



News

[Home](#) - [Media Center](#) - [News and Media](#) - [Gulf Menhaden fishery achieves MSC certification](#)

17 October 2019

Gulf Menhaden fishery achieves MSC certification

Washington, D.C. – Gulf of Mexico Menhaden processed by Omega Protein and Daybrook Fisheries have been granted certification today against the Marine Stewardship Council standard for sustainable fishing. The certification comes following more than two years of detailed independent review by conformity assessment body, SAI Global, and extensive stakeholder input.

Gulf menhaden (*Brevoortia patronus*) are small, oily fish that range in the nearshore Gulf of Mexico waters, with the exception of the extreme eastern Yucatan and western Cuba. While considered unfit for direct human consumption, menhaden caught via the purse seine method are used in fishmeal and fish oil for human and animal nutrition, due to their high natural concentration of healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Menhaden are also valuable as bait for sport fishermen, and fishermen targeting other commercially valuable species, such as crab, crawfish and lobster. The Atlantic menhaden fishery achieved MSC certification in September 2019.

“Certification of the menhaden fishery is significant because it indicates not only a sustainable fishery, but also sustainable fish meal and fish oil. In addition to the environmental impacts, the certification supports the fishing communities who depend on menhaden. Congratulations to Omega Protein and Daybrook Fisheries on this milestone,” said Brian Perkins, Americas Director for the Marine Stewardship Council.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Menhaden is “one of the most selective, and effective fisheries” with minimal bycatch. Between the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, the U.S. menhaden fishery is the second largest in the country by weight, trailing only Alaska pollock. Most recent stock assessments of Atlantic menhaden confirm that neither species is undergoing overfishing or overfished.

“We have always been proud of the menhaden industry’s efforts to insure a sustainable renewable resource. This certification now gives that assurance to our customers and our customer’s customer. This is particularly important to our clients in the aquaculture feed segment especially as the ASC certification grows” said Scott Herbert, Sr. Vice President at Daybrook Fisheries

“Today’s announcement that the Gulf menhaden fishery has finally been certified sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council illustrates what we have all along known, which is that the Gulf menhaden fishery operates one of the most sustainable and responsible fisheries in the world,” said Bret Scholtes, CEO of Omega Protein. “Global customers, along with the general public, can have confidence in the health of the menhaden population and also the long-term availability of Gulf menhaden- derived fish meal and oil.”

Stakeholder input is a critical part of the MSC fisheries assessment process and includes an objections process which allows for detailed scrutiny and transparency in the application of the MSC Fisheries Standard. Assessment includes a formal objections procedure to provide an orderly, structured process by which concerns about certification decisions can be lodged, reviewed and resolved, fairly and transparently by an independent adjudicator. The Gulf Menhaden fishery assessment included several objections from registered stakeholders and involved the oversight of an independent adjudicator to ultimately determine if the determination by the SAI Global should be upheld. Objections were ultimately thrown out by the independent adjudicator ruling in favor of SAI Global’s assessment.

The MSC standard was established in 1997 and is the only wild caught seafood standard and ecolabeling program to meet United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) guidelines as well as meet Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) benchmarking criteria. The standards used to evaluate fisheries have been developed in deliberation

MSC's (MSC) developing standard and standards have been developed in consultation with scientists, industry, and conservation groups, and reflect the most up-to-date fisheries science and management practices.

The MSC fishery standards are based on three core principles that every fishery must meet:

- 1. Sustainable fish stocks: Fishing activity must be at a level which ensures it can continue indefinitely.
- 2. Minimizing environmental impact: Fishing operations must be managed to maintain the structure, productivity, function, and diversity of the ecosystem.
- 3. Effective Management: The fishery must comply with relevant laws and have a management system that is responsive to changing circumstances.

The Gulf menhaden fishery is certified through 2024 and can enter reassessment after the five year period. During the five year certification, the fishery must undergo annual surveillance audits in order to ensure their ongoing compliance with the MSC's requirements.

Share This



Help

- Contact us
- Terms and conditions
- Privacy policy

Explore

- Our approach
- What You Can Do
- About the MSC
- The MSC Standards



United States - English



TRACK A FISHERY

