

# ICELAND RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES FOUNDATION



## ***Responsible Fisheries Management Standard***

A Tool for Voluntary Use in Markets for  
Products of Marine Capture Fisheries

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION of a Fish Stock as Having *“Responsible Fisheries Management”***

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## Foreword

The Standard developed and presented in this document is based on the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and on the FAO Guidelines for the Eco-labelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries adopted in 2005 and amended/extended in 2009, which in turn are based on the current suite of agreed international instruments addressing fisheries, in particular the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement, as well as related documentation including the 2001 Reykjavik Declaration on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem, as well as various other relevant documents from ISO and other sources.<sup>1</sup>

The standard is owned by Iceland Responsible Fisheries Foundation.

As per the FAO Guidelines for the Eco-labelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries adopted in 2005 and amended/extended in 2009, this Standard:

- Is consistent with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and other relevant international instruments.
- Recognizes the sovereign rights of States and complies with all relevant laws and regulations.
- Is voluntary in nature and market-driven.
- Is transparent, including balanced and fair participation by all interested parties.
- Is non-discriminatory, does not create unnecessary obstacles to trade and allows for fair trade and competition.
- Provides the opportunity to enter international markets.
- Establishes clear accountability for the owners of schemes and the certification bodies in conformity with international standards.
- Incorporates reliable, independent auditing and verification procedures.
- Respects that other standards should be considered equivalent if consistent with it
- Is based on the best scientific evidence available, also taking into account traditional knowledge of the resources provided that its validity can be objectively verified.
- Is practical, viable and verifiable.
- Ensures that labels communicate truthful information.
- Provides for clarity.

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<sup>1</sup> The development of the first version of this standard was facilitated by the Fisheries Association of Iceland (FAI). The FAI was founded in 1911. The following (non-governmental) organizations are members of FAI: Fisheries Iceland (SFS), National Association of Small Boat Owners (NASBO), The Icelandic Seamen's Federation (SSI), The Federation of General and Special Workers in Iceland (SGS), The Icelandic Union of Marine Engineers and Metal Technicians (VM), The Icelandic Ships Officers Association (FFSÍ).

- Is based on the minimum substantive requirements, criteria and procedures outlined in the FAO guidelines.

The Certification and Accreditation Programme is based on internationally ISO/IEC Guide 17065:2012 Standards, which assure consistent, competent and independent certification practices.

ISO/IEC Guide 17065:2012 accreditation by an IAF (International Accreditation Forum) Accreditation Body, gives the Programme recognition and a credibility position in the international marketplace and ensures that products certified under the Programme are identified at a recognised level of assurance. Demonstration of compliance will be through a rigorous verification and assessment by a competent, third party certification body.

The purpose of the Programme is to provide the fishing industry with a “Certification of Responsible Fisheries Management” at the highest level of market acceptance. Certification to requirements under the Programme will demonstrate a commitment that will communicate to customers and consumers the responsibility of fishermen and fisheries management authorities and the provenance of Icelandic fish.

The role of the certification body is not to interfere or advise on fishery management matters but rather to verify and record the evidence of how the fishery management system meets or does not meet the standard and to formulate a report for certification decision.

The Programme has **two complimentary standards**:

- Icelandic Responsible Fisheries Management Standard.
- Icelandic Responsible Fisheries Management Chain of Custody Standard.

Each is designed to be practical and will provide a means to bring together the many aspects of best practice.

The scope of the Programme and of the standards is limited to<sup>2</sup>:

- the fisheries of Icelandic vessels within the Icelandic EEZ
- the pelagic fisheries of shared stocks by Icelandic vessels in the high seas

The Programme is the direct result of pro-active discussions and interaction with fishermen, packers, processors, markets, regulators, standards and certification experts.

The Standard is based *inter alia* on the 2005/2009 FAO Guidelines for the Eco-labelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries and the FAO Code of Conduct

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<sup>2</sup> The Programme and the standards are not intended to certify/do not cover deep sea fisheries in the high seas nor enhanced fisheries.

for Responsible Fisheries. These FAO documents are themselves, the result of considerable international collaboration and cooperation in the elaboration of the definition and principles of responsible fisheries management through the FAO Committee on Fisheries.

A unique Certification Mark has been developed which can be used to signify compliance to the Responsible Fisheries Management Standard.

Through the Programme framework, the requirements for Certification of Responsible Fishery Management will be subject to continual review and improvement to ensure that it continues to serve stakeholder needs. Members of the Technical Committee serve in their individual capacity as experts in their field of competence.

## **Introduction**

This document sets out the requirements that must be achieved for certification against the Responsible Fishery Management Standard.

A Technical Committee has developed and endorsed this Standard. The Committee had representation and inputs from throughout the supply chain and interested parties.

This document defines the requirements for certification of responsible management and fishing practices.

## **Scope and Applicability**

This document defines the requirements for certification.

The Standard will be reviewed by the Technical Committee on a regular and planned basis to ensure the relevance of the Standard with respect to stated objectives.

## **Third Party Assessments**

The Applicant is a Fishery, represented by a nominated person or entity who applies on behalf of the Fishery seeking certification. The nominated person / persons are responsible and accountable for the Application and must be able to facilitate necessary access to information, practices and relevant stakeholders.

The Applicant must be able to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of this Standard to become a 'Certified Member' of the Programme. This assessment will be conducted by an independent and qualified Inspection Body accredited to ISO/IEC Guide 17065:2012 requirements.

The frequency of assessment to maintain certified status will be agreed by the Technical Committee in conjunction with the certification body and accreditation body.

This will be based on the Applicants' demonstrated ability to consistently comply with the Iceland Responsible Fisheries Management Standard.

Normally the frequency of assessment will be:

One full assessment every five years;

Annual surveillance audit.

## **Further Information**

Further information regarding application, rules and regulations of the programme can be obtained from:

**Contact Addresses:**

**Iceland Responsible Fisheries Foundation**  
**Grandagarður 16,**  
**101 Reykjavík,**  
**Iceland**

**Global Trust Certification Ltd.**  
**Quay Street Business Park,**  
**Dundalk,**  
**Ireland**

## Normative References

The normative documents which this Standard draws upon include:

- **FAO (2005/2009) Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products From Marine Capture Fisheries**
- **1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (FAO CCRF)**

also

- 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
- Implementation of the International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries No. 9.
- EC Regulation 1005/2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- ISO/IEC Guide 14024:1999. Environmental labels and declarations - Type 1 environmental labeling - Principles and procedures.
- ISO/IEC Guide 59 CODE of good practice for Standardization, and the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement Annex 3 Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards, for the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Second Triennial Review Annex 4, Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides.

## Legal references

Applicants must fully meet the legal obligations that are in place for the jurisdiction(s) where seafood is harvested, produced and supplied to be considered for certification.

Certification of an Applicant Fishery does not place any liability on IRFF or any associated body involved in the development, implementation, auditing and issuing of certificates of this Programme brought about through failure of an Applicant to meet their legal obligations.

## Definitions

### ***Applicant***

The Fishery must nominate a competent Management Representative (Applicant) that is responsible for:

- The Application submission
- Communication with the Certification Body
- Adherence to the requirements of the Standard and Certification Programme



### ***Unit of Certification***

The unit of certification is a Specific Icelandic Fishery (e.g. Cod, Haddock etc) for which certification is sought, as specified by the stakeholders (Applicant) who are seeking certification.

Certification will normally refer to a National Fishery where the geographic distribution of the stock occurs within the jurisdiction of Icelandic fisheries management.

The certification could encompass the whole fishery, where a fishery refers to the activity of one or more particular gear-type(s) or method leading to the harvest of one or more species; however, in certain cases, the unit of certification could also include a sub-component of a fishery, for example a national fleet fishing a shared stock; or several fisheries operating on the same resources.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Stock under Consideration***

The stock under consideration exploited by this fishery (unit of certification) may be one or more biological stocks as specified by the stakeholders for certification.

The certification applies only to products derived from the stock under consideration<sup>4</sup>.

In assessing compliance with this Standard, the impacts on the stock under consideration of all the fisheries utilizing that stock under consideration over its entire area of distribution are to be considered.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Fisheries Management Plan (FMP)***

A fisheries management plan is an administrative instrument for long-term strategic management of fishery resources.

The fisheries management plan identifies the partners in the fishery and their respective roles, the objectives for the fishery and specifies the management rules.

### ***Official Central Database***

The official central database, in the context of this Standard, is a database maintained by the competent fisheries management authorities for management purposes. The official central database is used for prompt recording and continual updating of the following minimum information: a list of the fishing vessels authorised to participate in the different fisheries in the jurisdiction area; the conditions of vessels' fishing permits, including the amounts of authorised catches for each vessel or vessel group by species in the management period; the amounts of fish landed by each vessel at each landing by species, area, vessel and date; any transfer of quota between vessels; and the quota remaining at each time by species for each vessel or vessel group.

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<sup>3</sup>FAO 2005/2009 Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries.

<sup>4</sup>FAO 2005/2009 Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries, paragraph 30.<sup>5</sup>FAO 2005/2009 Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries.

<sup>5</sup>FAO 2005/2009 Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries.

## SECTION 1: FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

### 1.1 *Fisheries Management System and Plan for Stock Assessment, Research, Advice and Harvest Controls*

#### *The fisheries management system*

- 1.1.1 A **structured** fisheries management system shall be adopted and implemented and have the **objective** to limit the total annual catch from the fish stocks so that catches are in conformity with amounts allowed by the competent authorities.
- 1.1.2 **Appropriate measures** for the conservation and sustainable use of the “stock under consideration” shall be **adopted** and **effectively implemented** by the competent authorities.
- 1.1.3 The Standard does not recognise fishing practices that are prohibited such as dynamiting, poisoning and other comparable destructive fishing practices.
- 1.1.4 **Transparency** in the fisheries management and related decision-making process shall be ensured.
- 1.1.5 Fisheries shall be regulated in such a way as to avoid the risk of conflict among fishers using different vessels, gear and fishing methods. Where conflict arises appropriate venues and means shall be available for conflict resolution.

#### *The Fisheries Management Plan*

- 1.1.6 Fishing for the “stock under consideration” shall be managed by the competent authorities in accordance with a **documented and publicly available** Fisheries Management Plan.<sup>6</sup>
- 1.1.7 The Fisheries Management Plan developed and adopted by the competent authorities shall be formulated with due consideration to the following:
  - 1.1.7.1 The management unit;
  - 1.1.7.2 Specification of stock or component stocks of “stock under consideration”;
  - 1.1.7.3 Jurisdiction areas and the respective competent authorities for the entire range of component stock(s) of “stock under consideration”;
  - 1.1.7.4 The long-term harvesting policy, consistent with achieving optimum utilization, including the means for assurance of its consistency with the precautionary approach to fisheries management.

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<sup>6</sup> FAO Code of Conduct, art. 7.3.3.

1.1.8 The Fisheries Management Plan shall specify:

- 1.1.8.1 The long term objective(s) of the fisheries management, including target(s) for stock biomass and target value(s) or range(s) for fishing mortality or its proxy;
- 1.1.8.2 Limits with respect to precautionary management, including the limit reference point for stock size or its proxy and the limit reference point for fishing mortality or its proxy (e.g. harvest as a proportion of stock size, etc.)<sup>7</sup>, as well as remedial action to be taken if limits are approached or exceeded;
- 1.1.8.3 The applicable harvest control framework or harvest control rule, as appropriate.
- 1.1.8.4 The primary approach applied to managing the fisheries (e.g. input controls, output controls, etc.).

1.1.9 The Fisheries Management Plan shall also consider the following:

- 1.1.9.1 The specific management method/approach or measures, according to fleet or jurisdiction or other relevant variables as appropriate;
- 1.1.9.2 Any further measures which support meeting the management objectives;
- 1.1.9.3 The institution(s) or arrangement(s) responsible for providing stock assessment and advice;
- 1.1.9.4 A description of the process for making decisions on Total Allowable Catch (TAC) – how and on what basis management decisions are made;
- 1.1.9.5 Provisions for considerations and consultation with the fishing industry and relevant authorities.
- 1.1.9.6 The means of implementing the management approach, including main provisions for monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement;
- 1.1.9.7 The objectives and management measures relevant to ecosystem effects of the fishery.

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<sup>7</sup> [ $F_{lim}$  can be explicit, or implicit in cases where harvest rate is set annually to a precautionary  $F_{target}$  (or its proxy)]

## **1.2 Research and Assessment**

- 1.2.1 A competent research institute or arrangement shall collect and/or compile the necessary data and carry out scientific research and assessment of the state of fish stocks and the condition of the ecosystem. Research results shall be made public in a timely and readily understood fashion. In the course of research and stock assessment, relevant traditional, fisher and/or community information and/or knowledge shall be sought by the researchers through appropriate means/fora.
- 1.2.2 The relevant data collected/compiled shall be appropriate to the chosen method of stock assessment for stock under consideration and sufficient for its execution.
- 1.2.3 Stock assessments shall be based on systematic research of the size and/or productivity of the fish stock(s).
- 1.2.4 For the stock under consideration, the determination of suitable conservation and management measures shall include or take account of total fishing mortality from all sources in assessing the state of the stock under consideration, including:
  - 1.2.4.1 Estimates of discards;
  - 1.2.4.2 Unobserved and incidental mortality,
  - 1.2.4.3 Unreported catches and catches in other fisheries.
- 1.2.5 There shall be active collaboration with international scientific organisations, with the aim of ensuring that the focus is on internationally acknowledged research and assessment methods that provide the best available information on the condition of the stock under consideration at any time.
- 1.2.6 In cases where the stock under consideration is a shared stock or a straddling stock or a highly migratory stock, there shall be scientific cooperation at the relevant bilateral, regional or international level for obtaining data and/or conducting stock assessments and/or providing advice, as appropriate.

### **1.3 Stock under Consideration, Harvesting Policy and the Precautionary Approach**

#### **1.3.1 The precautionary approach**

- 1.3.1.1 The precautionary approach<sup>8</sup> **shall be implemented** to protect the stock under consideration.
- 1.3.1.2 The stock under consideration shall not be overfished to a level causing recruitment overfishing<sup>9</sup>.
- 1.3.1.3 Relevant uncertainties shall be taken into account through a suitable method of risk assessment.
- 1.3.1.4 Appropriate reference points **shall be determined** and remedial actions to be taken if reference points are approached or exceeded shall be specified.<sup>10</sup>
- 1.3.1.5 The **long-term harvesting policy shall be stated** in the Fisheries Management Plan.
- 1.3.1.6 The Fisheries Management Plan **shall specify** how the precautionary approach shall be implemented for the stock under consideration.

#### **1.3.2 Management targets and limits**

##### **1.3.2.1 Harvesting rate and fishing mortality**

- 1.3.2.1.1 The management target for fishing mortality (or its proxy) and the associated *limit reference point*, as well as the management action to be taken when the limit reference point is exceeded, **shall be stated** in the Fisheries Management Plan<sup>11</sup>.
- 1.3.2.1.2 If fishing mortality (or its proxy) is above the limit reference point, management **actions shall be taken** to decrease the fishing mortality (or its proxy) below the limit reference point.<sup>12</sup>

##### **1.3.2.2 Stock biomass**

- 1.3.2.2.1 The long term *management target* for stock size (biomass), either explicit or implicit depending on management approach, consistent

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<sup>8</sup> Referring to clause 29.6 of the FAO Eco-labelling Guidelines for Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries

<sup>9</sup> „The ‘stock under consideration’ is not overfished if it is above the associated limit reference point (or its proxy).“ FAO Guidelines (2009), par. 30.1.

<sup>10</sup> FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, Article 7.5.2.

<sup>11</sup>  $F_{lim}$  can be explicit, or implicit in cases where harvest rate is set annually to a precautionary  $F_{target}$  (or its proxy)

<sup>12</sup> FAO Guidelines (2009), par. 30.2. See also footnote 9.

with the objective of promoting optimum utilization, **shall be specified.**

1.3.2.2.2 **Limits** or directions for stock size (or its proxy) with respect to precautionary management, consistent with avoiding recruitment overfishing, **shall be specified.**

1.3.2.2.3 **The stock (biomass) limit** reference point ( $B_{lim}$ ) **shall be developed** in accordance with internationally accepted practice.

1.3.2.2.4 Should the estimated stock size approach  $B_{lim}$  (or its proxy), then appropriate management action shall be taken with the objective of restoring stock size to levels above  $B_{lim}$  (or its proxy) with high probability within a reasonable time frame.

### **1.3.2.3 Stock biology and life-cycle (structure and resilience)**

1.3.2.3.1 Information on the biology, life-cycle and structure of the stock shall be taken into account when designing management measures to promote optimal utilisation of the stock with respect to resilience to natural variability and fishing.<sup>13</sup>

1.3.2.3.2 **Consideration shall be given** to measures designed to avoid excessive exploitation of spawning components at spawning time, as appropriate, especially at times when biomass (SSB) may approach the level of the limit reference point ( $B_{lim}$ ).<sup>14</sup>

1.3.2.3.3 **Consideration shall be given** to relevant measures designed to limit fishing mortality of juvenile fish, with the objective to protect juveniles, to reduce the likelihood of growth overfishing and increasing the contribution of year classes to the spawning stock of the stock under consideration.

## **1.4 External Scientific Review**

1.4.1 For the stock under consideration the harvesting policy (including its consistency with the precautionary approach), stock assessments and advice shall be reviewed, by request from the fisheries management authorities at appropriate, regular intervals as well as when substantive changes are made in harvesting policy by an appropriate international scientific body or committee.

1.4.2 Following external scientific review, the competent fisheries management authority shall **review and/or revise the harvesting policy**, taking into consideration the external review, as appropriate.

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<sup>13</sup> From FAO Guidelines (2009), para 30.3. The structure and composition of the “stock under consideration” which contribute to its resilience are taken into account.

<sup>14</sup> FAO Guidelines (2009), par. 30.3.

## **1.5 Advice and Decisions on TAC**

- 1.5.1 A competent scientific body, research institute, designated advisory body or arrangement **shall provide** the competent fisheries management authority with fisheries advice on the harvesting of the stock under consideration, in a timely manner.
- 1.5.2 Advice shall include the appropriate value(s) for precautionary reference points.
- 1.5.3 Decisions on TAC shall be taken by the competent fisheries management authority taking into consideration the entire distribution range of the stock under consideration, as appropriate, and for shared stocks the setting of TAC shall take into consideration international agreements and scientific advice.
- 1.5.4 The competent fisheries management authority shall decide on TAC within the boundaries set by the adopted harvesting policy.
- 1.5.5 Management measures for conservation and sustainable use of the stock under consideration shall be **specified** in laws and regulations.
- 1.5.6 Practical implementation shall be the task of (a) **designated** competent institution(s).
- 1.5.7 Decisions on TAC in the appropriate units shall be made and **implemented** in such a way as to ensure that the actual catch is as close to the intended catch as practically possible.
- 1.5.8 The competent fisheries management authorities shall cooperate and actively participate in competent Regional Fisheries Management Organisation(s) (RFMOs) or arrangement(s), relevant to the stock under consideration and management agreements reached shall be implemented by fisheries authority and effectively and uniformly executed.
- 1.5.9 In the absence of specific information on the stock under consideration, generic evidence based on similar stocks may be used for fisheries with low risk to that stock under consideration. However, the greater the risk the more specific evidence is necessary to ascertain the sustainability of intensive fisheries.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> FAO Guidelines (2009), para. 30.4.

## SECTION 2: COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING

### **2.1 *Implementation, Compliance, Monitoring, Surveillance and Control***

2.1.1 An effective legal and administrative framework at the local, national or regional level, as appropriate, **shall be established** for the fishery and **compliance shall be ensured** through effective mechanisms for monitoring, surveillance, control and enforcement.<sup>16</sup>

2.1.2 Laws and regulations concerning conservation and management measures shall be publicly available and effectively disseminated.

### **2.2 *Concordance between actual Catch and allowable Catch.***

2.2.1 **Concordance** between the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and actual total catch from stock under consideration **shall be ensured** through control, enforcement, documentation, correction and verification.<sup>17</sup>

2.2.2 Monitoring, surveillance and information feed-back shall be used to collate information on actual catch. Corrective management measures and/or appropriate adjustments in management decisions shall be implemented when the need is indicated by the relevant information.

2.2.3 Participating companies shall:

2.2.3.1 Ensure that they have been issued with all required permits;

2.2.3.2 Operate in compliance with the relevant rules and regulations;

2.2.3.3 Limit the catches of their vessels in accordance with their catch quota.

### **2.3 *Monitoring and Control***

#### **2.3.1 *Vessel registration and catch quotas***

2.3.1.1 Allocated catch quotas by species are assigned in such a way that the combined quotas conform with the currently effective decision on TAC.

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<sup>16</sup> 2005 FAO Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries.

<sup>17</sup> For long-lived species, this can include flexibility provisions such as legal allowance and adjustment for limited transfer of vessel quotas between adjacent management periods (years) as well as provisions providing incentives against discards.



- 2.3.1.2 Commercial fishing **shall be** solely conducted with **registered vessels** authorised to participate in the fishery by the competent authorities.
- 2.3.1.3 The catch quota of each vessel or vessel group for each fish species and fishing year **shall be** recorded in the official central data base in a transparent manner.
- 2.3.1.4 Information on the size and composition of the fleet of fishing vessels **shall be** available, documented and include the following provisions:
- 1) An officially maintained fishing vessel registry;
  - 2) Participation in the fishery must be subject to licence;
  - 3) Only vessels on the fishing vessel registry shall be authorised to participate in the fishery;<sup>18</sup>
  - 4) For the stock under consideration, the allowed catch by species for each vessel or vessel group **shall be** specified.

### **2.3.2 Fishing vessel monitoring and control systems**

- 2.3.2.1 A program for the monitoring and control of fishing vessel activities shall be operated and enforcement shall be in place to prevent fishing by unauthorised vessels.
- 2.3.2.2 The fishing gear shall be subject to inspection, as well as the composition of the catch and its handling onboard the fishing vessels.
- 2.3.2.3 Areas closed from fishing shall be monitored by authorities.
- 2.3.2.4 Catch amounts by species and fishing area shall be estimated and continually recorded in fishing logbooks on-board the fishing vessels.
- 2.3.2.5 Fishing logbooks shall be subject to unannounced inspection.
- 2.3.2.6 The timely and correct recording of catches in fishing logbooks **shall be** monitored by comparing the recorded catch amounts with the catch stored aboard the vessel at time of inspection.
- 2.3.2.7 Discarding of catch from stock under consideration shall be prohibited. Discarding that may occur shall be monitored, e.g. by estimating amount of catch discarded due to size based high grading by species, season, gear type and area as feasible. The method for the monitoring of discards **shall be** specified.
- 2.3.2.8 Vessels must comply with relevant national fishery management measures, which may include; TAC and quota allocations, effort

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<sup>18</sup> Foreign registered vessels may be allowed to fish in Icelandic waters by international agreement; such vessels require specific permit from the Icelandic authorities and their catches are strictly monitored.

management measures (e.g. days at sea, access limitation, gear restrictions, maximum allowable proportion of undersized fish, closure of areas with a high proportion of fish recruiting to the fishery, etc.), and technical conservation measures (e.g. mesh size and other gear selectivity measures).

- 2.3.2.9 Monitoring and control measures shall be in place and shall be conducted in a manner to encourage and demonstrate compliance (and deter unreported landings).
- 2.3.2.10 Catches **shall be** landed in authorised fishing ports. Authorised fishing ports provide the necessary facilities for handling and weighing of the catch.
- 2.3.2.11 In cases of mixed species catches, all commercial species shall be landed.
- 2.3.2.12 Landings shall be monitored. Harbor officials and fisheries inspectors shall monitor the correct weighing and registration of the catch.
- 2.3.2.13 Catch shall be weighed by species at landing.
- 2.3.2.14 The weight (whole weight or gutted weight) by species of all catches of stock under consideration and by-catch species **shall be** measured by authorised harbour officials at landing and recorded in the official central data base (date, vessel, gear type, location, species, quantity).
- 2.3.2.15 There is systematic monitoring of landing, weighing and registration of catches and discrepancies/deviations shall be recorded.
- 2.3.2.16 Reasons for deviations shall be analysed and corrections made to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.
- 2.3.2.17 In cases of passive fishing gear left unattended at sea, there shall be rules that requires fishing gear to be marked so that the owner can be identified, where relevant.<sup>19</sup>

### **2.3.3 Catches are subtracted from relevant quotas**

- 2.3.3.1 Landed catches shall be subtracted from the relevant quotas (allowable catch) of the vessel or vessel group.
- 2.3.3.2 Limited allowance may be made for the use of quota for one species to count against landings of another species, with the objective of providing the necessary minimum flexibility and discouraging discards.

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<sup>19</sup> This clause is applicable to gillnets, traps and pots.

- 2.3.3.3 When a vessel's quota is used up, additional quota must be transferred to the vessel from other vessels or the vessel stops fishing.
- 2.3.3.4 Transfer of quota between vessels shall take effect only after it has been authorised and recorded to the official central data base.
- 2.3.3.5 Information on each vessels catch quota and quota use shall be updated regularly and made public and accessible to all on the official web-site, thus ensuring transparency.

#### **2.3.4 Rules are enforced**

- 2.3.4.1 Rules shall be enforced. There shall be penalties for serious infractions.

#### **2.3.5 Analysis is carried out**

- 2.3.5.1 Analysis shall be carried out with the aim of detecting any deviations that may occur of the actual total catch from the Total Allowable Catch (TAC). Measures are available and are adopted when indicated.
- 2.3.5.2 Anyone purchasing and/or selling catches shall be obligated to present reports to the appropriate authorities, containing information on the purchase, sale and other disposition of fish catches. If analysis reveals discrepancy between the information stated in the reports and the information received from the harbour weighing, corrective measures shall be taken when this is deemed appropriate.
- 2.3.5.3 There shall be full traceability from catch, through processing, export and delivery on the market.

## SECTION 3: ECOSYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

### 3.1 *Guiding Principle*

- 3.1.1 Adverse impacts of the fishery on the ecosystem shall be considered and appropriately assessed and effectively addressed,<sup>20</sup> consistent with the precautionary approach<sup>21</sup>.
- 3.1.2 Those impacts that are likely to have serious consequences shall be addressed. This may take the form of an immediate management response or further analysis of the identified risk.<sup>22</sup>

### 3.2 *Specific Criteria*

#### 3.2.1 Information gathering and advice

- 3.2.1.1 Information **shall be** available on fishing gear used in the fishery, including the fishing gears' selectivity and its potential impact on the ecosystem. Stocks of non-target species commonly caught in the fisheries for the stock under consideration **may be** monitored and their state assessed, as appropriate
- 3.2.1.2 Information shall be available on the potential effect of fishing on endangered, threatened and protected species<sup>23</sup>, as appropriate and relevant in the context of the unit of certification.

#### 3.2.2 By-catch and discards <sup>24</sup>

- 3.2.2.1 Discarding, including discarding of catches from non-target commercial stocks, is prohibited.
- 3.2.2.2 Where relevant, appropriate steps shall be taken to avoid, minimize or mitigate encounters with seabirds and marine mammals.
- 3.2.2.3 Non-target catches, including discards, of stocks other than the "stock under consideration" should not threaten these non-target

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<sup>20</sup>FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, Article 7.2.

<sup>21</sup> In this context refer to 2009 FAO Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries, Article 31: Adverse impacts of the fishery on the ecosystem should be appropriately addressed. Much greater scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks. This issue can be addressed by taking a "risk assessment/risk management approach". For the purpose of development of ecolabelling schemes, the most probable adverse impacts should be considered, taking into account available scientific information, and traditional, fisher or community knowledge provided that its validity can be objectively verified. Those impacts that are likely to have serious consequences should be addressed. This may take the form of an immediate management response or further analysis of the identified risk. ...

<sup>22</sup> 2005/2009 FAO Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries.

<sup>23</sup> Species recognised by Icelandic legislation and/or binding international agreements to which the Icelandic authorities are party. Binding international agreements as applicable in Icelandic jurisdiction.

<sup>24</sup> See also section 2.3.2

stocks with serious risk of extinction; if serious risks of extinction arise, effective remedial action should be taken.

3.2.2.4 Suitable steps shall be considered to avoid, minimize or mitigate encounters with endangered, threatened and protected species, as appropriate and relevant in the context of the unit of certification.

3.2.2.5 Appropriate steps shall be taken to avoid the loss of fishing gear and ghost fishing of lost and abandoned gear.

### **3.2.3 Habitat Considerations**

3.2.3.1 If studies show that the spawning or nursery areas or other essential habitats in the fishing area are at risk and highly vulnerable to negative impacts of particular fishing gear, such impacts shall be limited in range relative to the full spatial range of the habitat or else action is taken to avoid, minimise or mitigate such impacts.

3.2.3.2 Management measures must take into account significant continuous stony coral areas, identified through scientific and formal methods.

3.2.3.3 Such areas shall be documented and protected through their closure to fishing, where appropriate, with gear that has significant bottom impact.

3.2.3.4 Known thermal vents structures **shall be** protected through area closure to fishing activities with gear that has significant bottom impact during normal operation.

### **3.2.4 Foodweb Considerations**

3.2.4.1 If the stock under consideration is a key prey species in the ecosystem, the harvesting policy and management measures shall be directed to avoid severe adverse impacts on dependent predators.

### **3.2.5 Precautionary Considerations**

3.2.5.1 Management plans shall be developed and implemented in a timely fashion for avoiding, minimizing or mitigating any ecosystem issues properly identified. These shall be based on risk analysis and scientific advice, consistent with the precautionary approach<sup>25</sup>, as being of serious concern in the fishery in question.

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<sup>25</sup> In this context refer to 2009 FAO Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries, Article 31: Adverse impacts of the fishery on the ecosystem should be appropriately addressed. Much greater

## **ANNEX 1. GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### **Accreditation**

Accreditation provides assurance, through independent assessment by a recognised accreditation body that certification bodies responsible for conducting conformity assessments according to Standards are competent to carry out such tasks.

### **Bycatch**

Discarded catch plus incidental catch.

### **Certification**

Certification is the procedure by which a body or entity gives written or equivalent assurance through a process of assessment according to defined procedures that an operation or activity under consideration conforms to the relevant certification Standards.

### **Discarded Catch**

That portion of the catch returned to the sea as a result of economic, legal, or personal considerations.

### **Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU)**

As defined by the 2001 FAO International Plan Of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.

#### **Illegal fishing refers to activities:**

- Conducted by national or foreign vessels in waters under the jurisdiction of a State, without the permission of that State, or in contravention of its laws and regulations;
- Conducted by vessels flying the flag of States that are parties to a relevant regional fisheries management organization but operate in contravention of the conservation and management measures adopted by that organization and by which the States are bound, or relevant provisions of the applicable international law; or
- In violation of national laws or international obligations, including those undertaken by cooperating States to a relevant regional fisheries management organization.

#### **Unreported fishing refers to fishing activities:**

- Which have not been reported, or have been misreported, to the relevant national authority, in contravention of national laws and regulations;

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scientific uncertainty is to be expected in assessing possible adverse ecosystem impacts of fisheries than in assessing the state of target stocks. This issue can be addressed by taking a “risk assessment/risk management approach“. For the purpose of development of ecolabelling schemes, the most probable adverse impacts should be considered, taking into account available scientific information, and traditional, fisher or community knowledge provided that its validity can be objectively verified. Those impacts that are likely to have serious consequences should be addressed. This may take the form of an immediate management response or further analysis of the identified risk. ...

- Undertaken in the area of competence of a relevant regional fisheries management organization which have not been reported or have been misreported, in contravention of the reporting procedures of that organization.

**Unregulated fishing refers to fishing activities:**

- In the area of application of a relevant regional fisheries management organization that are conducted by vessels without nationality, or by those flying the flag of a State not party to that organization, or by a fishing entity, in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures of that organization; or
- In areas or for fish stocks in relation to which there are no applicable conservation or management measures and where such fishing activities are conducted in a manner inconsistent with State responsibilities for the conservation of living marine resources under international law.

(N.B Notwithstanding this, certain unregulated fishing may take place in a manner which is not in violation of applicable international law.)

**Incidental Catch**

Retained catch of non-targeted species.

**Normative Reference, ISO/IEC Guide 17065:2012**

ISO/IEC Guide 17065. Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services. 2012.

**Precautionary Approach:**

The application of prudent foresight, taking account of the uncertainties in fisheries systems and the need to take action with incomplete knowledge in order to prevent undesirable and irreversible outcomes that may affect the long term conservation of the living aquatic resource.

(Adapted from FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries - Precautionary Approach to Capture Fisheries and Species Introductions – 2, Rome 1996.)

**Reference Points**

Biological Reference Points (Target and Limit), including proxies and indicators, used to define management action in response of stock status.

**Target Catch**

The catch of a species or species assemblage which is primarily sought in a fishery.,

**Target Reference Point (TRP)**

A TRP is a biological reference such as fishing mortality or biomass, which permits a long-term responsible exploitation of the stock, with the *best possible catch*. (Cadima, E.L. Fish stock assessment manual. *FAO Fisheries Technical Paper*. No. 393. Rome, FAO. 2003. 161p.)

**The Limit Reference Points (LRP)**

LRP are maximum values of fishing mortality which must not be exceeded or minimum values of the biomass, which must be conserved to ensure the capacity of self-renewal of the stock. (Cadima, E.L. Fish stock assessment manual. *FAO Fisheries Technical Paper*. No. 393. Rome, FAO. 2003. 161p.)