

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT<sup>1</sup> FROM FRANCE**  
**on efforts made between 2011 and 2018**  
**to establish a sustainable balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities**

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the guidelines for analysing the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities under Article 22 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy as specified in European Commission Communication COM(2014)545 final of 2 September 2014.

<sup>2</sup> In keeping with the format recommended by the SG-BRE 10-01 working group of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries on the examination of national reports on the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities.

## 1. Summary of the report

### 1- Conclusions of the report

For the period 2011-2018, 232 segments were covered. In 2018, the French fleet comprised 191 fleet segments, plus a further 3 segments (ATL ELE 27, MED ELE 37 and MED Ganguis) i.e. 194 segments. Of those segments, 102 were balanced, 15 were to be monitored, 7 were imbalanced, 14 were inactive and 56 required additional information in order to be assessed and/or comprised less than three vessels.

France welcomed the improvements in the status of the segment comprising trawlers fishing for Norway lobster in the Bay of Biscay. This segment is once again balanced, having last year been identified as imbalanced. This change was brought about by the noticeable improvement in the status of Norway lobster stocks. However, five segments have been imbalanced for at least two years, namely the segments fishing eel off the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts, the 'gangui' fishing segment in the Mediterranean, and Mediterranean trawlers from 18 to 24 metres and from 24 to 40 metres fishing for red mullet and hake. Furthermore, the segment comprising seiner vessels fishing European pilchard in the Bay of Biscay is again imbalanced, having first been identified as such last year. This segment is complemented by seiners fishing European pilchard in the Celtic Sea - Western Scotland.

Stocks were assessed by taking into account the status of 112 stocks for the entire period. In 2018, there were 105 stocks for which French landings were not at zero. Of those stocks, 69 were in good health and 36 were overharvested. Within this category, France accounted for more than 5% of landings for 22 stocks and more than 80% of landings for eight stocks, namely anchovy from the Mediterranean, eel from the Atlantic, shrimp from French Guiana, hake from the Mediterranean, red mullet from the Mediterranean, whelk from the Atlantic, spotted ray and white skate from the Atlantic.

Table 1: List of stocks identified as overharvested where France accounted for more than 5% of international landings

Stock	Description	Percentage of French landings	Total quantity landed (France) (tonnes)
ELE.27	European eel (ATL)	100%	91
PEN.31	Penaeus shrimp	100%	227
RJM.27.7a7e-h	Spotted ray	100%	831
RJA.27	White skate	97%	7
HKE.37.7	European hake	97%	764
WHE.27.7 <sup>e</sup>	Whelk	91%	9543
MUT.37.7	Red mullet	87%	260
ANE.37.7	European anchovy	82%	947
PIL.27.8abd	European pilchard	79%	25582
RJU.27.7de	Undulate ray	62%	86
HAD.27.7b	Haddock	62%	4377

ELE.37	European eel (MED)	52%	193
COD.27.7e	Atlantic cod	36%	496
PLE.27.7hjk	European plaice	34%	33
CRE.27.78abd	Edible crab	30%	3692
RJM.27.67bj	Spotted ray	24%	23
WHG.27.47d	Whiting	22%	3567
SBR.27.678	Blackspot seabream	19%	24
COD.27.6a	Atlantic cod	10%	109
BET.51	Bigeye tuna	7%	6750
YFT.51	Yellowfin tuna	7%	28856
MNZ.27.3a46	Monkfish	6%	1304

## 2- Structure of the French fleet in 2018

On 31 December 2018, the fleet comprised 6376 administratively active vessels corresponding to 177 112 GT and 968 101 kW. Of those vessels, the activity of 5 570 vessels, corresponding to 175 358 GT and 8 681 852 kW is presented in this report.

This disparity is in line with the different method for activity accounting. In an administrative sense, inactivity means either zero trips during 6 of the previous 12 months, no regular landings of fishery resources during the previous 12 months, or fishing does not serve as the primary source of income for the party responsible. However, for the purposes of this report, inactivity is where capacity was underused as at 31 December 2018.

## 3- Segmentation method and main segments of the French fleet

The fleet was segmented in accordance with the method set out under Appendices II and III to the Commission Decision of 18 December 2009 (2010/93/EU) adopting a multiannual Community programme for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector for the period 2010–2013.

Under the method laid down in the aforementioned Commission Decision, each vessel is annually assigned to a segment according to three characteristics:

- a) the vessels' maritime zone of activity,
- b) the primary metier,
- c) and the overall length.

a) In terms of the maritime zone, supra-regional level was not given priority in order for the stock distribution and fishing strategies of French vessels to be consistent. Since the 2015 report, France has used geographical groupings which are more specific than supra regions in accordance with Appendix II to Decision 2010/93/EU. The report identifies 10 reference regions:

- North Sea - Eastern Channel
- Western Scotland - Celtic and Irish Seas - Iceland

- Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas
- Mediterranean
- Africa - Antarctica - Indian Ocean
- La Réunion
- Mayotte
- Guadeloupe
- Martinique
- French Guiana

b) As in the previous report, the segmentation was adjusted for certain fleet segments as it was not adapted to certain subsidiary or seasonal fishing activities. In those fisheries, active vessels were distributed between different segments in which the landing share of each segment for those stocks was marginal. It is therefore impossible to identify an imbalance. Three segments were therefore added in order to identify vessels engaging in real activity in respect of stocks at risk according to the SAR indicator (see point 8.2 of this report) so that the entire segment – which is not imbalanced – would not be targeted. To that end, the number of vessels with special eel fishing licences for the Atlantic and Mediterranean seaboard and the number of vessels with gangui licences was therefore transferred to those three segments for the years covered by the report.

The three segments are:

- ME ME VL0012 – gangui fishing: vessels of between 0 and 12 metres engaging in gangui fishing as a subsidiary activity on Mediterranean seagrass (*Posidonia*) beds,
- AT ELE VL0024: vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel as a subsidiary activity on the Atlantic seaboard,
- ME ME ELE VL0024: vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel as a subsidiary activity in the Mediterranean.

Under this segmentation, 14 segments were inactive, of which 3 had more than 100 vessels. 15 active segments had more than 100 vessels, 52 segments had fewer than 4 vessels (of which 26 were single-vessel segments) and 54 segments had between 10 and 50 vessels.

Table 2: List of fleet segments with the largest number of vessels

*N.B.: the distribution of vessels between segments changes from year to year. In some years, segments may have no vessels. However, they are retained for the years in which they do have vessels.*

Segment	Number of vessels in 2017	Supra-region	Region	Metier	Category of length overall
AT NONACTIVE VL0010	166	Atlantic	Inactive	Inactive	0 to 10 metres
AT GG_Ib DFN VL0010	200	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas	Netter	0 to 10 metres
AT GG_Ib DTS VL1012	112	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas	Trawler	10 to 12 metres
AT GG_Ib DTS VL1218	115	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas	Trawler	12 to 18 metres
AT GG_Ib HOK VL0010	145	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas	Hooks	0 to 10 metres
AT GG_Ib	146	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay -	Various	0 to 10

MGO VL0010			Balearic Seas	active gear	metres
AT MC_OE_Is FPO VL0010	170	Atlantic	Western Channel - Celtic and Irish Seas - West Scotland - Iceland	Potter	0 to 10 metres
ME NONACTIV E VL0612	135	Mediterranea n	Inactive	Inactiv e	6 to 12 metres
ME ME DFN VL0006	122	Mediterranea n	Mediterranea n	Netter	0 to 6 metres
ME ME DFN VL0612	521	Mediterranea n	Mediterranea n	Netter	6 to 12 metres
ME ME DFN VL0612	101				
OM NONACTIV E VL0010	597	Outermost regions	Inactive	Inactiv e	0 to 10 metres
OM Guadeloup e PGP VL0010	234	Outermost regions	Guadeloupe	Various passive gear	0 to 10 metres
OM Martinique FPO VL0010	165	Outermost regions	Martinique	Potter	0 to 10 metres
OM Martinique HOK VL0010	134	Outermost regions	Martinique	Hooks	0 to 10 metres
OM Martinique PGP VL0010	214	Outermost regions	Martinique	Various passive gear	0 to 10 metres
OM Mayotte PP excl. seiners HOK VL0010	104	Outermost regions	Mayotte excl. seiners	Hooks	0 to 10 metres
OM Reunion PP excl. seiners HOK VL0010	156	Outermost regions	La Réunion excl. seiners	Hooks	0 to 10 metres

#### 4- Developments since the 2019 report

The segmentation used in 2020 contains a total of two fewer ‘natural’ segments compared to the previous report. This slight decrease actually reflects larger movements in the fleet segments identified. The table below therefore lists the changes between the 2019 report and this year’s report:

Table 3: Fleet segments newly appearing or no longer present – comparison between 2019 and 2020 reports

<b>Segments present in the 2019 report but not in the 2020 report</b>	<b>Segments present in the 2020 report but not in the 2019 report</b>
AT MC_OE_Is MGP VL1218	AT GG_Ib OTM VL2440
AT MC_OE_Is PGO VL1012	AT GG_Ib OTM VL2440
AT MC_OE_Is TBB VL1218	AT MC_OE_Is OTM VL2440
AT MdN_Mchest OTM VL1824	AT MC_OE_Is PGP VL2440
AT MdN_Mchest TBB VL1012	OM French Guiana FPO VL0010
OM French Guiana PGP VL0010	OM French Guiana HOK VL1012
OM French Guiana HOK VL0010	
OM Reunion PP excl. seiners DFN VL0010	

The segments created by France in the last report, i.e. eel in the Atlantic, eel in the Mediterranean and ‘gangui’, were maintained. As in the previous report, and in view of the poor condition of eel stocks on the Atlantic and Mediterranean seaboard, France has chosen to cover all eel stages<sup>3</sup> in eel segments, so as to ensure consistent monitoring of eels throughout its territory.

The number of vessels recorded in this report across eel segments corresponds to the number of ‘CMEA licences’<sup>4</sup> and the number of regional fishing authorisations issued for this species for the years concerned.

A comparison of the French fleet between 31 December 2018 and 31 December 2016 showed that the number of vessels fell by 417. This corresponded to 31 683 KW of power exiting the French fleet, but paradoxically an increase in vessel tonnage of 2 872 GT. As a reminder, the French fleet comprised 7 380 vessels in 2011. The fleet volume fell by 10% over this period, registering a total of 6 629 vessels on 31 December 2018 (of which 5 570 were active vessels).

#### 5- Change in stock status and/or fishing opportunities between 2017 and 2018

Stock status has remained relatively stable since last year.

Nevertheless, six stocks saw an improvement and were considered to be in good health, having been considered overharvested in 2017. Those stocks were:

- Greater forkbeard GFB.27
- Haddock HAD.27.3an46a

<sup>3</sup> This refers to glass eel (only in the Atlantic), yellow eel (on both seaboard) and silver eel (only in the Mediterranean).

<sup>4</sup> Special fishing rights for amphihaline fish.

- European hake (HKE.27.8c9a)
- Norway lobster (NEP.27.7bcjk.FU16-24)
- Norway lobster (NEP.27.8ab.FU23-24)
- Spotted ray (RJM.27.3a47d)

On the other hand, eight stocks were assessed as overharvested in 2018, having been in good health in 2017. Those stocks were:

- Albacore (ALB.51)
- European anchovy (ANE.37.7)
- Bigeye tuna (BET.51)
- Edible crab (CRE.27.78abd)
- Haddock HAD.27.7b-k
- Ling LIN.27.5b
- Monkfish MNZ.27.3a46
- Norway lobster NEP.27.7gf.FU22

Fishing and fishery strategies remained largely unchanged during the period 2011-2018.

#### 6- Management plans introduced during the year

Fishing effort decreased during the period 2011-2018. This was in line with the fishing effort management measures in force, in particular the schemes in place for Western waters<sup>5</sup>, deep-sea species<sup>6</sup>, cod<sup>7</sup>, sole in the Western Channel<sup>8</sup> and Bay of Biscay<sup>9</sup>, Southern hake and lobster<sup>10</sup> and Mediterranean national management plans<sup>11</sup>. The aforementioned fishing effort management measures under the cod and deep-sea species plans were repealed from the 2017 management year.

In 2018, following the capacity report, the conditions for granting professional licences ('CMEA licences') covering the fishing of estuarine and amphihaline species were tightened in respect of eels so as to reduce the capacity in the Atlantic glass eel and yellow eel segment. This enabled pre-2015 levels to be restored as regards the number of special fishing rights for eel in the Atlantic with a decrease in the number of fishing licences (9 fewer). In 2019, the number of licences remained virtually unchanged (2 more).

In the Mediterranean, despite an announcement by the fishing industry during the first half of 2018 for trawler fishing to be temporarily ceased, the industry ultimately decided to delay this owing to the entry into force of the European management plan for the Western Mediterranean. The aim of this ambitious plan is to improve demersal stocks in GSAs 1 to 11, in particular hake stocks. It has already resulted in a considerable reduction in available fishing effort in the corresponding areas and allowed area-related and seasonal fishing bans for protecting juvenile hake.

Finally, in the context of the present COVID-19 health crisis, a wide-ranging programme for temporary cessation of fishing activity has been proposed to vessel owners in France following an amendment to the EMFF Regulation. Exceptionally, the measure may now be used to compensate vessel owners forced to temporarily cease fishing activity due to the impact of COVID-19 on their working conditions.

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<sup>5</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003 of 4 November 2003 on the management of the fishing effort relating to certain Community fishing areas and resources.

<sup>6</sup> Regulation (EC) No 2347/2002 of 16 December 2002 establishing specific access requirements and associated conditions applicable to fishing for deep-sea stocks.

<sup>7</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 on the multi-annual cod management plan.

<sup>8</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 509/2007 of 7 May 2007 establishing a multi-annual plan for the sustainable exploitation of the stock of sole in the Western Channel.

<sup>9</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 388/2006 of 23 February 2006 establishing a multiannual plan for the sustainable exploitation of the stock of sole in the Bay of Biscay.

<sup>10</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 2166/2005 of 20 December 2005 establishing measures for the recovery of the Southern hake and Norway lobster stocks in the Cantabrian Sea and Western Iberian peninsula.

<sup>11</sup> Management plan implemented under the Order of 13 May 2014 adopting management plans for professional fishing activities using purse seine, dredging, beach seine and gangui fishing methods in the Mediterranean sea by vessels flying the flag of France.

As a reminder, four fleet exit plans and one temporary cessation have been in place since 2011 in order to reduce fishing effort in the following fisheries:

- Temporary cessation of Mediterranean trawlers in zone GFCM 37.GSA7 fishing Mediterranean hake and red mullet<sup>12</sup>.
- Fleet exit plan for sole netters of between 0 and 18 metres in the Eastern Channel<sup>13</sup>.
- Fleet exit plan for Mediterranean lobster trawlers in zone GSA8<sup>14</sup>.
- Fleet exit plan for vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing glass eel and yellow eel in the Atlantic supra-region<sup>15</sup>.
- Fleet exit plan for netters of between 10 and 12 metres in the Eastern Channel and North Sea<sup>16</sup>.

#### 7- Compliance with the fleet entry-exit plan

The capacity ceilings in force for mainland France and its outermost regions were observed throughout the 2011-2018 period (see point 5, section C).

#### 8- Fleet management system improvement plans

The wide range of stocks which France monitors and analyses allows French fleet segments to be accurately assessed.

In the case of imbalanced fleet segments, France prohibits new entries to the fleet and capacity increases. Furthermore, it seeks to implement active management measures for reducing fishing effort, e.g. assisted fleet exits.

#### 9- Use of technical, biological, economic and social indicators

This report follows the European Commission's guidelines of 2 September 2014 (COM(2014)545 final). The method created certain difficulties which subtly modified the assessment of certain fleet segments.

In this respect, we would reiterate that the principle of a single metier was applied to allocate vessel activity to a segment. This led to fleet segments being assigned catch from vessels within the segment using other fishing gear.

We would also emphasise that the outcomes of the economic indicators were weakened by a number of factors.

- the method applied: variables were formed based on sampling involving non-exhaustive answers,
- the segment size: variables were reported only for segments comprising more than three vessels in accordance with the rules on confidentiality applied to statistical data.

Lastly, France interpreted the results of this assessment with caution given the diversity of the vessels' fishing strategies and the biases observed in the quality of certain data, particularly economic and technical data. Economic and technical indicators could not be conclusive given the variety of fishing strategies existing within the same fleet segment, leading to results which were difficult to use, with account taken of the drop in the number of vessels in most segments.

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Order of 15 December 2016 on the implementation of assisted temporary cessation of fishing activity for vessels using trawls in the Mediterranean in zone GFCM 37.GSA7.

<sup>13</sup> Order of 3 February 2017 implementing a fleet exit plan for vessels of between 0 and 18 metres fishing with nets in the Eastern Channel and North Sea.

<sup>14</sup> Order of 26 July 2017 implementing a fleet exit plan for vessels of between 6 and 18 metres trawling lobster in zone GSA8 of the Mediterranean.

<sup>15</sup> Order of 26 July 2017 implementing a fleet exit plan for vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing glass eel and yellow eel in the Atlantic supra-region.

<sup>16</sup> Order of 11 August 2017 implementing a fleet exit plan for vessels of between 10 and 12 metres fishing with nets in the Eastern Channel and North Sea.



## **2. Position of France regarding the balance between the capacity of its fleet and national fishing opportunities**

### **2.1. Methodology used and indicator calculation results**

France followed the guidelines for analysing the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities under Article 22 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy as specified in European Commission Communication COM(2014)545 final of 2 September 2014.

To supplement the evaluation of its fleet segments, France included additional indicators in its report in order to make better use of stocks evaluated without analytical advice. These additional indicators, which were proposed by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), are presented under point 8 of this report.

#### **i. Preparatory stages for drawing up the report**

The following preparatory stages were essential for calculating the indicators:

- identifying reference maritime regions. France chose to use a regional level as specified in the Commission Decision of 18 December 2009 (2010/93/EU),
- establishing a list of stocks to be monitored (see point 3.2). France sought to evaluate all stocks landed by its vessels. However, due to the wide variety of segments in the French fleet, France gave priority to the stocks which were most important for its vessels. Selection was all the more necessary in view of the difficulty in collecting full biological data for the stocks landed. The concept of 'important stock' is explained under point 3. 2.
- defining a method for allocating vessels to fleet segments and a method for aggregating segments into clusters for the economic indicator where this was required under the principle of confidentiality of individual data,
- gathering the necessary data for the study, including scientific opinions and data on the activity of all vessels.

#### **ii. Presentation of different types of analysis**

Article 22(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 calls on Member States to distinguish imbalanced segments from balanced segments. France supplemented this distinction by using the following categories:

- the following are balanced fleet segments (cumulative criteria):
  - segments where the SAR indicator or 'SHI' indicator is positive over at least the last three years assessed in the report for 2020, i.e. 2016 to 2018,
  - segments not targeting overharvested stock for at least the last three years assessed in the report for 2020 (i.e. 2016 to 2018) and/or where the economic dependence on these overharvested stocks is less than 40%.
- the following are imbalanced fleet segments (alternative criteria):
  - segments where the SAR indicator or 'SHI' indicator is negative (greater than 1) over at least the last three years assessed in the report for 2020, i.e. 2016 to 2018,
  - segments fishing overharvested stock for at least the last three years assessed in the report for 2020 (i.e. 2016 to 2018) and where the economic dependence on these overharvested stocks is greater than 40%.
- the following are fleet segments to be monitored (alternative criteria):
  - where one of the biological indicators calculated is negative for at least two consecutive years between 2016 and 2018,
  - where the economic viability is untenable with respect to economic over-capacity for at least two

- years between 2016 and 2018 ;
- segments evaluated as being imbalanced but for which analyses are weak and discretion is allowed for in their interpretation.
- inactive fleet segments are segments comprising vessels that did not perform any commercial fishing activity:
- fleet segments for which it was impossible to calculate indicators due to:
  - the small size of the fleet segment, as a result of which the segment did not ‘exist’ during the last year covered by the 2020 report,
  - the absence of the minimum data needed for indicators to be calculated, such as fishing time or quantities landed.
- iii. 2020 assessment

For the 194 segments comprising the French fleet in 2018, the 2020 assessment is as follows:

- 102 segments are balanced,
- 7 segments are imbalanced,
- 15 segments are to be monitored,
- 14 segments are inactive,
- 56 segments are impossible to calculate indicators for (all indicators combined).

In response to the main difficulties encountered in calculating the indicators in this report, France will ensure for future reports that:

- it maintains dialogue with the various stakeholders, particularly scientific experts, so as to have the most detailed information possible on the stocks fished by the French fleets in overseas coastal regions and Mediterranean regions in particular,
- it improves the quality and completeness of economic and landing data.

For the segments identified as imbalanced, France will implement an action plan for each segment, as described in point 6.2 and Annex 4 to this report. The plans to restore a sustainable balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities in these imbalanced segments will each primarily comprise the following measures:

- capacity ceilings for imbalanced segments,
- implementation of assisted management measures intended to reduce fishing effort in imbalanced segments,
- where necessary steering the renewal and redeployment of the fleet towards balanced segments, with assistance for temporary cessation of activity where appropriate,
- increasing selectivity of fishing gear, where appropriate by funding research to rebalance the stock(s) concerned more quickly,
- optimising the regulatory, technical and administrative measures in force so as to balance fishing capacity with fishing opportunities.

## 2.2. Imbalanced segments

The methods for calculating the SHI, NOS, SAR and EDI indicators are specified in point 8 of this report.

### i. Methodology used

France produced its assessment of imbalances:

- **by giving priority to the results of biological indicators in qualifying imbalanced sectors, in line with the approach taken by France for several years regarding how it draws up the capacity report for the French fleet.** France considers that the biological indicators have slightly different objectives to

the technical and economic indicators. They enable those segments to be assessed which have a definite impact, in terms of volume landed, on overharvested stocks. By comparison, the technical and economic indicators for each segment (calculated systematically as soon as data is available) tend to suggest a segment's vessels are being underused or that a segment is unprofitable. The reasons for this relate to variables bearing no relation to stock status, which instead identify situations caused by poor management, seasonal or complementary activity, and ultimately make no difference to the status of fishery resources. Furthermore, as such decisions are specific to each business, no general assessment of a lasting imbalance is possible other than by means of a case-by-case examination. The results of these indicators can therefore only support, where appropriate, findings of an imbalance based on biological indicators,

- **by requiring biological indicators to be negative for three years in order for segments to be classified as imbalanced. Although all indicators (technical, economic and biological) provided for in EU legislation were calculated for each segment covered by this report, France only classified segments as imbalanced if their biological indicators were negative for the last three years of the report.** The three-year requirement is justified by the objective of this report, namely to identify real trends among vessel segments for overharvested stocks to be overfished. An imbalance over one or two years is insufficient to identify long-term activity. If vessels change their fishing strategies and target stocks from one year to the next, three years is enough to confirm the focus of vessel activity in a segment. Three years is therefore appropriate for assessing fishing activity which may result in a segment being classified as imbalanced and corrective measures being taken. Moreover, if a segment has negative biological indicators over two years during the period 2016-2018, the segment is then classified as a segment to be monitored.
- **by basing itself on unambiguous biological indicators.** Biological indicator calculations sometimes give rise to legitimate reservations as to their interpretation (questionable biomass evaluations, for example). Where this is the case, negative biological indicators can be insufficient to classify a segment as imbalanced, even if negative for three consecutive years. As a precaution, the segment would nevertheless be classified as a segment to be monitored.

For the purposes of this report, France considers an imbalanced segment to be a segment which meets one of the following conditions:

- 'sustainable harvest' (SHI) or 'stocks at risk' (SAR) biological indicators are negative during the last three years of the report,
- at least two of the 'number of overexploited stocks' (NOS) or 'economic dependence indicator<sup>11</sup>' (EDI) biological indicators are negative during each of the last three years of the report.

It should be noted that the NOS and EDI indicators are not included in the European Commission guidelines of 2 September 2014. However, these indicators were proposed in STECF report No 15-02 from February 2015 which examined how Member States balanced their fishing capacity and the reports of those Member States.

As in reports from previous years, France chose to calculate the NOS and EDI indicators in addition to the indicators mentioned in the guidelines as they:

- do not require knowledge of current  $F(c)$  and  $F(msy)$  fishing mortality for all stocks, as is the case for the SHI indicator,
- use a concept of overharvested stock which is broader than the concept of a stock at risk defined for the SAR indicator.

The use of these indicators was all the more useful because the available data and the methodology described by the STECF for calculating the SHI indicator do not allow imbalanced segments to be identified for France. As shown in point 3.2 of this report, the data for calculating the SHI indicator was only available for 60 stocks. It should be noted that the assessments are becoming more robust, with two additional stocks having now become subject to analytical assessment since the last report.

This is also true for the SAR indicator which applies only to Atlantic and Mediterranean eel, Mediterranean

hake, Mediterranean red mullet and Mediterranean Posidonia-dependent stock as referred to in points 3.2.a and 8.2.

ii. List of imbalanced French segments

Table 4: List of 7 imbalanced segments

Segment	Description	Number of vessels in 2018	Biological criteria (biological overcapacity)	Overharvested stock landed	Technical criteria (technical overcapacity)	Economic criteria (economic overcapacity)	Changes compared to 2017
ME ME DTS VL1824	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - trawlers - between 18 and 24 metres	28	Imbalance NOS 1, SAR	Red mullet - MUT (37.GSA7), European hake - HKE (37.GSA7)	Balance	Balance	Number of vessels and capacity frozen at the level of the last report
ME ME DTS VL2440	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - trawlers - between 24 and 40 metres	31	Imbalance NOS 1, SAR	Red mullet - MUT (37.GSA7), European hake - HKE (37.GSA7)	Balance	Economic non-viability	Number of vessels and capacity frozen at the level of the last report
ME ME ELE VL0024	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - between 0 and 24 metres – eel fishing as subsidiary activity	215	Imbalance SAR	Eel - ELE (37)	Not applicable to fleets of less than 12 metres	Balance	Increase in number of regional fishing authorisations
ME ME VL0012 - gangui fishing:	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - between 0 and 12 metres – gangui fishing	23	Imbalance SAR	Posidonia beds	Not applicable to fleets of less than 12 metres	Balance	Number of vessels unchanged between 2017 and 2018
AT ELE VL0024	Atlantic - between 0 and 24 metres – eel fishing as subsidiary activity	435	Imbalance SAR	Eel - ELE (27)	Not applicable to fleets of less than 12 metres	Balance	Decrease in number of CMEA licences with special fishing rights for glass eel and eel
AT GG_lb PS_VL1218	Atlantic - Bay of Biscay, Balearic Seas - purse seiners - between 12 and 18 metres	17	Imbalance NOS 2	European pilchard (PIL.27.8abd)	Balance	Balance	One additional vessel
AT	Atlantic –	9	Imbalance	European	Balance	Balance	New

MC_ OE_Is PS VL121 8	Celtic Sea, West Scotland - purse seiners - between 12 and 18 metres		NOS 2	pilchard (PIL.27.8abd)			imbalanced segment
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As stated under point 1 of the summary to this report, France included in its unbalanced segments three segments which were not based on Commission Decision 2010/93/EU of 18 December 2009. The aforementioned Decision classifies all vessels according to a single length, single primary gear and single zone of activity. This type of classification is not adapted to certain types of fishing activity carried out as a subsidiary activity. Indeed, vessels active in those fisheries are distributed between various segments in which the share of those stocks landed by the segment is marginal. It is therefore impossible to identify an imbalance. For fisheries with stocks deemed to be overharvested, France therefore added fleet segments in order to bring vessels operating with those stocks into a single segment irrespective of their primary annual activity. The segments in question are those bringing together:

- vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel as a subsidiary activity on the Atlantic seaboard,
- vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel as a subsidiary activity in the Mediterranean.
- vessels of between 0 and 12 metres carrying out gangui fishing in the Mediterranean.

From a methodological perspective, the number of vessels in these three segments corresponds to:

- the number of eel licences<sup>17</sup> issued for the years in question, irrespective of the age of the eels, and for the two seabords,
- the number of European fishing authorisations for gangui fishing.

Lastly, three segments were not classified as imbalanced despite biological indicators classifying them as such, on account of reservations as to the interpretation of the stock and the robustness of the indicator. Those segments were all classified as segments to be monitored. The segments in question are:

- Segment AT MC\_OE\_Is OTM VL40XX was not included despite a negative SHI as blue whiting has a high biomass in zone VNbc,VNe-k, despite being overfished. Fishing mortality has been falling for a number of years and is now close to Fmsy level. Finally, the segment is made up of just one vessel and contributes less than 1% to the exploitation of the stock. This reflects the low impact of the fishing activity of this vessel. All of these arguments combined are why this segment is not included as an imbalanced segment but as a segment to be monitored, largely for economic reasons.
- Segments AT MC\_OE\_Is FPO VL0010 and AT MC\_OE\_Is FPO VL1012 are also on the list of segments to be monitored despite having negative biological indicators for three consecutive years which would suggest classifying them as imbalanced segments. This was done on account of the stock exploited by those segments. In ICES subarea VII, whelk has been considered overfished for a number of years. However, there are a number of reservations in terms of the interpretation of the assessment of the stock status. Despite the reference document, i.e. the BESTCLIM programme, clearly presenting the stock status until 2015, it only presents developments in biomass from 2016, without determining fishing mortality. It was updated in 2017, and then again in 2018. However, it has no reference value. The different stock assessment approaches proposed under the project are weak and offer differing results. The limitations inherent in this project mean that extreme caution must be taken when assessing the actual status of the stock. Consequently – and in line with the principles set out in part 2.2, subsection i of this report – France has decided to include segments

<sup>17</sup> CMEA licence for the Atlantic and regional fishing authorisations for the Mediterranean seaboard.

AT MC\_OE\_Is FPO VL0010 and AT MC\_OE\_Is FPO VL1012 with the segments to be monitored.

The capacity reduction objectives for those segments which are imbalanced in this report and the methodology used are specified under point 6.2 of the present report.

### iii. Changes compared to the assessments presented in the 2019 report

Six of the seven imbalanced segments in the 2020 report were already imbalanced in the 2019 report. The segments in question are:

- vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel in the Atlantic,
- vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel in the Mediterranean,
- trawlers of between 18 and 24 metres in the Mediterranean,
- trawlers of between 24 and 40 metres in the Mediterranean,
- vessels of between 0 and 12 metres carrying out gangui fishing in the Mediterranean,
- purse seine vessels of between 12 and 18 metres fishing European pilchard in the Bay of Biscay in the Atlantic.

The segment comprising trawlers fishing for Norway lobster in the Bay of Biscay is balanced once again, following improvements in the stock status. Norway lobster now has an Fc/Fmsy ratio considerably below 1, as compared to the 2019 report where the ratio was slightly above 1.

However, a new segment has now been identified as imbalanced, namely seiners of between 12 and 18 metres fishing European pilchard in the Celtic Sea – West Scotland.

## **2.3. Segments to be monitored**

### i. Methodology used

Segments to be monitored are determined by evaluating different indicators. In total, 20 segments were classified as segments to be monitored.

- a) Firstly, the segments concerned are segments which contributed significantly to landings of overharvested stock, albeit infrequently, i.e. in two of the last three years examined. Landings did not reach the point of imbalance for indicators over the last three years. The segments were monitored as a precaution in order to check their impact on the quantities of overharvested stocks removed. There are three such segments.
- b) The segments to be monitored were also segments classified as such on account of their economic viability. The SAR, SHI and NOS indicators did not demonstrate a significant impact or dominant activity with regard to overharvested stocks, whereas the EDI indicator demonstrated strong economic dependence on overharvested stocks. Segments were identified on the basis of economic overcapacity observed during two of the last three years. Nine such segments were identified for this report.
- c) Lastly, segments assessed as imbalanced, albeit with scientific knowledge subject to interpretation (slight imbalance for a single indicator, recent scientific opinions suggesting an improvement in the stock, difficulties in interpreting the status of the stock) were also classified as segments to be monitored. There were three such segments.

### ii. List of French segments to be monitored

Table 5: List of the 6 segments to be monitored according to biological indicators.

Segment	Description	Associated species/gear	Number of vessels in 2018	Average age of vessels	Changes between 2017 and 2018
AT MC_OE_Is FPO VL0010 163	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland, Iceland - pot vessels - between 0 and 10 metres	Whelk (WHE 27.e)	170	24	No change
AT MC_OE_Is FPO VL1012 163	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland, Iceland - pot vessels - between 10 and 12 metres	Whelk (WHE 27.e)	44	21	One additional vessel
AT MC_OE_Is DTS VL1824	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland - trawlers - between 18 and 24 metres	Cod (COD 27)	56	23	9 vessels fewer
AT MC_OE_Is DTS VL2440	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland - trawlers - between 24 and 40 metres	Cod (COD 27)	44	17	1 vessel fewer
ME ME DFN VL0612	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - netters - between 6 and 12 metres	Hake (HKE 37.7)	521	33	9 vessels fewer
AT MC_OE_Is OTM VL40XX	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland, Iceland - pelagic trawlers - more than 40 metres	Blue whiting - (WHB 27)	1	45	No change

Table 6: List of the 9 balanced segments whose economic viability needs to be monitored

Segments to be monitored	Description	Assessment of economic viability	Number of vessels	Average age of vessels	Change as compared to 2018 report (i.e. between 2016 and 2017)
AT MC OE Is PGP VLOO10	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland - between 0 and 10 metres	Economic overcapacity over the period 2011-2018. However, the number of vessels has been falling considerably over time (-37% over the period). Furthermore, no impact on overharvested stocks	13	27	8 vessels fewer

		(biological indicators remained negative throughout the period).			
AT MdN_Mchest HOK VL0010	Atlantic - North Sea, Eastern Channel - hooks - between 0 and 10 metres	Continued economic overcapacity since 2016, intensifying in 2018. However, dependence on overharvested stocks reduced considerably over the course of the period and is now virtually at zero (EDI close to 0). No negative biological indicators at any point during the period.	26	28	5 vessels fewer
AT MdN_Mchest PMP VL0010	Atlantic - North Sea, Eastern Channel - various active and passive gear - between 0 and 10 metres	Since 2012, the segment has had economic overcapacity each year for which such data is available. The segment has fewer than 10 vessels which limits the relevance of the assessment.	3	21	One additional vessel
ME ME DTS VL1218	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - between 12 and 18 metres	The segment has fewer than 10 vessels which limits the relevance of the assessment.	3	58	1 vessel fewer
ME ME HOK VL1218	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - between 12 and 18 metres	Segment only has technical overcapacity, with values reaching the point of balance for 90 effort.	8	22	1 vessel fewer
ME ME DFN VL1218	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - netters - between 12 and 18 metres	Economic overcapacity every year except 2015.	8	40	2 additional vessels
ME ME PGO VL0612	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - other passive gear - between 6 and 12 metres	Since 2012, the segment has always had economic overcapacity but is still close to being balanced.	49	28	No change
OM Reunion PP excl. seiners HOK VL1218	Other regions - La Réunion - between 18 and 24 metres	Economic overcapacity since 2011 which is growing gradually.	16	18	One additional vessel

iii. Changes compared to the assessment presented in the 2019 report



The number of segments to be monitored is falling (20 segments in 2019 report, 15 segments in the 2020 report, representing a drop of 20%).

The analysis of economic overcapacity needs to be qualified given the small number of vessels in each segment. Only four of the eleven segments assessed as being economically non-viable actually have more than 10 vessels, which is the threshold for considering an economic assessment relevant. Nevertheless, in the case of almost all fisheries the imbalance was slight. Segments were either close to profitability or had alternated since 2011 between profitable and unprofitable years.

### 3. Section A: Fleet segments and fisheries

#### 3.1. Description of fleet segments

The fleet segments defined for this report were created in accordance with the segments set out in Appendices II and III to Commission Decision 2010/93/EU of 18 December 2009 adopting a multi-annual Community programme for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector for the 2010–2013 period, i.e. by length class, dominant gear and zone of activity.

Nevertheless, priority was not given to supra-regional level. In order to align the stock distribution and fishing strategies of French vessels, France refined its vessel segmentation by using more specific geographical groupings than supra-regional level whilst remaining compliant with Appendix II to Decision 2010/93/EU. The study identifies 10 reference regions:

Table 7: Reference regions for indicator calculations

Supra-region (DCF)	Regions selected for the segmentation of the French fleet	ICES division	Description of the region in the indicator tables ('Region Capacity')
Atlantic	North Sea - Eastern Channel	27.1; 27.2; 27.3; 27.4; 27.7.d	MdN_Mchest
	Western Channel - Celtic and Irish Seas - West Scotland - Iceland	27.5; 27.6; 27.7 (except 27.7.d); 27.12; 27.14	MC_OE_Is
	Bay of Biscay and the Balearic Seas	27.8; 27.9; 27.10	GG_lb
Mediterranean	Mediterranean	37	ME
Other regions	Africa, Antarctica, Indian Ocean - Seiners of more than 24 metres	34; 47; 48; 51; 58	OM AFR_Oind
	La Réunion – Vessels of less than 24 metres	51 (Vessels registered in La Réunion)	OM Reunion PPHSen
	Mayotte – Vessels of less than 24 metres	51 (Vessels registered in Mayotte)	OM Mayotte PPHSen
	French Guiana	31 (Vessels registered in French Guiana)	French Guiana

	Guadeloupe	31 (Vessels registered in Guadeloupe)	Guadeloupe
	Martinique	31 (Vessels registered in Martinique)	Martinique

Dominant gear and length categories are as defined in the abovementioned Appendix III, namely:

Table 8: List of dominant fishing methods in French fleet segments

Gear code	Description of gear	Type of fishing method
DRB	Dredgers	Active gear
DTS	Demersal trawlers and demersal seiners	Active gear
MGO	Other active gear	Active gear
MGP	Various active gear	Active gear
OTM	Pelagic trawlers	Active gear
PS_	Purse seiners	Active gear
TBB	Beam trawlers	Active gear
DFN	Drift and/or fixed netters	Passive gear
FPO	Vessels using pots or traps	Passive gear
HOK	Hooks	Passive gear
PGO	Other passive gear	Passive gear
PGP	Various passive gear	Passive gear
PMP	Various active and passive gear	Polyvalent gear
NONACTIVE	Inactive	Inactive

Table 9: List of length categories in French fleet segments

Atlantic - Outermost regions	Mediterranean
0 < 10 m = VL0010	0 < 6 m = VL0006
10 < 12 m = VL1012	6 < 12 m = VL0612
12 < 18 m = VL1218	

18 < 24 m = VL1824
24 < 40 m = VL2440
40 m and over = VL40XX

At the end of the segmentation process by region, dominant metier and length category, more than 200 fleet segments were identified according to the following geographical distribution during the period:

Table 10: Changes in the vessel population and number of segments by region (2011-2018)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Africa - Antarctica - Indian Ocean	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
Bay of Biscay and the Balearic Seas	38	40	44	41	42	44	42	44
Guadeloupe	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
French Guiana	4	3	4	5	7	5	5	5
Martinique	14	12	12	11	12	11	10	10
Mayotte PP excl. seiners					3	3	3	3
Celtic Sea - West Scotland	43	43	40	40	37	34	37	36
North Sea - Eastern Channel	38	37	36	36	36	36	35	33
Mediterranean	32	32	31	29	31	29	28	28
Reunion PP excl. seiners	6	6	6	8	6	6	7	6
Inactive vessels	18	17	17	17	16	16	14	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>191</b>

### 3.2. Link with fisheries

#### i. Identification of evaluated stocks

During the period 2011-2018, there were 289 stocks for which French landings were calculated not to be at zero. As France did not have biological data for all of those stocks, efforts to gather data focused as a priority on the following stocks (alternative criteria):

- Criterion 1: stocks for which France's share in terms of value represented at least 1% of all French landings
- Criterion 2: stocks for which France's share in terms of quantity represented at least 1% of all French landings
- Criterion 3: stocks managed through a regional fisheries organisation
- Criterion 4: stocks managed through a European multi-annual management plan

- Criterion 5: stocks for which France represented more than 30% of the European allowable catch rate
- Criterion 6: stocks for which France has a quota in excess of 1 000 tonnes
- Criterion 7: notified stocks. This category also includes stocks subject to a fishing ban. As the ban was complied with by vessels flying the French flag, these stocks are merely indicated for information purposes.

Once the list had been drawn up, France commissioned the French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea (Ifremer) to gather all biological data available on those stocks, including as a minimum,

- an opinion or trend: this assessment is based on stock evaluations carried out internationally (ICES, ICCAT, IOTC, etc.). It may be quantitative, i.e. standard fishing mortality ( $F_c$ ) in relation to the reference point ( $F_{msy}$ ), or qualitative, i.e. an expert assessment,
- quantities landed internationally of each stock.

112 of these stocks were monitored and a scientific opinion was drawn up, as indicated in Annex 5.

France therefore has the data needed to calculate the indicators covered by this report for 112 stocks. The list of stocks for which the necessary variables for calculating the SHI could be gathered for the years 2011 to 2018 is contained in Annex 5 to this report. Although 112 stocks are indicated, only 105 stocks had a landing value which was not at zero.

## ii. Assessment of stocks used

The assessment for the stocks used is binary:

- 0: stock overharvested
- 1: stock in good health

The assessment was produced for each stock on the basis of two indicators:

- the stock exploitation level (mortality),
- the status of the stock (biomass level).

The stock exploitation level indicator determines the final status of the stock as used in the report other than if overfishing is low whilst biomass is high when the  $B/B_{msy}$  ratio is greater than 1.5, or if biomass is very high when the ratio is close to or greater than 2.

In total, six stocks were assessed as being in good health when seen in terms of low overfishing and high biomass:

- Haddock - HAD (IIIan,IV,Vla) and HAD (VIIb-k)
- European hake - HKE (VIIIc,IXa)
- Saithe - POK (Vb)
- Blue whiting - WHB (27)
- Mackerel (27)
- Atlantic Cod (27)

## iii. Use of assessments for the indicators covered by the report

Assessments for the stocks used were integrated depending on the indicator calculation conditions (see point 8.2).

### a. For the 'stocks at risk' indicator (SAR):

In line with the guidelines referred to under point 8.2, the indicator is only calculated for active fleet segments exploiting stocks:

- which comply with the definition set out in point 10.1 of Commission Communication COM(2014)545 final of 2 September 2014,
- where the stocks caught by the segment represent at least 10% of the segment's total landings, or if the segment contributes to at least 10 % of total landings for that stock.

This very restrictive definition does not take into account certain stocks notified by scientific experts and international organisation.

Furthermore, in the absence of the list of stocks at risk produced for all Member States for the 2020 report, France, drawing on the definition set out in the guidelines, still included in this category:

- stocks dependent on a fragile habitat or overharvested and recognised as such by relevant international organisations. The same applies to gangui fishing activity on Posidonia beds in the Mediterranean as detailed in point 8.2 and Annex 2 to this report. This assessment is confirmed by Annex II to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea and Annex IV to the Habitats Directive. Annex 2 to this report – also provided last year – summarises this fishing method.
- Mediterranean hake, red mullet and shrimps for which a significant reduction in fishing effort is recommended in a GFCM16 opinion.
- Atlantic and Mediterranean eel, in particular Atlantic glass eel, for which a significant and lasting reduction in recruitment to the stock was observed in the September 2016 opinion of ICES and the Joint EIFAAC/ICES Working Group on Eels (WGEEL).

The list of SARs therefore comprises the following stocks for the years 2011 to 2018: - hake (HKE) in the Mediterranean; - red mullet (MUT) in the Mediterranean; - stock associated with Mediterranean Posidonia and exploited by vessels using gangui fishing methods - eel stocks on the Atlantic and Mediterranean seabords (ELE).

#### **b. For the 'sustainable harvest indicator' (SHI):**

Assessments of a given fleet segment must meet the following two cumulative criteria:

- stock exploited with an  $F_c/F_{msy}$  ratio that can be calculated
- the same stock with available  $F_c/F_{msy}$  ratio must account for at least 40% of total landings for the segment in question.

France included an additional SHI calculation which allows the segment's contribution to the overall fishing mortality of each exploited stock to also be taken into account. The EU's SHI otherwise does not allow this to be identified as it focuses on the segment's stock dependence. Both criteria were taken into account to define the imbalance.

The  $F_c/F_{msy}$  ratio is only available for 63 stocks. Of those, 51 segments meet the second criteria, i.e. the share of the stock accounts for at least 40% of the total volume of landings for the segment over the last three years. Only one segment was thus imbalanced under this indicator, namely the segment comprising pelagic trawlers over 40 metres in the North Sea and in the Western Channel.

An analysis of the stocks underlying this segment resulted in France preferring to classify the segment as a segment to be monitored as this better reflected reality. Indeed, despite being overharvested, blue whiting (WHB (27)) is considered properly exploited due to its high biomass. Furthermore, the segment comprising pelagic trawlers over 40 metres fishing in the Western Channel – West Scotland, is classified as a segment to be monitored.

**Consequently, no French segment is ultimately imbalanced on the basis of the SHI indicator.**

#### **c. For the 'number of overexploited stocks' indicator (NOS):**

An analysis was carried out on the basis of two evaluations:

- an ‘NOS 1’ evaluation calculating the number of overharvested stocks fished by the segment where
  - 80% or more of the calculated stock is landed by segments of the French fleet, and
  - the segment’s contribution to total landings is greater than 1/the number of French segments fishing the stock.
- an ‘NOS 2’ evaluation calculating the number of overharvested stocks fished by the segment for which the segment’s contribution to total landings is greater than 15%. The analysis allowed the 5% and 10% NOSs to be refined. However, only the 15% NOS was used in conjunction with the EDI to identify the imbalance.

For segments active with respect to overharvested stocks according to the ‘NOS 1’ and ‘NOS 2’ calculations, the imbalance assessment was used.

For segments active with respect to overharvested stocks according to only one of either the ‘NOS 1’ or ‘NOS 2’ calculations, the imbalance assessment was only used if the segments’ economic dependence on those stocks was high. Dependence was considered to be high where the EDI indicator demonstrated that dependence was greater than 40% of the total value of the species landed by the segment.

Although six segments were identified under the NOS indicator, it was decided that two segments exploiting whelk should not be included, specifically

- whelk, WHE (VIIe), which is subject to a number of reservations in terms of its interpretation. This stock has been considered overfished for a number of years. However, the assessment of the stock status is ambiguous. The reference document, i.e. the BESTCLIM programme, presents developments in biomass since 2016, without determining fishing mortality. It was updated in 2017, and then again in 2018. However, it has no reference value. The various stock assessment approaches proposed under the project makes the assessment weak and offers differing results. The limitations inherent in this project mean that extreme caution must be taken when assessing the actual status of the stock. Consequently, the two segments comprising pot vessels fishing whelk were not included as imbalanced segments but instead as segments to be monitored.

In order to illustrate the different approaches relating to this indicator, the following table summarises and explains once again how they have been used in the reports submitted by France since 2015. As in previous reports, this report includes the NOS indicator in accordance with the STECF recommendations (see point 8.2). However, two different calculation methods have been applied.

**Table 11: Summary of different NOS indicator variants in reports submitted by France since 2015**

NOS indicator variants	Methodology	2015 report	2016 report	2017 report	2018-2019 and 2020 reports
NOS 1 - 54%	Number of overharvested stocks where the landing ratio of the segment for a stock as a proportion of all landings is higher than the ratio 1/total number of active segments fishing the stock. As the total number of segments is only understood in terms of each Member State, the indicator is calculated solely for stocks for which France has a share of at least 54%. In this context, the		X		

	number of segments targeting this stock in France was considered to be a proxy of the total number of segments targeting this stock.				
NOS 1 - 80%	Number of overharvested stocks where the landing ratio of the segment for a stock as a proportion of all landings is higher than the ratio 1/total number of active segments fishing the stock. As the total number of segments is only understood in terms of each Member State, the indicator is calculated solely for stocks for which France has a share of at least 80%. In this context, the number of segments targeting this stock in France was considered to be a proxy of the total number of segments targeting this stock. The ratio was increased to 80% in the interests of identifying those segments making the biggest contribution.			X	X
NOS 2 - 15%	Number of overharvested stocks by segment where the landings of the segment for a stock are higher than 15% of all landings of that stock.	X		X	X
NOS 2 - 10%	Number of overharvested stocks by segment where the landings of the segment for a stock are higher than 10% of all landings of that stock.				X
NOS 2 - 5%	Number of overharvested stocks by segment where the landings of the segment for a stock are higher than 5% of all landings of that stock.				X

#### d. For the 'economic dependence indicator' (EDI)

This indicator allows a fleet segment's economic dependence on overharvested stocks to be evaluated. It alone cannot justify the existence of an imbalance in a fleet segment. However, it is able to support such an assessment in conjunction with other biological indicators. This indicator is also used to identify segments to be monitored due to their economic dependence on overharvested stocks.

The list of stocks and the assessment (in good health or overharvested) of those stocks used for the purposes of this report is contained in Annex 5 hereto.

### 3.3. Development of the fleet

The French fleet is renewed through applications for operating permits. All vessel owners/operators wishing to enter a new fishing unit into the fleet or modify the technical characteristics of one of their vessels must apply for an operating permit. Furthermore, a distinction is drawn between operating permits requested due to:

- a shipwreck or any other type of incident at sea resulting in a fishing vessel becoming unseaworthy: 'operating permit by right',
- a new fleet entry or active vessel upgrade without the exit of a vessel of equivalent capacity by the applicant: 'other operating permit',
- fleet renewal or an active vessel upgrade, meaning applications for operating permits are submitted against the permanent exit from the fleet of one or more vessel(s): 'one-for-one operating permit'.

Between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2018, 1042 new fleet entries and upgrade projects were launched within the segment for mainland France. Projects consisted of fleet unit upgrades or entries of new fishing units into the fleet by constructing, importing or changing the activity of vessels.

Table 12: Coast-by-coast summary of fleet renewals

Coast of mainland France	Projects	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
South Atlantic coast	Fleet entries	1	9	13	12	12	19	7	18
(vessel equal to or less than 25 metres)	Vessel upgrade	8	4	20	11	15	27	6	7
Eastern Channel - North Sea coast	Fleet entries	8	4	6	9	7	12	12	17
(vessel equal to or less than 25 metres)	Vessel upgrade	1	2	10	10	11	5	5	7
Western Channel - North Atlantic coast	Fleet entries	12	14	24	13	34	24	11	37
(vessel equal to or less than 25 metres)	Vessel upgrade	10	4	11	9	8	10	16	9
Mediterranean coast	Fleet entries	26	8	56	37	37	41	11	33
(vessel equal to or less than 25 metres)	Vessel upgrade	8	3	30	20	30	28	28	29
All coasts	Fleet entries	4	6	3	1	4	11	1	3
Vessel exceeding 25 metres	Vessel upgrade		4	2	2	1	5	3	6



<b>Total</b>		78	58	175	124	159	182	100	166
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#### 4. Section B: Fishing effort adaptation plan

##### 4.1. Fishing effort reduction plan

###### i. Available tools

There are various types of management measures in force to reduce fishing effort in fisheries where this is necessary.

These include:

- limits on fishing time: quotas (kW\*days or days at sea),
- catch limits: by tonnage or maximum volume, percentage or quota,
- access restrictions: by introducing authorisation schemes,
- technical restrictions: by means of mesh size, selective devices,
- limits on space and time,
- aid for permanent or temporary cessation of activities.

This also includes regional access schemes implemented by professionals in their regions to limit the fishing effort of some fleets, such as the measures applying to netters in the 'North Atlantic – Western Channel', 'Eastern Channel – North Sea' and 'Southern [French] Atlantic' regions.

###### ii. Implementation of assisted fleet exit plans

The following fleet exit plans have been implemented with public aid:

- in 2007 for the anchovy, 'thonaille', cod, sole, deep-water species, Mediterranean hake, eel and monkfish fisheries,
- in 2008 for the anchovy, cod, sole, deep-water species, Mediterranean hake, eel and monkfish fisheries,
- in 2009 for the anchovy, cod, sole, deep-water species, Mediterranean hake, eel, monkfish, bluefin tuna and tuna fisheries in Senegalese waters,
- in 2010 for the eel and porbeagle fisheries,
- in 2011 for the Mediterranean (trawl), bluefin tuna, cod and eel fisheries,
- in 2012 for the Mediterranean (trawl), porbeagle, cod and Mediterranean eel fisheries,
- in 2013 for the Mediterranean trawl and European eel fisheries in the Mediterranean,
- in 2016 for the Mediterranean trawl fishery and gangui fishery on Posidonia beds in the Mediterranean in zone GSA734,
- in 2017 for the sole netters of between 0 and 18 metres fishery in the Eastern Channel,
- in 2017 for the Mediterranean lobster trawler fishery in zone GSA8,
- in 2017 for the fishery for vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing glass eel and yellow eel in the Atlantic supra-region,
- in 2017 for the fishery for netters of between 10 and 12 metres in the Eastern Channel and North Sea.

Fleet exit plans were halted on 31 December 2017 and there have been no assisted exits since then. However, this measure was reintroduced under the West Med plan which entered into force in the summer of 2019.

In addition, under the new 'EMFF' regulation, which will replace Regulation (EU) No 508/2014, fleet exit plans should be reintroduced under the terms of ordinary law starting in 2022. In line with the wishes of the industry (the measure being voluntary as with temporary cessations) and the results of the management

measures for imbalanced segments, fleet exit plans could be rolled out.

iii. Adjustment of fishing effort for the period 2016-2018

The following limits on fishing effort were applied:

- with a view to the future Mediterranean management plan, the maximum authorised fishing effort for Mediterranean trawlers was reduced to 10 % in zone GSA7 due to the status of the fleets' target hake stock. Under the national management plan for Mediterranean trawlers, fishing effort in 2018 was limited to 11 848 days for Mediterranean trawlers,
- under the national management plan for small-scale vessels in the Mediterranean and in view of the situation in terms of the stocks fished, limits on fishing effort were introduced in 2016 for vessels using beach seines, purse seines and dredges in the Mediterranean. Those limits are based on activity levels during the period 2014-2015, serving as a ceiling which may not be exceeded. Other than this ceiling, fishing effort was also reduced for beach seines and purse seines in 2016 under the Mediterranean management plan,
- the fishing effort of active vessels was restricted in accordance with the following schemes: 'cod in the Eastern Channel, North Sea, Western Scotland and the Irish sea', 'deep-sea species', 'Western waters', 'Southern hake – lobster' and 'Western Channel sole'. The fishing effort scheme for the cod fishery was abolished in 2017.

REGIONS	YEAR	Tonnage (GT or UMS)	Power (kW)
<b>MAINLAND</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>178 124</b>	<b>769 423</b>
	31/12/2018	150 151	679 103
	31/12/2017	147 301	677 373
	31/12/2016	145 804	673 919
	31/12/2015	144 019	673 087
	31/12/2014	144 654	676 014
	31/12/2013	147 761.53	685 925
	31/12/2012	151 926.35	693 989
	31/12/2011	153 795.82	700 277
<b>LA REUNION</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>10 002</b>	<b>31 465</b>
	31/12/2018	6 595	19 439
	31/12/2017	6 703	19 653
	31/12/2016	6 694	19 397
<b>Less than 12 metres</b>	31/12/2015	6 715	19 014
<b>4FD</b>	31/12/2014	6 710	19 014
	31/12/2013	6 713.88	18 502
	31/12/2012	7 048.02	19 509
	31/12/2011	7 568.35	20 579
<b>LA REUNION</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>1 050</b>	<b>19 320</b>
	31/12/2018	347	11 181
	31/12/2017	355	11 397
	31/12/2016	347	11 107
<b>More than 12 metres</b>	31/12/2015	342	10 887
<b>4FC</b>	31/12/2014	357	11 254
	31/12/2013	358.06	11 293
	31/12/2012	363.1	11 453
	31/12/2011	397	12 561
<b>GUADELOUPE</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>6 188</b>	<b>162 590</b>
	31/12/2018	2 302	126 200
	31/12/2017	2 285	126 307
	31/12/2016	3 014	160 762
<b>Less than 12 metres</b>	31/12/2015	3 023	160 434

<b>4FL</b>	31/12/2014	3 001	158 017
	31/12/2013	2 974.84	156 500
	31/12/2012	2 967.70	156 280
	31/12/2011	2 887.13	151 112
<b>GUADELOUPE</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>1 750</b>
	31/12/2018	0	0
	31/12/2017	0	0
	31/12/2016	0	0
<b>More than 12 metres</b>	31/12/2015	0	0
<b>4FM</b>	31/12/2014	0	0
	31/12/2013	0	0
	31/12/2012	0	0
	31/12/2011	0	0
<b>MARTINIQUE</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>5 409</b>	<b>142 116</b>
	31/12/2018	1 633	89 25
	31/12/2017	1 732	92 057
	31/12/2016	1 807	96 938
<b>Less than 12 metres</b>	31/12/2015	1 748	94 476
<b>4FJ</b>	31/12/2014	2 090	110 724
	31/12/2013	2 038.09	108 109
	31/12/2012	1 907.14	99 099
	31/12/2011	1 884.08	96 649
<b>MARTINIQUE</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>1 046</b>	<b>3 294</b>
	31/12/2018	317	1 718
	31/12/2017	274	1 403
	31/12/2016	274	1 403
<b>More than 12 metres</b>	31/12/2015	233	1 035
<b>4FM</b>	31/12/2014	233	1 035
	31/12/2013	372	1 549
	31/12/2012	415	1 864
	31/12/2011	501	2 495
<b>FRENCH GUIANA</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>11 644</b>
	31/12/2018	676	9 541
	31/12/2017	685	9 584

	31/12/2016	642	9 114
<b>Less than 12 metres</b>	31/12/2015	580	7 071
<b>4FF</b>	31/12/2014	700	8 313
	31/12/2013	656	7 808
	31/12/2012	638	7 608
	31/12/2011	577	6 968
<b>FRENCH GUIANA</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>7 560</b>	<b>19 726</b>
	31/12/2018	2 169	6 050
	31/12/2017	2 104	6 090
	31/12/2016	2 104	6 090
<b>Shrimp vessels, more than 12 metres</b>	31/12/2015	2393	7 035
<b>4FG</b>	31/12/2014	2 896	8 345
	31/12/2013	3 088	8 971
	31/12/2012	2 877	8 345
	31/12/2011	3 031	9 177
<b>FRENCH GUIANA</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>3 500</b>	<b>5 000</b>
	31/12/2018	0	0
	31/12/2017	0	0
	31/12/2016	0	0
<b>Pelagic vessels, more than 12 metres</b>	31/12/2015	0	0
<b>4FH</b>	31/12/2014	166	723
	31/12/2013	166	723
	31/12/2012	166	723
	31/12/2011	166	723
<b>MAYOTTE</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>13 916</b>	<b>24 000</b>
	31/12/2018	12 634	19 400
	31/12/2017	12 634	19 400
	31/12/2016	12 634	19 400
<b>Tuna seiners</b>	31/12/2015	2 393	7 035
<b>4FN</b>	31/12/2014	Non-OR	Non-OR
	31/12/2013	Non-OR	Non-OR
	31/12/2012	Non-OR	Non-OR
	31/12/2011	Non-OR	Non-OR

	<i>CEILING</i>	<i>Definition in progress</i>	<i>Definition in progress</i>
<b>MAYOTTE</b>			
	31/12/2018	287	5 779
	31/12/2016	298	6 228
<b>Tuna longliners</b>	31/12/2015	305	6 404
<b>More than 24 metres</b>	31/12/2014	Non-OR	Non-OR
<b>4FP</b>	31/12/2013	Non-OR	Non-OR
	31/12/2012	Non-OR	Non-OR
	31/12/2011	Non-OR	Non-OR
<b>MAYOTTE</b>	<i>CEILING</i>	<i>Definition in progress</i>	<i>Definition in progress</i>
	31/12/2018	Inventory in progress	Inventory in progress
	31/12/2017	Inventory in progress	Inventory in progress
<b>Demersal and pelagic species</b>	31/12/2016	Inventory in progress	Inventory in progress
<b>Less than 10 metres</b>	31/12/2015	Inventory in progress	Inventory in progress
<b>4FO</b>	31/12/2014	Non-OR	Non-OR
	31/12/2013	Non-OR	Non-OR
	31/12/2012	Non-OR	Non-OR
	31/12/2011	Non-OR	Non-OR

- In 2018, the capacity system for this fishery was also abolished, although France continues to monitor the capacity of this fishery at national level,
- since 2015, the quota for vessels with authorisation to access the Eastern Channel sole fishery takes account of the status of the stock,
- application of a moratorium on all métiers targeting sea bass in ICES division IV b-c, VIIa and VII d to k, without bottom trawls, Danish seines, hook gears (partial closure only in February and March) and static nets in 2017,
- closure to Mediterranean trawlers for 5 days each year for biological recovery,
- closure to sole netters in the Bay of Biscay for 21 days between 1 January and 31 March,
- closure for 90 days on a voluntary basis (measure 33 of the EMFF) to Mediterranean trawlers in area GFCM 37.GSA7. Measure has since been abolished.

#### 4.2. Impact on capacity reduction

Fishing effort adjustment measures are aimed at limiting the maximum effort of the French fishing fleet. Fishing effort is no longer increasing, but there has been a shift in vessel activity. The fleet has been reducing in order to adapt to the quotas in place on fishing effort and available catch.

The impact of aid for permanent cessation of activity has been all the more effective where beneficiaries have been highly dependent on fisheries subject to fishing effort reduction measures. Fishing effort has

therefore reduced significantly in anchovy and bluefin tuna fisheries. This measure was deployed again between 2016 and 2017. However, it will not be possible to gauge its impact until 2018 as vessels benefitting from it will be scrapped in 2017 and 2018.

Although the fleet exit plans ended on 31 December 2017, they were reintroduced under the EMFF II.

## 5. Section C: Compliance with the entry/exit scheme (power and tonnage)

Pursuant to Article 22(7) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, the fishing capacity of the French fishing fleet is limited in power (kW) and tonnage (UMS) to the levels set out in Annex II to the abovementioned Regulation. Recognised capacity is understood to mean the fishing capacity of vessels holding a fishing licence within the meaning of Article 4(9) of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy.

On 31 December 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018, the fleet in possession of a fishing licence was below the capacity ceilings allocated to France.

### Table 13: Active fishing fleet levels and ceilings for the period 2011-2018

Between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2018, the French fishing fleet able to undertake fishing activity (declared active on the fishing vessel register) remained stable.

More vessels exited than entered the mainland segment during the period 2011-2015. However, since 2016 this trend has reversed with tonnage and power increasing slightly due to new construction projects and fleet entries associated with safety and an improvement in on-board quality of life.

## 6. Section D: Management of the fleet

### 6.1. Strengths and weaknesses of the national fleet management system

- The 2015 and 2016 reports confirmed the revision of the geographical disaggregation of fleet segments, with a view to honing the assessments. The disaggregation referred to under point 3.1 was applied as in the report, albeit with sub-segments for the coastal fleets from La Réunion and Mayotte which had previously been grouped together in the same region – in line with the 2017 and 2018 reports. The active fleets and stocks fished did not overlap with each other. Consequently, a separate assessment was deemed appropriate.

A number of difficulties are still being experienced.

- **The time lag between an evaluation of N-2 data and the current situation of the fisheries make it difficult to understand** the management measures taken.
- **A lack of European data on international catches.** Without this data it is difficult to estimate the impact of national fleets on each stock.
- **In 2018, of the active segments, more than 91 comprised less than 10 vessels. This proved problematic from a statistics point of view, giving rise to questions of a statistical nature regarding the relevance of producing an economic assessment.** This major limitation with regard to economic criteria has already been explained as part of the analysis of segments to be monitored, specifically regarding their economic viability. Extreme caution should be exercised when using this criteria.
- The estimate of the replacement value and capital depreciation costs prevented capital data from

being taken into account when calculating the RoFTA and CR/BER economic indicators. Capital data could be included for most segments in this report. However, discussions on strengthening how this variable is calculated are underway.

- Assigning each vessel to a primary region could result in vessels with highly divergent fishing strategies being grouped together within a single segment, e.g. vessel A spending 99% of its time in region 1 and vessel B visiting 3 fishing regions within the same year and only spending 34% of its time in region 1.
- The creation of sub-segments distinguishing vessels according to landing composition is still being examined. However, it has been decided for the past two years that adapted segments be presented in order to address:
  - active vessels fishing eel in the Atlantic supra-region,
  - active vessels fishing eel in the Mediterranean,
  - active vessels gangui fishing in the Mediterranean.

Vessels involved in these two activities are split into different fleet segments despite each contributing to the targeted fishing effort developed for sensitive, overharvested fisheries. However, as activity in such fisheries is generally of a subsidiary nature, it is impossible to identify dedicated fleet segments. In order to avoid this shortcoming, segments were evaluated for the purposes of this report according to the standard criteria referred to above.

France therefore added three subsidiary fishing activity segments:

- ME ME VL0012 – gangui fishing: vessels of between 0 and 12 metres engaging in gangui fishing as a subsidiary activity on Mediterranean seagrass (*Posidonia*) beds,
  - AT ELE VL0024: vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel as a subsidiary activity on the Atlantic seaboard,
  - ME ME ELE VL0024: vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel as a subsidiary activity in the Mediterranean.
- 
- The lack of available data for certain segments, in particular for French Guiana, Martinique and Guadeloupe, has not been entirely resolved. However, the situation has improved since 2015 with the provision of biological, technical and economic data. We would emphasise that economic data could be provided for segments of less than 12 metres in Guadeloupe and French Guiana for 2016. Although this data does not allow an assessment to be concluded, France intends to continue its efforts to fully integrate those territories into the report. However, this will only prove useful if biological data is made available for the stocks targeted by these fleets.
  - It should be a prerequisite that Member States are provided with the data needed to produce this report, particularly in terms of:
    - the dissemination of scientific advice on all stocks fished. As this information is not provided, each Member State gathers the most recent opinions from recognised scientific bodies, some of which are national bodies, without sharing this information. Furthermore, the uniformity of the advice is impossible to verify,
    - the dissemination of total quantities fished in respect of stocks to be monitored. As this data is not made available to Member States, each Member State obtains from recognised bodies the total quantities fished, without sharing this data. However, a number of those quantities are not available or stable. It is therefore impossible to be certain as to the completeness of the quantities obtained,
    - access to the number of vessels and fleet segments from all Member States targeting a specific stock. Obtaining certain indicators, such as NOS 1, is therefore otherwise limited only to Member State segments which are not always representative in terms of total landings.
  - Lastly, in order to ensure enhanced monitoring and assessments of French fleet segments, there is still a need to:
    - strengthen dialogue with scientific and professional partners on methodological choices (list of stocks, assignment of vessels to regions, grouping of segments into clusters, etc.) for future



reports,

- improve the quality and availability of data gathered for the preparation of future reports,
- oversee the renewal and redeployment of the fleet towards balanced segments, where appropriate with assistance for temporary cessation of activity,
- optimise the regulatory, technical and administrative measures in force so as to balance fishing capacity with fishing opportunities.

## 6.2. Action plans for improving the national fleet management system

France welcomes the stock coverage in this report which has continued to progress with each year and will continue its efforts to improve this. The national action plan will therefore endeavour to make data falling under Member State jurisdiction available, although the need for stronger European coordination should be kept in mind.

The plan is a move towards full monitoring of the French fishing fleet, so as to ensure timely management in view of achieving a sustainable balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities. In view of this, the plan comprises two sections:

- a qualitative section, for improvements to data gathered for drafting the capacity report,
- a section focusing on reducing the capacity of imbalanced segments and optimising segment management.

### i. Improved quality and availability of data needed for preparation of the capacity report

The list of monitored stocks has increased considerably since the 2017 report. For the period 2011-2013, landings of monitored stocks were assessed at 34%. For the period 2011-2014, this increased to 68%. Progress has been constant, leading to a coverage rate in 2017 of 74% of the volume landed on national territory (including overseas regions), or 72% in terms of the landing value. This fell slightly in 2018, with a coverage rate of 72% of the volume landed.

Table 14: Coverage rate of reference stocks in terms of volume and value

Year	No of REF* stocks	Tonnes (REF stocks)	Tonnes – total FRA	Value k€ (REF stocks)	Total value k€ landings FRA	% coverage (tonnage)	% coverage (value)
2011	110	339 918	492 363	819 409	1 201 936	69%	68%
2012	111	349 656	504 569	832 912	1 175 288	69%	71%
2013	110	373 844	528 582	874 534	1 200 267	71%	73%
2014	109	401 793	545 423	892 489	1 236 872	62%	65%
2015	110	398 565	535 934	920 330	1 260 784	74%	73%
2016	108	421 605	552 491	972 561	1 319 744	76%	74%
2017	108	415 962	552 690	997 158	1 368 546	75%	73%
2018	105	409 501	565 245	957 690	1 398 045	72%	69%

\* for which French landings were calculated not to be at zero.

### ii. Supporting capacity reduction in imbalanced segments

After identifying imbalanced segments, as presented under point 2 of this report, France estimated the reductions to be made to each imbalanced segment, taking into account the latest available scientific advice

and the share of each of those segments in French landings of overharvested stocks responsible for the imbalance.

Overcapacity was estimated in order to reduce as a priority landings of overharvested stocks causing segments to become imbalanced. An average landing reduction target per segment was set for those stocks. Once the landing reduction target had been set for a segment, it was used to establish an objective for reductions in vessels, tonnage and power by segment. The objective is indicative. It was evaluated by considering that the catch taken by all vessels is identical. It can therefore be adjusted in line with the vessels reducing their fishing effort. This objective may also be revised in the light of future scientific advice or the first cessations of activity.

Management measures have been identified for each reduction objective to ensure that the imbalances found are corrected by 31 December 2020 at the latest.

The reduction objectives will primarily be achieved through the following actions:

- temporary cessation of activity without assistance and assisted temporary cessation in accordance with the procedures set out in the OP EMFF,
- greater selectivity of fishing gear, where appropriate by funding studies,
- restrictions on fleet renewal and fleet entries for imbalanced segments,
- discussions on stepping up management measures under the multi-annual plans in force for vessels flying the flag of France.

#### **Timetable of aid for temporary cessation of activity**

If aid for temporary cessation of activity is granted, it shall be on an exceptional basis in order to address serious situations as described in Article 33(1) of Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 or to implement a sustainable reduction in fishing effort that guarantees the attainment of the maximum sustainable yield objectives as referred to in Article 2(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

In this context, aid measures for the temporary cessation of activity will be implemented as follows:

- the decision to make aid available will be taken and will mention the fisheries targeted and the selectivity objectives for which the set-up time or testing may give rise to compensation,
- filing, processing and granting of aid must be finalised by 31 May of the year following the year in which aid is made available.

#### **iii. General information on compliance with fleet management measures**

Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a community control system and its Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011 of 8 April 2011 came into force on 1 January 2012.

These two Regulations govern, in particular, the monitoring of engine power, which is divided into two stages, namely engine certification, followed by engine verification (document check and, where required, a physical check). In accordance with these provisions, the French authorities used the engine certifications described in detail in the 2013 report.

In 2012, France entered the verification stage, submitting the necessary sampling plans to the European Commission for approval. These plans, which were approved by the Commission, have been in place since 2013.

### **7. Development of administrative procedures concerning the national fleet management system**

The Directorate for Sea Fisheries and Aquaculture is responsible for the management of the French fleet in respect of French strategic fisheries and works with decentralised departments, producer organisations and maritime fisheries committees and marine breeders to implement management measures and ensure compliance.

Moreover, since 2011 producer organisations and committees have been delegated the task of authorising certain schemes. This task was delegated in response to operators' requests for more flexibility to balance

the capacity required with their production opportunities and optimum marketing conditions.

In the same vein, France is continuing to simplify its administrative procedures for access rights management by extending electronic authorisations. Fishing authorisations such as licences are no longer issued in paper form; the entire process is now electronic. This development is in line with European legislation on fisheries control and enables more fluid management and more flexibility to react to the activity programmes of fishing vessels.

Lastly, France, in collaboration with the fishing industry, initiated a reform of production rights management (catch and effort opportunities) in 2013, which was completed in late 2014 and continued into 2015. These reforms respond to the need for administrative procedures to be simplified and for the industry to be more involved in management decisions, in particular as regards aligning fishing capacity with fishing opportunities.

The capacity management reform entered into force in mainland France in February 2017 and was implemented in the overseas regions in March 2019.

## **8. Assessment of indicators relating to the fishing fleet**

Of the 194 fleet segments, indicator calculations covered all active segments. However, for confidentiality reasons, economic indicators were only reported for segments with more than three vessels.

### **8.1. Technical indicators**

The technical indicators used for this report were those used by STECF for the assessment of Member State reports submitted for 2012, namely:

- the number of inactive vessels by region and DCF length category explained under point 3.1 of this report,
- the usage rate for the segment's production capacity, i.e. average days at sea of the segment against the maximum possible days at sea (Average DaS/max. possible DaS) of the segment. Maximum possible days at sea are within the segment's 90th percentile. If this indicator is below 0.7, the segment's productive capacity is under-used.

It should be noted that the second technical indicator is reported for segments of less than 12 metres. However, no assessment could be carried out. Given the wide range of individual strategies among masters/owners of vessels for which fishing is in many cases not the sole activity, interpreting the production capacity usage rate for this category is a delicate process. A more detailed assessment of how dependent segments comprising vessels of less than 12 metres are on fishing should be conducted in order to take account of their greater versatility.

Furthermore, the submission method used for the reporting obligations of vessels of less than 10 metres – one fishing log per month – does not allow for optimal monitoring of their fishing effort. In order to assess the technical indicator for these segments, it is therefore necessary to review the data which must be collected.

### **8.2. Biological indicators**

The biological indicators used for this report were those used by STECF for the assessment of Member State reports submitted for 2012<sup>18</sup>, and the two new indicators recommended in its 15-02 report. **Compared to previous years, a change was made to how the biological indicators were calculated this year.** Until now,

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<sup>18</sup> COM(2014)545 final of 2 September 2014 - Point 7.1 Guidelines for analysis of the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities in accordance with Article 22 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy.

biological indicators had been calculated by taking into account the most recent biological assessment which would in turn 'colour' the entire data series. However, when preparing the 2020 report, the assessment for the current year was used, without colouring the entire dataset. This method is in line with European recommendations and has the advantage of better capturing the actual stock status during a multi-annual series. This helps the weighting of the last known assessment of a stock to be put into perspective and the positive or negative trends in stock status over time to be better taken into account.

#### **a- Sustainable Harvest indicator (SHI)**

This is a standardised fishing mortality average  $F^*(F_c/F_{msy})$  for all stocks fished by the segment in question with an estimated  $F_{msy}$  weighted according to the landing volume of the stocks under consideration:

- this indicator is recorded if landings of the stock under consideration account for at least 40% of the segment's landings,
- $SHI \leq 1$  means that the segment is economically dependent on stocks that can be fished sustainably.

For France, this indicator was only calculated for the 63 stocks for which the necessary information was available (see table 8, point 3.2).

#### **b- Stocks at risk indicator (SAR)**

This is the number of stocks at risk fished by the segment if the stock in question accounts for at least 10% of the segment's landings, or if the segment contributes to at least 10% of total landings for that stock.

For the STECF, a stock at risk means a stock:

1. with a biomass below a set biomass limit (Blim), or,
2. for which an international advisory body recommends closing the fishery, prohibiting targeted fishing, reducing fishing activities to the greatest possible extent or adopting similar measures, even where this opinion has been issued on the basis of limited data, or,
3. for which a regulation on fishing opportunities provides that fish should, wherever possible, be released alive back into the sea or that landings are prohibited, or,
4. that is included on the IUCN 'red list' or in the CITES annexes.

France has added to this definition:

- **stocks dependent on a fragile habitat or overharvested and recognised as such by authorised international organisations.** Due to the fragility of certain habitats, fishing practices that present a risk to their health should be limited. This is the case for gangui fishing methods used on Mediterranean Posidonia beds. These fishing practices, described in Annex 2 to this report, are a threat to those habitats, and should be reduced. In this context, France considers Mediterranean stocks dependent on Posidonia beds to be stocks at risk. This assessment is confirmed by Annex II to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea and Annex IV to the Habitats Directive<sup>19</sup>,
- **stocks for which there is scientific advice recommending a significant reduction in fishing effort** to be applied even if the biomass limit is not known and closure of the fishery has not been advised. This is the case for:
  - Mediterranean hake, red mullet and shrimps for which a significant reduction in fishing effort is recommended in a GFCM opinion<sup>20</sup>,
  - Atlantic and Mediterranean eel stocks for which a significant and lasting reduction in recruitment to the stock was observed in the September 2016 opinion of ICES and the Joint EIFAAC/ICES Working Group on Eels (WGEEL).

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<sup>19</sup> Annex IV to Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, and Annex II to the Barcelona Convention for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea.

<sup>20</sup> GFCM:SAC18/2016/Inf.11, pp. 11-13.

### c- 'Number of Overexploited Stocks' (NOS)

This indicator includes stocks for which only an 'expert opinion' is available.

For this report, France differentiated between two calculation methods for this indicator:

- the 'NOS 1' variant which identifies the fleet segments responsible for the status of the stock. This variant is closest to the calculation method proposed in the STECF-15-02 report. However, where no information is available on the number of fleet segments fishing each stock at international level, the NOS 1 indicator is calculated by assuming that a segment is considered to fish one or more overharvested stocks once the share of FR landings as a proportion of all landings is high (> 80 %) and the ratio (segment catches-stock/total catches stock) is higher than the ratio (1/total number of segments). 'Overexploited' stock is accounted for in the NOS for the segment. In this context, the number of segments targeting this stock in France is considered to be a proxy of the total number of segments targeting this stock,
- the 'NOS 2' variant which allows segments with significant landings of overharvested stocks to be identified. A segment is considered to be fishing an overexploited stock where the quantity of the overharvested stock removed accounts for at least 15% of total landings for that stock.

### d- Economic dependence indicator (EDI)

This indicator represents the landing share in terms of the value of overharvested stocks within a segment's total landings. An EDI exceeding 40% means that the segment's turnover depends predominantly on overharvested stocks, compromising the economic viability of the segment. The EDI is not assessed for many of the segments of less than 12 metres in the Mediterranean and overseas territories.

The NOS and EDI indicators have been calculated for all stocks to be monitored, as listed in Annex 5 to this report.

## 8.3. Economic indicators

For the purposes of this report, France would reiterate that the outcomes of these indicators are weakened by

- the method applied: variables were formed based on sampling involving non-exhaustive answers,
- the segment size: variables were reported only for segments comprising more than three vessels in accordance with the rules on confidentiality applied to statistical data.

Furthermore, owing to the variety of fishing strategies, these indicators could not be conclusive. France has therefore interpreted the outcomes of this evaluation with caution.

Otherwise, the economic indicators used for this report were those used by STECF for the assessment of Member State reports submitted for 2012, namely.

- RoFTA (Rate of return on fixed tangible asset) = (Net Profit + opportunity cost of capital) / Tangible asset value (Vessel depreciated replacement value).
- CR/BER = current revenue/break-even revenue.

So as to have long, stable data sets, it was decided that segments of at least 10 vessels would be created to calculate the economic indicator. This grouping takes into account the following vessel classes as identified by the EU and follows the order presented below:

1. Groupings formed within a single supra-region and single region,
2. Cluster takes the name of the largest segment in terms of number of vessels,
3. Groupings follow the order presented below:
  - a- Clusters comply with vessel classes identified by the EU:

- Small-scale fleet (SSF) vessels of less than 12 m with ‘passive’ gear.
- Large-scale fleet (LSF): other vessels, with the exception of LWF vessels.
- Long-distance water fleet (LWF): overseas vessels exceeding 24 m.

b- vessels practising the same metier and belonging to a closely adjoining (e.g. 0–10 m/10–12 m) length overall category (LOA) in metres (m) are grouped together; where this was not possible;

c- Vessels practising a similar but not identical metier and belonging to an identical LOA category are grouped together.

d- By way of a derogation to point c, a different grouping must be adopted in view of their specific characteristics in the case of:

- vessels of more than 40 metres: priority is given to groupings by LOA irrespective of the metier practised by the vessels grouped together.
- for overseas segments: priority is given to groupings by fishing method irrespective of the length classes concerned (albeit observing point 4.a above).

4. It is possible to retain segments of fewer than 10 vessels given their variety by comparison to neighbouring segments.