



Fair Trade USA

Capture Fisheries Standard

Version 1.0

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Introduction

Goal and Objective

The Fair Trade Capture Fisheries Standard was developed to provide the opportunity for fishers to demonstrate the core elements of Fair Trade in their practices, while helping them commercialize their product. The Standard is structured along the core Fair Trade USA principles that represent the main organizational objectives of:

1. **Empowerment**The Standard supports fishers to develop skills necessary to effectively negotiate with those who have an influence on the buying, processing, and marketing of their products. This is done through the process of organizing a Fisher Association, electing a Fair Trade Committee, creating a Fair Trade Premium Plan, and making decisions on how to spend the Fair Trade Premium.
2. **Economic Development**The Fair Trade Capture Fisheries Standard aims to increase the income of fishers by ensuring a transparent and stable trading relationship with their buyer(s) and by requiring payment of a Fair Trade Premium on every Fair Trade Certified™ product sale. The Standard establishes wage requirements for workers employed by the registered fishers and the certificate holder in order to increase their income. The Resource Management section of the Standard also aims to strengthen and stabilize fish stocks so the resource can provide a sustainable livelihood for the fishing community over the long term.
3. **Social Responsibility**The Standard protects the human rights of those involved in the fishery. For fishers and their employees, health and safety measures are established in order to avoid work-related injuries. Fishers are encouraged to use the Fair Trade Premium to provide greater access to, or improved quality of, healthcare and education.
4. **Environmental Stewardship**Independent fishers must adopt responsible fishing practices and protect biodiversity. This includes data collection and monitoring to provide better information on the state of fish stocks and mitigate the impacts of fishing, recognizing that small-scale fisheries often face challenges with data availability and management. A goal of the Capture Fisheries program is to have fisheries improve over time and eventually reach a level of environmental sustainability consistent with Marine Stewardship Council certification. In addition, the certificate holder and Fisher Association(s) work with government agencies and other stakeholders to jointly improve fishery management.

Structure of the Standard

The Capture Fishery Standard contains the requirements for participation of small-scale fishers in Fair Trade certification as members of a legal cooperative or through their partnership with a seafood importer, exporter, fish processor, or supporting organization such as an environmental non-profit, which functions as the certificate holder. In some cases, the certificate holder may choose to work with a third-party implementation partner. For example, the certificate holder may be a processor who partners with a local non-profit that works directly with fishermen and helps implement the Capture Fisheries program. As the certificate holder is ultimately responsible for compliance with this Standard, it is the certificate holder's responsibility to ensure the implementation partner is fulfilling its duties and undertaking the agreed upon tasks.

To participate in Fair Trade, fishers who are not already members of a cooperative form at least one democratically-run Fisher Association. The Fisher Association represents the views of fishers on any matters affecting their fishery, including:

- The requirements of the Capture Fishery Standard
- Any laws and regulations controlling the fishery
- General welfare of the fishers and their dependents
- Fishery-related infrastructure

The fishers must also elect an inclusive and participatory Fair Trade Committee. This Committee is responsible for managing and spending the Fair Trade Premium on behalf of the registered fishers (and workers within the scope of the certificate) and for tracking and reporting the use of the Premium. If the Fisher Association is already democratically controlled by small-scale fishers, then its leadership may serve as the Fair Trade Committee. The Committee is also responsible for working with the certificate holder and registered fishers to ensure the effective implementation of the Fair Trade Standard.

Scope and Applicability

The unit of certification for the Standard is defined as:

1. Groups of small-scale fishers. The fishers belong to a Fisher Association and have organized and elected a Fair Trade Committee to democratically make decisions about the use of the Fair Trade Premium.
2. The practices of individual fishers when they are fishing for those species (stock) covered by the certificate, including the vessels and gear that they use, the fishing grounds (habitat and associated species), and legal management framework.
3. The first processing facility, if the Fisher Association is not the certificate holder and if fish are processed in the same geographic region as where they are landed (i.e., before being exported).
4. Workers employed by the certificate holder and/or the individual registered fishers both on boats and on shore, as well as workers in processing facilities included in the unit of certification.

Compliance Criteria and Progress Requirements

In addition to this Standard document, we have developed compliance criteria which are available on the Fair Trade USA [website](#). The Fair Trade USA Capture Fisheries Standard takes a continuous improvement approach to development by differentiating between entry criteria and progress criteria. Entry criteria, or Year 0 requirements, are assessed during the first certification audit and represent minimum requirements regarding social empowerment, economic development, and environmental responsibility. These criteria are met prior to initial certification. Progress criteria are fulfilled after the first, third, or sixth year of audits as detailed in the compliance criteria. Progress criteria represent continuous development towards increased social empowerment and economic development as well as best practices in environmental stewardship.

Some compliance criteria have a qualifying statement at the beginning of the criterion that clarifies its scope and timing of applicability. For example, some of the Year 0 requirements cannot be fully implemented until the time of the first Fair Trade sale or the first Premium expenditure. In these cases, the requirements must be met as soon as they become applicable, which may be some time between the Year 0 and the Year 1 audits. At the time of the Year 0 audit, the auditor will determine whether the fishery will be prepared to meet these requirements when they become applicable. The auditor may ask for preliminary evidence to support

that determination. Certification bodies may conduct follow-up audits or request supporting documentation before the next full audit to ensure the compliance criteria have been met.

Where international, national, or local legislation goes beyond the Standard, legal compliance is required. Where the Standard goes beyond the legal minimum requirements, the Standard must be followed.

Key Associated Documents

In addition to this document and the compliance criteria (version 1.0), it is recommended the certificate holder be familiar with the following additional documents, which are available on Fair Trade USA's [website](#):

1. *Fair Trade USA Standards Glossary & Capture Fisheries Glossary*: These two glossaries include definitions of terms used in this and other key Fair Trade Standards and Certification documents.
2. *Productivity & Susceptibility Analysis Worksheet*: The Productivity and Susceptibility Analysis Worksheet may be used for data-limited fisheries to determine the vulnerability of a stock to fishing pressure. Additional information can be found within the Capture Fisheries Standard and compliance criteria.
3. *Certification Manual*: This provides more information on the certification process, including program prerequisites, a step-by-step description of the certification process, certification fees, and a procedure for complaints, appeals, and disputes.
4. *Price and Premium Database*: This includes the Fair Trade Premium as set by Fair Trade USA.

Certification Process

Certification decisions are made by third-party certifiers approved by Fair Trade USA, based upon compliance with the criteria found within this Standard as established in onsite audits.

Non-conformities with any subset of requirements may result in a decision to suspend the certification contract until compliance has been ensured or deny certification in the program, depending upon the severity and extent of the non-conformity. Some criteria are identified as “Major” requirements, which represent the fundamental Fair Trade values and principles. Non-conformities with any individual Major requirement are considered to be especially severe.

Fair Trade certification requires supply chain traceability. In order to use the Fair Trade logo and claim, all entities involved in the production, processing, manufacturing, and handling of the product need to be certified by or registered with Fair Trade USA. Individual fishers are required to keep fishing trip logs, and landing sites must record detailed information about catch and payments.

Finally, in recognition of the fact that most fisheries are publicly-owned resources (even if the right to harvest may be privately or communally held), the Resource Management section of the annual audits and related elements of the Corrective Action Plan are made publicly accessible for the scrutiny of interested parties. Any such public reports shall be modified to protect the identity of individual workers or fishers who participated in the audit.

Translations

In any case of conflict or disagreement between the different language versions of this document, the English version prevails.

Feedback

Fair Trade USA is open to receive comments and feedback on all its Standards at standards@fairtradeusa.org. As recommended by ISEAL, Fair Trade USA will review the Capture Fisheries Standard regularly, at least every five years.

1.0 Structural Requirements (STR)

1.1 The Certificate Holder (CH)

STR – CH 1

The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Capture Fisheries Standard, including related documentation.

STR – CH 2

Vessels used by registered fishers are legally registered and licensed.

STR – CH 3

A plan and systems are in place to ensure implementation and continuity of the Fair Trade program.

STR – CH 4

The certificate holder deals fairly with the Fair Trade Committee, registered fishers, and Fisher Association and supports their empowerment.

STR – CH 5

There is a functioning internal control system to facilitate compliance of the Capture Fisheries Standard and improvements in the Fair Trade program.

1.2 The Fishery Association (FA)

STR – FA 1

Fishers are empowered through their membership in a Fisher Association.

STR – FA 2

Fisher Association meetings adhere to agreed-upon rules, and communication and management of those meetings is effective.

STR – FA 3

Fisher Associations are represented by a leadership team.

1.3 The Fair Trade Committee (FTC)

STR – FTC 1

The fishers form one or more Fair Trade Committees to ensure democratic and transparent decisions about Fair Trade.

STR – FTC 2

Fair Trade Committee meetings adhere to agreed-upon rules, and communication and management of those meetings is effective.

STR – FTC 3

Registered fishers make democratic decisions concerning the Fair Trade Premium.

2.0 Empowerment & Community Development (ECD)

2.1 Development & Management of the Fair Trade Premium Plan (DM)

ECD – DM 1

There is a written assessment that outlines the needs of the fishers, workers, community, and the environment.

ECD – DM 2

There is a Fair Trade Premium Plan which details how the Fair Trade Premium will be used to address the needs of the registered fishers, workers, community, and/or environment.

ECD – DM 3

The Fair Trade Premium Plan is approved at a General Assembly meeting.

ECD – DM 4

The certificate holder supports implementation of the Fair Trade Premium Plan.

2.2 Fair Trade Payments & Premium (FTP)

ECD – FTP 1

A bank account has been set up to hold the Fair Trade Premium.

ECD – FTP 2

The Fair Trade Committee receives the correct amount of Fair Trade Premium in a timely manner.

ECD – FTP 3

The Fair Trade Premium is used according to the Fair Trade Premium Plan.

ECD – FTP 4

Communication about Fair Trade sales and use of the Fair Trade Premium is thorough and consistent.

ECD – FTP 5

Registered fishers are trained and empowered to fulfill their duties regarding the use and management of the Fair Trade Premium.

ECD – FTP 6

An accounting system accurately tracks the Fair Trade Premium expenses and budget.

3.0 Fundamental Human Rights (FHR)

3.1 NonDiscrimination (ND)

FHR – DAP 1

There is no discrimination against registered fishers, potential new program participants, or workers.

FHR – DAP 2

The use of corporal punishment, mental or physical coercion, verbal abuse, behavior, including gestures, language, and physical contact, that is sexually intimidating, abusive or exploitative, or any other form of harassment is not supported, engaged in, or tolerated.

3.2 Freedom from Forced Labor & Human Trafficking (FL)

FHR – FL 1

Human trafficking and forced, bonded, and compulsory labor does not occur.

FHR – FL 2

Workers are recruited through fair and transparent processes.

3.3 Protection of Children & Young Persons (PC)

FHR – PC 1

Children below the age of 15 (or below the working age defined by national law, if higher) are not employed anywhere in the operation. The minimum age for employment on fishing vessels is 16 or as defined in law, if higher.

FHR – PC 2

If children of the registered fishers below the age of 15 (or below the working age defined by national law, if higher) help their relatives with work after school and/or during holidays, the work does not jeopardize the child's wellbeing.

FHR – PC 3

Workers under the age of 18 have working conditions that are modified in consideration of their age and physiological needs.

3.4 Freedom of Association (FR)

FHR – FR 1

Freedom of association is respected and workers can freely organize.

FHR – FR 2

Individuals do not suffer repercussions due to organizing.

FHR – FR 3

Trainings are provided concerning freedom of association.

4.0 Wages, Working Conditions & Access to Services (WWS)

4.1 Conditions of Employment (CE)

WWS- CE 1

Workers have clear employment conditions, and all conditions are respected by the employer.

WWS- CE 2

Salaries and wages are decent, and increasing towards a living wage.

WWS- CE 3

Salaries and wages are paid directly, on time, and in legal tender.

WWS- CE 4

If fishers are paid a portion of the market value of the landed catch, the share-catch system and working conditions on board are agreed upon in writing among all parties involved.

WWS- CE 5

The employer complies with local law regarding the provision of social security, pension, and health and disability insurance. In cases where permanent workers are not entitled to health insurance benefits, the employer provides equivalent benefits in the form of private health insurance or comparable health services.

WWS- CE 6

Working hours are in line with local law and international standards, and workers receive adequate rest periods.

WWS- CE 7

Overtime is voluntary and not excessive.

WWS- CE 8

The use of time-limited contracts and subcontractors is limited and justifiable.

4.2 Occupational Health & Safety (OH)

WWS- OH 1

Workplace risks are minimized and employers take all appropriate measures to ensure they and their employees are safe from harm.

WWS- OH 2

Individuals have access to drinking water and sanitary facilities.

WWS- OH 3

Individuals have the training and information they need to keep themselves safe.

WWS- OH 4

Policies and procedures are in place to promote health and safety in the workplace.

5.0 Resource Management (RM)

5.1 Fishery Documentation (FD)

RM - FD 1

The fishery's primary, secondary, bycatch, and endangered, threatened, and protected species have been identified.¹

RM - FD 2

A Fishery Management Plan has been developed and implemented.

¹ Primary species: Any non-bycatch, retained species proposed as a unit of assessment for certification. Primary species may not be classified as endangered, threatened, or protected.

Secondary species: Any non-bycatch, retained species not proposed as a unit of assessment for certification. Includes all non-primary, retained species classified as endangered, threatened, or protected.

Bycatch Species: Species caught incidental to the harvest of target species (i.e., primary and secondary species) and not retained (discarded). Includes mammals, seabirds, and reptiles, and all discarded species classified as endangered, threatened, or protected. Bycatch species are not eligible for Fair Trade certification.

5.2 Data Collection (DC)

RM – DC 1

There is a system in place to collect fishery data necessary to comply with this Standard.

RM – DC 2

Systems are in place to control the quality of fishery data.

5.3 Stock Health (SH)

RM – SH 1

Protections are in place for endangered, threatened, or protected (ETP) species.

RM – SH 2

If overfishing is occurring, there is a strategy in place, and clear progress is being made to eliminate overfishing.

RM – SH 3

Fish stocks are assessed.

5.4 Biodiversity & Ecosystem Protection (BEP)

RM – BEP 1

The fishing gear used does not cause harm to marine habitat.

RM – BEP 2

Local ecosystems are monitored.

5.5 Governance (GOV)

RM – GOV 1

Illegal fishing is monitored and reported.

RM – GOV 2

The Fisher Association is actively involved in the management of the fishery.

RM – GOV 3

There is a procedure for resolving conflicts among the certificate holder, the Fisher Association, and the legally responsible agency regarding management of the fishery and the use of its resources.

5.6 Waste Management (WM)

RM – WM 1

Waste disposal does not threaten human health or the environment.

6.0 Trade Requirements (TR)

6.1 Product Traceability (PT)

TR - PT 1

There is a traceability system in place to ensure only fish caught by registered fishers are sold as Fair Trade.

TR - PT 2

There is documentation of all Fair Trade product transactions.

6.2 Contracts & Agreements (CA)

TR - CA 1

There are signed agreements with each registered fisher defining the Fair Trade program responsibilities of the certificate holder and the registered fisher.

TR - CA 2

There are signed agreements with each registered fisher defining the general terms of trade, including any share-catch arrangements.

TR - CA 3

A sourcing plan summarizing expectations regarding volumes to be sourced in the next six to 12 months is shared with the Fair Trade Committee and Fisher Association.

TR - CA 4

Interest rates and credit or pre-finance conditions are transparent.

TR - CA 5

All elements of contracts with Fair Trade buyers are fulfilled at the conditions agreed upon in the contract, unless changes to the contract are mutually agreed upon between the seller and the buyer in writing.

TR - CA 6

Within six years of initial certification, the Fisher Association negotiates an agreement on terms of trade for the duration of one harvest period on behalf of all registered fishers.

6.3 Contract Suspension & Decertification (CS)

TR - CS 1

When a certificate holder or buyer is suspended: Within six months, the contracts that have already been signed are fulfilled, and new contracts are only signed with the organization's existing trade partners (those who have entered into commercial transactions in the previous 12 months).

TR - CS 2

An organization stops selling Fair Trade products from the date of its decertification, even if it has signed Fair Trade contracts that are yet to be fulfilled.

TR - CS 3

Fair Trade Certified products are not sold to decertified buyers from the date of the buyer's decertification. In such cases, contracts that have not yet been shipped shall not be classified as Fair Trade contracts.

Appendices

Appendix A: Fair Trade USA Policy for Adding New Members to Capture Fisheries Standard Certificate Holders Between Audits

Purpose of Policy

While some organizations come to Fair Trade USA and SCS for certification at a point where their structure and membership composition is mature, in many cases applicant organizations are newly formed structures that are created with the intent to grow membership and sales.

This policy outlines the requirements for adding members between audits, and seeks to balance the risk of adding members that were not part of the audit scope and sample selection with the recognition that the ability to add new members and their corresponding sales between audits can increase impact back to producers.

The certificate holder may add new fishers between annual audits, provided the total number of new fishers added does not negatively impact quality control of either the fish stock or the health and safety of registered fishers and applicable workers. In addition, certificate holders need to comply with all requirements of the Fair Trade USA Policy for Adding New Members. The policy is presented below.

For new members to be added to the certification scope prior to the next audit, the following conditions must be met:

1. A new member integration policy is provided to the auditor at the time of the most recent audit or in follow-up with the certification body. The new member integration policy should include:
 - a. New member risk assessment and
 - b. Training materials for new members covering the requirements of the Standard, including the operations of the Fair Trade Committee.
2. At the time of the new member registration, or at an appropriate interval determined by the auditor, and prior to the subsequent audit, certificate holders shall provide SCS with evidence that the new member integration policy has been implemented with all new members at the time of their registration.
3. Certificate holders keep the member list updated, and SCS reserves the right to request this updated list between annual audits. The complete list of total membership is to be fully updated prior to the next surveillance audit.
4. All new members are included in the scope of the certificate at the same level as the existing members (i.e., if the group is at Year 3, they enter at the Year 3 compliance level).
5. New members are added only to existing Fair Trade Committees or geographic producer groups.
6. New members deliver Fair Trade product to existing collection sites.

Appendix B Data-Limited Stock Assessment Decision Tree

Introduction

This stock assessment decision tree may be used to determine which data-limited stock assessment methodology is most appropriate for your fishery. It outlines the appropriate follow-up actions and requirements based upon the status of the stock, and should only be used for primary or secondary species. This document should not be used for stocks with sufficient data to conduct a formal stock assessment. In such cases, a formal stock assessment should be conducted as outlined by FAO standards (FAO, 2003).

Instructions

1. Determine whether you are assessing a primary or secondary species. Secondary species classified as endangered, threatened, or protected should also be assessed using this decision tree if a stock assessment does not already exist.
2. Use the decision tree to determine the appropriate assessment method based upon your available data.
3. For primary and secondary species, conduct data-limited stock assessments to analyze at least three performance indicators (see Table 1). If possible, use performance indicators from different types of data to increase the assessment's robustness and decrease uncertainty. Ideally, both fishery-dependent (e.g., catch data) and fishery-independent data (e.g., visual or capture surveys) should be used. A rigorous interpretation of performance indicators chosen via a participatory process and based upon independent data streams is recommended.
4. Use Table 2 or Table 3 to determine the appropriate follow-up actions for your species.

Fish stocks must be assessed yearly. The same performance indicators shown in Table 1 do not need to be used each year, although continuity over time is recommended. As additional fishery data are gathered, the information should be incorporated into new stock assessments, thereby progressively increasing the robustness of each assessment. Furthermore, the performance indicators do not need to be assessed in a particular order. Where possible, use data gathered from the same location as the fishery rather than information from other regions or global data.

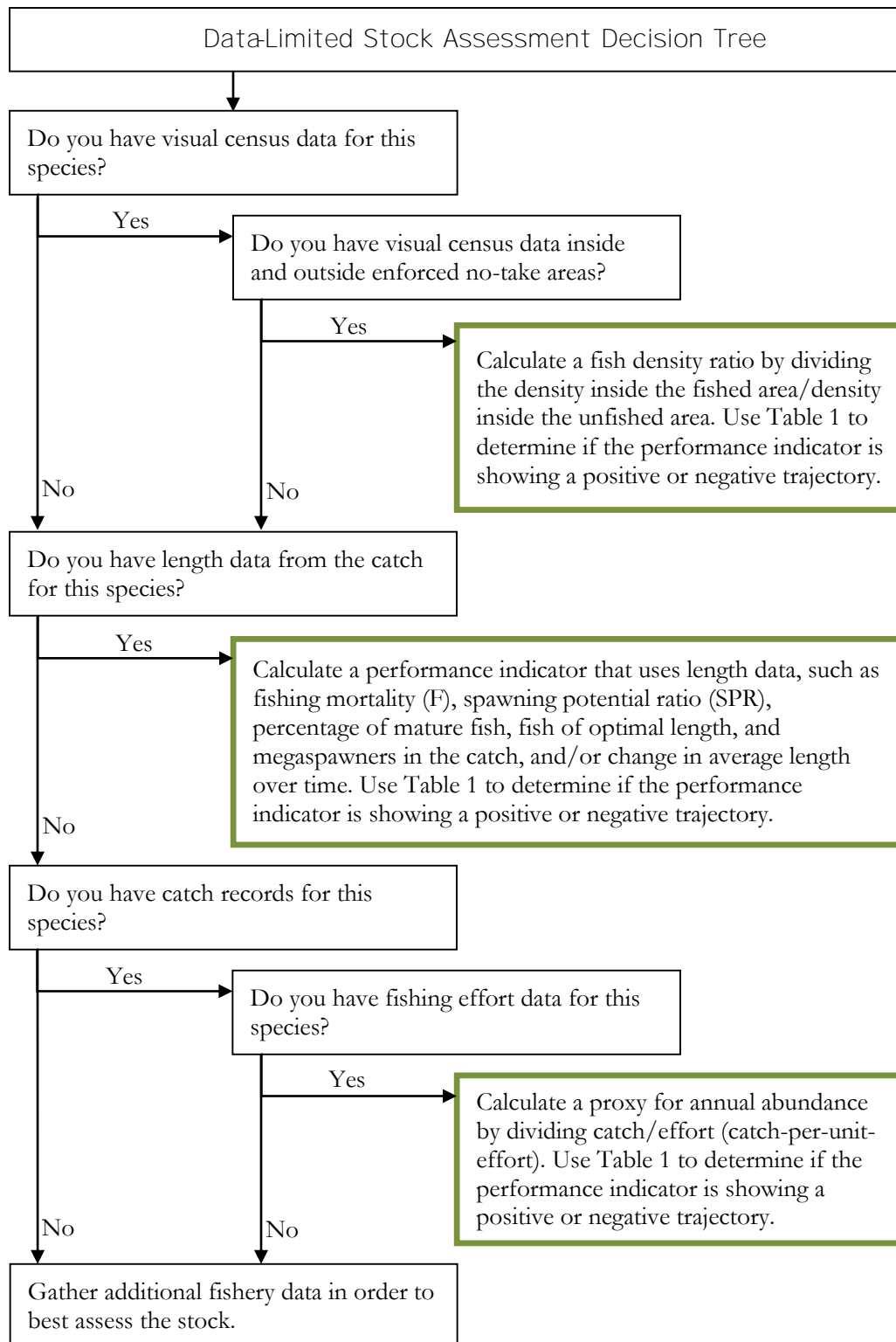


Table 1: Stock Assessment Performance Indicator Trajectories

Stock Assessment Performance Indicator	Positive Trajectory	Negative Trajectory
Density Ratio Fished Area/Unfished Area ³	All fish > 0.8 Mature fish > 0.6	All fish < 0.8 Mature fish < 0.6
Fishing Mortality	Fishing mortality < Natural mortality	Fishing mortality > Natural mortality ⁴
Spawning Potential Ratio (SPR)	SPR \geq 40% ⁵	SPR \leq 40% ⁵
Percentage of Mature Fish in Catch ⁶	> 90%	< 90%
Percentage of Fish Caught at Optimal Length ⁷	> 90% within $\pm 10\%$ optimal length	< 90% within $\pm 10\%$ optimal length
Percentage of Megaspawners in Catch ⁸	< 10% ⁹ 30-40% ¹⁰	> 10% ⁹ < 20% ¹⁰
Change in Average Length ¹¹	Avg. length is staying the same	Avg. length is decreasing
Change in Catch-Per-Unit-Effort (CPUE) ¹²	CPUE is stable or increasing over time	CPUE is decreasing over time

Performance indicators for your fishery may be higher or lower than those shown here, especially where site- and species-specific studies have been conducted that indicate alternative optimal reference points. Furthermore, some indicators may be more or less suited for certain species. For example, studies have shown length-based SPR is an indicator well-suited for lobster fisheries, and density ratio is a good stock status indicator for more sedentary species such as bivalves. It is important to choose indicators and reference points appropriate for your fishery's species.

Fair Trade USA is open to indicators not present in Table 1 provided they have been peer-reviewed and tested for their appropriateness and accuracy.

² Please see the primary literature for additional information on the methods listed below.

³ May not be applicable in locations where no-take zones are not well enforced. Babcock and MacCall, 2011.

⁴ May not be an appropriate performance indicator for high trophic-level predators with low natural mortality rates.

⁵ Applicable for slow growing/slow reproducing finfish. Refer to published literature to determine the appropriate SPR for invertebrates and other fast-growing species.

⁶ Froese, 2004

⁷ Optimal length is the length where the number of fish in a given unfished year class multiplied with their mean individual weight is maximum (Froese, 2004).

⁸ Megaspawners are fish of optimal length plus 10% (Froese, 2004).

⁹ Applicable if the management framework's goal is zero catch of megaspawners.

¹⁰ Applicable if catch data reflect the age and size structure of the stock.

¹¹ If the fishery is highly stochastic, use a running average over the last three to five years when calculating average length.

¹² Ensure fishing effort is delineated by gear type to avoid conflating data over multiple fishing gears.

Questions to consider when analyzing the performance indicators are:

1. Are the indicators and positive/negative trajectories consistent with local knowledge of the fishery?
2. Are the length-based indicators consistent with each other?
3. Are the length-based indicators consistent with a non length-based indicator?
4. If CPUE has been used as an indicator for stock status, is the fishery showing hyperstability (i.e., is this an aggregation-based fishery)?

Table 2: Primary Species Follow-Up Actions

Primary Species	Number of Performance Indicators Showing a Positive Trajectory		
	3 of 3	2 of 3	1 of 3
Instructions	Continue to maintain responsible fishing practices to ensure the stock status remains healthy and stable.	The Fishery Management Plan must include a rebuilding strategy with stated goals to allow the stock health to improve. The rebuilding strategy should be reviewed annually and updated where necessary to ensure it is effective.	The species cannot be Fair Trade Certified (or re-certified) unless additional analysis of the species can demonstrate the stock is healthy and stable.

For fisheries with sufficient data to track more than three performance indicators, at least 60% (or two-thirds) of the performance indicators analyzed must show a positive trajectory. If only 30% (or one-third) of the indicators analyzed show a positive trajectory, the fishery cannot be certified unless additional analysis of the species can demonstrate the stock is healthy and stable.

Table 3: Secondary Species Follow-Up Actions

Secondary Species	Number of Performance Indicators Showing a Positive Trajectory		
	3 of 3	2 of 3	1 of 3
Instructions	Continue to maintain responsible fishing practices to ensure the stock status remains healthy and stable.	The Fishery Management Plan must include a rebuilding strategy with stated goals to allow the stock health to improve. The rebuilding strategy should be reviewed annually and updated where necessary to ensure it is effective.	The Fishery Management Plan must include a rebuilding strategy with stated goals to allow the stock health to improve. The rebuilding strategy should be reviewed annually and updated where necessary to ensure it is effective.

Appendix C Habitat Impacts

Instructions

1. Use Table 1 to score impacts of the fishing gear on the substrate. If the fishery's gear is not listed, use a listed gear type that has similar contact with the bottom habitat. Where multiple habitat types are encountered or habitat classification is uncertain, use scores associated with the most sensitive type of habitat the fishery encounters.
2. Use Table 2 to score the fishery's mitigation efforts against habitat impacts by the fishing gear. Step 2 is not necessary for gear that does not contact the bottom. High levels of certainty are required to score a strong or moderate mitigation measure. Examples of this include good quality habitat maps or observer coverage documenting effective spatial measures are enforced.
3. Determine your total habitat impact score by adding the appropriate score from Table 2 to the score from Table 1.

Table 1: Impact Matrix (MBA, 2014a)

Conservation Concern	Description	Score
None	Gear does not contact bottom; fishing for a pelagic/open water species	5
Very Low	Vertical line fished in contact with the bottom or fishing for a benthic/demersal or reef-associated species	4
Low	Bottom gillnet, trap, bottom longline except on rocky reef/boulder and corals Bottom seine (on mud/sand only) Midwater trawl that is known to contact bottom occasionally (<25% of the time) or purse seine known to commonly contact bottom	3
Moderate	Scallop dredge on mud and sand Bottom gillnet, trap, bottom longline on boulder or coral reef Bottom seine (except on mud/sand) Bottom trawl (mud and sand, or shallow gravel) (includes midwater trawl known to commonly contact bottom)	2
High	Hydraulic clam dredge Scallop dredge on gravel, cobble or boulder Trawl on cobble or boulder, or low energy (>60 m) gravel	1
Very High	Dredge or trawl on deep-sea corals or other biogenic habitat (such as eelgrass and maerl)	0

Table 2: Mitigation Matrix (MBA, 2014a)

Mitigation Type	Description	Score
Strong Mitigation	<p>At least 50% of the representative habitat is protected from the gear type used in the fishery under assessment (see Spatial Protection below).</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Fishing intensity is sufficiently low and limited such that it can be scientifically demonstrated that at least 50% of the representative habitat is in a recovered state, based upon knowledge of the resilience of the habitat and the frequency of fishing impacts from the gear type used in the fishery under assessment (see Spatial Protection below).</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Gear is specifically designed to reduce impacts on the seafloor and there is scientific evidence that these modifications are effective in this regard and modifications are used on the majority of vessels.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Other measures are in place that have been demonstrated to be highly effective in reducing the impact of the fishing gear, which may include an effective combination of two or more “moderate” measures described below, e.g., gear modifications + spatial protection.</p>	+1
Moderate Mitigation	<p>Ongoing, effective measures are reducing fishing effort, intensity or spatial footprint.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>A substantial proportion of all representative habitats are protected from all bottom contact and expansion of the fishery’s footprint is prohibited and vulnerable habitats are strongly protected.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Gear modifications or other measures are in use that are reasonably expected to be effective.</p>	+0.5
Minimal Mitigation	<p>Fishing effort or intensity is effectively controlled, but is not actively being reduced.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Vulnerable habitats are strongly protected but other habitats are not strongly protected.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Modifications or measures anticipated to be effective are being tested or developed.</p>	+0.25
No Effective Mitigation	<p>No controls on fishing intensity are in place.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>No or few efforts exist to limit the spatial extent of fishing.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>No modifications anticipated to be effective are in use.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Modifications are in use but are not effective.</p>	+0
Not Applicable	Not applicable because gear used is benign.	+0

Spatial Protection (MBA, 2014b)

Reducing the footprint of fishing through spatial management can be one of the most effective ways to mitigate the ecological impact of fishing with habitat-damaging gears (Lindholm et al., 2001; Fujioka, 2006). The relationship between gear impacts, the spatial footprint of fishing and fishing effort (i.e., frequency of impact) is complex (Fujioka 2006) and cannot be quantified precisely in Seafood Watch® assessments. Nevertheless, criteria should acknowledge the benefits of conservative habitat protection efforts by adjusting the habitat score. Thresholds for adjusting the habitat score due to habitat protection from the gear-type used in the fishery (50% protected to qualify as “strong mitigation” and 20% protected to qualify as “moderate mitigation”) are based upon recommendations for spatial management found in the scientific literature as noted in Auster (2001). Auster recommends use of the precautionary principle when a threshold level of 50% of the habitat management area is impacted by fishing, with a minimum of 20% of regions in representative assemblages and landscape features protected in MPAs in order to minimize impacts on vulnerable species and sensitive habitats.

The table below gives examples of gear modifications that are believed to be moderately effective at reducing habitat impacts based upon scientific studies. This table will be continually revised as new scientific studies become available. The main sources for the current table are He (2007) and Valdemarsen et al., (2007).

Gear	Modification
Otter Trawls	Semi-pelagic trawl rigging (trawl doors, sweeps and bridles off the bottom, also includes modifications such as short bridles and sweeps—most commonly used for shrimp, nephrops and other species that are not herded by sand clouds and bridles due to poor swimming ability)
	Quasi-pelagic trawl rigging/sweepless trawls (trawl doors remain in contact with the seafloor, remaining gear largely off the bottom, e.g., whiting in New England, flatfish in Alaska, red snapper in Australia)
	Lighter ground gear (e.g., fewer bobbins)
	Use of rollers instead of rockhoppers
	Trawl door modifications such as high aspect (smaller footprint), cambered (generally for fuel efficiency) or soft doors (e.g., self-spreading ground gear)

Appendix References

Appendix B

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