

Stock Annex: Small-eyed ray (*Raja microocellata*) in divisions 7.d and 7.e (English Channel)

Stock specific documentation of standard assessment procedures used by ICES.

Stock:	Small-eyed ray
Working Group:	Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF)
Created:	2012
Authors:	
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A. General

A.1. Stock definition

There are localized concentrations of *R. microocellata* in the English Channel, including around the Channel Islands (Ellis et al., 2011) and Baie of Douarnenez, Brittany (Rousset, 1990), with small numbers taken elsewhere.

Data from surveys (CGFS and BTS in 7.d and 4.c, BTS in 7.e) and from French observations aboard commercial vessels confirm low catches related to a patchy and very coastal distribution. North of the norman-breton Gulf is confirmed as a presence area.

A.2. Fishery

This species is mainly exploited by French and UK (including Channel Islands) fleets, as a bycatch by the trawlers, and as a target species by small, coastal netters and longliners.

A.3. Ecosystem aspects

This species may have a very coastal distribution.

B. Data

B.1. Commercial catch

The quality of specific landings is improving since 2008 with the obligation to have a separate declaration for this species but is still considered poor (landing as miscellaneous skates).

B.2. Biological

Knowledge is increasing with new studies on the costal skates after the undulate ray ban (see Stephan and Al., 2014 and Leblanc and Al., 2014).

B.3. Surveys

Survey data used include the French CGFS in 7.d, IBTS in 7.d-4, and the English BTS in 7.d-4.c and in 7.e.

CGFS indicates that the geographical distribution of the species in 7.d is very coastal and that the apparent abundance is low.

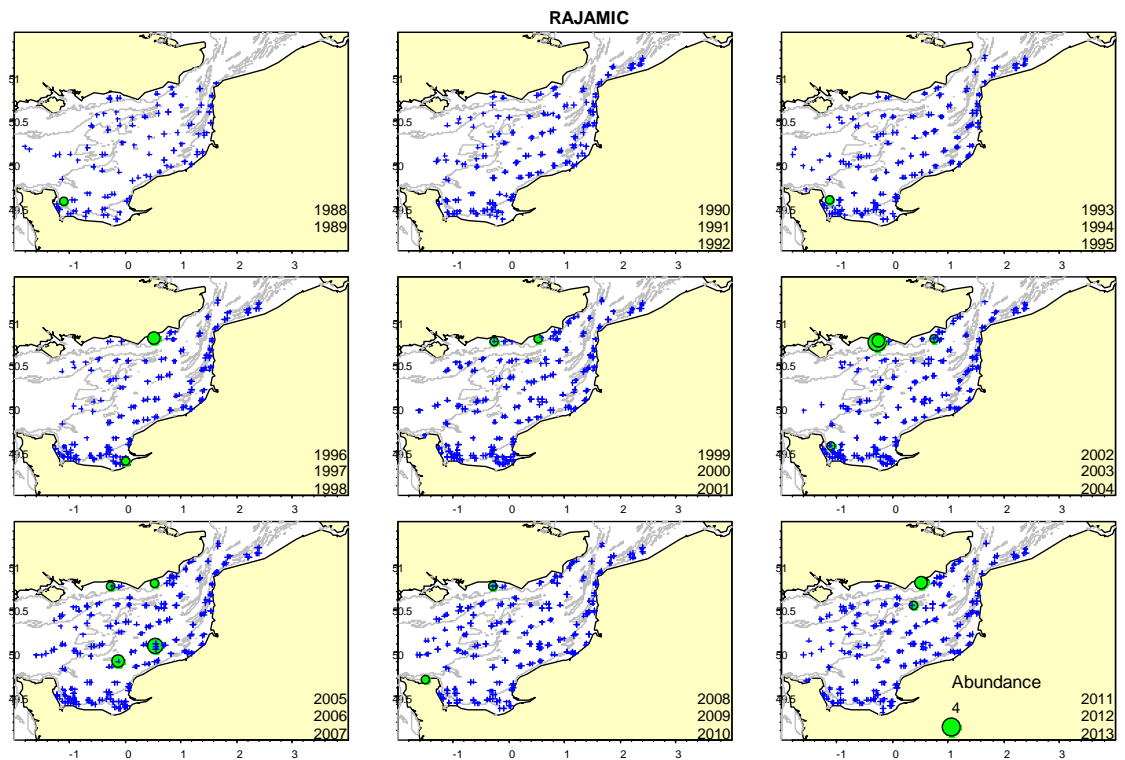


Figure 1.-Spatial distribution of small-eyed ray (*Raja microocellata*) in 7.d from CGFS. The number of fish caught per haul (green circles) is shown for groups of three years. Hauls with no catch of the species are represented by a blue cross (+).

English BTS in 7.e gives few records of this species, and whilst these were generally from coastal waters with smaller size groups likely to occur in waters shallower than can be surveyed by the research vessel. (Figure 2).

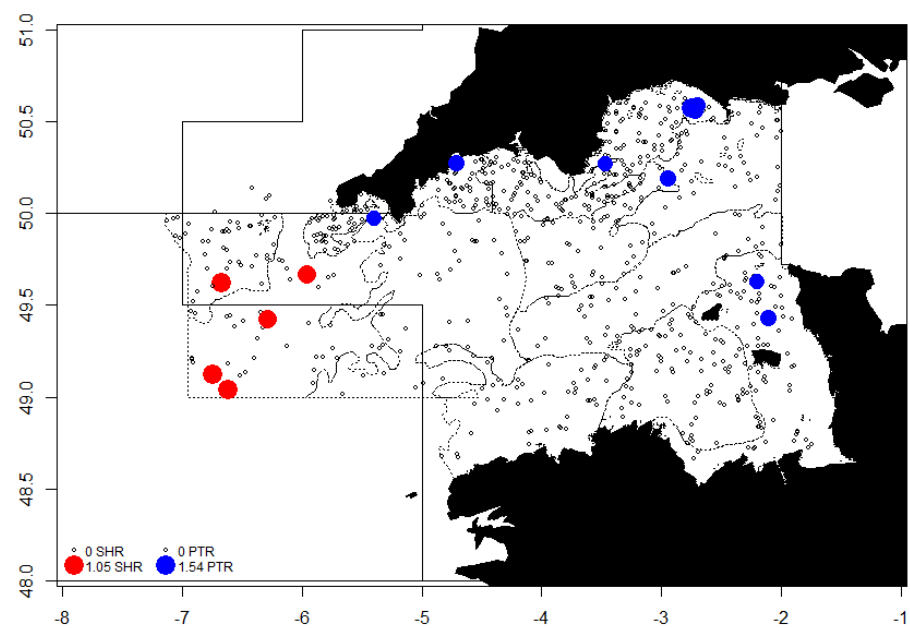


Figure 2.-Spatial distribution of small-eyed ray (*Raja microocellata*) (blue) in 7.e English BTS (2006-2014).

B.4. Commercial CPUE

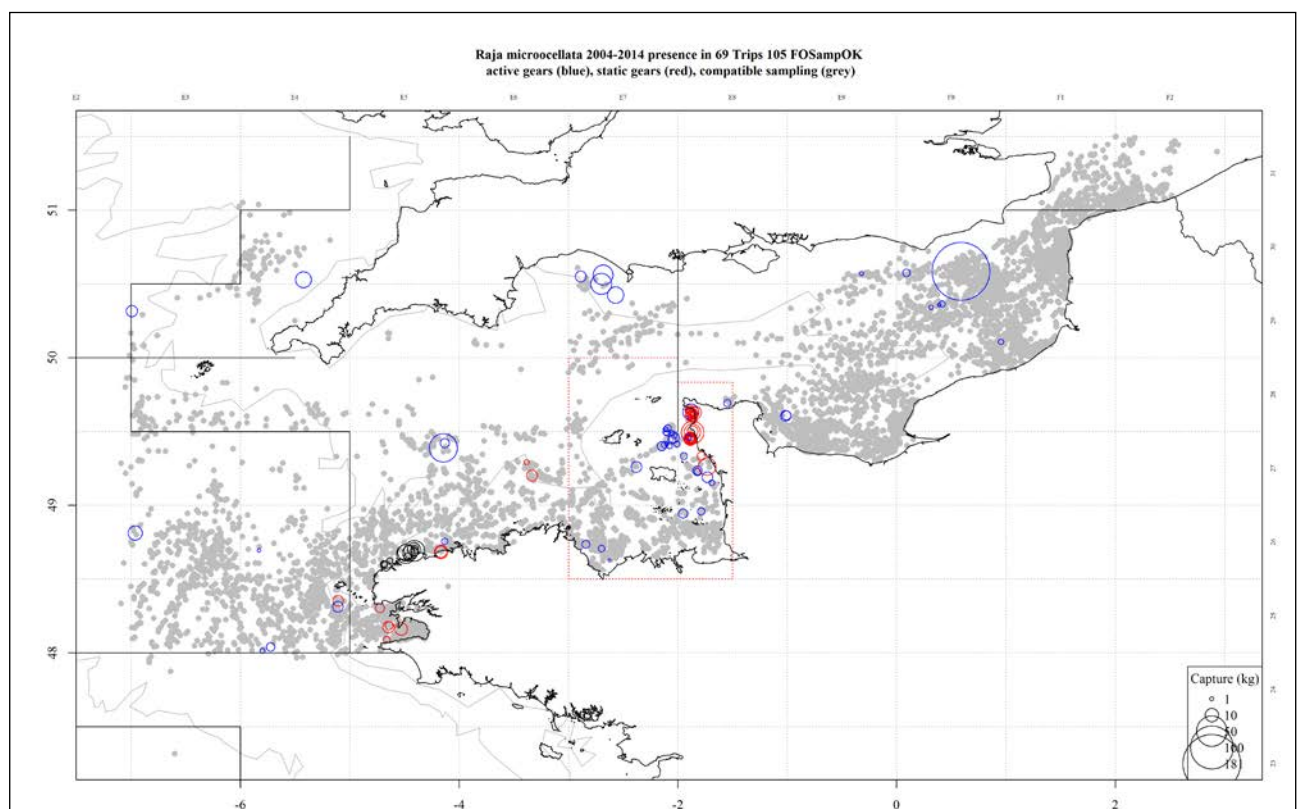


Figure. 3.- French fisheries observer program: *Raja microocellata* catches (kg) in the English Channel and adjacent areas from 2003 to the first quarter 2014 (grey dots: hauls from gears susceptible to catch skates with no catch of *R. microocellata*; open circles catch in weight of *R. microocellata*, blue: towed gears, red: passive gears). Each circle corresponds to one sampled fishing operation.

B.5. Other relevant data:

C. Assessment: data and method

D. Short-Term Projection

E. Medium-Term Projections

F. Long-Term Projections

G. Biological Reference Points

	TYPE	VALUE	TECHNICAL BASIS
MSY	MSY Btrigger	xxx t	Explain
Approach	FMSY	Xxx	Explain
	Blim	xxx t	Explain
Precautionary	Bpa	xxx t	Explain
Approach	Flim	Xxx	Explain
	Fpa	Xxx	Explain

H. Other Issues

H.1. Historical overview of previous assessment methods

2012: first advice for rje-ech (rje.27.7de), years 2013 and 2014.

I. References

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Stéphan, E., Hennache, C., Delamare, A., Leblanc, N., Legrand, V., Morel, G., Meheust, E., Jung, J.L., 2014. Length at maturity, conversion factors, movement patterns and population genetic structure of undulate ray (*Raja undulata*) along the French Atlantic and English Channel coasts: preliminary results. Working Document presented at the Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF) meeting, 17–26th June, 2014.

French fisheries observer program (<http://sih.ifremer.fr/Description-des-donnees/Les-donnees-collectees/Echantillonnage-des-captures-a-bord-des-navires-de-peche>).

J. F. Silva, S. R. McCully, J. R. Ellis and S. Kupschus, 2014. Demersal elasmobranchs in the western English Channel (ICES Division VIIe). Working Document presented at the Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF) meeting, 17–26th June, 2014