

Supplementary Information to the MSC Annual Report 2023-24

This document details the methods and data sources for the figures and graphs included in the Annual Report 2023-24, as well as providing supplementary figures and tables.

If using any data, kindly acknowledge the MSC as the source and provide a download date and website link. When citing elements of this report, please cite as:

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For general queries please contact: info@msc.org

For technical issues pertaining to the data please contact: standards@msc.org



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Index and data sources

Where external data sources are cited, data can be independently verified by accessing those sources. For internal MSC datasets, these are generated by the MSC Research Team and Business Intelligence Team, extracting information from MSC Fishery and Chain of Custody certificate reports and provided by label license holders. Accuracy of the data extraction is assured by the MSC with sample-based verification. Details on this process are available on request.

Reports are authored by and based on assessments carried out by accredited third party certification bodies, and as such the certification bodies take full responsibility for the accuracy and truthfulness of their contents, including fishery assessment scores given.

List of outputs and data

All data used to generate the plots and maps in the report are downloadable from:

- [MSC202324_Annual_Report_Supplementary_Information_data.xlsx](#)

Output	Excel tab	Data source(s)
Progress on the water: MSC engaged catch at the end of the 2022-23 and 2023-24 financial (Page 6)	msscach	MSC 2024
Progress on the water, proportion of all wild marine catch engaged with MSC (Pages 6-7)	msscach	MSC 2024; FAO 2024: Global capture production 1950-2021
Progress on the water MSC engaged catch at the end of the 2022-23 and 2023-24 financial years by different species groups (Pages 16-23)	msscach	MSC 2024
Map of MSC certified marine catch compared with total marine catch in each FAO major fishing area (Page 7)	faomap	MSC 2024; FAO 2024: Global capture production 1950-2021
Improvements made in MSC fisheries by the end of March 2024 (Pages 10-11)	improvement	MSC 2024
Volume sold by product type Year (Pages 8-9)	liveproductvolume	MSC 2024
Number of Live MSC labelled consumer Products (Pages 8-9)	liveproductcount	MSC 2024

Glossary of terms and acronyms

List of acronyms and glossary of terms used throughout the report

Acronym - term	Definition
Assessment	Assessment is used to refer to the initial certification and recertifications of fisheries.
ASI - Assurance Services International	Assurance Services International, provider of accreditation services for the MSC program.
CAB - Conformity Assessment Body	Organisation that performs conformity assessment services against the MSC Fisheries and CoC standards.
Catch	In this annual report, the total live weight of a target species caught. The weight at the time of catch, before processing, for the species that can carry the MSC ecolabel.
Certificate holder	An entity which holds a certificate issued by an MSC accredited CAB.
CoC - Chain of Custody	The procedures implemented by organisations purchasing or handling certified products in the supply chain. These procedures ensure conformity with the MSC Chain of Custody Standard and provide assurance that throughout the supply chain, certified products are segregated from noncertified products and are traceable back to a certified source.
Condition	A requirement to achieve outcomes in order to raise a Performance Indicator score to 80 or above.
Default tree	All versions of the MSC Fishery Certification Requirements since FAM v1 was released in 2008.
Enhanced fishery	A fishery that includes in its operations some aquaculture methods such as ‘catch and grow’, i.e., juveniles are captured from the wild stock in the same geographic region and allowed to settle and grow in a relatively controlled environment, such as rope-grown mussels, or ‘hatch and catch’, i.e., juveniles reared in a hatchery and then released in the wild for sport fishing, such as hatchery-reared salmon.
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FAM – Fishery Assessment Methodology	The methodology followed by CABs when assessing conformity against the Fisheries Standard.
Farm	Seaweed farm or production unit is the harvesting unit or farm from which the seaweed is produced (the extent of the production unit is defined explicitly as the UoA).
Fishery	The group of harvesters associated with an MSC fishery certificate targeting one stock with a certain gear type/method/vessel type in a specified area. Note that an MSC certificate may include more than one species or harvest method, and thus more than one fishery, according to this definition, and the term ‘fishery’ may be used differently in other MSC publications or external sources.
Improvement	An improvement is counted when the score of a fishery component (stock, method/gear, practice/vessels) is increased to a minimum score of 80 through closing a condition.
ISSCAAP	International Standard Statistical Classification of Aquatic Animals and Plants
ISSCAAP Division/Group	Grouping of commercial species based on their taxonomic, ecological and economic characteristics.
Live Products	Products sold that have sales recorded against them for the reported year.
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
N - Number	Number of elements or sample size.
P1 - Principle 1	Principle 1 of the MSC Fisheries standard, i.e. stock status.
P2 - Principle 2	Principle 2 of the MSC Fisheries standard, i.e. environmental status.



Acronym - term	Definition
P3 - Principle 3	Principle 3 of the MSC Fisheries standard, i.e. fishery governance.
PCR - Public Certification Report	The final version of the assessment report, after stakeholder comments to the PCDR have been taken into account.
Production unit	The harvesting unit or farm from which the seaweed is produced (the extent of the production unit is defined explicitly as the UoA).
Stock	A wild population of a marine or freshwater species that is harvested by fishers. A stock ideally corresponds to a biological unit that has distinctive demographic dynamics and thus is assessed separately from other populations belonging to the same species. In reality, exact information on the genetic structure of the catch is often missing, which sometimes leads to erroneously aggregating more than one population of the same species under the same stock. As more knowledge is accumulated, stock definitions can be revised, and consequently their stock assessments.
UoA - Unit of Assessment	The sum of all the elements that are assessed for awarding a given certificate. For fisheries evaluated against the MSC Fisheries Standard, this includes the target stock(s) being certified, combined with any fleets, or groups of vessels, or individual fishing operators or other eligible fishers pursuing that same stock using different methods/gears/practices, as well as the species and ecosystem in the area where the fishery is active.
UoC - Unit of Certification	The target stock(s) and any fleets, groups of vessels, or individual fishing operators, defined by the fishing method/gear/practice for pursuing that stock, covered by an MSC fishery certificate.
Year	Calendar year from 1 st January of the year to 31 st December of the same year
Fiscal year	from April 1 st of the year to March 31 st of the following calendar year

Methods for the Annual Report

If any interpretative issues arise in relation to the MSC Fisheries and Chain of Custody Standards, the text of the English MSC scheme documents will prevail in all instances:

- [MSC Fishery Certification Requirements.](#)
- [MSC Chain of Custody Certification Requirements.](#)

Progress on the water

MSC engaged catch at the end of the 2022-23 and 2023-24 financial years as a total and by different species groups (Pages 6-7, 16-23)

To show change in time and scope of what MSC fisheries catch, all MSC engaged catch was extracted and summed from the most recently available data for each snapshot in time.

The total sum of engaged catch for each year included all UoA/ UoC that were either Certified, Suspended or In Assessment. A single MSC fishery can have many UoA or UoC that target one or many different species.

When extracting catch data, it was assigned against the UoA/UoC for that fishery to enable different aggregation to be applied (e.g. against the target species, the fishing method/gear or major ocean area(s)). In cases where a report provided a grouped catch, such as a single figure for many species, the catch was divided equally.

Data Source(s): MSC 2024¹, FAO Global Capture production 2024²

Of all wild marine catch engaged with the MSC

To understand the reach of MSC and provide a sense of scale, MSC engaged marine catch is shown relative to the latest FAO Global Capture Production dataset (2024, covering through 2022) to measure proportion of MSC global marine catch by species and marine FAO Major Fishing Areas. Using the certificate status of the MSC UoA/UoC, the total MSC proportion of FAO catch is shown along with a breakdown by status.

When assigning catch from MSC reports to all UoA/UoC, it was matched to the target species and FAO Major Fishing Areas. In cases where a MSC report provided a grouped catch, such as a single figure for many species, the catch was divided equally. To provide a comparable snapshot in time, the most recent catch from MSC fisheries was associated with the most recent fiscal years.

¹ Marine Stewardship Council, Supplementary Materials to the MSC Annual Report 202223.xlsx, 2023.

<http://www.msc.org>

² FAO. Global capture production 1950-2021. License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. Extracted from:

https://www.fao.org/fishery/statistics-query/en/capture/capture_quantity. Data of Access: 30-06-2023.

To make a comparison between MSC and FAO data, several rules were applied to each dataset, and both contain only:

- Marine catch. As a marine Standard, the MSC program would not be expected to grow in reach and have the same impact on freshwater seafood sustainability. Inland and freshwater catches are excluded as they dilute the ability to measure progress on the program's goals and key strategies.
- Wild capture. Enhanced MSC fisheries that report at a country level as aquaculture and would exist in the FAO Global Aquaculture Production dataset are excluded.
- ISSCAAP division/groups: Those that are not measured by MSC are excluded from the FAO Global Capture data, these are '*Aquatic plants*', '*Freshwater fishes*', '*Miscellaneous aquatic animal products*', '*Miscellaneous aquatic animals*' & '*Whales, seals and other aquatic mammals*'.

Data Source(s): MSC 2024¹, FAO Global Capture production 2024³

Proportion of global catch that is MSC certified

Map of MSC certified marine catch compared with total marine catch in each FAO major fishing area.

To show where MSC certified fisheries operate around the world compared against FAO global capture, MSC certified catch was mapped to each marine FAO Major Fishing Area⁴ alongside pins indicating the approximate location of each MSC fishery. (Page 7)

The method for handling data was the same as used in the indicators for all wild marine catch engaged with the MSC at the end of the 2023-24 financial year, described above. The data was filtered to include only MSC 'certified' and 'suspended' catch; 'in assessment' catch was excluded. 'Suspended' was included in the sum with 'certified' catch, as the fishery can still reacquire their certificate if they address the causes of their suspension. Each pin on the map provides an approximate location of the fishing activity for each MSC certified fishery.

Data Source(s): MSC 2024¹, FAO. Global capture production 1950-2022², FAO, 2024³

Fisheries Improving

Improvements made in MSC fisheries by the end of March 2024

To demonstrate the changes MSC fisheries have made to reduce their environmental impacts, all improvements resulting from closed conditions have been counted. To highlight

³ FAO. Global capture production 1950-2022. License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. Extracted from: https://www.fao.org/fishery/statistics-query/en/capture/capture_quantity. Data of Access: 20-06-2024.

⁴ FAO, 2020. FAO Major Fishing Areas for Statistical Purposes. In: FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department [online]. Rome. [Accessed 1 Dec 2020] <https://www.fao.org/fishery/area/search/>

the areas of improvement, the number of improvements in the last 3 years has been counted by elements. (Pages 10-11)

Conditions are set whenever a Performance Indicator (PI) is scored between 60 and 79 during the assessment of a fishery, requiring the fishery to improve the score for that PI to a minimum of 80 within the period of the 5-year certification cycle. A condition is applied to all fishery components (i.e. target stock(s), the fishing method/gear, and practice (including vessel/s) pursuing that stock) that do not meet a score of 80 for each PI. It is a requirement for a fishery to take action to improve performance in order to maintain certification. One condition can impact multiple components and generate multiple improvements.

An improvement is counted when the score of a fishery component (stock, method/gear, practice/vessels) is increased to a minimum score of 80 through closing a condition. One condition can therefore have multiple improvements as numerous fisheries components have made changes to lift their score. Improvements are only counted when a condition has been fully closed.

Data Source(s): MSC 2024¹.

Sales remain stable but challenges remain

Volume sold by product type Year

The weight of seafood products sold by an MSC licence holder is based on reports by the licence holder to the MSC. This was summed together for the full 2023/24 financial year and then broken down by the type of product. Product weight includes all other ingredients and excludes packaging. (Pages 8-9)

Data Source(s): MSC 2024¹.

Number of Live MSC labelled consumer Products

Plot showing the number of products sold that carry the MSC label by country over a period of 14 years. (Pages 8-9)

The country breakdown is where the products are sold, rather than where the licence holder is located. To report on different markets, products were counted as a unique item in each country. E.g. a tin of tuna sold in France and Germany was counted as 2 distinct products. Live products are products described in the MSC licence and signed by the Licensee to be sold as MSC-certified that have sales recorded against them for the reported year.

Products with no reported sales in the latest year are excluded. This was done to avoid cumulative overestimation over time, as products drop out of the market and are replaced by others, ensuring the values more accurately reflect products 'on the shelf'.



Data Source(s): MSC 2024¹.

Retail Sales Value

This figure is calculated using the total net wholesale value of all consumer-facing MSC labelled product sales or purchases (GBP) declared by all label licence holders for the 2023/24 financial year. (Pages 8-9)

GBP converted to USD using the average exchange rate considering the monthly rates for 2024 and an average percentage increase (1.4) is applied to arrive at a representative retail sales value.

Data Source(s): MSC 2024¹, Oanda currency converter