



Surveillance Report
Hastings Fleet Dover Sole Trammel Net Fishery

Certificate No.: **MML-FC-008**

Moody Marine Ltd.
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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 Hastings Fleet Dover Sole Trammel Net Fishery

Species: Dover sole *Solea solea*

Area: Within the Eastern English Channel (ICES Division VIIId) and specifically between Beachy Head and Dungeness and offshore to the six mile limit

Method of capture: Trammel Net

Date of Surveillance Visit:	03 - 04 November 2009			
Initial Certification	Date: 16 September 2005		Certificate Ref: MM-FC-008	
Surveillance stage	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Surveillance team:	Lead Assessor: Tim Huntington			
	Assessor(s): A. Hough and J Nichols			
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2.0 RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The second surveillance audit of this fishery (carried out in February 2008) reported the following conclusions: *“All the outstanding conditions of certification were closed at the last audit. Conduct of the fishery and the actions of the Hastings Fishery Management Group continue to meet the required standard. MSC Certification shall now continue at least until the next annual audit.”*

Item 1	Status of the stock
Observations	<p>Since the first Audit in November 2006 the ICES assessments of the state of the sole stock in Division VIIId have shown that it continues to be above the precautionary biomass limit, although ICES now warns that it is at risk of being harvested unsustainably. ICES currently classifies the stock as having full reproductive potential but being overfished. There have been large recruitments of the 2001, 2004 & 2005 year classes but the 2007 year class is currently considered to be the weakest in the time series. The SSB has been fluctuating around 10,000 t, well above the Bpa of 8,000t., since 2003. Fishing mortality has been above the precautionary approach level (Fpa) of F 0.4 since 2006 and in 2008 it was estimated at F 0.45. The fishing mortality which is consistent with taking a high long term yield with a low risk of depleting the productive potential of the stock is F 0.3. Current fishing mortality is well above the range that would lead to high long-term yields and low risk of stock depletion but is well below Flim of 0.55. The most recent assessment, in 2009, shows that the SSB was 10,607 t. Based on status quo fishing mortality in 2009 the SSB in 2010 is predicted to fall to 7,900t. The fishing mortality in 2010 should be kept at or below Fpa corresponding to landings of less than 3,190 t in 2010, which is expected to keep SSB slightly above Bpa in 2011.</p>
Item 2	Current advice
Observations	<p>The ICES advice for the 2009 fishery was for Fpa corresponding to a catch of 4,380t. At the December 2008 Fisheries Council the agreed TAC for sole in ICES Division VIIId for 2009 was 5,274 mt. This represented a reduction of 20% over the 2008 TAC of 6,593t. It should be noted that the recorded landings in 2008 were only 4,510t which is 32% below the agreed TAC. However ICES notes the ongoing problem of likely underreporting of catches by small vessels of the inshore fleets. The UK allocation of the 2009 TAC was 1,014t with 2,840t allocated to France and 1,420t to Belgium.</p> <p>The ICES advice for 2010 provides a range of options consistent with a precautionary approach. Fishing at, F status quo (0.47) is not considered precautionary and would lead to a catch of 3,650t in 2010 and SSB below Bpa. Fishing at Fpa (0.4) would lead to a catch of 3,190t whilst F max long term yield (0.27) would lead to a catch of 2,270t. Both options would lead to maintaining SSB above the precautionary level.</p>
Item 3	Any relevant changes to legislation and regulation
Observations	<p>Since the introduction of the Registration of Buyers and Sellers Act in 2006, regulation of the inshore fisheries sector in the UK has been tightened substantially.</p>
Item 4	Any relevant changes to management regime.
Observation	<p>There has also been a change in that Hastings previously received its quota allocations as part of the ICES VIIb-k, but since 2009 the area has been refined to VIIId only. The current (2009) cod allocation for the inshore fisheries sector in VIIId is 64.8 mt, which is allocated to around 339 eligible vessels. As of 4 November, 99.2 per cent of this has been used.</p>

Item 5	Increased discarding of cod
Discarding and issue of CAR	<p>The text for Performance Indicator 2.1.2.2 and corresponding Scoring Guideposts (SG's) is as follows:</p> <p>PI 2.1.2.2: Is information available on the extent of discard and slippage (the proportion of the catch not landed)?</p> <p>SG 60: Information is available of the extent of discarding and slippage, including an assessment of the main species represented.</p> <p>SG 80: Information is available to allow estimates of discard and slippage to be calculated and interpreted.</p> <p>SG 100: Accurate and verifiable information is available on the extent of all discards and slippage, and the consequences of these. Or the entire catch is landed.</p> <p>The original score for this PI was 80.</p> <p>As a consequence of limits on allowable cod landings, it is understood that discards of this species from this fishery have risen. Discarding mainly takes place in the months Sept – December as the cod move inshore and enter the trammel net fishery. There is some recording of this discarding as part of the a monitoring programme of the sole fishery for aggregate dredging interests, but this is limited to only 4 of the 27 boats fishing the certified fleet. This is in contradiction to the HFMG's Action Plan response to Condition 1 (recording of catches) in the original certification.</p> <p>The score for this PI is therefore now revised to 75.</p> <p>As a result the following condition is raised.</p> <p>The fishery maintains an average score for Principle 2 of over 80.</p>
Condition	<p>Condition: Recording of discards</p> <p>Action required: The rate of discarding of cod from this fishery once quota for this species has been exhausted appears to have risen. Discarding mainly takes place in the months Sept – December as the cod move inshore and enter the trammel net fishery. It is important that accurate reporting of all catches, including discards is recorded and made available to the relevant scientific agency, in this case CEFAS.</p> <p>Records of fish by-catch and discard should be maintained by species and approximate numbers or weight, and any other incidental catch (such as seabirds etc) should include numbers caught. Records should be kept on a regular basis e.g. monthly/quarterly. These records should be made available to relevant agencies on request.</p> <p>Timescale: Within 12 months</p> <p>Relevant Scoring Indicators: 2.1.2.2</p>

Item 6	Overall Conclusions
	All the outstanding conditions of certification were closed at the last audit, but it is apparent that the requirements to record discards (original Condition 1) is now not being fully complied with (see Item 5 above). Other than this, the conduct of the fishery and the actions of the Hastings Fishery Management Group continue to meet the required standard. MSC Certification shall now continue at least until the next annual audit, where compliance with Condition 1 will be reviewed.

Information Sources:**Reports**

M&FA UK Weekly Quota Uptake (<http://www.mfa.gov.uk/management/documents/Area-VII.xls>) as of 4 November (retrieved 9 November 2009).

ICES (2009). Report of the Working Group on the Assessment of Demersal Stocks in the North Sea and Skagerrak, 6 – 12 May 2009 (ICES CM 2009/ACOM:10)

Meetings

1. 03/11/2009. Steve Potter. Hastings Borough Council
2. 04/11/2009. Hastings Fishery Management Group, Hastings (Paul Joy, Graham Coughlin)
3. 04/11/2009. Hastings Fishery Management Group, Hastings (Paul Joy, Ken Moss)
4. 03/11/2008. Paola Serafino. MFA Hastings
5. 09/11/2008. Angus Radford. MFA Hastings (by telephone)

Standards and Guidelines used:

1. MSC Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing
2. MSC Fishery Certification Methodology Version 6. September 2006
3. TAB Directives - all