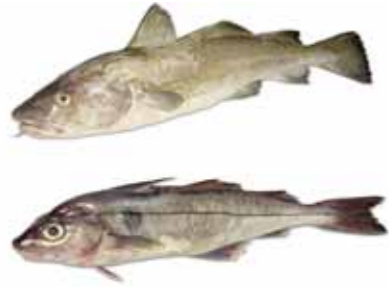


Domstein Longliner Partners North East Arctic Cod and Haddock



DATE CERTIFIED 27 February 2009

SPECIES Cod (*Gadus morhua*); haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*)

FISHING METHOD Longline

COUNTRY Norway



In the Norwegian Sea, in the southern Barents Sea and in the Svalbard area

FISHERY TONNAGE 5,000 tonnes cod (2009); 3,000 tonnes haddock (2009)

“FOR MANY YEARS now, Norwegian fish stock management has been considered the best in the world,” says Rolf Domstein, CEO of Domstein, the processor and exporter that manages these two important fisheries in partnership with the Ervik Havfiske longlining fleet. When communicating such matters to consumers far from home, the MSC logo has proved invaluable.

New markets

“In Norway, I think people have a lot of trust in the way our fisheries are managed,” Domstein explains, “but in more distant markets it is very important to have a neutral, third-party acknowledgment of that. We are getting lots of attention now in Germany, in Holland and in the United Kingdom. Indeed, Asda [the third largest retailer in the UK], to whom we have not sold anything before, began taking our MSC cod the very first week after certification.”

Domstein has traditionally made value-added products using the low-value parts of the fillet – but all that may be changing. “I believe we will sell more fresh fish in the future,” Domstein says, “and get even better prices. We do not need a price premium. If we can increase our sales volumes and get our fish into better-paying markets, we will achieve better economy without one.”

Sustainable fishing

The big gain for consumers is that they can buy Atlantic cod (a species of concern when discussing sustainability) with a clear conscience – thanks to exemplary stock management in the Barents Sea, under a joint arrangement between Norway and Russia. “We have always adjusted the fishing to the biomass,” Domstein says, “so the fishery has never been in the kind of crisis seen in other parts of the world.” In its report, the MSC certifier confirmed the stock “to be consistently maintained at levels above the precautionary limits”, meaning more than enough fish are left in the ocean for the species to spawn a healthy generation the following year.

In terms of selectivity, too, both fisheries performed strongly. “The fishermen know by experience what species they will catch at different times of year,” Domstein says – mainly cod from October to March and haddock in the summer. “They know which areas to fish and at what depth, and the size of the bait and hooks they use determines what they catch. Our bycatch record is very good.”

However, as part of their MSC action plan, both fisheries are required to provide “more robust estimates” of all bycatch, to help understand better the potential impacts on other species. In particular, a sampling programme must be developed and implemented within 12 months of certification, providing data that will allow scientists to assess the distribution, ecology and abundance of commercial and non-commercial species, mammals and birds.

Focusing minds on sustainability

“Every fisherman taking up a fish will be responsible for this reporting,” says Domstein. “They will be a lot more involved. Our whole organisation is more focused on making environmental improvements as a result of the MSC assessment. It opened our eyes, and we learned a lot. We always reported our catch in Norway – but now we will be reporting in a more formalised way.”

In other respects, too, Domstein is taking sustainability seriously. “We have always paid attention to fuel consumption because oil is one of our biggest cost elements,” Rolf Domstein says. “All our vessels use technology that boosts fuel-efficiency – but during the past year, we have become more aware of the pollution side, too, in particular our carbon footprint.” With this in mind, every seafood item that Domstein sells is subjected to life-cycle analysis to measure its CO2 emissions from raw material through to the finished product.



“ Because of the MSC logo, we are getting into more interesting markets paying higher prices. We are moving away from being a mass producer of a commodity, selling big quantities to big customers, towards working with smaller customers who specialise in sustainable seafood ”

Rolf Domstein, CEO, Domstein Fish AS, Norway

“ Asda and its customers support the MSC, whose ecolabel gives assurance on the sustainability of the fish we offer. We’re proud that we were able to bring the first MSC certified Atlantic cod and haddock to our customers, enabling the nation’s favourite fish-and-chips to be a green choice ”

Chris Brown, Head of Ethical and Sustainable Sourcing, ASDA