Sandy ray (*Leucoraja circularis*) in subareas 6–7 (West of Scotland, southern Celtic Seas, English Channel)

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, landings should be no more than 34 tonnes in each of the years 2021 and 2022. ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catches.

Note: This advice sheet is abbreviated due to the COVID-19 disruption. The previous advice issued for 2019 and 2020 is attached as Annex 1.

Stock development over time

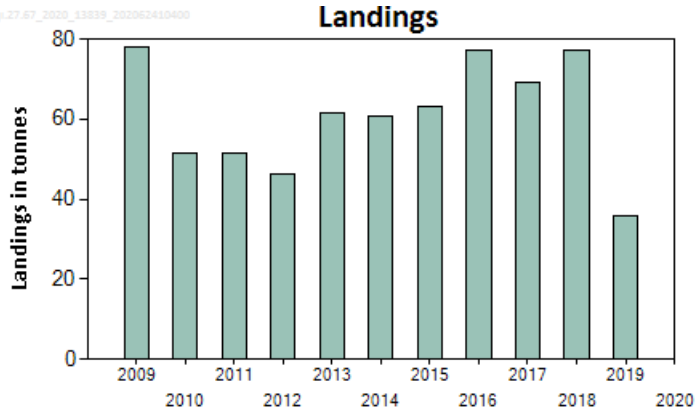

Figure 1 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. ICES estimated landings (in tonnes).

Stock and exploitation status

Table 1 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. State of the stock and the fishery relative to reference points.

		Fishing pressure				Stock size				
		2017	2018	2019			2017	2018	2019	
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
Qualitative evaluation	-	?	?	?	Unknown	-	?	?	?	Unknown

Catch scenarios

The stock size and fishing pressure status relative to reference points is unknown. The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2018 and thus not applied in 2020.

Discarding is known to take place; however, ICES cannot quantify the corresponding dead catch.

Table 2 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. The basis for the catch scenarios.

Advised landings for 2019–2020 (issued in 2018)		34 tonnes
Discard rate		Unknown
Precautionary buffer	Not applied	-
Landings advice *		34 tonnes
% advice change **		0%

* Advised landings for 2019–2020.
** Advice value for 2021 and 2022 relative to the advice value for 2019 and 2020.

Issues relevant for the advice

Separate estimates of landings from the NEAFC Regulatory Area are unavailable.

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 3 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. History of ICES advice and ICES estimates of landings *. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Landings corresp. to advice	ICES landings:
2011	No specific advice		52
2012	No specific advice		46
2013	No TAC, species-specific measures needed, catch to decrease by at least 20%	-	62
2014	No new advice, same as 2013	-	61
2015	Reduce landings by 20%	39	63
2016	No new advice, same as 2015	39	77
2017	Precautionary approach	≤ 42	69
2018	Precautionary approach (same value as advised catches for 2017)	≤ 42	77
2019	Precautionary approach	≤ 34	36
2020	Precautionary approach	≤ 34	
2021	Precautionary approach	≤ 34	
2022	Precautionary approach	≤ 34	

* There is no specific TAC for this stock. Fishing opportunities are managed through an overall TAC by management unit, which includes all species of skates and rays.

Summary of the assessment

There is no assessment for this stock in this area.

Sources and references

ICES. 2020. Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF). ICES Scientific Reports, 2:77. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.7470.

Recommended citation: ICES. 2020. Sandy ray (*Leucoraja circularis*) in subareas 6-7 (West of Scotland, southern Celtic Seas, English Channel). *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2020. ICES Advice 2020, rji.27.67. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.5795.

ICES Advice on fishing opportunities, catch, and effort
Celtic Seas Ecoregion
rji.27.67

31 October 2018
https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.4577

Sandy ray (*Leucoraja circularis*) in subareas 6–7 (West of Scotland, southern Celtic Seas, English Channel)

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, landings should be no more than 34 tonnes in each of the years 2019 and 2020. ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catches.

Stock development over time

Landings have been relatively stable in the period.

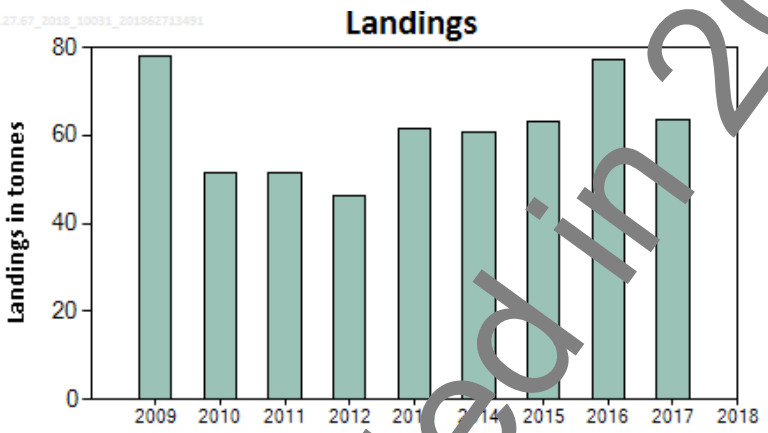

Figure 1 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. ICES estimated landings (tonnes).

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 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. State of the stock and fishery relative to reference points.

	Fishing pressure				Stock size			
		2015	2016	2017		2015	2016	2017
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
Qualitative evaluation	-	?	?	? Unknown	-	?	?	? Unknown

Catch scenarios

The ICES framework for category 5 stocks was applied (ICES, 2012). For stocks without information on abundance or exploitation, ICES considers that a precautionary reduction of catches should be implemented unless there is ancillary information clearly indicating that the current level of exploitation is appropriate for the stock. The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2014, and has therefore been applied again in 2018.

Discarding is known to take place, but ICES cannot quantify the corresponding dead catch.

Table 2 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. The basis for the catch scenarios*.

Advised landings for 2017–2018 (issued in 2016)		42 t
Discard rate		Unknown
Precautionary buffer	Applied	0.8
Landings advice **		34 t
% Advice change ***		−20%

* The figures in the table are rounded. Calculations were done with unrounded inputs and computed values may not match exactly when calculated using the rounded figures in the table.
** [Advised landings for 2017–2018] × [precautionary buffer].
*** Advice value for 2019 relative to the advice value for 2018.

The advised landings for 2019 and 2020 are lower than those advised for 2017 and 2018 because the precautionary buffer has been applied.

Basis of the advice

Table 3 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. The basis of the advice.

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

Quality of the assessment

The quality of ICES estimates of landings data for elasmobranchs has generally improved in recent years, especially following the WKSHARK2 workshop in which ICES revised elasmobranch landings data for the period 2009–2015 (ICES, 2016a). Some of the national landings data from divisions 7.a and 7.f–g attributed to sandy ray are considered to refer to small-eyed ray, owing to confusion over the common name "sandy ray". Therefore, with the revision of elasmobranch landings statistics conducted in 2016, some of the sandy ray landings from these areas have been reallocated to the small-eyed ray stock for the period beginning in 2008–2009 when species-specific data reporting began.

Survey coverage is insufficient to describe the stock status. Sandy ray is only encountered frequently in one survey (SpPGFS-WIBTS-Q4) around the Porcupine Bank. This survey only covers a small part of the stock area, and data are lacking for other regions.

Issues relevant for the advice

Sandy ray is a bycatch species in mixed trawl and gillnet fisheries targeting hake, anglerfish, and megrim on the outer continental shelf, upper slope, and offshore banks. It is also an occasional bycatch in longline fisheries targeting deep-water fish on the continental slope.

Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

Basis of the assessment

Table 4 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	5 (ICES, 2016b).
Assessment type	No assessment (ICES, 2018).
Input data	Landings data 2009–2017.
Discards and bycatch	Discarding is known to take place but has not been quantified.
Indicators	None.
Other information	SpPGFS-WIBTS-Q4.
Working group	Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF)

Information from stakeholders

There is no additional available information.

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 5 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. History of ICES advice and ICES estimates of landings. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Landings corresp. to advice	ICES species-specific landings: minimum estimate based on reported landings
2011	No specific advice		52
2012	No specific advice		46
2013	No TAC, species-specific measures needed, catch to decrease by at least 20%	-	62
2014	No new advice, same as 2013	-	61
2015	Reduce landings by 20%	39	63
2016	No new advice, same as 2015	39	77
2017	Precautionary approach	≤ 42	63
2018	Precautionary approach (same value as advised catches for 2017)	≤ 42	
2019	Precautionary approach	≤ 34	
2020	Precautionary approach	≤ 34	

* There is no specific TAC for this stock. Fishing opportunities are managed through an overall TAC by management unit, which includes all species of skates and rays.

History of the catch and landings

This stock is distributed along the continental slope, shelf edge, and offshore banks. Catches from the NEAFC regulatory area cannot be quantified.

Table 6 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. Catch distribution by fleet in 2017 as estimated by ICES.

Catch (2017)	Landings				Discards
Unknown	beam trawl	otter trawl	gillnets	longlines	Unquantified
	3%	50%	28%	19%	
	63 tonnes				

Table 7 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. History of landings. ICES estimates of landings by country (in tonnes). Data revised in 2016 (ICES, 2016a).

Year	Belgium	Spain	UK	Ireland	France	Total landings
2009		30	2		46	78
2010		16	0	0	35	51
2011	0	22	0	4	25	52
2012	0	8	3	0	35	46
2013	0	10	25		26	62
2014	0	5	22		33	61
2015	0	3	25		34	63
2016	0	5	35		37	77
2017	2	11	17		34	63

Summary of the assessment

There is no assessment for this stock 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.

ICES. 2016a. Report of the Workshop to compile and refine catch and landings of elasmobranchs (WKSHARK2), 19–22 January 2016, Lisbon, Portugal. ICES CM 2016/ACOM:40. 69 pp.

ICES. 2016b. Advice basis. *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee 2016. ICES Advice 2016, Book 1, Section 1.2.

ICES. 2018. Report of the Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF), 19–28 June 2018, Lisbon, Portugal. ICES CM 2018/ACOM:16. 1306 pp.