

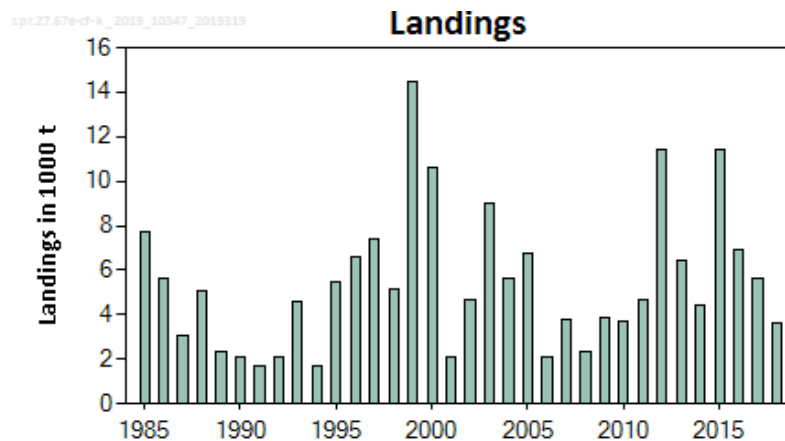
## Sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*) in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a–c and 7.f–k (West of Scotland, southern Celtic Seas)

### ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, catches should be no more than 2800 tonnes in each of the years 2020 and 2021.

### Stock development over time

The information available is insufficient to evaluate stock trends and exploitation. Stock identity for this species in this area is not defined.



**Figure 1** Sprat in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a–c and 7.f–k. Summary of the stock assessment.

### Stock and exploitation status

ICES cannot assess the stock and exploitation status relative to maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and precautionary approach (PA) reference points because the reference points are undefined.

**Table 1** Sprat in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a–c and 7.f–k. State of the stock and fishery relative to reference points.

		Fishing pressure				Stock size				
		2016	2017	2018		2016	2017	2018		
Maximum sustainable yield	$F_{MSY}$	?	?	?	Unknown	$MSY B_{trigger}$	?	?	?	Unknown
Precautionary approach	$F_{pa}, F_{lim}$	?	?	?	Unknown	$B_{pa}, B_{lim}$	?	?	?	Unknown
Management plan	$F_{MGT}$	—	—	—	Not applicable	$B_{MGT}$	—	—	—	Not applicable

### Catch scenarios

The ICES framework for category 5 stocks was applied (ICES, 2012). For stocks without information on abundance or exploitation rate, ICES considers that a precautionary reduction of catches should be implemented where there is no ancillary information clearly indicating that the current level of exploitation is appropriate for the stock. The precautionary buffer was applied in 2017 and has, therefore, not been applied again. Discarding is known to take place, but ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catch.

**Table 2** Sprat in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a–c and 7.f–k. The basis for the catch scenarios.

Recent advised catch	2800 tonnes
Discard rate	Unknown
Precautionary buffer	Not applied
Catch advice	2800 tonnes
% Advice change*	0%

\* Advice value 2020 and 2021 relative to the advice value 2018 and 2019.

There is no change in the advice.

### Basis of the advice

**Table 3** Sprat in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a–c and 7.f–k. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Precautionary approach
Management plan	ICES is not aware of any precautionary management plan for sprat in this area.

### Quality of the assessment

Historical landings data may not be accurate. Landings may be underestimated due to difficulties in quantifying the landings from vessels of less than 10 m in length. The level of discarding is unknown; based on a few samples it is estimated to be less than 1% of the catch.

### Issues relevant for the advice

This advice does not refer to a “stock”. It relates to the species in a wider region where data are available. The stock structure of sprat populations in this ecoregion is not clear. ICES is unable to identify appropriate management units for sprat in this area, and the relationship with sprat in divisions 7.d and 7.e is also unknown.

Currently there is no TAC for this species in this area, and it is not clear whether there should be one or several management units.

Acoustic surveys carried out in the Celtic Seas (the Irish Sea Acoustic Survey [Ac(VIIaN)] and the Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey [CSHAS]) that target herring also provide estimates of sprat biomass. These estimates correspond to a small fraction of the total area of distribution of sprat in the Celtic Seas. Therefore, they provide a lower boundary for the total sprat biomass in the area. On average the survey biomass exceeds the average catches by several orders of magnitude.

Given the uncertainty in stock structure and the limited survey coverage, issues of potential local depletion should be monitored.

### Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

### Basis of the assessment

**Table 4** Sprat in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a–c and 7.f–k. Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	5 ( <a href="#">ICES, 2018</a> ).
Assessment type	No assessment (ICES, 2019).
Input data	Landing statistics.
Discards and bycatch	Discards are unknown.
Indicators	Irish Sea Acoustic Survey (Ac(VIIaN)) and the Celtic Sea Herring Acoustic Survey (CSHAS).
Other information	Benchmarked in 2013 (WKSPRAT; ICES, 2013).
Working group	Herring Assessment Working Group for the Area South of 62°N ( <a href="#">HAWG</a> ).

## Information from stakeholders

There is no additional available information.

## History of the advice, catch, and management

**Table 5** Sprat in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a–c and 7.f–k. ICES advice and official landings. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Predicted catch corresponding to advice	TAC	Official landings
2000	-	-	-	10641
2001	-	-	-	2119
2002	-	-	-	4692
2003	-	-	-	9020
2004	-	-	-	5646
2005	-	-	-	6784
2006	-	-	-	2086
2007	-	-	-	3762
2008	-	-	-	2355
2009	-	-	-	3844
2010	-	-	-	3744
2011	-	-	-	4538
2012	No increase in catch	-	-	10719
2013	20% reduction on catches (10-year average)	< 3500	-	5887
2014	Same advice as last year	< 3500	-	4392
2015	Same advice as last year	< 3500	-	10368
2016	Precautionary approach (same catch value as advised for 2013)	< 3500	-	6941
2017	Precautionary approach (same catch value as advised for 2013)	< 3500	-	5672
2018	Precautionary approach	≤ 2800	-	3590
2019	Precautionary approach	≤ 2800	-	
2020	Precautionary approach	≤ 2800		
2021	Precautionary approach	≤ 2800		

## History of the catch and landings

**Table 6** Sprat in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a–c and 7.f–k. Catch distribution by fleet in 2018 as estimated by ICES.

Catch (2018)	Landings	Discards
3590 tonnes	Mid-water trawl 100%	Negligible
	3590 tonnes	

**Table 7** Sprat in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a–c and 7.f–k. History of official landings for each country participating in the fishery. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	Denmark	Faroe Islands	France	Ireland	Isle of Man	Netherlands	Norway	Spain	UK – England & Wales	UK – Scotland	Total
1985	0	0	0	3964	0	273	557	0	20	2946	7760
1986	538	0	0	4532	1	0	0	0	10	520	5601
1987	269	0	1	2230	0	0	0	0	0	582	3082
1988	364	0	0	853	0	1	0	0	4	3870	5092
1989	0	0	0	1163	0	0	0	0	1	1146	2310
1990	0	0	0	1325	0	0	0	0	0	813	2138
1991	0	0	0	205	0	0	0	0	4	1526	1735
1992	28	0	0	508	0	0	0	0	0	1555	2091
1993	22	0	0	2353	0	0	0	0	0	2230	4605
1994	0	0	0	232	0	0	0	0	2	1491	1725
1995	491	0	0	799	0	0	0	0	30	4124	5444
1996	0	0	0	4214	0	0	0	0	0	2350	6564
1997	0	0	0	2085	0	0	0	0	8	5313	7406
1998	40	0	0	1578	0	0	0	0	54	3467	5139
1999	0	0	0	5826	0	0	0	0	456	8161	14 443
2000	0	0	0	6032	0	0	0	0	371	4238	10 641
2001	0	0	0	0455	0	0	0	0	367	1297	2119
2002	0	0	0	1729	0	0	0	0	306	2657	4692
2003	887	0	0	4948	0	0	0	0	592	2593	9020
2004	0	0	0	4096	0	0	0	0	134	1416	5646
2005	0	252	0	5928	0	0	0	0	604	0	6784
2006	0	0	0	1523	0	0	0	0	563	0	2086
2007	0	0	0	3745	0	0	0	1	2	14	3762
2008	0	0	0	2353	0	0	0	0	2	0	2355
2009	0	0	0	3773	0	0	0	0	1	70	3844
2010	0	0	0	3200	0	0	0	0	7	537	3744
2011	0	0	0	3770	0	0	0	0	261	507	4538
2012	6	0	2	9029	0	0	0	0	2	1688	10719
2013	0	0	0	4916	0	0	0	0	2	968	5887
2014	0	0	0	2852	0	0	0	0	1	1540	4392
2015	0	0	0	9328	0	0	0	0	0	1060	10389
2016	0	0	0	4763	0	0	0	0	1	2177	6941
2017*	0	0	0	4318	0	0	0	0	0	1354	5672
2018*	10	0	0	3580	0	0	0	0	0	0	3590

\*Preliminary.

## Summary of the assessment

There is no assessment for sprat in this area.

## Sources and references

- ICES. 2012. ICES Implementation of Advice for Data-limited Stocks in 2012 in its 2012 Advice. ICES CM 2012/ACOM:68. 42 pp.
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- ICES. 2018. Advice basis. *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2018. ICES Advice 2018, Book 1, Section 1.2. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.4503>.
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