IDENTIFICATION

SCIENTIFIC NAME
Clupea harengus

SPECIES NAME(S)
Atlantic herring

COMMON NAMES
Atlanto-Scandian herring, Norwegian spring-spawning herring

STOCK IDENTIFICATION
The NE Atlantic Spring spawner herring (also known as Norwegian Spring spawning herring) is the largest herring stock in the world, and is widely distributed and highly migratory through the parts of the NE Atlantic where it occurs.

It is treated and assessed as a single stock, based on the evidence of no genetic differences between the various spawning areas. Occasionally, some mixing with other herring stocks may occur adjacent areas to its distribution (ICES, 2014a).

ASSessment

Strengths
- An analytical assessment is conducted.
- A precautionary management plan is in place.
- Compliance with catch limits has been high.
- Minor bycatch and discards, although discards are not fully quantified.
- No reported evidence of stock size decline.
- ETPO and the seabed ecosystem are not impacted by the MSC certified fishery.

Weaknesses
- Stock biomass is declining due to low recruitment and underestimated fishing mortality, which is exceeding the management plan target.
- The spawning stock size has also been revised, to a lower level than previously estimated.
- The lack of agreement on the TAC for 2013 has led to quotas being unilaterally set, and resulted in a global TAC higher than the anticipated in the management plan. If the situation persists it may lead to overfishing and accelerate the present decline of the stock.

Scores

Management Quality:
- Management Strategy: 8.4
- Managers Compliance: < 6 to 8.1
- Fishers Compliance: 10

Stock Health:
- Current Health: 8
- Future Health: 7.4

FIPS
No related FIPs

MSC
- Scottish Pelagic Sustainability Group Ltd: Atlantic herring: MSC Certified
- Pelagic Freezer-Trawler Association: Atlantic-Scandian herring pelagic trawl: MSC Certified
- SPSG, DRPO, VFA, SPFPO & KFO: Atlantic-Scandian purse seine and pelagic trawl herring: MSC Certified

Recommendations
- Retaliers & Supply Chain
  - Monitor the performance of the fishery and its management to ensure the fishery continues to be eligible for condition-free MSC re-certification.