. Evaluation of Proposed Amendments to the North Sea Flatfish Multiannual Plan. ICES CM 2012/ACOM:70.

ICES 2011. Report of the Working Group on the assessment of Demersal Stocks in the North Sea and Skagerrak (WGNSSK). 4-10 May 2011 Copenhagen. ICES CM 2011/ACOM:13

ICES 2012. Request from the Netherlands on the North Sea flatfish Management Plan. Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2012. ICES Advice, 2012. Book 6, Section 6.3.3.4.

ICES 2013a. Advice on Plaice in Subarea IV. ICES Advice 2013. Book 6 Section 6.4.18, pp 1-13.

ICES 2013b. EU request on interannual quota flexibility for plaice in the North Sea. In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2013. ICES Advice, 2013. Book 6, Section 6.3.5.3.

ICES 2013c. Advice on Sole in Subarea IV. ICES Advice 2013. Book 6 Section 6.4.18, pp 1-11.

Standards and Guidelines used:

1. MSC Principles and Criteria
2. MSC Certification Requirements v1.3
3. Guidance to the MSC Certification Requirements, v 1.1

Plaice: Stock status and Catch Data

Update on Stock Status

Plaice

Summary

The North Sea plaice stock is considered to be at its highest level since at least 1957 (ICES 2013a). Based on data up to and including 2012, SSB in 2013 was estimated to be around 663,000t and was expected to reach over 735,000t at the start of 2014, which is more than double the long term average level. Fishing mortality is estimated to be at an historic low and to be below the long term target F of 0.3 which is consistent with Fmsy (ICES 2011). ICES classifies North Sea plaice as being harvested sustainably and having full reproductive capacity.

Stock status

a) SSB

The trend in the spawning stock biomass is shown below. The stock declined sharply during the 1990s from a peak of over 400,000t in 1987 and fell below Bpa (the level of spawning biomass that should avoid recruitment failure with a high degree of certainty) of 230,000t during a number of years in the period 1994-2004. In recent years the stock has shown a strong recovery and the SSB at the start of 2014 is estimated at above 735,000t by ICES (2013a). This is a record high level for the stock. The increase in the stock has occurred under average recruitment conditions and is not caused by a higher productivity of the stock. The main reason for the increase is considered by ICES to be the reduction of fishing mortality under the present management plan. The perception of SSB is consistent with last year’s assessment.

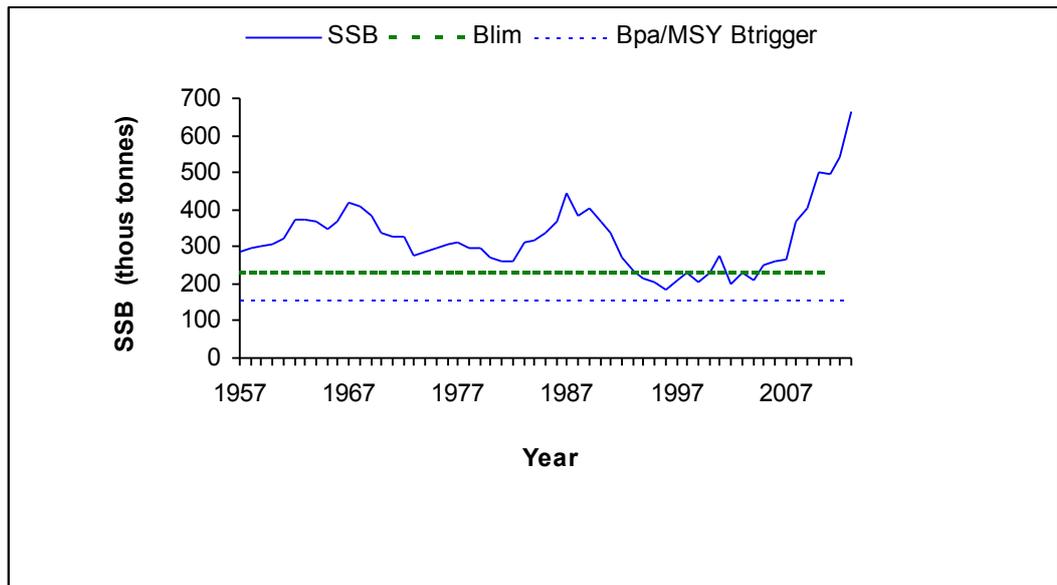


Figure 1. Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) of North Sea plaice for the period 1957 to 2013 with the precautionary reference level Bpa shown (source: ICES 2013a).

b) Fishing mortality

Total fishing mortality which includes both human consumption and discard mortality showed a steady increase over the forty year period up to 1997 after which it started to decline with the exception of a brief increase between 2001 and 2003. Since 2003 it has decreased considerably reflecting the reduction in effort by the fishing fleet. It is estimated to have fallen below the precautionary reference level of 0.6 since 2005 and to be below the long-term management objective of F0.3 since 2008. In recent years, fishing mortality has been estimated to be below Fmsy (0.25).

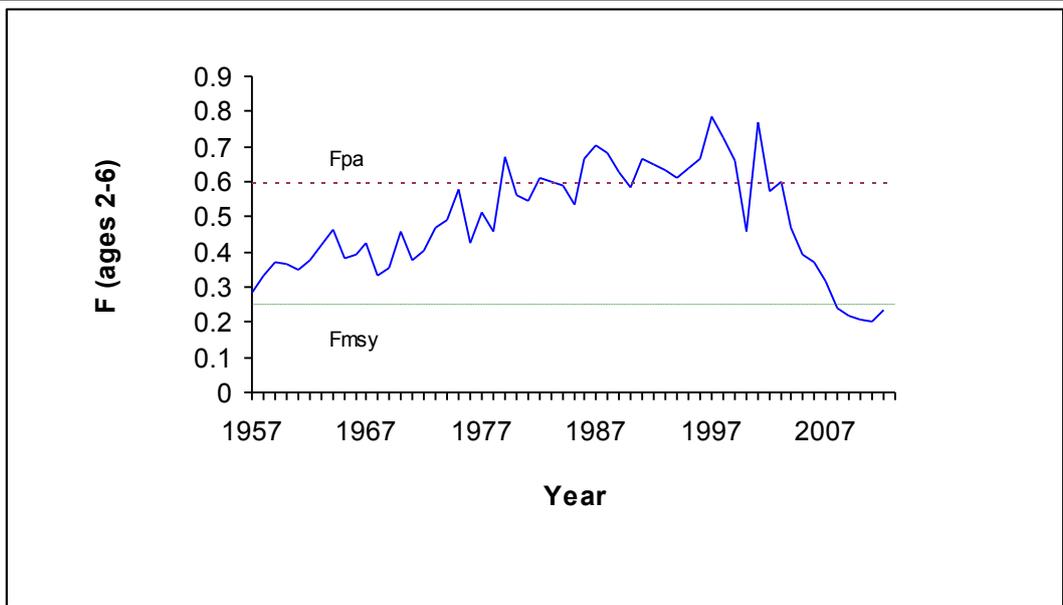


Figure 2. North Sea plaice total fishing mortality for landings plus discards. The reference points F_{pa} and F_{msy} are derived in relation to total mortality (ICES 2013a).

c) Recruitment

Figure 3 shows the changes in recruitment of juvenile plaice at age 1 into the stock over the period 1957-2012. There was an increase in recruitment during the 1980s with the 1985 year-class being the largest recruitment in the time series and with other strong year classes in 1981, 1984, 1986 and 1987. The strong recruitment led to a temporary increase in stock abundance despite the high level of fishing mortality. During the early 1990s, the stock declined rapidly following a period of poor recruitment and under continuing high fishing pressure. In recent years, recruitment has varied around the long term average of around 1 billion. At the same time there has been a very strong stock recovery indicating that it has been driven mainly by the reduction in fishing mortality rather than by strong recruitment.

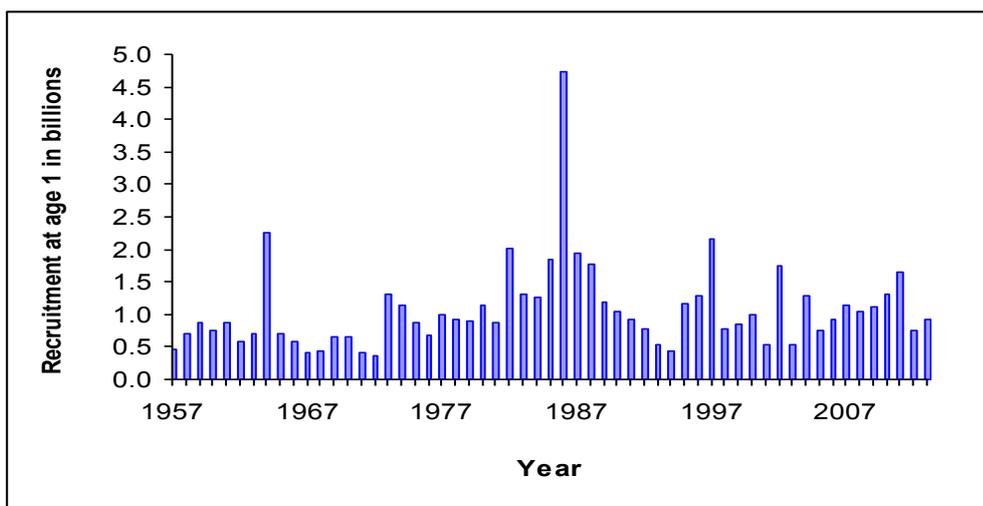


Figure 3. Recruitment of North Sea plaice at age 1 in billions (ICES 2013a).

d) Catch and Landings

The trend in catch (landings plus discards) is shown in Figure 4. Landings in 2012 were 73,830t from a TAC of 84,410t. Discards have been a high proportion of the total catch, peaking at over 50% but have declined in recent years.

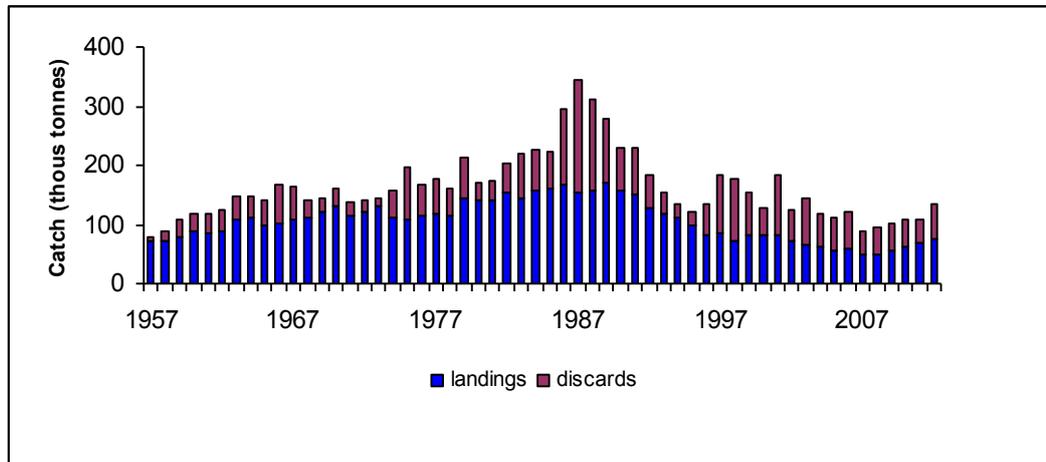


Figure 4. Landings and discards of North Sea plaice in thousands of tonnes (ICES 2013a).

Management Plan

North Sea plaice has been managed under a long term plan for the management of both plaice and sole stocks (Council Regulation (EC) No. 676/2007). This set up a two stage process for managing the stocks. Firstly by returning the stocks to within safe biological limits and in the second stage to exploit the stocks at MSY. In the first stage, the procedure for rebuilding the stocks to safe biological limits was by reducing fishing mortality on plaice and sole by 10% each year with the constraint that the TAC should not be allowed to vary by more than 15% per year. Once SSB was above precautionary levels for more than two successive years for each species, the second stage of the plan would be implemented. In this stage the aim was to maintain the fishing mortality on plaice at a rate equal to or no lower than 0.3 and for sole at or no lower than 0.2.

Plaice was considered to be within safe biological limits since 2005 and sole in terms of F since 2008 and SSB since 2012.

Transition to Stage two of the LTMP

ICES has concluded that the objectives of stage one have been met but the implementation of the second stage has not yet been defined.

Up to 2011, there was a potential discrepancy between the long term management $F=0.3$ for plaice and the ICES advice which implied an F_{msy} of 0.20. The value of 0.3 was determined by the ICES *ad hoc* Group on Long Term Management Advice (AGLTA) and was adopted by the EU in its multi-annual plan for plaice and sole. ICES has since reviewed the estimate of F_{msy} for plaice and proposed a range of values between 0.2-0.3 (ICES 2011). As a result, the target F for plaice is now considered to be consistent with MSY.

In 2012, ICES evaluated a proposal by the Netherlands for an amended management plan, which could serve as stage 2 of the LTMP (Coers et al., 2012). The amendments included changing the target F for sole to 0.25 from its current level of 0.4 and to cease the annual

	<p>reductions of fishing effort. ICES concluded that the plan – subject to those amendments – is consistent with the precautionary approach and the principle of maximum sustainable yield (ICES, 2012). None of these amendments would affect the current TAC advice for plaice as the proposed changes were aimed at the target F for sole, and ceasing reductions in effort. However, in the absence of agreement on stage 2, these changes have not yet been implemented.</p> <p>Management Advice</p> <p>The EU Management plan based on an F0.3 would result in a TAC increase of more than 15% compared with 2013. If the TAC constraint of 15% is applied (as required by the EU LTMP) this would lead to a TAC for 2014 of no more than 111,631t based on an F0.26. This is expected to lead to an SSB of 737,000t in 2015. Maximum Sustainable Yield framework results in an F(2-6) of 0.25 with projected landings of 106,226t leading to an SSB in excess of 743,000t in 2015.</p> <p>The TAC for 2014 will be decided following the Council of Ministers meeting in December 2013.</p> <p>Conclusion on Stock Status</p> <p>Spawning stock biomass is currently at an historic high in the long-term time series dating back to 1957. It is expected to be above 735,000t at the start of 2014, which is more than double the long term average. Total fishing mortality has been steadily reduced since 2003 and has been below Fmsy in recent years. The management of the North Sea plaice stock is currently sustainable and well within safe biological limits both for SSB and fishing mortality. It is fully compliant with all reference points for Maximum sustainable yield, the Precautionary approach and the EU Management plan.</p>
Total Allowable Catch (TAC) in most recent fishing year	97,070t for 2013
Unit of Certification share of TAC	19% of the Dutch quota (37,122t) 7% of the North Sea TAC
Client share of TAC	38% of North Sea TAC (37,122t from 97,070t)
Green Weight¹ of catch taken by client group	6,985t

¹The weight of a catch prior to processing

Sole: Stock status and Catch Data

<p>Update on Sock Status</p>	<p>Sole Summary</p> <p>Based on the most recent estimate of SSB (in 2013) and fishing mortality (in 2012), ICES classifies North Sea sole as being harvested sustainably and having full reproductive capacity (ICES 2013c). SSB has improved since the previous review in 2010 and is currently well above the MSY Btrigger of 35,000t. Fishing mortality has shown a declining trend since 1995 and is estimated to be close to Fmsy (0.22).</p> <p>Stock status</p> <p>a) SSB</p> <p>The trend in the spawning stock biomass is shown below. The stock increased sharply following good recruitment in 1958 and this led to the rapid expansion of the trawl fishery for sole. It declined to close to the precautionary biomass level (Bpa) during the 1970's and 1980's before increasing sharply again following strong recruitment in 1987 and 1991. It has fluctuated around the precautionary reference points for the last decade and has been well above MSY Btrigger for the last two years.</p> <div data-bbox="359 828 1412 1299" style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p>Figure 5. Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) of North Sea sole for the period 1957 to 2013 (ICES 2013c).</p> <p>b) Fishing mortality</p> <p>Total fishing mortality (figure 6) has shown a steady increase over the forty year period up to 1994 in line with increases in capacity and effort of the beam trawl fleet in the North Sea. Since 1995, it has declined steadily. It has been below Bpa for the past 5 years and is estimated to be 0.24 which is within the range for Fmsy (0.22-0.25).</p>
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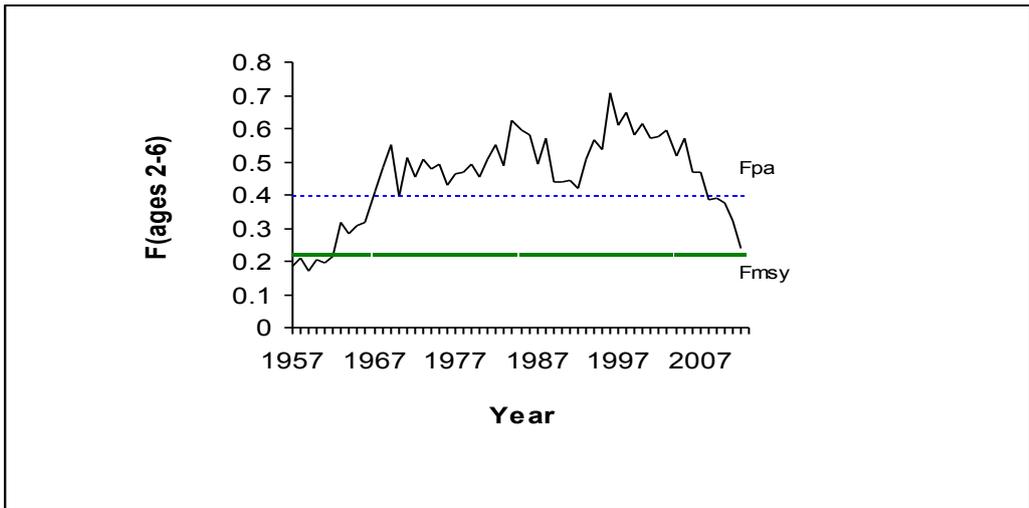


Figure 6. North Sea sole fishing mortality (F) for ages 2-6 from 1957 – 2012 (ICES 2013c).

c) Recruitment

Estimates of abundance of fish recruiting to the stock at age one are shown in figure 7. Geometric mean recruitment is around 94 million one-year olds but there have been years with very strong recruitment often associated with cold winters such as 1958, 1963, 1987 and 1996. In recent years, recruitment has been close to the long term average and there has been a noticeable absence of the very strong recruitment seen in earlier periods.

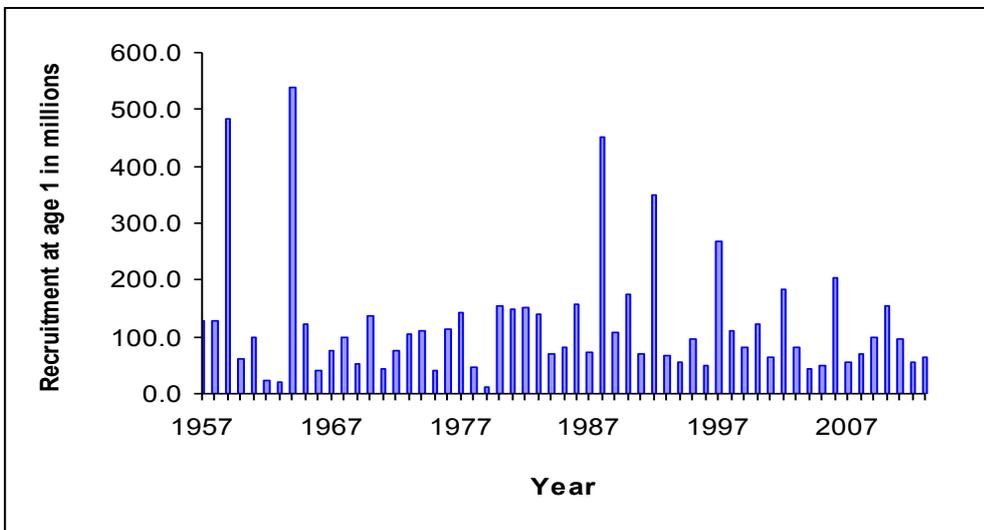


Figure 7. Recruitment of North Sea sole in millions of fish at age 1 year (1957-2013) (ICES 2013c).

d) Catch and Landings

Total annual landings of sole in the North Sea were around 20,000t in the 1970's and 80's increasing to over 30,000t for a short period in the early 1990's. Since then there has been a steady decline to a long term minimum of around 11,500t in 2011 and 2012.

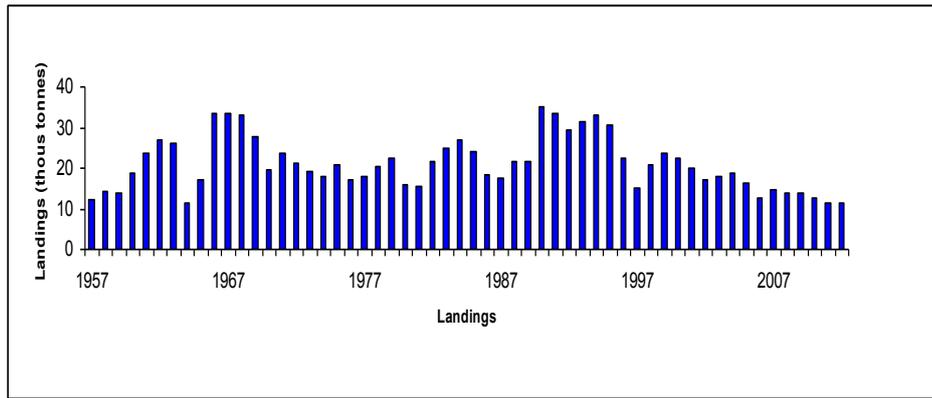


Figure 8. Annual landings of North Sea sole from 1957 to 2012 (ICES 2013c).

Management Plan

North Sea sole has been managed under a long term plan for the management of both plaice and sole stocks (Council Regulation (EC) No. 676/2007). This set up a two stage process for managing the stocks. Firstly by returning the stocks to within safe biological limits and in the second stage to exploit the stocks at MSY. In the first stage, the procedure for rebuilding the stocks to safe biological limits was by reducing fishing mortality on plaice and sole by 10% each year with the constraint that the TAC should not be allowed to vary by more than 15% per year. Once SSB was above precautionary levels for more than two successive years for each species, the second stage of the plan would be implemented. In this stage the aim was to maintain the fishing mortality on plaice at a rate equal to or no lower than 0.3 and for sole at or no lower than 0.2.

Plaice was considered to be within safe biological limits since 2005 and sole in terms of F since 2008 and SSB since 2012.

Transition to Stage two of the LTMP

ICES has concluded that the objectives of stage one have been met but the implementation of the second stage has not yet been defined.

Management Advice

The EU Management plan based on an F0.2 would result in a TAC decrease of more than 15% compared with 2013. If the TAC constraint of 15% is applied (as required by the EU LTMP) this would lead to a TAC for 2014 of no more than 11,900t based on an F0.24. This is expected to lead to an SSB of 46,070t in 2015.

The TAC for 2014 will be decided following the Council of Ministers meeting in December 2013.

Conclusion on Stock Status

There has been a steady improvement in sole stock status over the last two years. Fishing mortality has decreased sharply and is now within the estimated Fmsy range 0.2-0.25. Spawning stock biomass had been fluctuating at or around Bpa since 2009 but has increased sharply in the last two years as a result of the decrease

	in F. SSB is well above MSY Btrigger and expected to remain high under the existing management plan.
Total Allowable Catch (TAC) in most recent fishing year	14,000t in 2013
Unit of Certification share of TAC	0.1% of the Dutch quota 0.09 of North Sea TAC
Client share of TAC	77.6% of North Sea TAC (10,861t of 14,000t)
Green Weight² of catch taken by client group	12.9t

²The weight of a catch prior to processing

Condition 1	Reduce fishing mortality on sole to achieve B_{MSY} target
UoCs	All sole UoCs (10-15)
PI	1.1.1 (stock status) The stock is at a level which maintains high productivity and has a low probability of recruitment overfishing
SG 60	It is likely that the stock is above the point where recruitment would be impaired.
SG 80	It is highly likely that the stock is above the point where recruitment would be impaired. The stock is at or fluctuating around its target reference point.
SG 100	There is a high degree of certainty that the stock is above the point where recruitment would be impaired. There is a high degree of certainty that the stock has been fluctuating around its target reference point, or has been above its target reference point, over recent years
Score	70
Scoring Rationale	It is highly likely that the stock is above the point where recruitment would be impaired (SG80) but the stock is not at or fluctuating around its target reference point (SG80).
Condition	To ensure that the stock is at or fluctuating around its target reference point.
Timing	Evidence of engagement with relevant parties on this subject (yr1, yr2 surveillance) Evidence of stock at or around reference point (yr 3 surveillance)
Client Action Plan	1.1 The CVO will engage with Dutch authorities and discuss how the reductions in F under the LTMP can most effectively be achieved. 1.2 The CVO will present evidence of these discussions
Client Progress	Direct letter to management authorities provided to assessment team. Several discussions through the RACs on stage 2 of the management plan to reach MSY level. Objective is MSY by 2015 unless socio-economic issues then not later than 2020 – think we are on the right path to achieve this.
Observations	The stock is well above the reference point below which risk of recruitment failure may occur (B _{lim}) and has been above MSY B _{trigger} for two years. Fishing mortality has decreased steadily and is at or close to F _{msy} . In this situation, it is highly likely that the stock is above the point where recruitment would be impaired (SG 80). To meet the second guideline at SG 80, the stock should be at or fluctuating around its target reference point. This guideline is met in terms of F which was at or close to the LTMP reference level (0.2) in 2012 and within the range for F _{msy} (0.2-0.25). In terms of the biomass reference level, there are uncertainties about the precise level of B _{msy} , but it is considered that the SSB has been above MSY B _{trigger} in 2012 and 2013 and is expected to remain at a similar level under the LTMP in 2014-15. Taken together these indicators suggest that the current position of the stock satisfies the second guideline at SG80.

Conclusion	In view of the improved score, this condition has been met and is now closed. Score 80
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Condition2	Stock rebuilding strategy to achieve B_{MSY} target
UoCs	10-15 (all sole UoCs)
PI	1.1.3 (stock rebuilding strategy) Where the stock is depleted, there is evidence of stock rebuilding.
SG 60	Where stocks are depleted rebuilding strategies which have a reasonable expectation of success are in place. Monitoring is in place to determine whether they are effective in rebuilding the stock within a specified timeframe.
SG 80	Where stocks are depleted rebuilding strategies are in place. There is evidence that they are rebuilding stocks, or it is highly likely based on simulation modelling or previous performance that they will be able to rebuild the stock within a specified timeframe.
SG 100	Where stocks are depleted, strategies are demonstrated to be rebuilding stocks continuously and there is strong evidence that rebuilding will be complete within the shortest practicable timeframe.
Scoring	70
Rationale	Although fishing mortality has declined in recent years, it remains close to F_{pa} and has not yet reached a level consistent with MSY ($F_{msy}=0.22$). Under the EU long-term management plan for plaice and sole, a rebuilding strategy is in place which aims at an annual 10% reduction in fishing mortality in relation the fishing mortality estimated for the preceding year until an F of 0.2 is reached, with a maximum change in TAC of 15%. ICES has evaluated this plan and concluded that it leads on average to a low risk of $B < B_{lim}$ within the next 10 years. ICES concluded that the management plan could be provisionally accepted as precautionary. This meets the first scoring guideline at SG80. Given the SSB and fishing mortality levels outlined above, however, and that simulation modelling (Froese&Proelß, 2010) suggests that the North Sea sole stock is unlikely to rebuild under current levels of fishing exploitation by the specified timeframe of 2015, the second scoring guideline at SG80 is not met.
Condition	Ensure that where stocks are depleted, rebuilding strategies are in place and present evidence that they are rebuilding stocks, or it is highly likely based on simulation modelling or previous performance that they will be able to rebuild the stock within a specified timeframe.
Timing	Yr1 surveillance present evidence of discussions and assessment of stock rebuilding. Within 4 years F at or below F_{MSY} should be reached.
Client Action Plan	2.1 The CVO will engage with Dutch authorities to assess the rebuilding strategy and reductions in F under the LTMP and determine if further action is needed. 2.2 The CVO will present evidence of these discussions 2.3 The CVO will present evidence of the outcome of stock rebuilding and if not at or above target reference points, evidence that the strategy is highly likely to work.
Client Progress	See condition 1 above.

Observations	A rebuilding strategy in the form of the EU LTMP has been in place since 2007. This meets the first scoring guideline at SG80. The plan has been successful in reducing F steadily and in 2012 it was at or close to Fmsy. The SSB was initially slow to respond and remained fluctuating around Bpa from 2008-2011. However since 2012, SSB has increased and was estimated to be well above MSY Btrigger in 2013. This provides clear evidence that the stock is rebuilding towards Bmsy and satisfies the second scoring guidelines at SG80 and the first guideline at SG100. There is not yet evidence that the rebuilding will be complete within the shortest practicable timeframe and it is also too early to be certain how robust the recovery is. This does not satisfy the second guideline at SG100.
Conclusion	In view of the improved score, this condition has been met and is now closed. Score 85.

Condition 3	Improve information on plaice discarding
UoCs	all UoCs (1-15)
PI	1.2.3 Relevant information is collected to support the harvest strategy
SG 60	Some relevant information related to stock structure, stock productivity and fleet composition is available to support the harvest strategy. Stock abundance and fishery removals are monitored and at least one indicator is available and monitored with sufficient frequency to support the harvest control rule.
SG 80	Sufficient relevant information related to stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition and other data is available to support the harvest strategy. Stock abundance and fishery removals are regularly monitored at a level of accuracy and coverage consistent with the harvest control rule, and one or more indicators are available and monitored with sufficient frequency to support the harvest control rule.
SG 100	A comprehensive range of information (on stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition, stock abundance, fishery removals and other information such as environmental information), including some that may not be directly relevant to the current harvest strategy, is available. All information required by the harvest control rule is monitored with high frequency and a high degree of certainty, and there is a good understanding of the inherent uncertainties in the information [data] and the robustness of assessment and management to this uncertainty.
Scoring	75
Rationale	Although sufficient relevant information related to stock structure, stock productivity, fleet composition and other data is available to support the harvest strategy and stock abundance, and fishery removals are regularly monitored at a level of accuracy and coverage consistent with the harvest control rule(SG80), there is insufficient information on other fishery removals, in particular discards of plaice. This has led to increased uncertainty in the ICES plaice stock assessment.
Condition	Together with Condition 4 & 5, develop & implement a sampling programme of full catch recording across a suitable sample of the fleet. This should enable robust assessment of the catch and discard levels in those UoCs where there is a high level of fishing effort and plaice discarding.
Timing	Year 1 surveillance: Installed within 6 months with data being collated thereafter.
Client Action Plan	3.1 CVO will request IMARES or another scientific institute to help set up a self sampling programme, consistent with the information requested by the certifier, in addition to the data that are already gathered in the IMARES discards monitoring programme. 3.2 This will work in conjunction with Conditions 5 and 6 (Improve information on by-catch, including ETP species) but target particularly vessels with high plaice discards rather than ensuring coverage of all UoCs 3.3 The skippers and crew of the CVO vessels will be trained in how to perform the self sampling. The sampling protocol and necessary administration documents will be provided by CVO. The collected data will be analyzed on a regular basis. The results will be

	presented annually in a report.
Client Progress	<p>3.1 – 3.3 A self-sampling programme has been set up based on the protocols developed for the Osprey fleet. Details of the training and sampling are given under client progress 4.1.</p> <p>In relation to plaice discarding, a total of 228 hauls were sampled from 13 vessels over 23 weeks of the fishery. This involved twin-rig 80 mm (41 hauls), twin-rig 100 mm (108), twin-rig 120 mm (46), flyshoot 120 mm (11) and outrig 80 mm (16). Discard quantities and percentages of plaice and all other species were calculated and presented in the report. Six vessels from the fishery (UoC) are also sampled as part of the IMARES discard programme and this will provide independent verification of the data in due course.</p> <p>Gears with expected higher levels of discarding were initially targeted as required under the action plan, and sampling from flyshoot 100mm, and outrig 100mm and 120mm has not yet been undertaken.</p> <p>The results from the gears sampled indicated that the 80mm twinrig gear had the highest level of plaice discards, 39% compared with 13.1% for outrig and 7.2% for flyshoot. There was also a difference between the different mesh sizes for twinrig vessels. The 120 mm gear had the lowest level of discards 7.3% compared with 9.9% for 100mm gear and 39.2% for 80mm gear.</p>
Observations	<p>The client action plan has provided detailed information on landings and discards of plaice from a wide range of gears in the fishery during the fishing season of 2013 (weeks 22-44). Sampling will be continued and over time all gear types in the UoCs that are operating should be sampled (some UoC units of were not operating in 2013). The client will review their sampling plan in the light of the programme undertaken by IMARES in order to ensure that there is coverage for all units with potentially high discarding in the UoCs, but reduce duplication of effort where this could occur.</p> <p>The client has therefore demonstrated that there is and will continue to be sufficient information to support the harvest strategy and provide good information on all fishery removals from the stock. This satisfies the requirements under SG80.</p>
Conclusion	This condition is now closed, though the data collection and sampling should be ongoing. Score 80.

Condition 4	Improve information on retained species
UoCs	Outrig 80mm UoCs 4 & 13
PI	2.1.3 Information on the nature and extent of retained species is adequate to determine the risk posed by the fishery and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage retained species.
SG 60	Qualitative information is available on the amount of main retained species taken by the fishery. Information is adequate to qualitatively assess outcome status with respect to biologically based limits. Information is adequate to support measures to manage main retained species.
SG 80	Information are available on the amount of main retained species taken by the fishery. Information is sufficient to estimate outcome status with respect to biologically based limits. Information is adequate to support a partial strategy to manage main retained species.
SG 100	Accurate and verifiable information is available on the catch of all retained species and the consequences for the status of affected populations. Information is sufficient to quantitatively estimate outcome status with a high degree of certainty. Information is adequate to support a comprehensive strategy to manage retained species, and evaluate with a high degree of certainty whether the strategy is achieving its objective. Monitoring of retained species is conducted in sufficient detail to assess ongoing mortalities to all retained species.
Scoring	75
Rationale	SG80.4 is not met: While there is sufficient data on the operation of the fishery in relation to retained species (i.e. logbook data), there is not sufficient data to detect any increase in risk level due to changes in outcome indicator scores.
Condition	Collect and analyse landings and discard data to determine the risk level that 80mm outrig gear poses to retained species.
Timing	Year 1 and ongoing
Client Action Plan	4.1 CVO will collect landing data of outrig vessels using 80mm mesh size. 4.2 CVO will set up a self-sampling program (see condition 5 and 6), which will also cover outrig with 80mm mesh size.
Client Progress	4.1 Total landings data from auctions for CVO vessels using 80 mm outrig trawls between 15 June and 30 Oct. 2013 have been compiled, and are presented in the following table (source: attachment G). 4.2 A self-sampling programme has been set up based on the protocols developed for the Osprey fleet. In May 2013, training sessions were held for skippers and crew in which a total of 18 fishermen representing 20 vessels were instructed in the on-board self-sampling methodology, procedures and the use of excel sheets etc for recording.

A summary of all landings and sampling is presented in the Client Surveillance Report (attachment G). A total of 228 hauls were sampled from 13 vessels over 23 weeks of the fishery, of which twin-rig 80 mm (41 hauls), twin-rig 100 mm (108), twin-rig 120 mm (46), flyshoot 120 mm (11) and outrig 80 mm (16). Discard quantities and percentages of all species (and undersize and marketable plaice, dab and cod) were calculated and presented in the report.

Discard data for retained species in the 80mm outrig gear show that the discards percentage of dab, lemon sole and whiting, in relation to their total weight in all samples were 19.2, 15.4 and 56.5 % respectively, whilst there were no discards of cod, turbot, gurnard, hake or brill.

English name	Scientific name	Dutch name	UK47	TX5	Total	%
Plaice	<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	SCHOL	190916	66065	256981	74,87
Sole	<i>Solea solea</i>	TONG	988	719	1707	0,50
Turbot	<i>Psetta maxima</i>	TARBOT	4544	3349	7893	2,30
Brill	<i>Scophthalmus rhombus</i>	GRIET	1220	461	1681	0,49
Anglerfish	<i>Lophius piscatorius</i>	ZEEDUIVEL	471	0	471	0,14
Lemon sole	<i>Microstomus kitt</i>	TONGSCHAR	2514	337	2851	0,83
Red mullet	<i>Mullus surmuletus</i>	MUL	20	0	20	0,01
Catfish (Wolffish)	<i>Anarchichas lupus</i>	ZEEWOLF	57	2	59	0,02
Dab	<i>Limanda limanda</i>	SCHAR	7495	3335	10830	3,16
Flounder	<i>Platichthys flesus</i>	BOT	93	11	104	0,03
Cod	<i>Gadus morhua</i>	KABELJAUW	2871	314	3185	0,93
Whiting	<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	WIJTING	165	256	421	0,12
Haddock	<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	SCHELVIS	102	4	106	0,03
Red gurnard	<i>Trigla lucerna</i>	RODE POON	233	267	500	0,15
Saithe	<i>Pollachius vires</i>	ZWARTE KOOLVIS	7	0	7	0,00
Pollack	<i>Pollachius pollachius</i>	WITTE KOOLVIS	2	0	2	0,00
Mackerel	<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	MAKREEL	171	0	171	0,05
Grey gurnard	<i>Eutrigla gurnardus</i>	ZWARTE POON	507	1056	1563	0,46
Megrim	<i>Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis</i>	SCHARTONG	4	0	4	0,00
Spotted ray	<i>Raja montagui</i>	GLADDE ROG	6	72	78	0,02
Thornback ray	<i>Raja clavata</i>	STEKELROG	30	0	30	0,01
Hake	<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	HEEK	1534	511	2045	0,60
Witch	<i>Glyptocephalus cynoglossus</i>	WITJE	572	0	572	0,17
John dory	<i>Zeus faber</i>	ZONNEVIS	0	0	0	0,00
Ling	<i>Molva molva</i>	LENG	114	0	114	0,03
Greater weever	<i>Trachinus draco</i>	PIETERMAN	13	0	13	0,00
Bib	<i>Trisopterus luscus</i>	STEENWIJTING	0	0	0	0,00
Norway lobster	<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	NOORDSE KREEFT	19984	23767	43751	12,75
Squid	<i>Loligo vulgaris</i>	PIJLINKTVIS	11		11	0,00
Whelk	<i>Buccinum undatum</i>	WULK	1314		1314	0,38
Lobster	<i>Homarus vulgaris</i>	KREEFT	4		4	0,00
Brown crab	<i>Cancer pagurus</i>	KRAB	830		830	0,24
Mix		VARIA / BIJVANGST	20	5884	5904	1,72
TOTAL			236812	106410	343222	100

Observations

The client action plan has been carried out as required, and landings data of outrig vessels using 80mm mesh size collated and a self-sampling programme set up, which satisfies this condition. The information now available is sufficient to estimate outcome status with respect to biologically based limits for retained species and to support a partial strategy to manage them (score 80). Note no *Nephrops* in discard samples, though this species represents the only main retained species (>5% of total catch) in the outrig 80 mm UoC.

Conclusion

This condition is now closed, though the data collection and sampling should be ongoing in order to achieve a higher score (SG100).

Condition5	Improve information on all by-catch
UoCs	All UoCs (1-15)
PI	2.2.3 (by-catch information) Information on the nature and amount of by-catch is adequate to determine the risk posed by the fishery and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage by-catch.
SG 60	Information is adequate to broadly understand outcome status with respect to biologically based limits. Information is adequate to support measures to manage by-catch.
SG 80	Qualitative information and some quantitative information are available on the amount of main by-catch species affected by the fishery. Information is sufficient to estimate outcome status with respect to biologically based limits. Information is adequate to support a partial strategy to manage main by-catch species. Sufficient data continue to be collected to detect any increase in risk to main by-catch species (e.g. due to changes in the outcome indicator scores or the operation of the fishery or the effectiveness of the strategy).
SG 100	Accurate and verifiable information is available on the amount of all by-catch and the consequences for the status of affected populations. Information is sufficient to quantitatively estimate outcome status with respect to biologically based limits with a high degree of certainty. Information is adequate to support a comprehensive strategy to manage by-catch, and evaluate with a high degree of certainty whether a strategy is achieving its objective. Monitoring of by-catch data is conducted in sufficient detail to assess ongoing mortalities to all by-catch species.
Scoring	70
Rationale	Whilst qualitative information and some quantitative is available (directly or by inference) on the amount of main by-catch species affected by the fishery (SG80), and is adequate to broadly understand outcome status with respect to biologically based limit and to support a partial strategy to manage by-catch (SG80), it is not sufficient to estimate outcome status with respect to biologically based limits nor does sufficient data continue to be collected to detect any increase in risk to main by-catch species.
Condition	Develop & implement a sampling programme of full catch recording across a suitable sample of the fleet. This should enable robust assessment of the catch and discard levels in all UoCs active in any given year.
Timing	Year 1 surveillance: Installed within 6 months with data being collated thereafter.
Client Action Plan	The IMARES discard monitoring programme, in place since 2009, also includes flyshoot and twinrig vessels since 2011. As the information gathered in this programme is limited to a few ships, and does not include outrig vessels, CVO therefore will undertake its own additional catch sampling consistent with the IMARES discard programme. 5.1 CVO will request IMARES or another scientific institute to set up a self

	<p>sampling programme on a representative sample of the fleet. The sampling programme will be set up to be consistent with the information requested by the certifier, in addition to the data that is already gathered in the discards monitoring programme.</p> <p>5.2 The skippers and crew of the CVO vessels will be trained in how to perform the self sampling. The sampling protocol and necessary administration documents will be provided by CVO.</p> <p>5.3 The skippers and crew of the CVO vessels will be instructed and trained in the identification of Endangered, Threatened and Protected (ETP) species. All interactions with ETP species will be recorded on a special ETP interactions recording sheet.</p> <p>5.4 A manual (list of ETP species and identification tools) will be developed and kept on board of each CVO vessel.</p> <p>The collected data will be analyzed on a regular basis. The results will be presented annually in a report.</p>
Client Progress	See Condition 4 for details of self-sampling training and programme success. All data collected from twin-rig 80 mm (41 hauls sampled), twin-rig 100 mm (108), twin-rig 120 mm (46), flyshoot 120 mm (11) and outrig 80 mm (16) have been analysed and discard quantities and percentages of all species presented in the report (Attachment G). In addition, two observer trips were conducted in October 2012 on a vessel using 80mm flyshoot gear (not certified: source Discards Report).
Observations	This condition requires that a sampling programme is developed and implemented across a suitable sample of the fleet, which should enable robust assessment of the catch and discard levels in all UoCs active in any given year. This has been done for most UoCs, though no data are yet available for flyshoot 120mm or outrig 100 and 120 mm because they were not operated during 2013. We conclude that quantitative information is available on the amount of main by-catch species that is sufficient to estimate outcome status with respect to biologically based limits and to support a partial strategy to manage main by-catch species. Provided this programme continues (or IMARES implements a discard sampling programme with similar coverage of the CVO UoCs), sufficient data will continue to be collected to detect any increase in risk to main by-catch species. Score 80.
Conclusion	This condition is now closed, though the data collection and sampling should be ongoing.

Condition6	Improve information on ETP species
UoCs	All UoCs (1-15)
PI	2.3.3 (information / monitoring) Relevant information is collected to support the management of fishery impacts on ETP species, including: - information for the development of the management strategy; - information to assess the effectiveness of the management strategy; and - information to determine the outcome status of ETP species
SG 60	Information is adequate to broadly understand the impact of the fishery on ETP species. Information is adequate to support measures to manage the impacts on ETP species Information is sufficient to qualitatively estimate the fishery related mortality of ETP species.
SG 80	Information is sufficient to determine whether the fishery may be a threat to protection and recovery of the ETP species, and if so, to measure trends and support a full strategy to manage impacts. Sufficient data are available to allow fishery related mortality and the impact of fishing to be quantitatively estimated for ETP species.
SG 100	Information is sufficient to quantitatively estimate outcome status with a high degree of certainty. Information is adequate to support a comprehensive strategy to manage impacts, minimize mortality and injury of ETP species, and evaluate with a high degree of certainty whether a strategy is achieving its objectives. Accurate and verifiable information is available on the magnitude of all impacts, mortalities and injuries and the consequences for the status of ETP species
Scoring	70
Rationale	Whilst information is sufficient to determine whether the fishery may be a threat to protection and recovery of the ETP species, and if so, to measure trends and support a full strategy to manage impacts, there is insufficient data to allow fishery-related mortality and the impact of fishing to be quantitatively estimated for all ETP species.
Condition	Develop & implement a sampling programme of full catch recording across a suitable sample of the fleet, including all encounters with ETP species. All elasmobranch ETP species to be identified, recorded and returned to sea as soon as possible.
Timing	Year 1 surveillance: Installed within 6 months with data being collated thereafter.
Client Action Plan	The IMARES discard monitoring programme, in place since 2009, also includes flyshoot and twinrig vessels since 2011. As the information gathered in this programme is limited to a few ships, and does not include outrig vessels, CVO therefore will undertake its own additional catch sampling consistent with the IMARES discard programme. 6.1 CVO will request IMARES or another scientific institute to set up a self sampling programme on a representative sample of the fleet. The sampling programme will be set up to be consistent with the information requested by the certifier, in addition to the data that is already gathered in the discards

	<p>monitoring programme.</p> <p>6.2 The skippers and crew of the CVO vessels will be trained in how to perform the self sampling. The sampling protocol and necessary administration documents will be provided by CVO.</p> <p>6.3 The skippers and crew of the CVO vessels will be instructed and trained in the identification of Endangered, Threatened and Protected (ETP) species. All interactions with ETP species will be recorded on a special ETP interactions recording sheet.</p> <p>6.4 A manual (list of ETP species and identification tools) will be developed and kept on board of each CVO vessel.</p> <p>The collected data will be analyzed on a regular basis. The results will be presented annually in a report.</p>
Client Progress	<p>See Condition 4 for details of self-sampling training and programme success. The ETP species list used this year may have been superseded by new MSC requirements, and CVO will be informed of the new North Sea ETP list in time for sampling in 2014. The crews were instructed to record all encounters with ETP species throughout the year, though spurdog were only to be recorded when encountered in a sampled haul. Plasticized species identification sheets for ETP species, rays and sharks were made available to help species identification. All data collected from twin-rig 80 mm, twin-rig 100 mm and twin-rig 120 mm; flyshoot 120 mm and outrig 80 mm have been analysed and no ETP species were reported during fishing in 2013 (Attachment G). Only four elasmobranch species were recorded: spotted ray, starry ray, thornback ray and lesser spotted dogfish (in decreasing order of quantities caught).</p>
Observations	<p>A sampling programme that records all encounters with ETP species in catches taken by a suitable sample of the fleet has been developed and implemented, in which all elasmobranch and ETP species caught have been identified, recorded and returned to sea. This information is sufficient to determine whether the fishery may be a threat to protection and recovery of the ETP species, and to allow fishery-related mortality to be quantitatively estimated. Continuation of the sampling programme (or future use of IMARES logbooks to cover ETP species) will enable trends to be measured and a strategy to manage impacts (if necessary) to be supported (and a higher score achieved). Score 80</p>
Conclusion	<p>This condition is now closed, though the data collection and sampling should be ongoing.</p>

Condition7	Management of fishing effort in relation to habitat
UoCs	All UoCs (1-15)
PI	2.4.2 (Habitat management) Management of fishing effort in relation to habitat
SG 60	There are measures in place, if necessary, that are expected to achieve the Habitat Outcome 80 level of performance. The measures are considered likely to work, based on plausible argument (e.g. general experience, theory or comparison with similar fisheries/habitats).
SG 80	There is a partial strategy in place, if necessary, that is expected to achieve the Habitat Outcome 80 level of performance or above. There is some objective basis for confidence that the partial strategy will work, based on information directly about the fishery and/or habitats involved. There is some evidence that the partial strategy is being implemented successfully.
SG 100	There is a strategy in place for managing the impact of the fishery on habitat types. The strategy is mainly based on information directly about the fishery and/or habitats involved, and testing supports high confidence that the strategy will work. There is clear evidence that the strategy is being implemented successfully, and intended changes are occurring. There is some evidence that the strategy is achieving its objective
Scoring	75
Rationale	As the SAC management plans are yet to be developed, there is no evidence that the management of the habitats of concern (the partial strategy) is being implemented successfully. Interim management is therefore required to ensure habitat impacts do not increase through new grounds being targeted.
Condition	Until such time as wider habitat management is being implemented successfully, there should be a commitment by CVO members to operate in long-established fishing areas.
Timing	Assessed at year 1 surveillance audit and an ongoing basis
Client Action Plan	7.1 The CVO will present maps of fishing intensity of the different UoC's, overlaid with habitat mapping at the first surveillance audit 7.2 The CVO will review the maps and present these to relevant authorities and stakeholders to establish if additional interim management is necessary ahead of marine SAC management being implemented.
Client Progress	The client prepared comprehensive maps of fishing intensity, layered by the different UoCs and overlaid with habitat mapping for the North Sea, which showed the distributions by UoC in 2013 and in recent previous years (and in relation to proposed MPAs) (See Condition 8). There was no evidence of fishing in 2013 extending outside the areas previously fished. The CVO is using the information contained in these maps in ongoing stakeholder consultations (Natura2000 e.g.) about potential MPAs and closed areas in the North Sea as part of discussions on marine SAC management (though this is still not implemented).

Observations	This condition is on target, in that there is a partial strategy in place that is expected to achieve the Habitat Outcome 80 level of performance or above, which is based on information directly about the fishery and the habitats involved. However, there is as yet no evidence that the partial strategy is being implemented successfully. Score 75
Conclusion	Good progress has been made, but the condition remains open.

Condition8	Improve information on distribution of fishing effort
UoCs	All UoCs (1-15)
PI	2.4.3 (Habitat information) Information is adequate to determine the risk posed to habitat types by the fishery and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage impacts on habitat types.
SG 60	There is a basic understanding of the types and distribution of main habitats in the area of the fishery. Information is adequate to broadly understand the nature of the main impacts of gear use on the main habitats, including spatial overlap of habitat with fishing gear
SG 80	The nature, distribution and vulnerability of all main habitat types in the fishery area are known at a level of detail relevant to the scale and intensity of the fishery. Sufficient data are available to allow the nature of the impacts of the fishery on habitat types to be identified and there is reliable information on the spatial extent of interaction, and the timing and location of use of the fishing gear. Sufficient data continue to be collected to detect any increase in risk to habitat (e.g. due to changes in the outcome indicator scores or the operation of the fishery or the effectiveness of the measures).
SG 100	The distribution of habitat types is known over their range, with particular attention to the occurrence of vulnerable habitat types. Changes in habitat distributions over time are measured. The physical impacts of the gear on the habitat types have been quantified fully.
Scoring	75
Rationale	The nature, distribution and vulnerability of all main habitat types in the fishery area are known at a level of detail relevant to the scale and intensity of the fishery, although habitat data coverage varies throughout ICES Sub-area IV. Sufficient data are available to allow the nature of the impacts of the fishery on habitat types to be identified, though overlay mapping of the VMS fishing tracks with habitat maps is needed to identify the spatial extent of interaction, and the timing and location of use of the fishing gear. Sufficient data continue to be collected to detect any increase in risk to habitat (e.g. due to changes in the outcome indicator scores or the operation of the fishery or the effectiveness of the measures) and, due to the nomination of several SAC sites towards Natura 2000, monitoring of the habitat impacts of fishing in the central and southern North Sea is likely to improve over the coming decade.
Condition	Map fishing effort by each UoC overlaid on habitats map to illustrate ground types fished.
Timing	by Year 1 surveillance audit
Client Action Plan	8.1 CVO will request a scientific institution to make maps of UoC fishing effort based on VMS data projected on habitat maps. This will be done for the areas IVa, b and c. 8.2 At the year 1 surveillance audit the maps will be presented to the assessment team.

Client Progress	The client has prepared comprehensive maps of fishing intensity, layered by the different UoCs and overlaid with habitat mapping for whole of the North Sea, which showed the distributions by UoC in 2013 and in recent previous years (and in relation to proposed MPAs).
Observations	The assessment team was very impressed with the clarity and comprehensive nature of these maps, which allowed the distribution of fishing effort by each UoC to be viewed in relation to habitat types and actual or potential closed/restricted areas. The nature, distribution and vulnerability of all main habitat types in the fishery area are known at a level of detail relevant to the scale and intensity of the fishery, and sufficient data are now available to allow the nature and spatial extent of the impacts of the fishery on habitat types to be identified. Continuing work of this nature will allow sufficient data continue to be collected to detect any increase in risk to habitat. Score 80.
Conclusion	This condition is now closed, though the data compilation should be ongoing. Although annual mapping is not proposed, the data should still be collated in case future mapping is needed to inform habitat management (outside the MSC requirements).

Condition9	Remove discarding due to perverse incentives in the effort regime
UoCs	All UoCs (1-15)
PI	3.1.4 Incentives for sustainable fishing The management system provides economic and social incentives for sustainable fishing and does not operate with subsidies that contribute to unsustainable fishing.
SG 60	The management system provides for incentives that are consistent with achieving the outcomes expressed by MSC Principles 1 and 2.
SG 80	The management system provides for incentives that are consistent with achieving the outcomes expressed by MSC Principles 1 and 2, and seeks to ensure that perverse incentives do not arise.
SG 100	The management system provides for incentives that are consistent with achieving the outcomes expressed by MSC Principles 1 and 2, and explicitly considers incentives in a regular review of management policy or procedures to ensure that they do not contribute to unsustainable fishing practices.
Scoring	75
Rationale	<p>A ‘perverse incentive’ has arisen in overlapping effort management measures under the cod recovery plan and the North Sea flatfish LTMP. As days at sea are allocated to particular gear sizes, vessels in the UoC are encouraged to fish with a smaller mesh than they would choose to fish with. The result is a greater proportion of discards of target and non-target species than would otherwise be the case.</p> <p>It is recognised that this situation is the result of an EU-level management regime, which the UoCs must abide by. Effort management measures are revised on an annual basis. The fishery should, however, provide information to the relevant management authorities (including the catch profiling data proposed under conditions 2 and 3) to inform appropriate regulatory revision that removes the negative incentive.</p> <p>If the negative incentive is not removed by the proposed timescale, an alternative approach is required to deliver the same effect, namely a reduction in discards. This may be through alternative fishing practices such as changes to gear set up, location or timing, if those changes are permitted within the relevant regulations, the UoC and the Code of Conduct.</p>
Condition	<p>Provide evidence that data and information to encourage management revisions were provided to the relevant parties (nVWA, POs, Productshap Vis and North Sea RAC).</p> <p>If issue remains by year 3, provide evidence of reduced levels of discarding to TR1 levels through either removal of the negative incentive (enabling larger mesh sizes to be operated full time) or through alternative actions.</p>
Timing	<p>By year 1 surveillance audit: provision of data and information encouraging appropriate management revisions.</p> <p>By year 4 surveillance audit: evidence of reduced discarding levels across the fishery to levels equivalent to TR1 levels (100mm+ mesh sizes).</p>
Client Action Plan	9.1 CVO will undertake its own discard sampling monitoring as described in the Client Action Plan under conditions 3 to 6

	<p>9.2 The analysis of the discards data will include a comparison of the levels of discarding between TR 1 and TR2 (limited to the vessels concerned with the negative incentive).</p> <p>9.3 CVO will provide the relevant authorities with data and information in order to encourage management revisions to remove the negative incentive</p> <p>9.4 In case the negative incentive to use smaller mesh sizes is not removed before the third surveillance audit the CVO will identify the vessels concerned with the negative incentive and will implement alternative measures to reduce discard levels of these vessels of TR2 to TR1 levels.</p>
Client Progress	See condition 1 above
Observations	<p>The client has continued to discuss the issues of effort management requirements with the relevant management authorities at a national level and through the North Sea RAC. Vessels continue to fish longer in certain fisheries than they would choose to do otherwise as a result of the effort restrictions being placed on them.</p> <p>As described under condition 3 and as would be expected, discarding with 120mm gear was found to be less than with 100mm or 80mm gears. Dab and plaice dominated the discards in the 80mm samples.</p>
Conclusion	Good progress in line with the Client Action Plan, but the condition remains open (score 75)

Any complaints against the certified operation; recorded, reviewed and actioned.

No complaints against the certified operation have been received. Individual vessels fishing under the certificate have been inspected by the control authorities. A control report summarising the issues identified throughout the last three years was provided to the surveillance team. This illustrated that some infringements had occurred (mainly logbook offences), but appropriate action was taken. The summary report is evidence that compliance is generally good and there is no evidence of systematic non-compliance by those fishing in the certified fishery.

Any relevant changes to legislation or regulation.

There were no significant changes to legislation in the past 12 months, however two future changes are noted:

- The revised Common Market Organisation regulation is due to come into force from January 2014. This removes the option to withdraw fish from the market at a minimum price.
- The introduction of landing obligation (discard ban) as part of the Common Fisheries Policy reform is to be phased and is expected to impact these North Sea fisheries from 2016 onwards.

Any relevant changes to management regime.

The introduction of active management of European Marine Sites is expected to be agreed in the coming six months. This will close parts of fishing areas such as Dogger Bank to certain fishing gears, including bottom gear as operated by the UoC vessels.

Overall Conclusions.

The North Sea plaice stock is at historically high levels, while the sole stock (of concern at the time of assessment) has improved and fishing mortality is reduced under the management plan.

The following summarises the conclusions in relation to the conditions:

Condition 1 – improved score, condition is closed (Score 80)

Condition 2 – improved score, condition is closed (Score for 1.1.3 N/A as 1.1.1 now 80)

Condition 3 - This condition is now closed, though the data collection should be ongoing (score 80)

Condition 4 - This condition is now closed, though the data collection should be ongoing (score 80)

Condition 5 - This condition is now closed, though the data collection should be ongoing (score 80)

Condition 6 - This condition is now closed, though the data collection should be ongoing (Score 80)

Condition 7 - Good progress has been made, but the condition remains open (score 75).

Condition 8 - This condition is now closed, though the data collection should be ongoing (score 80).

Condition 9 - Good progress in line with the Client Action Plan, but the condition remains open (score 75)

As illustrated above, 7 of the 9 conditions are now closed as a result of the improved performance of the fishery and the information produced in response to the conditions. Good progress has been made on the remaining open conditions in line with the Client Action Plan. Data collection is expected to continue and may be enhanced through greater collaboration with IMARES on sampling strategy.

Annex 1

Written stakeholder submissions to the surveillance audit and IMM responses to points raised.

None received.

Annex 2**Notification of surveillance audit****CVODutch North Sea plaice and sole fishery****MSC Certification
Certification Body: Intertek Moody Marine****Surveillance Audit**

Following certification of this fishery, we are now undertaking the process of annual surveillance audits of the fishery. These audits have two principal functions:

1. To review any changes in the management of the fishery, including regulations, key management or scientific staff, or stock evaluation
2. To evaluate the progress of the fishery against any Conditions of Certification raised during the Main Assessment

During the audit, or at separate meetings, we shall be speaking with representatives of the fishery and fishery management organisations. We expect to carry out meetings on **26^h November**. Meetings will be held in the Netherlands and attended by Audit Team members

The surveillance audit will be carried out by replacement assessment team members who have undertaken surveillance audits of the fishery previously.

Rod Cappell	Coordinator / LA/P3	On site
Mike Pawson	P2	On site
Richard Millner	P1	On site

(see details of the team membership below).

Should you have any information on this fishery that you feel should be considered in the assessment, please advise us. We may be available to meet with stakeholders as appropriate. If you would like to arrange a meeting, please advise us of:

- a) your name and contact details
- b) your association with the fishery
- c) the issues you would like to discuss (in order for us to arrange appropriate representation)
- d) where and when you would like to meet

Please contact me by **26th October** with information relevant to this surveillance audit or a meeting request.

Yours

Rod Cappell
Lead Assessor, E-mail: rod@consult-poseidon.com
04.10.13

Audit Team Members:

Richard Millner (Principle 1)

Richard was assessor of the CVO North Sea Plaice and Sole and is a fisheries biologist with 34 years experience working for the UK government as an advisor on fish stocks. He has wide experience of flat fish and inshore fisheries around the UK. He has been a member of ICES working groups on flatfish and demersal stocks in the North Sea and was chairman of the ICES Beam Trawl Survey Working Group. He has carried out MSC peer reviews on a number of fisheries assessments including Hastings trammel and trawl fisheries for sole and twin-rig trawling for plaice in the North Sea. He has published on flatfish fisheries and the biology and growth of flatfish.

Dr Mike Pawson (Principle 2)

Mike was assessor of the CVO North Sea Plaice and Sole. He was a senior fisheries advisor at Cefas, Lowestoft, for 39 years carrying out biological research and providing scientific advice to Defra, the EC and other national and international organisations on fish stock abundance (marine teleosts, elasmobranchs, salmonids and eels), technical conservation measures and fisheries management regulations, and on related monitoring, sampling, survey and research programmes. Between 1974 and 1980, he initiated and led acoustic surveys for blue whiting and mackerel, in L. Turkana, Kenya, and trawl surveys in the North Sea (1975-1979), and then spent 1 year working as an UNESCO Expert in Ichthyology in Tripoli, Libya. From 1980 to 1990, Mike designed and managed MAFF's coastal fisheries programme, implementing biological sampling, trawl surveys, a fishermen's logbook scheme and socio-economic evaluation of sea bass fisheries, and between 1990 and 2000 he led the Cefas Western demersal team. Mike has provided scientific evaluation, quality assurance and advice to several national and EC-funded projects on fisheries biology, monitoring and assessment, and one of his major roles over the last 15 years has been peer-reviewing papers, reports and manuscripts in preparation.

Rod Cappell (Lead auditor, Principle 3)

Rod Cappell was an assessor of CVO North Sea Plaice and Sole, and is a fisheries management consultant with over 18 years experience in European fisheries. He has a degree in Marine Biology, MSc in Marine Resource Development and a postgraduate certificate in Environmental Economics. Rod is currently working in several areas of European and UK fisheries management including European Commission Regulatory Impact Assessments (Flatfish long term management plan, Shark conservation action plan); Stakeholder consultation on 2012 CFP Reform; Economic approaches to longer term UK fisheries management reforms for Defra; and is currently working with the fishing industry to assess the impacts of Marine Conservation Zones in UK waters. Rod has been involved with a number of MSC assessments including English Channel and North Sea flatfish fisheries, which has involved consultation with key stakeholders in the UK and the Netherlands.

Full CVs of team members are available on request from IMM

Annex 3**Determination of surveillance level**

A surveillance audit may be conducted as either an “on-site” or “offsite audit”. This is determined by using criteria set out by the MSC:

Criteria	Surveillance Score	CVO
1. Default Assessment Tree		
Yes	0	0
No	2	
2. Number of Conditions		
Zero Conditions	0	
1-5 Conditions	1	1
>5 Conditions	2	
3. Principle Level Scores		
≥ 85	0	
<85	2	2
4. Conditions on outcome PIs?		
Yes	2	
No	0	0
Total		3

The score for the fishery is used to determine the surveillance level appropriate to the fishery using the table below:

Surveillance score	Surveillance level	Years after certification or re-certification				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
2 or more	Normal surveillance	On-site surveillance audit	On-site surveillance audit	On-site surveillance audit	On-site surveillance audit & recertification visit	
1	Remote surveillance	Option 1	Off-site surveillance audit	On-site surveillance audit	Off-site surveillance audit	On-site surveillance audit & recertification visit
		Option 2	On-site surveillance audit	Off-site surveillance audit	On-site surveillance audit	
0	Reduced surveillance	Review new information	On-site surveillance audit	Review new information	On-site surveillance audit & recertification visit	

The CVO North Sea plaice and sole fishery scores 3 as two conditions remain open and the Principle 2 score remains below 85, and so will require an on-site audit next year