ICES advice for North Western
Waters
NWWAC meeting, July 2025

Joanne Morgan
ICES ACOM vice-chair

ENGLISH CHANNEL

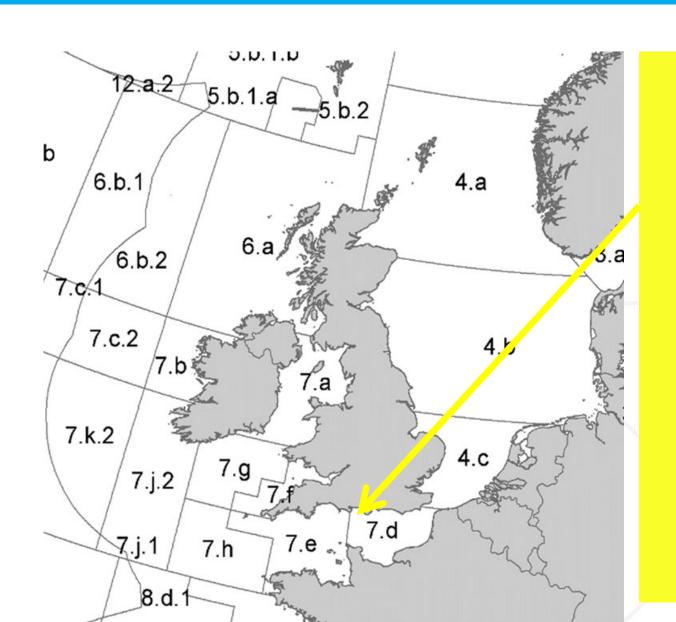


Science for sustainable seas



English Channel (Divisions 7.d and e)

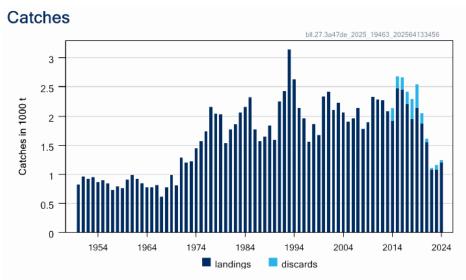




- Brill (3a, 4, 7d)
- Lemon sole (3a,4,7d)
- Plaice (7.d)
- Plaice (7.e)
- Sea bass (4.bc, 7.a,d-h)
- Sole (7.d)
- Sole (7.e)
- Striped red mullet (4,7.d,3.a)
- Whiting (4,7.d)
- Cod (4, 6a,7.d, 20) delayed
- Autumn
 - Rays and skates

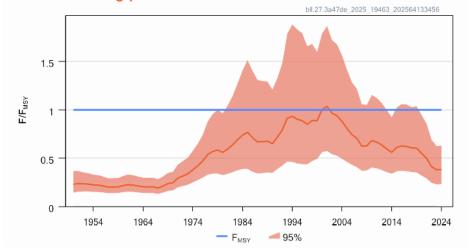
Advice for 2026, MSY: Catch ≤ 3086 t advice +3.9%





- F below Fmsy
- Stock size above MSY Btrigger
- Increase in biomass
- Some retro in stock size but without clear pattern









Brill in the North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat, English Channel (4, 3.a, 7.de)

Catch 2024: 1 244 t (3% discards) 484 t in 7de



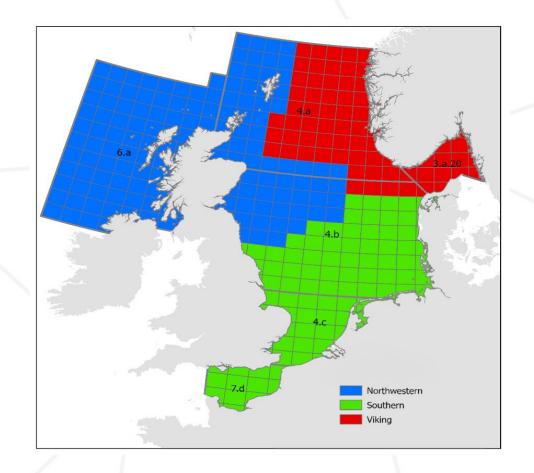
Basis	Total catch (2026)*	Projected landings (2026)	Projected discards (2026)**	Fishing mortality F ₂₀₂₆ /F _{MSY}	Stock size B ₂₀₂₇ /B _{MSY}	% B/B _{MSY} change***	% total allowable catch (TAC) change^	% advice change^^
ICES advice basis								
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach (35th percentile of predicted catch distribution under $F = F_{MSY}$)	3086	2950	136	0.92	1.36	-13.0	3.9	3.9
Other scenarios					•	•		
F _{MSY}	3314	3168	146	1.00	1.33	-15.5	11.6	11.6
F = F ₂₀₂₅	1390	1329	61	0.39	1.57	2.4	-53	-53
F = 0	0	0	0	0	1.74	12.0	-100	-100

SPICT

Advice for 2026



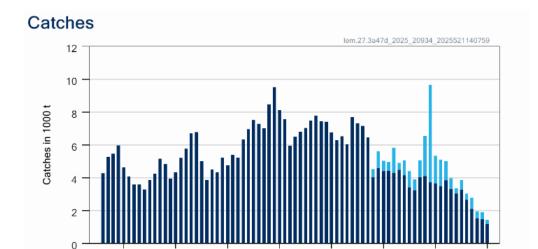
- Advice delayed until autumn
- October likely
- Struggle with mixing implications for advice – will give time for ACOM to further discuss
- Team being set up to try to improve assessment



Lemon sole in the North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat, E-English Channel (4, 3.a, 7.d)

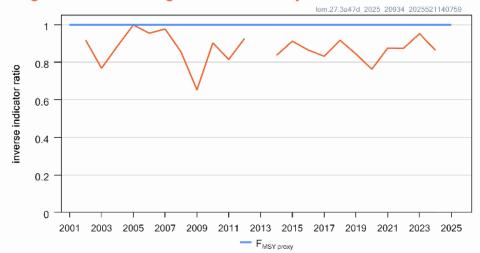
Advice for 2026, MSY: Catch ≤ 1106 t advice -24%

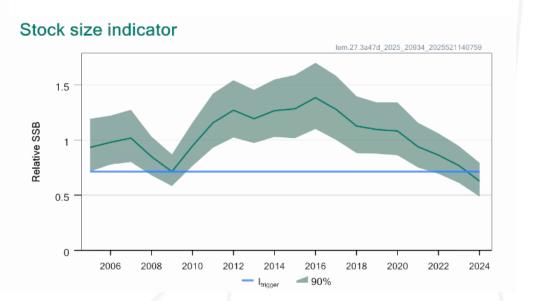




- DLS method chr
- F below FMSY proxy
- Stock size indicator below trigger
- Advice lower lower stock size and below trigger for HR reduced







Lemon sole in the North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat, E-English Channel (4, 3.a, 7.d)

Catch (2024) =1444 t (16% discards); landings of 34 t in 7.d



Previous catch advice A 1450 tonnes Biomass index I: most recent biomass index (I₂₀₂₄) 0.629 Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) proxy harvest rate HR_{MSY proxy}: MSY proxy harvest rate (average of the ratio of catch to 4003 biomass index for the years for which f > 1, where $f = L_{mean}/L_{F=M}$ Biomass safeguard 0.715 Index trigger value (Itrigger) b: index relative to trigger value, min{I₂₀₂₄/I_{trigger}, 1} 0.880 Precautionary multiplier to maintain biomass above B_{lim} with 95% probability m: multiplier (generic multiplier based on life history) 0.5 chr calculation** 1107 tonnes Stability clause (+20%/-30% compared to A_v, only considered if b = 1) Not applied Discard rate (average 2022–2024) 21% Catch advice for 2026 1107 tonnes Landings corresponding to the advice 873 tonnes % total allowable catch (TAC) change^ -24% % advice change -24%

Formula: $A_{y+1} = I \times HR_{MSY proxy} \times b \times m$

Advice for 2026



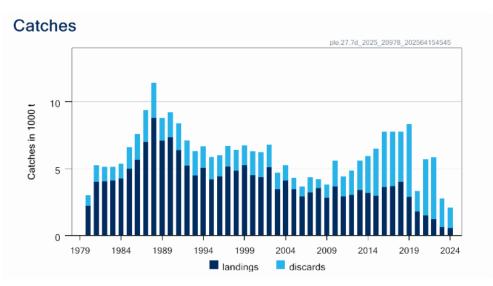
- Benchmarked 2025 WKNSCS
- Discard rate and migration taken into account
- Examined
 - Input data
 - Revised maturity ogive based on recent study
 - Discard rate calculated each year
 - Discard survival 0
 - Migration catches originating from ple.27.420 and ple.27.7e stocks are assumed to be, respectively, 50% and 12.86% of the mature individuals caught in Division 7.d during the first quarter
- Accepted SAM previously Aarts and Poos
- New reference points estimated

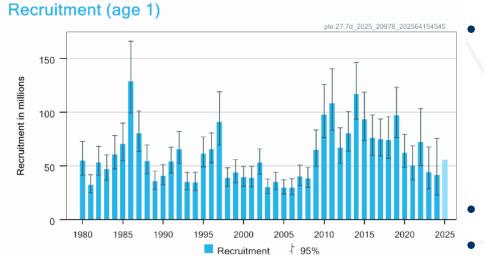
Plaice in the eastern English Channel (7.d)

Advice for 2026, MSY: Catch ≤ 1 151t advice -56%







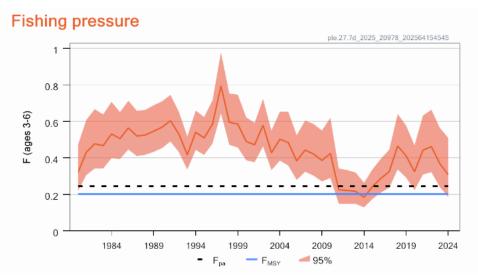


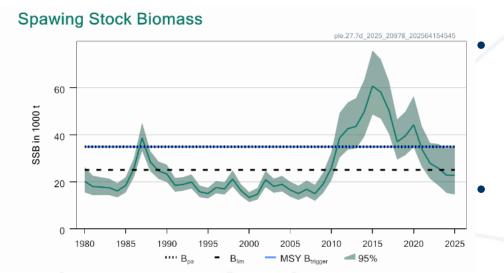
Western Channel and North Sea stocks: advice all plaice in 7d **1384 t** F below Fmsy SSB below MSY

 $B_{trigger}$

7e below trigger and catch from 7e should be no more than 872 t

Can not advise how to avoid 7e





Plaice in the eastern English Channel (7.d)

Catch (2024): 3019 t for the 7d area (75 % discards); 2088 t of 7d stock F(2025) = 0.308 (Average exploitation pattern 2021-2023, scaled to 2023);



10

SSB (2026)= 23993 t < MSY_{Rtrigger} (34942 t) and Blim (25105 t) F_{MSY}= 0.203 SAM assessment

				ı	Division 7.d	plaice sto	ck			
Basis	Total catch (2026)	Projected landings (2026)	Projected discards* (2026)	F _{total} (ages 3–6) (2026)	F _{projected} landings (ages 3–6) (2026)	F _{projected} discards (ages 3–6) (2026)	Spawning- stock biomass (SSB; 2027)	% SSB change **	Probability of SSB (2027) < B _{lim} (%)***	% advice change\$
ICES advice basis							•			
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: F _{MSY} × SSB (2026) /MSY B _{trigger}	1151	284	867	0.139	0.029	0.110	27504	14.6	34	-56
Other scenarios	•			•	•		•			
F = F _{MSY lower} × SSB (2026)/ MSY B _{trigger}	846	210	636	0.101	0.021	0.080	28071	17.0	31	-67
F _{MSY lower}	1213	299	914	0.147	0.030	0.117	27375	14.1	35	-53
F _{MSY}	1640	403	1237	0.203	0.042	0.161	26635	11.0	38	-37
F = 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29551	23	22	-100
F _{PA}	1960	480	1480	0.246	0.050	0.196	26016	8.4	44	-25
SSB (2027) = B _{lim}	2501	611	1890	0.322	0.066	0.256	25105	4.6	50	-3.8
SSB (2027) = B_{PA} = MSY $B_{trigger}^{\Lambda}$										
F = F ₂₀₂₅	2405	587	1818	0.308	0.063	0.245	25291	5.4	49	-7.5

Advice for plaice in Division 7.d is for the stock, it takes into account catches of 7.e and North Sea stocks in 7.d

Advice for 2026 and 2027



- Benchmarked late 2024 WKBPLAICE
- Previous assessment cat 3 rfb
- Examined
 - Input data
 - Discard rate 26% in 7e (updated as required here avg 2012-2023)
 - Discard survival 50%
 - Migration 15% of the mature population caught in quarter 1 in Division 7.d is added to the ple.27.7e stock catches (revised to 12.86% after the 7d benchmark)

Advice for 2026 and 2027

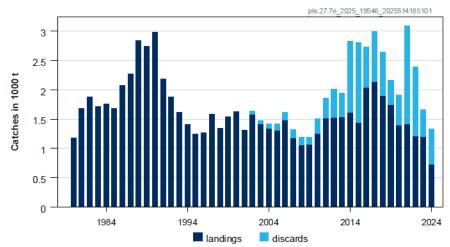


- Unable to produce Cat 1 assessment
- MSE to produce CHR (Cat 3) designed specifically for this stock
- Discard rate and survival and migration taken into account
- Produced new advice for 2026 (and 2027)

Advice for 2026 and 2027, MSY: Catch ≤ 872 t -5.9% (819 in 7e)

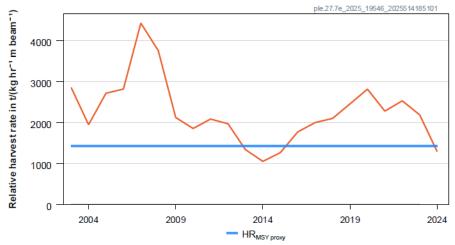


Catches

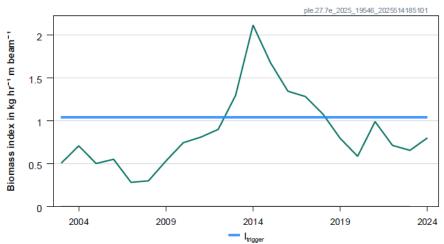


F below FMSY proxy Stock size below Itrigger Change in assessment method and below trigger

Relative harvest rate



Biomass index



Plaice in the western English Channel (7.e)

Catch (2024): 1122 t (39% discards) in 7e; +41 t in 7d

calculated using the rounded rightes in the table.				
Division 7.e plaice stock				
Biomass index				
I: most recent biomass index (I ₂₀₂₃₋₂₀₂₄)		0.73 kg hr ⁻¹ m beam ⁻¹		
MSY proxy harvest rate				
HR _{MSY proxy} : MSY proxy harvest rate (derived from stock-specific simulations)	1 424	tonnes/(kg hr ⁻¹ m beam ⁻¹)		
Biomass safeguard				
Index trigger value (I _{trigger} , derived from stock-specific simulations)		$1.04~{ m kg~hr}^{-1}~{ m m~beam}^{-1}$		
b: multiplier for index relative to trigger value, min{I ₂₀₂₃₋₂₀₂₄ /I _{trigger} , 1}	0.70			
Precautionary multiplier to maintain biomass above B _{lim} with 95% probability				
m: multiplier (derived from stock-specific simulations)	1			
Catch advice calculations				
chr calculation# $(I \times HR_{MSY proxy} \times b \times m)^*$		722 tonnes		
A _y : dead catch corresponding to previous catch advice**		804 tonnes		
Stability clause (+20%/-30%, chr calculation compared to A_y , only applied if $b = 1$)***	Not applied			
Discard rate (average 2012–2024)		34%		
Discard survival	50%			
Catch advice for 2026 and 2027 ([chr calculation]/[1 – discard rate \times discard survival])^		872 tonnes		
Landings corresponding to advice ([advised catch] \times [1 – discard rate])	572 tonnes			
% advice change^^		-5.9%		



chr rule

Since 2024, the TAC includes considerations of how much can be fished in each of the divisions 7.e and 7.d

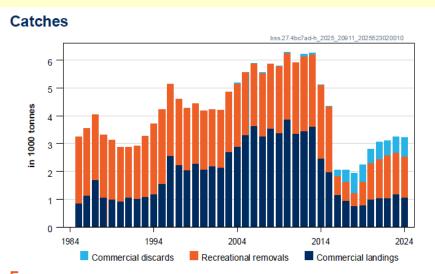
Advice for 2026

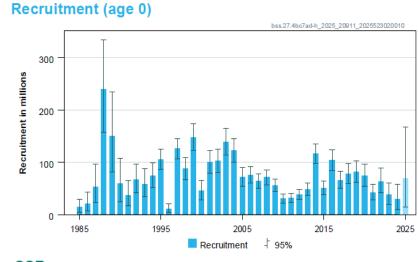


- Benchmark 2025 WKBSEABASS
- With Southern bss.27.8ab northern and central Bay of Biscay
- Examined
 - All input data
 - Stock structure move 29 % Q3 and 41 % Q4 catch to south
 - Recreational data new time series 95% post release survival
 - New natural mortality
 - 3 new recruitment surveys
- New SS3 model accepted

Sea pass in divisions 4.p-c, 7.a, and 7.u-n

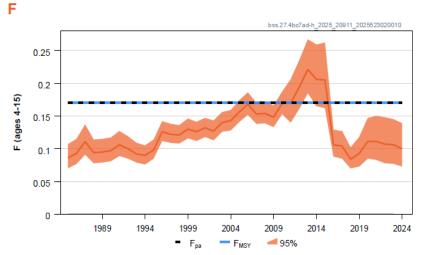
Advice for 2026, MSY: Total removals ≤ 5 180 t: advice +98%

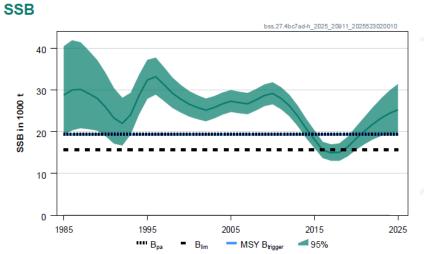






- SSB aboveMSYBtrigger
- F below F_{MSY}
- New assessment and reference points





EU MAP : Catch: 4472 – 5180 t

Sea bass in divisions 4.b-c, 7.a, and 7.d-h

Catch 2024: 3828 t (1282 t commercial, 716 t discards and 1830 t recreational) 🔍



F (2025)= 0.104 (average 2022-2024)

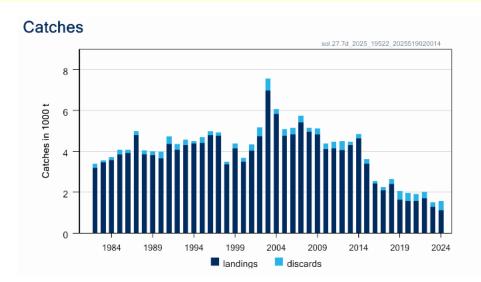
 $SSB(2026) = 25 330 > B_{lim} 15 666 t and > MSY B_{trigger} = 19 339t F_{MSY} = 0.170$

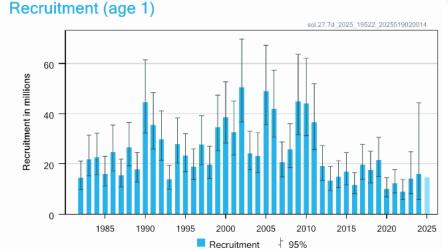
		Bss.27.4bc7ad-h sea bass stock										
Basis	Total removals (2026)*	Commercial landings** (2026)	Recreational kept** (2026)	Commercial discards** (2026)	Recreational dead released** (2026)	Survival recreational released** (2026)	F _{ages 4–15} total removals (2026)*	F _{ages 4–15} commercial catch (2026)	F _{ages 4–15} recreational removals (2026)	Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2027)	% SSB change^	% advice change^^
ICES advice basis		•	•									
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: F = F _{MSY}	5180	1821	2302	781	276	5524	0.170	0.086	0.085	23154	-8.6	98
Other scenarios												
F = 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27544	8.7	-100
EU MAP#: F _{MSY}	5180	1821	2302	781	276	5524	0.170	0.086	0.085	23154	-8.6	98
EU MAP#: F _{MSY lower}	4472	1573	1988	672	239	4772	0.145	0.073	0.072	23751	-6.2	71
EU MAP#: F _{MSY upper}	5180	1821	2302	781	276	5524	0.170	0.086	0.085	23154	-8.6	98
F = F _{PA}	5180	1821	2302	781	276	5524	0.170	0.086	0.085	23154	-8.6	98
$SSB_{2027} = B_{lim}$	14250	4956	6288	2252	755	15090	0.56	0.28	0.28	15666	-38	440
$SSB_{2027} = MSY B_{trigger} = B_{pa}$	9757	3413	4321	1504	519	10371	0.35	0.176	0.173	19339	-24	270
SSB ₂₀₂₇ = SSB ₂₀₂₆	2603	917	1159	388	139	2781	0.082	0.041	0.041	25330	0	-0.66
$F = F_{2025}$	3271	1152	1455	489	175	3493	0.104	0.053	0.052	24764	-2.2	25
Total removals advice (2026) = total removals advice (2025)	2620	923	1166	391	140	2799	0.082	0.041	0.041		-0.054	-0.038
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SS3

Sole in the eastern English Channel (7.d)

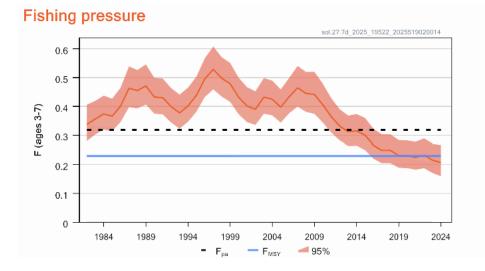
Advice for 2026, MSY : Catch ≤ 1 275 t +5.5%

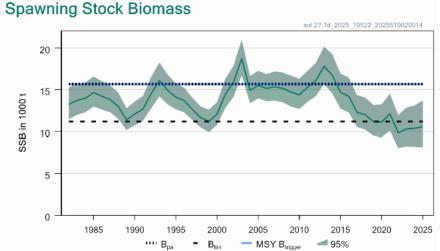






- \SSB below Blim
- Higher recruitment than assumed in last forecast
- SSB increase
 closer to
 Btrigger –
 higher target F
 than last year





Sole in the eastern English Channel (7.d)

Catch (2024): 1583 t (30% discards)

F(2025) = 0.207 (F2024)

SSB (2026)= $11009 < B_{lim}$ 11 181 t $F_{MSY} = 0.23$

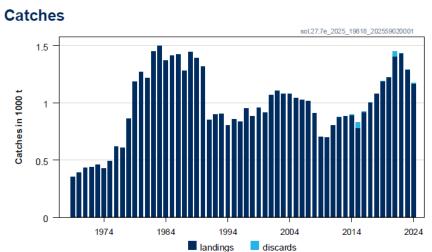


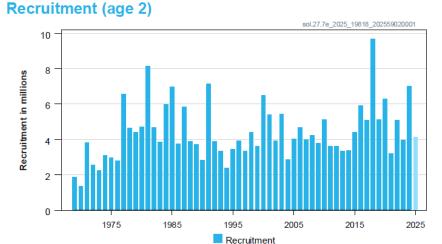
			_								
Basis	Total catch (2026)	Projected landings (2026)	Projected discards^ (2026)	F _{total} (ages 3–7) (2026)	F _{projected landings} (ages 3–7) (2026)	F _{projected discards} (ages 3–7) (2026)	Spawning -stock biomass (SSB; 2027)	% SSB change*	% total allowable catch (TAC) change**	% advice change**	Probability of SSB (2027) < Blim (%) ***
ICES advice basis											
Maximum sustainable yield											
(MSY) approach:	1275	1002	273	0.162	0.126	0.036	11860	7.7	5.5	5.5	35
F _{MSY} × SSB (2026)/MSY B _{trigger}											
Other scenarios											
F _{MSY lower} × SSB (2026)/ MSY B _{trigger}	889	699	190	0.110	0.086	0.024	12309	11.8	-26	-26	26
F = 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13324	21	-100	-100	11.6
F _{PA}	2322	1833	489	0.318	0.25	0.069	10652	-3.2	92	92	62
SSB (2027) = B _{lim}	1873	1475	398	0.248	0.194	0.054	11181	1.56	55	55	50
SSB (2027)= B _{PA} = MSY B _{trigger} #											
F = F ₂₀₂₅	1596	1256	340	0.207	0.162	0.045	11495	4.4	32	32	44
F _{MSY lower}	1235	971	264	0.156	0.122	0.034	11904	8.1	2.2	2.2	34
F _{MSY}	1751	1379	372	0.230	0.180	0.050	11315	2.8	45	45	47
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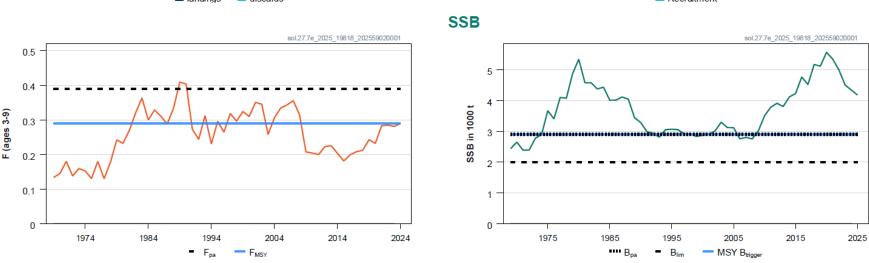
SAM assessment

Advice for 2026, MSY : Catch ≤ 1 213 t advice +5.4%









EU MAP : Catch: 710 – 1 391 t

F at F_{MSY}

SSB above MSY

 $\mathsf{B}_{\mathsf{trigger}}$

SSB declining but advice higher upward revision in SSB (retrospective) and STF has lower interim F and higher recruitment assumption than last year

Sole in the western English Channel (7.e)

Catch (2024): 1 174 t (negligible)

F(2025) = 0.26 (Based on assumed landings)

SSB (2026)= $4.198 t > MSY_{Rtrigger} (2.900 t)$ $F_{MSY} = 0.29$

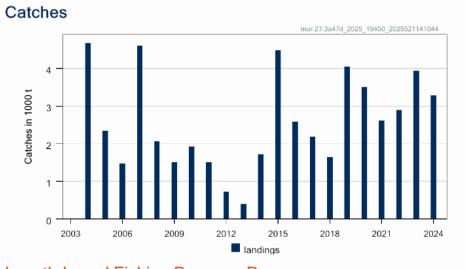


		ו ופעעוווא		IVINY								
Basis	Total catch** (2026)	Projected landings (2026)	Projected discards (2026)	F _{projected landings} (2026)	Spawning- stock biomass (SSB; 2027)	% SSB change ***	% advice change^					
ICES advice basis	ICES advice basis											
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: $F = F_{MSY}$	1213	1206	8	0.29	3944	-6.1	5.4					
Other scenarios												
EU MAP^^: F _{MSY}	1213	1206	8	0.29	3944	-6.1	5.4					
EU MAP^^: F _{MSY lower}	710	706	4	0.160	4425	5.4	-38					
EU MAP^^: F _{MSY upper}	1391	1383	9	0.34	3774	-10.1	21					
F = 0	0	0	0	0	5106	22	-100					
$F = F_{PA}$	1561	1551	10	0.39	3613	-13.9	36					
$SSB_{2027} = B_{lim}$	3284	3263	20	1.09	2000	-52	185					
Rollover total allowable												
catch (TAC)	1151	1144	7	0.27	4003	-4.7	0					
$SSB_{2027} = B_{pa} = MSY B_{trigger}$	2316	2301	14	0.65	2900	-31	101					
$SSB_{2027} = SSB_{2026}$	946	941	6	0.22	4198	0	-17.8					
F = F ₂₀₂₅	1111	1104	7	0.26	4042	-3.7	-3.5					

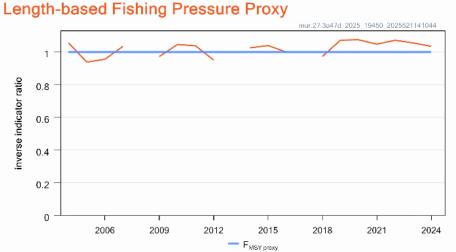
UK 2021-2023 catch and sample data revised – minimal impact

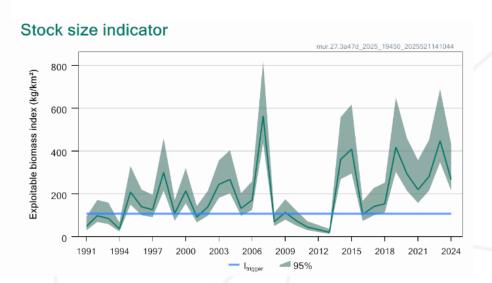
Advice for 2026 and 2027 , MSY: Catch ≤ 1 932 t -2.7%





- DLS method chr
- F above Fishing pressure proxy
- Stock size above trigger
- Small decrease in indicator
- Limited sampling





Striped red mullet in the North Sea, east English Channel, Skagerrak and Kattegat (4, 7.d, 3.a)

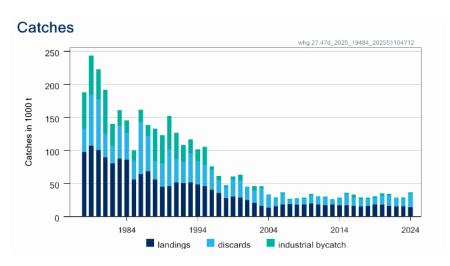
Catch (2024): 3 289 t (negligible discards)

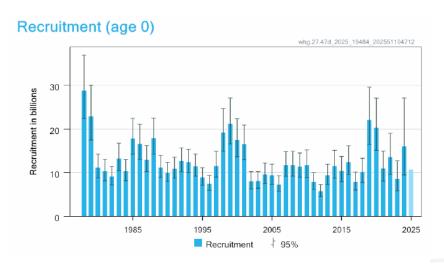
Previous catch advice A _y (advised catch for 2024 and 2025)	1985 tonnes
Biomass index	
I: most recent biomass index (I ₂₀₂₄)	266.48 kg/km ²
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) proxy harvest rate	
$HR_{MSY proxy}$: MSY proxy harvest rate (average of the ratio of catch to biomass index for the years for which f > 1, where f = $L_{mean}/L_{F=M}$)	14.50
Biomass safeguard	
Index trigger value (I _{trigger})	107.27 kg/km ²
b: index relative to trigger value, min{I ₂₀₂₄ /I _{trigger} , 1}	1
Precautionary multiplier to maintain biomass above B _{lim} with 95% probability	
m: multiplier (generic multiplier based on life history)	0.5
chr calculation**	1932 tonnes
Stability clause (+20%/ -30% compared to A _y , only considered if b = 1)	Not applied
Discard rate	0
Catch advice for 2026 and 2027	1932 tonnes
Landings corresponding to the advice for 2026 and 2027	1932 tonnes
% advice change	-2.7 %

% advice change CHR calculation $A_{y+1} = I \times HR_{MSY proxy} \times b \times m$ CIFM

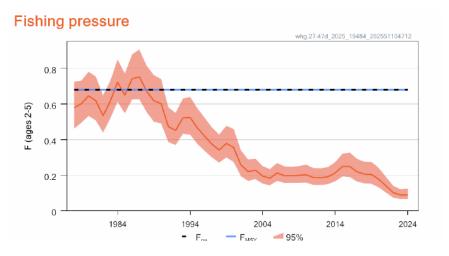
Advice for 2026, MSY: Catch ≤ 198 609 t advice +5.6%

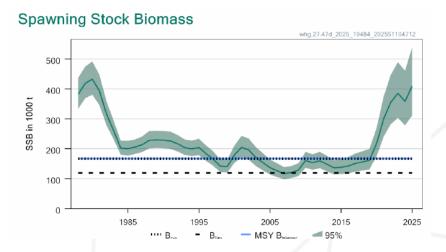






- 2025 advice rvised in autumn 2024
- F below F_{MSY}
- SSB above MSY B_{trigger}.
- Increase stock size





Whiting in the North Sea and eastern English Channel (4 and 7.d)

Catch (2024): 36 577 t (57% discards); Catch of 6 159t in 7.d F (2025)=0.090 (Average exploitation pattern(2022-2024), scaled to F 2024) SSB(2026) = 413 121 t> MSY_{Btrigger} =167 419t F_{MSY}=0.68



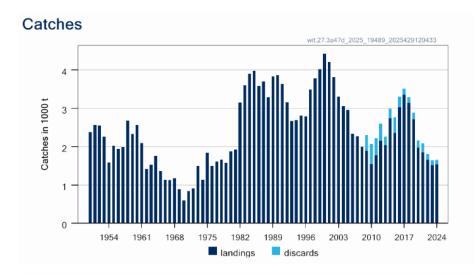
SAM

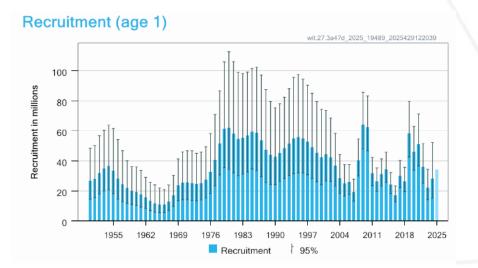
Basis	Total catch (2026)	Projected landings (2026)*	Projected discards (2026)*	Projected industrial bycatch (IBC) (2026)*	Human consumption catch (2026)	F _{total} (ages 2–5) (2026)**	F _{projected} landings (ages 2–5) (2026)	F _{projected} discards (ages 2–5) (2026)	F _{projected IBC} (ages 2–5) (2026)**	SSB (2027)	% SSB change	% TAC change^^	% advice change^^^	
ICES advice basis	advice basis													
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: F _{MSY}	198609	121538	75495	1576	197033	0.68	0.36	0.32	0.0054	286198	-31	42	5.6	
Other scenarios														
F _{MSY upper}	198609	121538	75495	1576	197033	0.68	0.36	0.32	0.0054	286198	-31	42	5.6	
F _{MSY lower}	146669	90964	53946	1759	144910	0.46	0.24	0.21	0.0054	323685	-22	5.2	-22	
F = 0 (industrial bycatch [IBC] only)	2242	0	0	2242	C	0.0054	0	0	0.0054	430525	4.2	-98	-99	
$F = F_{2025}$	33503	20286	11088	2130	31374	0.090	0.045	0.040	0.0054	403077	-2.4	-76	-82	
0.75 × F ₂₀₂₅ ***	25875	15364	8358	2153	23721	0.069	0.034	0.030	0.0054	408306	-1.17	-81	-86	
1.25 × F ₂₀₂₅ ***	40962	25082	13774	2106	38856	0.111	0.056	0.050	0.0054	397949	-3.7	-71	-78	1
F _{PA}	198609	121538	75495	1576	197033	0.68	0.36	0.32	0.0054	286198	-31	42	5.6	
SSB (2027) = B _{PA} = MSY B _{trigger}	385494	215820	168808	866	384628	2.3	1.19	1.06	0.0054	167419	-59	176	105	
SSB (2027) = B _{lim}	485115	244498	240124	492	484622	4.2	2.22	1.97	0.0054	119585	-71	248	158	

Advice for 2026, MSY: Catch ≤ 2 187t advice +11%

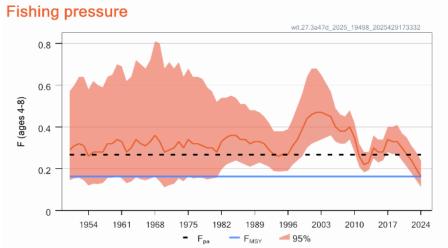


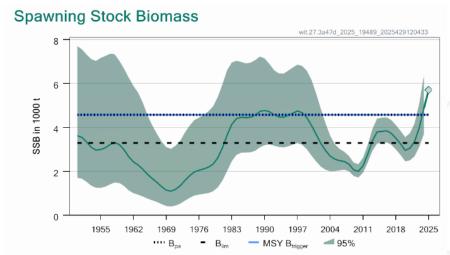






- F at F_{MSY}
- SSB above MSY B_{trigger.}
- Increase in stock size





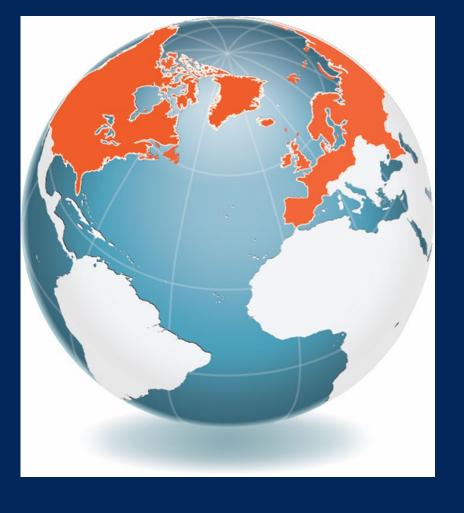
Witch North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat, eastern English Channel (SA4, 3a, 7d)

Catch (2024): 1 593t (11.7% discards); F (2025)=0.157 (catch constraint, exploitation pattern 2024) SSB(2026, July 1) = 5702 t> MSY_{Btrigger} (4576 t) F_{MSY}=0.163



SAM

Basis	Total catch (2026)	Projected landings (2026)	Projected discards* (2026)	F _{total} (ages 4–8) (2026)	Spawning- stock biomass (SSB)** (2026)	SSB**,*** (2027)	% SSB change ^	% total allowable catch (TAC) change	% advice change
ICES advice basis					•				
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: F _{MSY}	2187	2107	80	0.163	6210	6365	8.9	11.1	11.1
Other scenarios	•		•	•	•			•	
F _{MSY upper}	2877	2770	107	0.222	5992	5771	5.1	46	46
F _{MSY lower}	1538	1481	57	0.111	6410	6941	12.4	-22	-22
F = 0	0	0	0	0	6865	8381	20	-100	-100
F_{PA}	3376	3248	128	0.267	5839	5357	2.4	71	71
$F = F_{2025}$	2119	2043	76	0.157	6231	6427	9.3	7.6	7.6
SSB (2027) = B _{lim}	6283	6006	277	0.59	4865	3293	-14.7	220	220
SSB (2027) = B_{PA} = MSY $B_{trigger}$	4403	4229	174	0.37	5503	4576	-3.5	124	124
Rollover advice	1969	1898	71	0.145	6277	6580	10.1	0	0



Thank you for your attention!



www.ices.dk Joanne. Morgan@ices.dk



Advice for the following stocks for 2022 to be issued in autumn

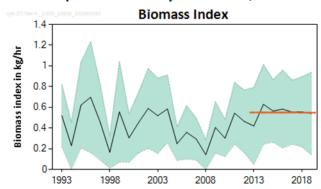
ICES CIEM

- Thornback ray in Subarea 4 and in divisions 3.a and 7.d
- Blonde ray in divisions 4.c and 7.d
- Spotted ray in Subarea 4 and in divisions 3.a and 7.d

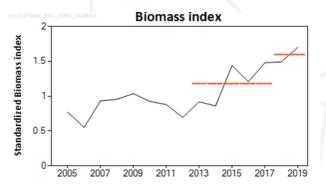
Advice issued in 2020 for 2021/2022

		Advice for 2022	
Stock	Landings (2020)	Landings	Rationale
Spotted ray in 7.a and 7.e-h	741	1041	PA - based on survey index (UK(E&W)-BTS-Q3)
Cuckoo ray in 6,7, 8abd	2453	3150	PA - based on survey indices (IGFS and EVHOE)
Undulate ray in 7.de	225	183 (2552)	PA - based on survey index (CGFS)
Small-eyed ray in 7de	53	40	PA - based on historical landings
Thornback ray in 7.e	464	170	PA - based on historical landings
Blonde ray in 7e	1014	266	PA - based on historical landings

Spotted ray in 7.a, 7e-h



Cuckoo ray in 6, 7, 8 abd



Undulate ray in 7.de

