



8950 Martin Luther King Jr. Street N. #202  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33702-2211  
Tel: (727) 563-9070  
Fax: (727) 563-0207  
Email: [MRAG.Americas@mragamericas.com](mailto:MRAG.Americas@mragamericas.com)

President: Andrew A. Rosenberg, Ph.D.

# MRAG Americas, Inc.

## Pacific Whiting (Hake) Mid-Water Trawl

### RFM Fishery Announcement

### December 3, 2021

MRAG Americas, Inc. is pleased to announce the beginning of an RFM assessment of the **Pacific Whiting (Hake) Mid-Water Trawl**. The assessment will evaluate the fishery for compliance with the Responsible Fisheries Management Fishery Standard.

Table 1.	Relevant RFM Program and scheme documents, including applicable versions and their usage		
<b>Relevant RFM Program</b>	Certified Seafood Collaborative (CSC Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) Certification Program		
<b>Relevant RFM Program Documents</b>	Document Title	Version	Usage
	RFM Procedure 2: Application to Certification Procedures for the RFM Fishery Standard	V6	Process requirements
	Responsible Fisheries Management Certification Program Fisheries Standard	V2.1	Standard
	Responsible Fisheries Management Certification Program Guidance to Performance Evaluation for the Certification of Wild Capture and Enhanced Fisheries in North America	V2.1	Guidance to Standard

<b>Table 2 – Fishery Announcement</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Fishery name</b>	
	Pacific whiting (hake) mid-water trawl	
<b>2</b>	<b>Certification cycle, assessment type and number</b>	
	Initial assessment	
<b>3</b>	<b>Statement that the fishery is within scope</b>	
	MRAG Americas confirms that the fishery under assessment (as defined by the Units of Assessment described below) is within scope of the relevant RFM Fisheries Standard.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Unit(s) of Assessment – UoA(s)</b>	
	Geographical Area(s)	US federal EEZ waters off Washington, Oregon and California
	Management System	Management of the coastal Pacific hake fishery is shared among the joint management Committee (or JMC as established by the agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the USA on Pacific hake/whiting), who recommends the annual TAC, and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in the US and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in Canada. NMFS is responsible for domestic management of US fisheries.
	Fishing gear(s)/method(s)	Mid-water trawl
	Client Group	Pacific Whiting Conservation Cooperative
	Species (common name/scientific name)	North Pacific hake ( <i>Merluccius productus</i> )
	Stock(s)	Offshore stock of Pacific whiting/hake
<b>5</b>	<b>Proposed team leader</b>	
	<p><b>Ms. Amanda Stern-Pirlot</b> will serve as team leader for the assessment. Amanda is an M.Sc graduate of the University of Bremen, Center for Marine Tropical Ecology (ZMT) in marine ecology and fisheries biology. Ms. Stern-Pirlot joined MRAG Americas in mid-June 2014 and is now Director of the Fishery Certification Division and is currently serving on several different assessment teams as team leader and team member. She has worked together with other scientists, conservationists, fisheries managers and producer groups on international fisheries sustainability issues for over 15 years. With the Institute for Marine Research (IFM-GEOMAR) in Kiel, Germany, she led a work package on simple indicators for sustainable within the EU-funded international cooperation project INCOFISH, followed by five years within the Standards Department at the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) in London, developing standards, policies and assessment methods informed by best practices in fisheries management around the globe. Most recently she has worked with the Alaska pollock industry as a resources analyst, within the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council process, focusing on bycatch and ecosystem-based management issues, and managing the day-to-day operations of the offshore pollock cooperative. She has co-authored a dozen publications on fisheries sustainability in the developing world and the functioning of the MSC as an instrument for transforming fisheries to a sustainable basis.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Proposed team members</b>	

	<p><b>Dr. Giuseppe Scarcella</b> is an experienced fishery scientist and population analyst and modeller, with wide knowledge and experience in the assessment of demersal stocks. He holds a first degree in Marine Biology and Oceanography (110/110) from the Università Politecnica delle Marche, and a Ph.D. in marine Ecology and Biology from the same university, based on a thesis "Age and growth of two rockfish in the Adriatic Sea". After his degree he was offered a job as project scientist in several research programs about the structure and composition of fish assemblage in artificial reefs, off-shore platform and other artificial habitats in the Italian Research Council – Institute of Marine Science of Ancona (CNR-ISMAR, now CNR-IRBIM). During the years of employment at CNR-ISMAR he has gained experience in benthic ecology, statistical analyses of fish assemblage evolution in artificial habitats, fisheries ecology and impacts of fishing activities, stock assessment, otolith analysis, population dynamic and fisheries management. During the same years he attended courses of uni- multivariate statistics and stock assessment. He is also actively participating in the scientific advice process of FAO GFCM in the Mediterranean Sea. At the moment he is member of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries for the European Commission (STECF).</p> <p>He is author and co-author of more than 50 scientific paper peer reviewed journals and more than 150 national and international technical reports, most of them focused on the evolution of fish assemblages in artificial habitats and stock assessment of demersal species. Dr. Scarcella also holds the credential as certifier of <i>Responsible Fisheries Management</i> (RFM).</p> <p><b>Dr. Susan Hanna</b> is professor emeritus of marine economics at Oregon State University. Her research and publications are in the area of marine economics and policy, with an emphasis on fishery management, ecosystem-based fishery management, property rights and institutional design. Dr. Hanna has served as a scientific advisor to the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, Minerals Management Service, Northwest Power and Conservation Council and the Pacific Fishery Management Council. She served on the Ocean Studies Board of the National Research Council (NRC), National Academy of Sciences, and several NRC Committees, including the Committee to Review Individual Quotas in Fisheries and the Committee on Protection and Management of Pacific Northwest Anadromous Salmonids.</p> <p>A discussion between team members regarding conflict of interest and biases was held and none were identified.</p>
<b>7</b>	<b>Site Visit</b>
	<p>A site visit for the fishery will occur in Seattle, WA the week of <b>January 10<sup>th</sup> 2022</b>.</p> <p>Stakeholders who would like to submit information or request a meeting with the assessment team are asked to do so by 17:00 UTC on <b>January 9, 2022</b>.</p> <p>Contact: MRAG Americas, Inc. <a href="mailto:certification@mragamericas.com">certification@mragamericas.com</a> Amanda Stern-Pirlot MRAG Americas, Inc. 8950 Martin Luther King Jr. St. N., Suite 202 St. Petersburg FL 33702 Ph: 1-206-669-0439 Fax: 1-727-563-0207</p> <p>To schedule a meeting please provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your name and contact details</li> <li>• Your association with the fishery</li> <li>• The issues you would like to discuss</li> <li>• Where and when you would like to meet.</li> </ul>
<b>8</b>	<b>Stakeholder opportunities</b>
	<p>As part of this assessment, only registered stakeholders will be afforded an opportunity to provide input on a public draft of the assessment report which will be provided for comment when the defined 30-day period in which registered stakeholders may comment is reached.</p>

As this stakeholder input opportunity is limited to registered stakeholders only, interested stakeholders should ensure they register as outlined below:

- Information on the RFM stakeholder process can be found here: <https://rfmcertification.org/stakeholder-involvement/>
- Contact MRAG Americas as outlined above requesting to be registered as a stakeholder for the fishery.
- The above deadline for requesting to consult with the assessment team and the details stakeholders should provide when requesting to be registered as a stakeholder shall apply here.

MRAG Americas, Inc.  
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St. Petersburg FL 33702

Ph: 1-206-669-0439  
Fax: 1-727-563-0207  
certification@mragamericas.com

Submitted by: Michealene Corlett

Date: December 3, 2022

## Appendix 1: Summary of CVs of team leader and team members

The assessment team for this assessment consists of:

- Ms. Amanda Stern-Pirlot (lead assessor and primarily responsible for fisheries impact to the ecosystem)
- Dr. Giuseppe Scarcella (assessor and primarily responsible for stock assessment and fish biology)
- Dr. Susan Hanna (assessor and primarily responsible for fisheries management)

**Ms. Amanda Stern-Pirlot** will serve as team leader for the assessment. Amanda is an M.Sc graduate of the University of Bremen, Center for Marine Tropical Ecology (ZMT) in marine ecology and fisheries biology. Ms. Stern-Pirlot joined MRAG Americas in mid-June 2014 and is now Director of the Fishery Certification Division and is currently serving on several different assessment teams as team leader and team member. She has worked together with other scientists, conservationists, fisheries managers and producer groups on international fisheries sustainability issues for over 15 years. With the Institute for Marine Research (IFM-GEOMAR) in Kiel, Germany, she led a work package on simple indicators for sustainable within the EU-funded international cooperation project INCOFISH, followed by five years within the Standards Department at the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) in London, developing standards, policies and assessment methods informed by best practices in fisheries management around the globe. Most recently she has worked with the Alaska pollock industry as a resources analyst, within the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council process, focusing on bycatch and ecosystem-based management issues, and managing the day-to-day operations of the offshore pollock cooperative. She has co-authored a dozen publications on fisheries sustainability in the developing world and the functioning of the MSC as an instrument for transforming fisheries to a sustainable basis.

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