IDENTIFICATION

SCIENTIFIC NAME
Micromesistius australis

SPECIES NAME(S)
Southern blue whiting, New Zealand southern blue whiting

COMMON NAMES
Polaca (Spanish)

STOCK IDENTIFICATION
Besides being found around the southern tip of South America, Southern Blue Whiting Micromesistius australis is found on the southern shelf of New Zealand, but this is considered to be a distinct sub-species – Micromesistius australis pallidus as opposed to Micromesistius australis australis. Results from Niklitschek et al. (2009), using genetics and otolith microchemical analyses, are controversial about distinctiveness of two stocks in Atlantic and Pacific oceans. But despite being a highly mobile resource, there is some evidence for sub-population structuring between the Falkland and Chilean areas corresponding to two main spawning grounds and a high level of segregation with birth-area (Arkhipkin et al., 2008; Subpesca, 2012b). Based on otolith microchemistry and parasite assemblage approaches, Niklitschek et al. (2010) consider the existence of “at least two ecologically distinct sub-populations of southern blue whiting in South America”. More recently, Leguá et al. (2013) confirm these two stocks according to otolith shape analysis. The present profile focuses on the SW Atlantic biological stock and the assessment unit on Argentinian/Falkland Islands waters presently considered by the National Institute of Fisheries Research and Development (Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Desarrollo Pesquero, INIDEP) for evaluation of the stock and by managers. The SE Pacific stock is covered in another profile.

ASSESSMENT

Strengths
- An analytical stock assessment is conducted.
- The fishery is conducted with low-impact midwater trawl.

Weaknesses
- The stock biomass is below the limit reference point.
- No recovery plans defined.

SCORES

Management Quality:

Managers
Compliance
10

Fishers
Compliance
10

Stock Health:

Future Health
NOT YET SCORED

Current Health
4

FIPS
No related FIPs

MSC
No related MSC fisheries

RECOMMENDATIONS

CATCHERS & REGULATORS
1. Develop coordinated fishery recovery and management plans for both Argentina and the Falkland Islands/Malvinas.
2. Evaluate the fishery environmental impacts, and design and implement a mitigation strategy.

RETAILERS & SUPPLY CHAIN
1. Request the managers in Argentina and the Falkland Islands/Malvinas to set TACs based on scientific recommendations.
2. Encourage the development of biological reference points and harvest control rules aimed at recovering the stock.
3. Promote the development of a peer-review in the stock assessment process.
4. Encourage coordination in managing the fisheries among of the different countries targeting the stock, including where you source from.