**ASSessment**

**strengths**
- Japan's Pacific stock of pollock remains well above the limit reference point ($B_{lim}$). A multiannual management strategy, regular assessments, and detailed regular surveys of biomass and recruitment are in use. A 2007 national review of fishery policy (Takagi report) called for specific reforms in management, indicating that considerable political will existed within the national government to improve sustainability.

**Weaknesses**
- In the past, the annual TAC has generally exceeded scientists' advised Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC). The decision-making process in setting TACs still lacks some transparency, particularly in regard to intra-annual revisions of the TAC (which may be increased several times during the fishing season). $B_{lim}$ for the Pacific stock of pollock has been set at the lowest observed biomass, and no long-term target for biomass above $B_{lim}$ is known to exist. There is no estimate of relative depletion of biomass. A government catch certification system exists but it is very limited in coverage. A recent study noted the fishery would fail MSC certification in terms of ecosystem impacts. Sufficient bottom trawl observations may prove a risk of significant negative impacts on the benthic habitats, but there is no information on benthic habitat impacts; bycatch is not monitored and, other than the ongoing research to use a bird-scaring devices (tori lines) in the longline fleet, no other bycatch reduction measures seem to be planned to be in place. Although the recent increase of bycatch/culling annual limit of Stellar sea lions (SSL) to 516 animals is supported by scientific reports commissioned the Japanese fishery agency – which suggest an increasing trend in the SSL populations – detailed research (e.g., origin and migration routes, current status and potential long-term impacts of the current management measures) on the SSL population occurring in Japan is very limited.

**scores**

**management quality:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>management strategy</th>
<th>managers compliance</th>
<th>fishers compliance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 6</td>
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<td>10</td>
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**stock health:**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>future health</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
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</table>

**FIPS**

No related FPs

**MSC**

No related MSC fisheries

**recommendations**

**catchers & regulators**

- Management needs to incorporate precautionary harvest control rules to ensure long-term sustainability. Stock size is currently above the lowest acceptable limit but no target population size is set.
- Implement a bycatch monitoring program and explore bycatch reduction measures. Include an analysis of Stellar sea lion culling on the sea lion population.
- Conduct research on the impacts of bottom-trawls on benthic habitats and initiate a multi-stakeholder process to implement a representative network of benthic protected areas.

**Retailers & supply chain**

- The fishery has made some improvements in recent years, and some buyers are engaged, however there is no publicly announced fishery improvement project (FIP). Encourage your supply chain to start a FIP; for advice, see SFP’s Seafood Industry Guide to FIPs at [http://www.sustainablefishingpublishers.com/2014/04/03/the-seafood-industry-guide-to-fips](http://www.sustainablefishingpublishers.com/2014/04/03/the-seafood-industry-guide-to-fips).
- Demand that the fishery meets international best practice for precautionary and ecosystem-based management, with a target population size set for maximum sustainability and aligned with scientific advice.
- Request that your supply chain initiate or participate in research to investigate the impacts of the fishery on the environment, both with respect to bycatch and habitat impacts and analyze Stellar sea lion culling impacts on the sea lion population.