

**2018 ANNUAL REPORT<sup>1</sup> FROM FRANCE**  
**on efforts made between 2011 and 2016 to establish a sustainable balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities**

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## **1. Summary of the report**

### 1- Conclusions of the report

For the period 2011-2016, 231 segments were covered. In 2016, the French fleet comprised 195 fleet segments, plus a further 3 segments (ATL ELE 27, MED ELE 37 and MED Ganguis) i.e. 198 segments. Of those segments, 99 were balanced, 26 were to be monitored, 6 were imbalanced, 14 were inactive and 53 segments for which an assessment would require additional information (fewer than 4 vessels, no landed quantity).

The evaluation was carried out by taking into account the status of 109 stocks for the entire period (105 stocks were found during the entire period). Of the 105 stocks monitored, 29 were considered to be overharvested. Of the 29 overharvested stocks, France accounted for 5 % of landings for 19 stocks and 80 % of landings for three stocks: Mediterranean anchovy, sole in VIIIab, Mediterranean hake and Atlantic eel.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the guidelines for the analysis of 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.

*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 landed quantity (tonnes)
ANE (37.GSA7)	Anchovy	93 %	1 257
SOL (VIIIab)	Common sole	90 %	3 346
HKE (37.GSA7)	European hake	86 %	1 029
ELE (27)	European eel	81 %	55
MUT (37.GSA7)	Red mullet	79 %	393
PEN (31)	Penaeus shrimp	66 %	692
COD (VIIe-k)	Atlantic cod	60 %	3 299
ELE (37)	European eel	52 %	688
PLE (VIIhjk)	European plaice	43 %	100
BSS (IVbc,VIIa,VIIId-h)	European seabass	42 %	1 295
COD (VIa)	Atlantic cod	35 %	250
WHG (IV,VIIId)	Whiting	24 %	16 439
GFB (27)	Greater forkbeard	21 %	2 175
SBR (VI,VII,VIII)	Red seabream	19 %	177
BLI (I,II,IIIa,IVa,VIII,IX,XII)	Blue ling	9 %	205
YFT (51)	Yellowfin tuna	8 %	412 679
BET (47)	Bigeye tuna	6 %	72 375

## 2- Structure of the French fleet in 2016

On 31 December 2016, the fleet comprised 6 842 administratively active vessels corresponding to 173 630 GT and 1 004 684 kW. Of those vessels, the activity of 5 725 vessels, corresponding to 167 665 GT and 876 199 kW, is presented in this report.

This disparity is in line with the different method for activity accounting. In an administrative sense, inactivity means zero trips during 6 of the previous 12 months. However, for the purposes of this report, inactivity is where capacity was underused as at 31 December 2016.

## 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 fishing method,
- c) and the overall length.

a) In terms of the maritime zone, priority was not given to supra-regional level 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-regional level in accordance with Annex 2 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 was 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 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.

In 2016, under this segmentation, 20 segments had more than 100 vessels, 61 segments had fewer than 4 vessels (of which 35 were single-vessel segments) and 53 segments had between 10 and 50 vessels. Of the 18 segments with more than 100 vessels, three of those were segments with inactive vessels from the Atlantic/English Channel seaboard, Mediterranean and outermost regions.

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

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

Segment	Number of vessels in 2016	Supra-region	Region	Fishing method	Category of length overall
OM NONACTIVE VL0010	753	Outermost regions	Inactive	Inactive	0 to 10 metres
AT ELE VL0024	435	Atlantic	Atlantic	Eel	0 to 24 metres
ME ME DFN VL0612	510	Mediterranean	Mediterranean	Netter	6 to 12 metres
OM Guadeloupe PGP VL0010	299	Outermost regions	Guadeloupe	Various passive gear	0 to 10 metres
OM Martinique PGP VL0010	223	Outermost regions	Martinique	Various passive gear	0 to 10 metres

ME ME ELE VL0024 Mediterranean	204	Mediterranean	Mediterranean	Eel	0 to 24 metres
AT GG_Ib DFN VL0010	197	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas	Netter	0 to 10 metres
OM Martinique FPO VL0010	188	Outermost regions	Martinique	Potter	0 to 10 metres
AT MC_OE_Is FPO VL0010	163	Atlantic	Western Channel - Celtic and Irish Seas - West Scotland - Iceland	Potter	0 to 10 metres
OM Reunion PP Hors Senneurs HOK VL0010	149	Outermost regions	La Réunion excl.seiners	Hooks	0 to 10 metres
AT GG_Ib HOK VL0010	147	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas	Hooks	0 to 10 metres
AT GG_Ib MGO VL0010	143	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas	Other active gear	0 to 10 metres
AT NONACTIVE VL0010	142	Atlantic	Inactive	Inactive	0 to 10 metres
OM Martinique HOK VL0010	137	Outermost regions	Martinique	Hooks	0 to 10 metres
ME NONACTIVE VL0612	128	Mediterranean	Inactive	Inactive	6 to 12 metres
AT GG_Ib DTS VL1012	116	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas	Trawler	10 to 12 metres
ME ME DFN VL0006	115	Mediterranean	Mediterranean	Netter	0 to 6 metres
ME ME DFN VL0612	115	Mediterranean	Mediterranean	Various passive gear	6 to 12 metres
OM Mayotte PP Hors Senneurs HOK VL0010	114	Outermost regions	Mayotte PP excl. seiners	Hooks	0 to 10 metres
AT GG_Ib DTS VL1218	113	Atlantic	Bay of Biscay - Balearic Seas	Trawler	12 to 18 metres

#### 4 - Developments since the 2017 report

Overall, the 2018 segmentation contains one additional ‘natural’ segment compared to the previous report and accounts in reality for the addition of two segments and the withdrawal of one segment compared to 2017. The segments which were added were the various passive gear segment of between 24 and 40 metres in the Atlantic - Bay of Biscay and Balearic Seas and the pelagic trawler segment of between 0 and 10 metres in the Atlantic - Bay of Biscay and Balearic Seas. The segment which was withdrawn was the pelagic trawler segment of more than 40 metres in the Atlantic - Bay of Biscay and Balearic Seas. The inclusion of this segment has varied and does not follow any significant pattern. With landings distributed almost equally between the Bay of Biscay and Channel zones, the segment can sometimes be linked to the Bay of Biscay, sometimes to the Western Channel.

The segments created by the Directorate for Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture (DPMA) in the last report, i.e. eel in the Atlantic and gangui, were maintained. The segment for eel in the Mediterranean was added to those two segments. Posidonia beds – which are fished by gangui vessels – and eel are subject to special monitoring by France and the European Commission. The segment for eel in the Mediterranean

was created for this reason so as to ensure maximum visibility for the species on all seaboards. This enables streamlined and uniform action plans to be put in place for all professionals operating in this fishery. Moreover, it was decided that not only glass eel but also yellow and silver eel would be taken into account for the 2018 report given the fragility of the species regardless of the age considered. The number of vessels recorded for this report across the eel segments corresponds to the exact number of 'CMEA licences'<sup>3</sup> issued for this species for the years covered.

The comparison of the French fleet on 31 December 2016 and 2015 showed that the number of active vessel segments was increasing (from 214 to 217), with a slight increase in the number of active vessels. This upward trend was also observed in capacity, with the French fleet capacity increasing by 2 269 GT and 4 510 kW between 2015 and 2016.

#### 5 – Change in stock status and/or fishing opportunities during the year

Fishing and fishery strategies remained largely unchanged during the period 2011-2016.

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

Fishing effort decreased during the period 2011-2016. This was in line with the fishing effort management measures in force, in particular the schemes for Western waters<sup>4</sup>, deep-sea species<sup>5</sup>, cod<sup>6</sup>, sole in the Western Channel<sup>7</sup> and Bay of Biscay<sup>8</sup>, Southern hake and lobster<sup>9</sup> and Mediterranean management plans<sup>10</sup>. The aforementioned fishing effort management measures under the cod and deep-sea species plans were repealed as of the 2017 management year.

In 2017, four decommissioning plans and one temporary cessation were introduced 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>11</sup>.
- Decommissioning plan for sole netters of between 0 and 18 metres in the Eastern Channel<sup>12</sup>.
- Decommissioning plan for Mediterranean lobster trawlers in zone GSA8<sup>13</sup>.
- Decommissioning plan for vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing glass eel and yellow eel in the Atlantic supra-region<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Special fishing rights for amphihaline fish.

<sup>4</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>5</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>6</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 on the multi-annual cod management plan.

<sup>7</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>8</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>9</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>10</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.

<sup>11</sup> Order of 15 December 2016 on the implementation of assisted temporary cessation of fishing activity by vessels trawling in zone GFCM 37.GSA7 of the Mediterranean.

<sup>12</sup> Order of 3 February 2017 implementing a decommissioning plan for vessels of between 0 and 18 metres fishing with nets in the Eastern Channel and North Sea.

<sup>13</sup> Order of 26 July 2017 implementing a decommissioning plan for vessels of between 6 and 18 metres trawling lobster in zone GSA8 of the Mediterranean.

<sup>14</sup> Order of 26 July 2017 implementing a decommissioning plan for vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing glass eel and yellow eel in the Atlantic supra-region.

- Decommissioning plan for netters of between 10 and 12 metres in the Eastern Channel and North Sea<sup>15</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 2011-2016 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 decommissioning.

#### 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 fishing method 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.

- Method applied: variables were formed based on sampling involving non-exhaustive answers.
- 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.

## **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

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<sup>15</sup> Order of 11 August 2017 implementing a decommissioning plan for vessels of between 10 and 12 metres fishing with nets in the Eastern Channel and North Sea.

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 2018, i.e. 2014 to 2016,
  - segments not targeting overharvested stock for at least the last three years assessed in the report for 2018 (i.e. 2014 to 2016) 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 2018, i.e. 2014 to 2016,
  - segments fishing overharvested stock for at least the last three years assessed in the report for 2018 (i.e. 2014 to 2016) 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 2014 and 2016,
  - where the economic viability is untenable with respect to economic over-capacity for at least two years between 2014 and 2016,
  - 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 2018 report,
  - the absence of the minimum data needed for indicators to be calculated, such as fishing time or quantities landed.

iii. 2018 assessment

For the 198 segments comprising the French fleet in 2016, the 2018 assessment is as follows:

- 99 segments are balanced,
- 6 segments are imbalanced,
- 26 segments are to be monitored,
- 14 segments are inactive,
- 54 segments for which it is impossible for indicators to be calculated.

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,
- optimise 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

Although all indicators were calculated, France carried out its assessment of imbalances:

- **solely in respect of the outcomes of the biological indicators.** Only those indicators identify the segments with a definite impact, in terms of volume landed, on overharvested stocks. The technical and economic indicators only reveal whether a segment's vessels are underused or if the segment is not profitable; this could be due to variables unrelated to the status of stocks, such as poor management, seasonal or complementary activity, etc. 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,
- **solely for segments with negative biological indicators for the last three years of the report.** An imbalance over one or two years is insufficient to identify a lasting trend. If vessels change their fishing strategies and target stocks from one year to the next, vessel activity is considered possible to identify over three years. However, if the biological indicators are cumulated for two years over the period 2014-2016, the segment will be considered a segment to be monitored.
- **when no discretion is allowed for in the interpretation of the biological indicator.** Where appropriate, the segment is considered 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 indicator11’ (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 53 stocks.

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 3: List of 6 imbalanced segments

Segment	Description	Number of vessels	Biological criteria	Overharvested stock landed	Technical criteria (technical overcapacity)	Economic criteria (economic overcapacity)
AT GG Ib DFN VL1218	Atlantic - Bay of Biscay, Balearic Seas - netters - between 12 and 18 metres	35	Imbalance NOS 1, NOS 2 15 %	Common sole - SOL (VIIIab)	Balance	Balance
ME ME DTS VL1824	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - trawlers - between 18 and 24 metres	28	Imbalance NOS 1, NOS 2 SAR	Red mullet - MUT (37.GSA7), European hake - HKE (37.GSA7)	Balance	Balance
ME ME DTS VL2440	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - trawlers - between 24 and 40 metres	31	Imbalance NOS 1, NOS 2 SAR	Red mullet - MUT (37.GSA7), European hake - HKE (37.GSA7)	Balance	Economic non-viability

ME ME ELE VL0024	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - between 0 and 24 metres – eel fishing as subsidiary activity	204	Imbalance SAR	Eel - ELE (37)	Not applicable to fleets of less than 12 metres <sup>16</sup>	Balance
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 <sup>17</sup>	Balance
ME ME VL0012 - gangui fishing:	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - between 0 and 12 metres – gangui fishing	23	Imbalance SAR	Gangui	Not applicable to fleets of less than 12 metres	Balance

As stated under point 1 of the summary to this report, France included in its 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 12 metres engaging in gangui fishing as a subsidiary activity on Mediterranean seagrass (*Posidonia*) beds,
- 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.

In terms of the methodology, the number of vessels recorded in this report corresponds to the number of eel licences<sup>18</sup> issued for the years in question, irrespective of the age of the eels, and for the two seaboards.

Certain segments were not used, despite biological indicators classifying them as imbalanced, e.g. those not used on account of the discretion allowed in their interpretation as compared to the stock and robustness of the indicator. Those segments were all classified as segments to be monitored and are as follows:

- Segment AT MC\_OE\_Is OTM VL40XX was not used despite a negative SHI as blue whiting, despite being overharvested, was exploited sustainably. France therefore gave the stock a positive assessment. Furthermore, the segment only contributed to a limited extent to the mortality of the stock. This segment only concerned one vessel.
- Segment AT MdN\_Mchest OTM VL40XX, targeting exclusively mackerel, was not used either despite a negative SHI EU. This was because the indicator was only slightly negative, the imbalance was not found in any other biological indicator and the estimate for the imbalance was only based on two vessels, making for a less robust assessment.
- Segment AT GG\_Ib HOK VL0010 targets seabass in ICES division VIIIab. Discretion in interpretation is allowed for this stock. This should no longer be the case with the new ICES opinion in June 2018 due to a category 1 evaluation. In terms of the difficulties in truly understanding the status and given the indicators demonstrating a degree of stability over the period 2000-2016, France considered that the stock was not overharvested. Consequently, as a

<sup>16</sup> Fishery concentrated almost exclusively around vessels of less than 12 metres.

<sup>17</sup> Fishery concentrated almost exclusively around vessels of less than 12 metres.

<sup>18</sup> CMEA licence.

precaution, the segment of between 0 and 10 metres fishing seabass in the Atlantic with hooks was classified as a segment to be monitored.

- Segments AT MC\_OE\_Is FPO VL0010 and AT MC\_OE\_Is FPO VL1012 were also added to the list of segments to be monitored due to the discretion in interpretation allowed for the overharvested target stock, i.e. whelk in ICES division VIIe. The reference document (BESTCLIM project) clearly presents the status of the stock until 2015. However it only presents developments in biomass for 2016 and not fishing mortality. It was updated in 2017 but did not have a reference value. Furthermore, the different approaches proposed under the project were lacking in certainty and offered differing results.
- Segments AT GG\_Ib DFN VL1012 et AT GG\_Ib DFN VL1824 insofar as the sole VIIIab stock which forms the basis for the assessment is slightly negative ( $F_{msy}=1.09$ ) and economic dependence on overharvested stocks is below 50 % for those segments. Fleets fish not only sole but also pollack (for the 10-12 metre segment) and hake (18-24 metres), which are stocks in good health. Those stocks were therefore classified as 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 2017 assessment

Five of the six imbalanced segments in the 2018 report were already imbalanced in 2017. The segments in question are:

- vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel in the Atlantic,
- netters of between 12 and 18 metres in the Bay of Biscay,
- 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 engaging in gangui fishing in the Mediterranean (grouped together into one segment this year as opposed to two last year).

Trawlers of between 6 and 12 metres and between 12 and 18 metres are no longer imbalanced segments, nor are netters of between 10 and 12 metres fishing sole in the North Sea and Eastern Channel and Corsican trawlers.

However, vessels of between 0 and 24 metres fishing eel in the Mediterranean are a new imbalanced segment.

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

i. Methodology used

Segments to be monitored are determined by evaluating different indicators. In total, 26 segments were classified as segments to be monitored.

- a) 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 placed under surveillance as a precaution in order to monitor their impact on the quantities of overharvested stocks removed. There are five 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. Fourteen such segments were identified for this report.

- c) 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 seven such segments.

ii. List of French segments to be monitored

*Table 4:* List of the 12 segments to be monitored according to biological indicators.

Segment	Description	Number of vessels in 2016
ME ME OTM VL2440	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - pelagic trawlers - between 24 and 40 metres	1
OM Guyane DTS VL1824	Other regions - French Guiana - trawlers - between 18 and 24 metres	15
AT GG_Ib HOK VL1012	Atlantic - Bay of Biscay, Balearic Seas - hooks - between 10 and 12 metres	46
AT GG_Ib PS_ VL1218	Atlantic - Bay of Biscay, Balearic Seas - purse seiners - between 12 and 18 metres	18
ME ME DFN VL0612	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - netters - between 6 and 12 metres	7
AT MdN_Mchest OTM VL40XX	Atlantic - North Sea, Eastern Channel - pelagic trawlers - more than 40 metres	2
AT GG_Ib HOK VL0010	Atlantic - Bay of Biscay, Balearic Seas - hooks - between 0 and 10 metres	147
AT MC_OE_Is FPO VL0010	Atlantic, Celtic Seas, West Scotland, Iceland - pot vessels - between 0 and 10 metres	163
AT MC_OE_Is FPO VL1012	Atlantic, Celtic Seas, West Scotland, Iceland - pot vessels - between 10 and 12 metres	43
AT GG_Ib DFN VL1012	Atlantic - Bay of Biscay, Balearic Seas - netters - between 10 and 12 metres	79
AT GG_Ib DFN VL1824	Atlantic - Bay of Biscay, Balearic Seas - netters - between 18 and 24 metres	24
AT MC_OE_Is OTM VL40XX	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland, Iceland - pelagic trawlers - more than 40 metres	1

*Table 5:* List of the 14 balanced segments whose economic viability needs to be monitored.

Segment	Description	Number of vessels in 2016
AT GG_Ib HOK VL2440	Atlantic - Bay of Biscay, Balearic Seas - hooks - between 24 and 40 metres	3
AT MC_OE_Is DRB VL1218	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland, Iceland - dredgers - between 12 and 18 metres	16
AT MC_OE_Is MGP VL1218	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland, Iceland - various active gear - between 12 and 18 metres	4
AT MC_OE_Is PGP VL0010	Atlantic - Celtic Seas, West Scotland, Iceland - various passive gear - between 0 and 10 metres	32
AT MdN_Mchest DTS VL2440	Atlantic - North Sea, Eastern Channel - pelagic trawlers - between 24 and 40 metres	9

AT MdN_Mchest HOK VL0010	Atlantic - North Sea, Eastern Channel - hooks - between 0 and 10 metres	32
AT MdN_Mchest MGP VL0010	Atlantic - North Sea, Eastern Channel - various active gear - between 0 and 10 metres	1
AT MdN_Mchest PGP VL0010	Atlantic - North Sea, Eastern Channel - various passive gear - between 0 and 10 metres	14
ME ME FPO VL0612	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - pot vessels - between 6 and 12 metres	19
ME ME PGO VL0612	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - other passive gear - between 6 and 12 metres	57
ME ME PMP VL0612	Mediterranean - Mediterranean - various active and passive gear - between 6 and 12 metres	14
OM AFR_Oind PS_ VL40XX	Other regions - Africa, Antarctica, Indian Ocean - seiner of more than 40 metres	22
OM Reunion PP Hors Senneurs HOK VL1218	Other regions - La Réunion - between 18 and 24 metres	15
OM Reunion PP Hors Senneurs HOK VL1824	Other regions - La Réunion - between 12 and 18 metres	4

iii. Changes compared to the 2017 assessment

The number of segments to be monitored is falling (30 segments in 2017, 26 segments for the 2018 report).

The method for considering economic viability has changed since the previous year and allows the sustainability of economic activity according to different fisheries to be better taken into account.

### 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 Annex 2 to Decision 2010/93/EU. The study identifies 10 reference regions:

*Table 6:* 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 (excl. 27.7.d); 27.12; 27.14	MC_OE_Is
	Bay of Biscay and the Balearic Seas	27.8; 27.9; 27.10	BB_Bal
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)	Guyane
	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 7:* List of dominant fishing methods in French fleet segments

Gear code	Description of gear	Type of fishing method
DRB	Dredgers	Active gear
DTS	Demersal trawl and demersal seine	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	Netters	Passive gear
FPO	Pot vessels	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 8:* 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 fishing method and length category, 231 fleet segments were identified according to the following geographical distribution:

Number of segments per year						
Regions	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Inactive vessels	17	17	17	17	14	14
Africa - Antarctica - Indian Ocean	2	2	2	2	2	2
La Réunion	6	6	6	8	6	6
Mayotte					3	3
Guadeloupe	10	10	10	10	10	10
French Guiana	4	4	5	5	6	5
Martinique	14	12	12	11	12	12
Western Channel - Celtic and Irish Seas - West Scotland - Iceland	44	44	41	40	39	34
North Sea - Eastern Channel	39	37	36	36	36	36
Bay of Biscay and the Balearic Seas	40	40	43	41	41	44
Mediterranean	33	32	32	30	32	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>195</b>

France had 231 fleet segments during the period 2011-2015. However, with some segments comprising very few vessels, not all segments had vessels during each of the years covered by the report. Nevertheless, as those segments had vessels during at least one of the years comprising the evaluation period, they were maintained for the entire period.

The breakdown of vessels by fleet segment can be found in Annex 1 to this report.

### 3.2. Link with fisheries

#### i. Identification of evaluated stocks

During the period 2011-2016, there were 291 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.

The list contains 155 stocks.

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<sub>c</sub>) in relation to the reference point (F<sub>msy</sub>), or qualitative, i.e. an expert assessment,
- quantities landed internationally of each stock.

Of those 155 stocks, it was possible to obtain a biological opinion on 135 stocks. Due to a lack of landings and various groupings, the list of stocks used for this report ultimately contained 105 stocks<sup>19</sup>. Certain stocks which had previously been on the list used as a basis for the capacity report were left out in order to concentrate on the relevant stocks. Consequently, stocks subject to a fishing ban or not fished by France were not taken into account for the purposes of this report.

France therefore has the data needed to calculate the indicators covered by this report for 105 stocks. The list of stocks for which the necessary variables for calculating the SHI could be gathered for the years 2011 to 2016 is contained in Annex 5 to this report.

## 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 used in the report other than if overfishing is low whilst biomass is high when the B/B<sub>msy</sub> ratio is greater than 1.5, or if biomass is very high when the ratio is close to or greater than 2. Nine stocks are affected:

- Haddock - HAD (IIIan,IV,VIa) and HAD (VIIb-k)
- European hake - HKE (VIIIc,IXa)
- Megrim - LEZ (VIIb-k,VIIIabd)
- Sardine - PIL (VII,VIIIabd)
- Saithe - POK (Vb)
- Sole - SOL (IV)
- Blue whiting - WHB (27)
- Whelk – WHE (VIIe)

Furthermore, one stock (seabass - VIIIab) was also considered to be in good health given the discretion allowed for in its interpretation meaning that overexploitation could not be concluded.

Of the stocks used in 2016, 76 were in good health and 29 were overharvested.

The details of the assessment of each stock can be found in Annex 5 to this report.

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

<sup>19</sup> Stocks applicable each year during the period 2011-2016.

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 in respect of 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 2016 report, France, drawing on the definition set out in the guidelines, 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 3 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 3 to this report which had already been notified last year provides a summary of 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 2016: Mediterranean hake (HKE), Mediterranean red mullet (MUT), stocks associated with Mediterranean Posidonia and exploited by gangui fishing vessels, eel stocks on the Atlantic and Mediterranean seaboard (ELE).

**b. For the ‘sustainable harvest indicator’ (SHI):**

The evaluation of a given fleet segment takes into account (cumulative criteria):

- stocks where the  $F_c/F_{msy}$  ratio is available,
- stocks where the share of landings of stocks which have an  $F_{msy}$  estimate represents at least 40 % of the segment’s total landings.

We would note that France only had the  $F_c/F_{msy}$  ratio for 53 stocks (see Annex 5). Of those stocks, only three segments were imbalanced in respect of this indicator. However, one of those segments was left out, namely the blue whiting WHB (27) which, although overfished, is considered to be properly exploited due to strong recruitment. Consequently, only two stocks were used for the SHI.

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.

**c. For the ‘number of overexploited stocks’ indicator (NOS):**

The 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.

**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 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 being 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: ‘operating permit other’,
- 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 permit’.

Between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2016, 776 fleet renewal or 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 10:* Coast-by-coast summary of fleet renewals

Coast of mainland France	Projects	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
South Atlantic Coast	Fleet entries	1	9	13	12	12	19
	(vessel equal to or less than 25 metres) Vessel upgrade	8	4	20	11	15	27
Eastern Channel - North Sea coast	Fleet entries	8	4	6	9	7	12
	(vessel equal to or less than 25 metres) Vessel upgrade	1	2	10	10	11	5

<b>than 25 metres)</b>							
<b>Western Channel - North Atlantic coast</b>	<b>Fleet entries</b>	12	14	24	13	34	24
<b>(vessel equal to or less than 25 metres)</b>	<b>Vessel upgrade</b>	10	4	11	9	8	10
<b>Mediterranean coast</b>	<b>Fleet entries</b>	26	8	56	37	37	41
<b>(vessel equal to or less than 25 metres)</b>	<b>Vessel upgrade</b>	8	3	30	20	30	28
<b>All coasts</b>	<b>Fleet entries</b>	4	6	3	1	4	11
<b>Vessel exceeding 25 metres</b>	<b>Vessel upgrade</b>		4	2	2	1	5
<b>Total</b>		78	58	175	124	159	182

#### 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: introduction of 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 with public assistance have been implemented:

- in 2007 for the anchovy, ‘thonaille’, cod, sole, deep-water species, Mediterranean hake, eel and anglerfish fisheries,
- in 2008 for the anchovy, cod, sole, deep-water species, Mediterranean hake, eel and anglerfish fisheries,
- in 2009 for the anchovy, cod, sole, deep-water species, Mediterranean hake, eel, anglerfish, 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 (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.

### iii. Adjustment of fishing effort for the period 2015-2017

The following limits on fishing effort were applied:

- under the Mediterranean management plan, the fishing effort of Mediterranean trawlers was limited to 14 726 days. With a view to the future Mediterranean management plan, the maximum authorised fishing effort for Mediterranean trawlers was also reduced to 10 % in zone GSA7 due to the status of the fleets' target hake stock,
- under the Mediterranean management plan 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 according to the level of activity over the period 2014-2015. A reduction was also applied to 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',
- since 2015, the quota for vessels with authorisation to access the Eastern Channel sole fishery takes account of the status of the stock,
- implementation of temporary cessation:
  - on pelagic trawlers targeting sea bass in ICES division IV b-c, VII a and VII d-k from 1 January to 30 June,
  - for 5 days each year on Mediterranean trawlers,
  - for 21 days between 1 January and 31 March on sole netters in the Bay of Biscay,
  - for 90 days on a voluntary basis (measure 33 of the EMFF) on Mediterranean trawlers in zone GFCM 37.GSA7.

#### **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 withdrawn in 2017 and 2018.

The fleet exit plans expired on 31 December 2017. They are therefore no longer included in the management measures which may be deployed in order to reduce French capacity in imbalanced segments.

#### **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 and 2016, the fleet in possession of a fishing licence was below the capacity ceilings allocated to France.

*Table 11:* Active fishing fleet levels and ceilings for the period 2011-2016

<b>REGIONS</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Tonnage (GT or UMS)</b>	<b>Power (kW)</b>
<b>MAINLAND</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>178 124</b>	<b>769 423</b>
	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>Less than 12 metres</b> <b>4FD</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>10 002</b>	<b>31 465</b>
	31.12.2016	6 694	19 397
	31.12.2015	6 715	19 014
	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>More than 12 metres</b> <b>4FC</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>1 050</b>	<b>19 320</b>
	31.12.2016	347	11 107
	31.12.2015	342	10 887
	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>Less than 12 metres</b> <b>4FL</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>6 188</b>	<b>162 590</b>
	31.12.2016	3 014	160 762
	31.12.2015	3 023	160 434
	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>More than 12 metres</b> <b>4FM</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>1 750</b>
	31.12.2016	0	0
	31.12.2015	0	0
	31.12.2014	0	0
	31.12.2013	0	0
	31.12.2012	0	0
	31.12.2011	0	0
<b>MARTINIQUE</b>  <b>Less than 12 metres</b> <b>4FJ</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>5 409</b>	<b>142 116</b>
	31.12.2016	1 807	96 938
	31.12.2015	1 748	94 476
	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>
	31.12.2016	274	1 403

<b>More than 12 metres 4FK</b>	31.12.2015	233	1 035
	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  Less than 12 metres 4FF</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>11 644</b>
	31.12.2016	642	9 114
	31.12.2015	580	7 071
	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  Shrimp vessels, more than 12 metres 4FG</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>7 560</b>	<b>19 726</b>
	31.12.2016	2 104	6 090
	31.12.2015	2 393	7 035
	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  Pelagic vessels, more than 12 metres 4FH</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>3 500</b>	<b>5 000</b>
	31.12.2016	0	0
	31.12.2015	0	0
	31.12.2014	166	723
	31.12.2013	166	723
	31.12.2012	166	723
	31.12.2011	166	723
<b>MAYOTTE  Tuna seiners 4FN</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>13 916</b>	<b>24 000</b>
	31.12.2016	12 634	19 400
	31.12.2015	2 393	7 035
	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
<b>MAYOTTE  Tuna longliners More than 23 metres 4FP</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>Definition in progress</b>	<b>Definition in progress</b>
	31.12.2016	298	6 228
	31.12.2015	305	6 404
	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
<b>MAYOTTE</b>	<b>CEILING</b>	<b>Definition in progress</b>	<b>Definition in progress</b>

<b>Demersal and pelagic species</b>	31.12.2016	Inventory in progress	Inventory in progress
	31.12.2015	Inventory in progress	Inventory in progress
<b>Less than 10 metres 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

Between 1 January 2010 and 31 December 2016, the French fishing fleet able to undertake fishing activity (declared active on the fishing vessel register) remained stable overall. More vessels exited than entered the mainland segment during the period 2011-2015. However, this trend is beginning to reverse with tonnage and power increasing slightly in 2016 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 report. The active fleets and stocks fished did not overlap with each other. Consequently, a separate assessment was deemed appropriate.
- As in previous reports, this report includes the NOS indicator in accordance with the new STECF recommendations (see point 8.2). However, two different calculation methods have been applied. The table below summarises the methods used for this indicator in the different reports produced by France.

<b>NOS indicator variants</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>2015 report</b>	<b>2016 report</b>	<b>2017 report</b>	<b>2018 report</b>
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 number of segments targeting this stock in France was considered to be a proxy of the total number of segments targeting this stock.		X		
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			X	X

	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.				
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

A number of difficulties are still being experienced.

- **A lack of European data on international catches.** Without this data it is difficult to estimate the impact of national fleets on each stock.
- 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.
  - the assignment of each vessel to a primary region, which could result in vessels using highly divergent fishing strategies being grouped together within a single segment (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, as of the previous report, it was decided that adapted segments would 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. The data does not allow an assessment to be finalised. Nevertheless, 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 current regulatory, technical and administrative means of matching fishing capacity to fishing opportunities.

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

France welcomes the stock coverage in this report and intends to continue its efforts to improve it. 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. Improving the quality and availability of data needed for preparing 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 %. Furthermore, for the period 2011-2016, they exceeded 70 %, and even 75 % in terms of coverage.

Efforts will continue to maintain or even increase this level of coverage, provided that the necessary external data (advice, landings in terms of volume by other Member States and third countries, etc.) are available. The completeness of the data used should be improved as regards gathering assessments or 'expert opinions' on stocks and landing, fishing effort and economic data. To assist in this work, an action plan<sup>20</sup> is currently being implemented.

## 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 and 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:

- decommissioning plans without assistance,
- 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)(a) and (b) 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. Cessation should therefore be on the grounds of equipment or the testing of new selectivity measures.

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 that 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 full effect 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

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<sup>20</sup> Commission Implementing Decision C(2014)3594 final of 6 June 2014 establishing an action plan to overcome shortcomings in the French fisheries control system.

required, a physical check). In accordance with these provisions, the French authorities used the engine certifications described in detail in this same report last year.

In 2012, France entered the verification stage, submitting the necessary sampling plans to the European Commission for approval. Those plans, which were approved by the Commission, were implemented in early 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 had a delegation to grant authorisation for certain schemes. This delegation came 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 professional sector, initiated a reform of production rights management (catch and effort opportunities) in 2013. This was completed in late 2014 and continued into 2015 with a reform of fleet entry procedures for fishing vessels. These reforms meet a need for the streamlining of administrative procedures and for greater involvement of professionals in management decisions, particularly with regard to aligning fishing capacity and fishing opportunities. The latter reform entered into force in mainland France on 1 January 2017 and will be rolled out in the overseas departments in 2019.

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

Of the 231 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 diversity 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 the dependence on fishing of segments comprising vessels of less than 12 metres should be conducted in order to take account of their greater versatility.

Furthermore, the submission method used for reporting obligations for 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 <sup>21</sup>2012, and the two new indicators recommended in its 15-02 report.

### 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 53 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>22</sup>.

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<sup>21</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.

<sup>22</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.

- **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<sup>23</sup> opinion,
  - 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).

#### **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 value of over-harvested stocks within a segment’s total landings. An EDI exceeding 40 % means that the segment’s turnover depends predominantly on over-harvested 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.

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<sup>23</sup> GFCM:SAC18/2016/Inf.11, pp. 11-13.

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 metres with 'passive' gear.
- Large-scale fleet (LSF): other vessels, with the exception of LWF vessels.
- Long-distance water fleet (LWF): overseas vessels exceeding 24 metres.

b- Vessels using the same fishing method and belonging to a closely related (0–10 m/10–12 m) length overall category (LOA) in metres (m) are grouped together; where this was not possible:

c- Vessels using a similar but not identical fishing method 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 fishing method used 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.

All calculations for biological, technical and economic indicators are included in Annex 1 to this report.