

ICES WKS KATE 2

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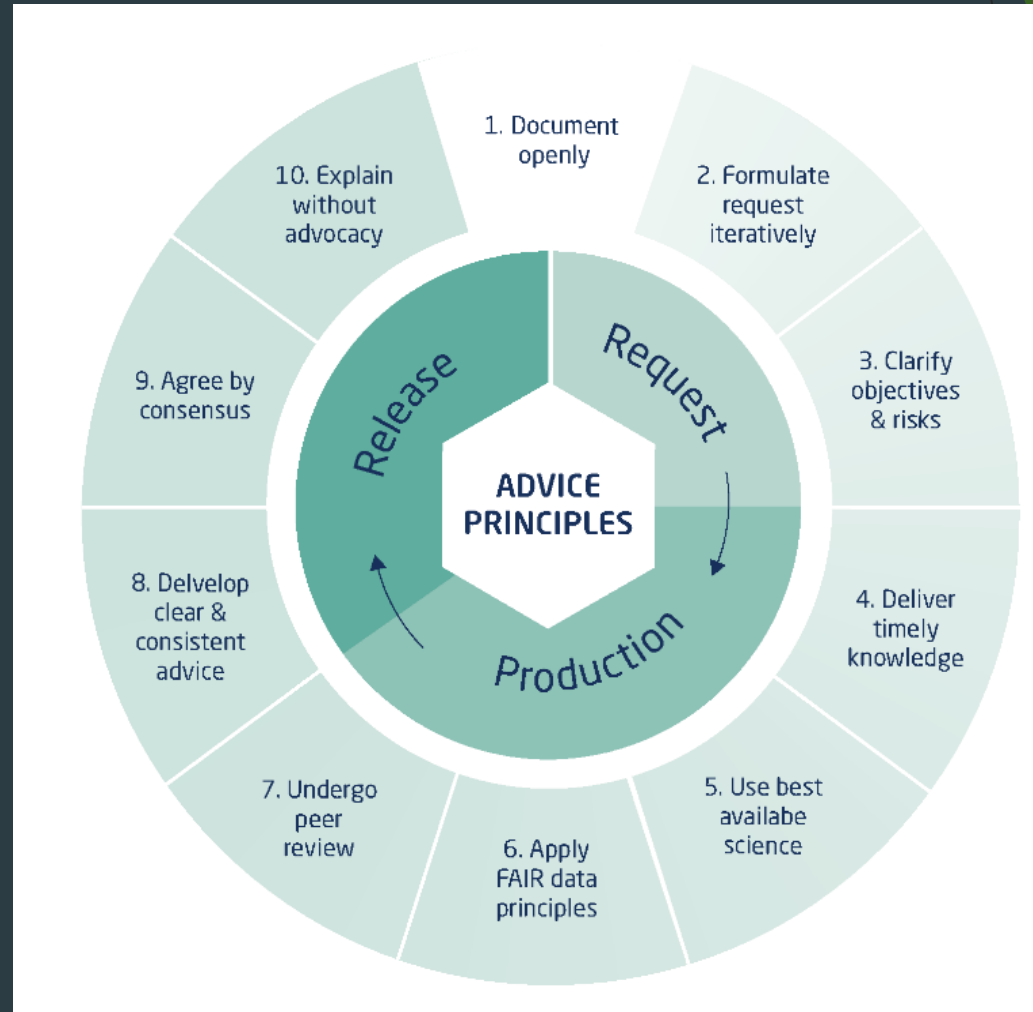
Presentation to NWWAC Focus Group, 11/06/2025

ICES Advice process for elasmobranchs

- ▶ Working Group on Elasmobranch Species - WGEF
- ▶ >50 stocks of skates, rays, dogfish & deepwater and pelagic sharks
- ▶ Advice generally on 2, 4 or 5 year cycle

ICES Advice cycle

- ▶ Data Call - May
- ▶ Working Group Assessment - June
- ▶ Review - July-August
- ▶ Advice Drafting Group - September
- ▶ Advice published - October





► ICES Categories

Category 1 - Full assessment, reference points, forecast - **Spurdog**. No skate or ray stock

Category 2- Full assessment, reference points, partial forecast. 4-5 stocks e.g **Cuckoo ray** in 678abd

Category 3 - Trends based assessment, proxy reference points. **Multiple stocks**

Category 4 - Partial assessment, bycatch species only - no skate or ray stocks

Category 5 - No assessment, Only catch data available. **Multiple stocks** e.g. **blonde ray** in 4a6.

Category 6 - No assessment. Limited data available. **Some stocks, mainly already protected.**

Category 5 stocks

- ▶ Only landings data available
- ▶ Surveys may be available, but not suitable e.g.
 - ▶ IBTS - blonde ray
- ▶ Precautionary buffer:
 - ▶ 20% cut every three cycles to allow for uncertainty
 - ▶ Declining advice over time

Outside the cycle - Workshops

- ▶ As required
- ▶ Examine particular issues
 - ▶ Landings (WKShark2)
 - ▶ Discards (WKShark3)
 - ▶ Deepwater shark distribution (WKShark6)
- ▶ WSKATE - Surveys

Why?

- ▶ Make our assessments “better” by using best available data
- ▶ Are we making use of all available surveys?
 - ▶ New surveys/time series
- ▶ Best way of combining survey trends
 - ▶ Same vs differing signals
 - ▶ Differing survey areas/times
 - ▶
- ▶ No additional costs or time



WWSKATE 1. 2020

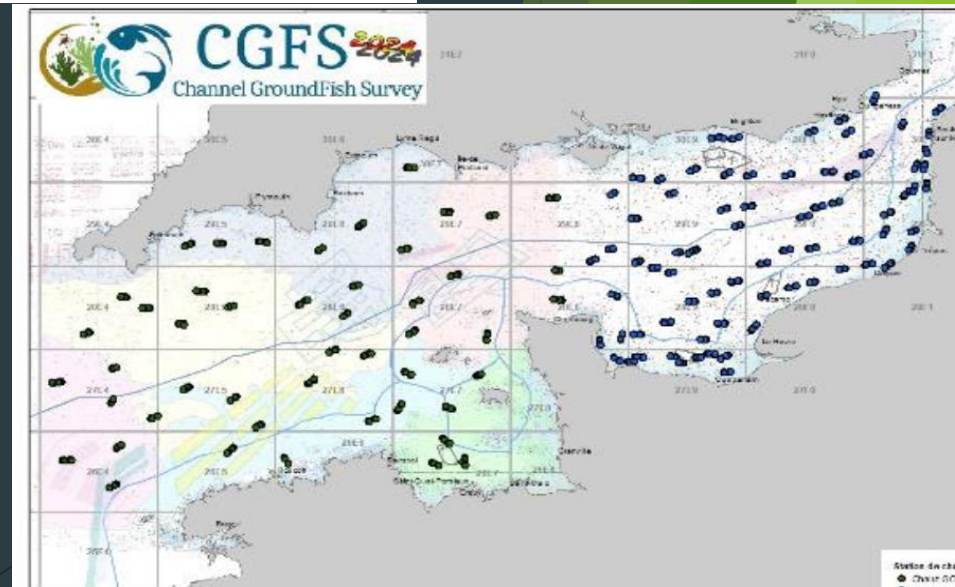
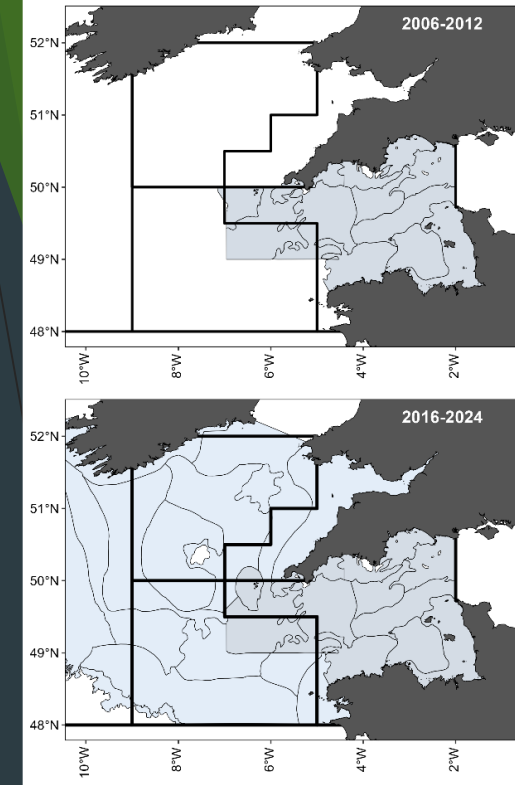
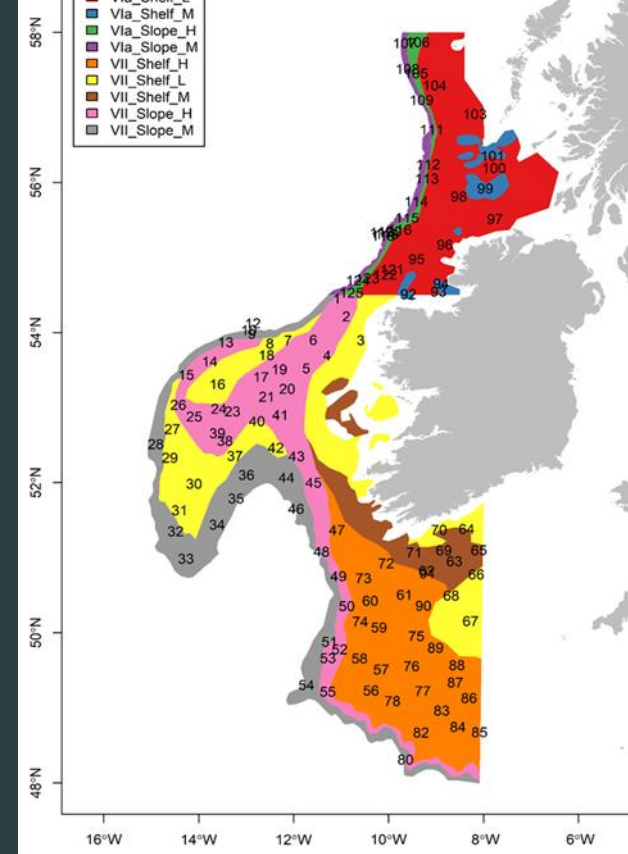
- ▶ Mainly North Sea stocks
- ▶ Biscay and Iberian Ecoregions
- ▶ Changes to the assessment process for several ray stocks
 - ▶ Standards set for using elasmobranch survey data
 - ▶ Standardisation of which surveys used and how they are combined
 - ▶ Agreement for certain length thresholds - “Exploitable” vs Total biomass.

WWSKATE 2 - Dublin, April 2025

- ▶ Celtic Seas Ecoregion
 - ▶ Surveys
 - ▶ Alternatives to fisheries-independent surveys
 - ▶ Stock selection
 - ▶ Length data
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- ▶ Include more surveys as appropriate
 - ▶ Improve stocks from Category 5 to Category 3

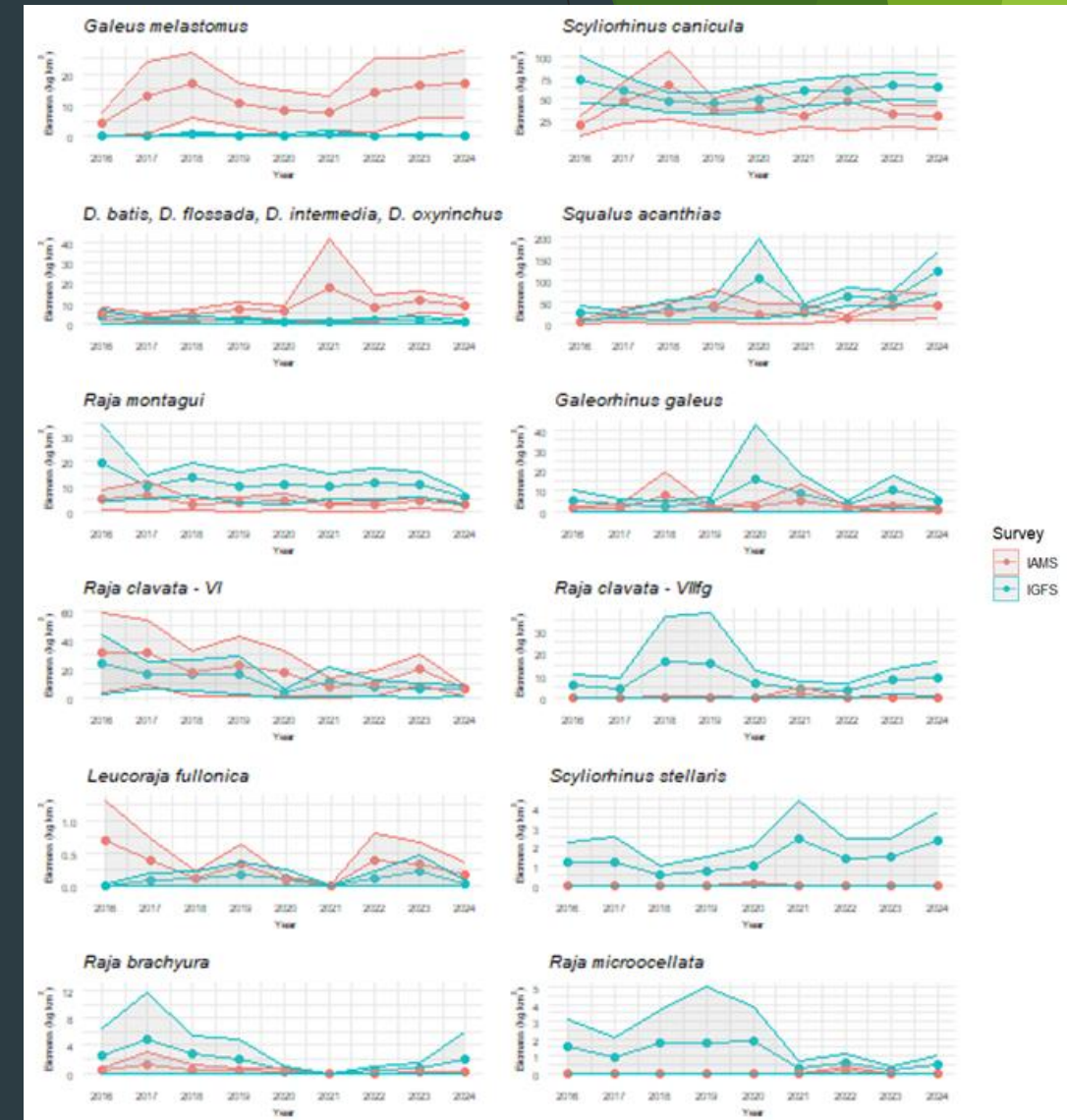
Surveys

- Use of additional surveys in process
 - Irish Anglerfish and Megrin Survey
 - UK channel surveys
 - French Channel surveys
- Alternatives to surveys in Portugal



IAMS - Irish Anglerfish and Monkfish Survey

- ▶ EMFAF- funded days for deeper stations
- ▶ Black-mouth dogfish
 - ▶ Only Spanish Porcupine survey used
- ▶ Also applies to spotted ray, West of Ireland.

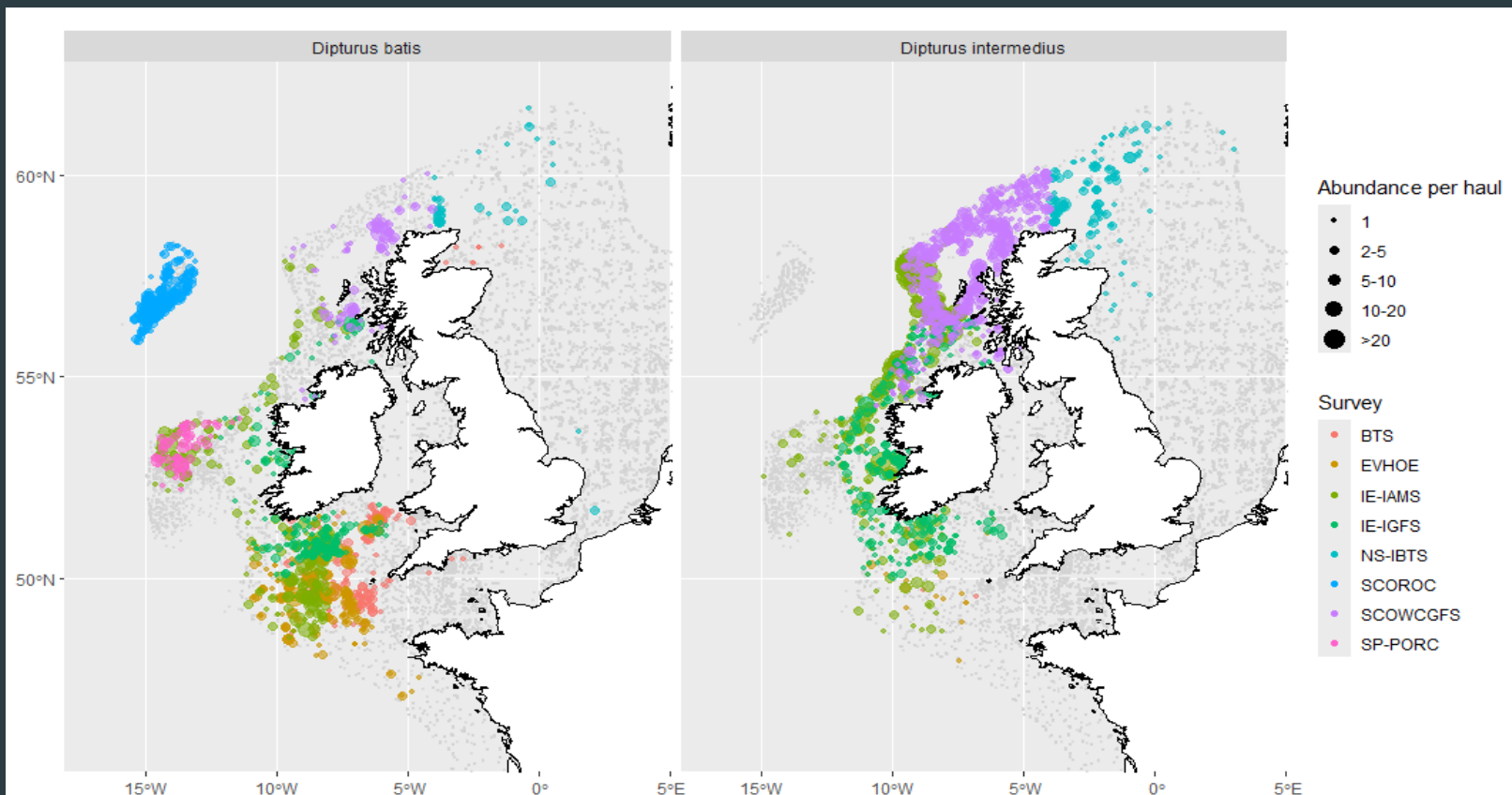


Common skate - *Dipturus* species

- ▶ Currently provided as *Dipturus* spp. - rjb.27.67a-ce-k
 - ▶ Species identification issues, unreliable landings
- ▶ Common skate complex
 - ▶ *Dipturus batis*
 - ▶ *Dipturus intermedius*
- ▶ *Dipturus nidarosiensis*
- ▶ *Dipturus oxyrinchus*

Dipturus data

- Available data from IAMS (Ire), IGFS (Ire) and EVHOE (Fra).



New recommendations

- ▶ Advice could be provided for *Dipturus batis* and *Dipturus intermedius* individually
- ▶ But EU/UK must ask for it
- ▶ Thornback ray in 7e (Western English Channel) to include
 - ▶ UK Q1 Beamtrawl survey
 - ▶ UKFSP survey
 - ▶ FR-WChannel Groundfish survey
 - ▶ And therefore should upgrade from Category 5 to 3.

Length Data - New procedures since 2021

- ▶ ICES Category 3 now uses length data in all assessments
 - ▶ Category 3 - Trends based assessment, proxy reference points
- ▶ Needs good size range
- ▶ Should be commercial, can be survey (not ideal)
 - ▶ Limited for certain stocks
- ▶ Exploitable v total biomass - which lengths?
 - ▶ Recommended changes for cuckoo ray in North Sea.

Spurdog

- ▶ Norwegian longline survey data
 - ▶ Now available to spurdog assessment
- ▶ WKSpur - Special request this month.

Final Recommendations

- ▶ Use IAMS data for blackmouth dogfish in NE Atlantic, and spotted ray in W of Ireland assessments
- ▶ Use UK-Q1-SWBeam, UK-FSP and FR-WCGFS surveys for thornback ray assesment in Western Channel.
- ▶ Provide individual advice for *Dipturus batis* and *D. intermedius* in the Celtic Seas Ecoregion
- ▶ Cuckoo ray in North Sea should use lower than currently-used exploitable biomass (30cm vs 50cm)
- ▶ Consider using Norwegian Longline spurdog data in spurdog assessment
- ▶ Develop further methods for the use of LPUE data where survey data are not available.

What happens next

- ▶ ICES reviews recommendations
- ▶ WGEF stock-assessors examine the data themselves
- ▶ If agreed, goes into 2026/2027 advice cycle

WKSpur - Workshop on Management Scenarios for Spurdog

- ▶ Chairs: Chris Griffiths (Swe) and Aurelian Delaval (Nor).
- ▶ Simulations by CEFAS (stock assessors).

Terms of Reference

- ▶ To examine the impacts on the stock of:-
 - ▶ Changing or removing the 100cm MLL (70-120cm)
 - ▶ Adding or using a Minimum Landings Size (70-90cm)
 - ▶ Remove length limitations, but reduce quota e.g. to 25%, 50%, or 75% of current
 - ▶ Examine the effects of discard survivability in different gears on the above options

Data

- ▶ Current stock assessment as baseline
 - ▶ Survey and commercial data from entire area
- ▶ New:
 - ▶ Survival rates from Ireland

Timelines

- ▶ June-July - WKSpur meets three times (one happened so far)
- ▶ 25th July - Draft report and advice
- ▶ October-December - EU-UK Negotiations.
- ▶ 2026 - (Any) changes implemented