

Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*) in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a (Bay of Biscay and Atlantic Iberian waters)

ICES stock advice

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, landings in each of the years 2022 and 2023 should be no more than 155 tonnes. ICES cannot quantify the corresponding total catches.

Stock development over time

ICES cannot assess the stock and exploitation status relative to MSY and precautionary approach (PA) reference points because information to define reference points is not available.

Landings

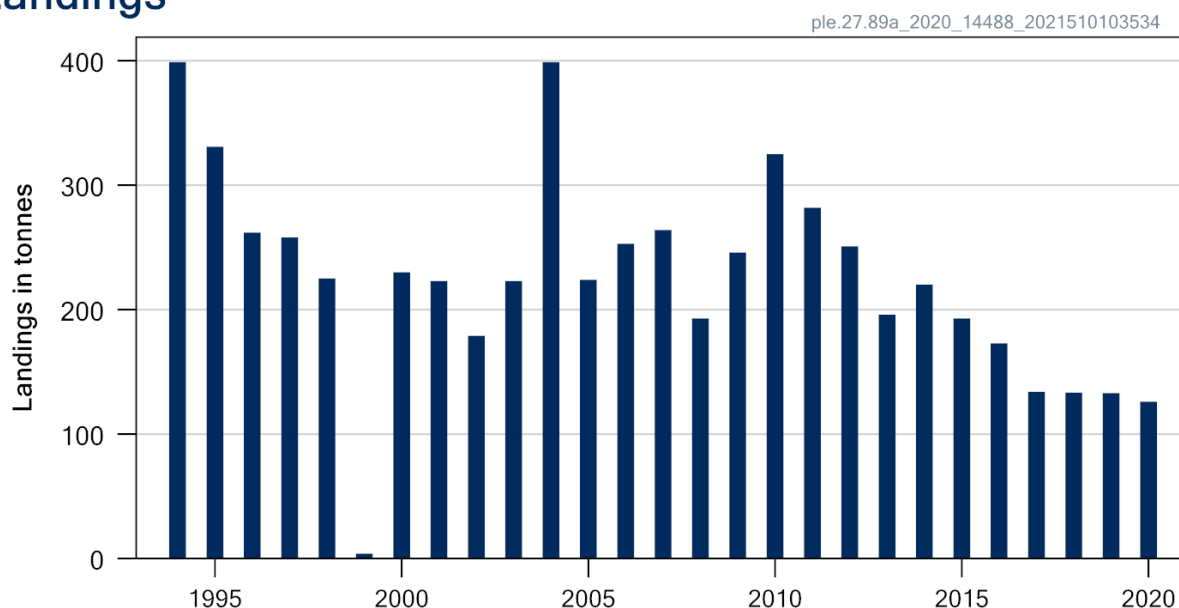


Figure 1 Plaice in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a. Official landings. Landings for Subarea 8 for 1999 are incomplete.

Catch scenarios

The ICES framework for category 5 stocks (ICES, 2012) was applied. 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 stock status relative to reference points remains unknown. The precautionary buffer was applied in 2019 (for the 2020 and 2021 advice) and is, therefore, not applied this year.

Discarding is likely to be greater than 5% of the catch but the information is uncertain, so only landings advice is provided.

Table 1 Plaice in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a. The basis for the catch scenarios*.

Recent advised landings	155 tonnes	
Discard rate	Unknown	
Precautionary buffer	Not applied	-
Landings advice **	155 tonnes	
% advice change ***	0%	

* 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 each of the years 2022 and 2023 = advised landings for each of the years 2021 and 2020.

*** Advice for each of the years 2022 and 2023 relative to the advice value for each of the years 2021 and 2020.

Basis of the advice

Table 2 Plaice in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Precautionary approach
Management plan	The EU Multiannual Plan for the Western Waters (MAP; EU, 2019) takes bycatch of this species into account.

Quality of the assessment

The COVID-19 pandemic has not affected the quality of data on which the advice is based.

The stock definition of plaice in this area is not clear. The bulk of the fishery takes place on the northern boundary of the stock area.

Issues relevant for the advice

Discard data are only available for the last two years for some fleets. The available discard rates are variable and highly uncertain, so ICES provides advice for landings.

Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

Basis of the assessment

Table 3 Plaice in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a. Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	5 (ICES, 2021a).
Assessment type	No assessment (ICES, 2021b).
Input data	Official landings prior to 2014 and ICES estimated landings from 2014.
Discards and bycatch	Limited discard information, but discards are considered to be > 5% of the catch.
Indicators	None.
Other information	None.
Working group	Working Group for the Bay of Biscay and the Iberian Waters Ecoregion (WGBIE).

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 4 Plaice in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a. ICES advice and official landings. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice ***	TAC *	Official landings #	ICES landings
2000		-	700	230	-
2001		-	560	223	-
2002		-	560	179	-
2003		-	448	223	-
2004		-	448	399	-
2005		-	448	224	-
2006		-	448	256	-
2007		-	448	263	-
2008		-	448	193	-
2009		-	448	244	-
2010		-	403	325	-
2011		-	395	283	-
2012	No increase in catch	-	395	252	-
2013	20% reduction in catches	-	395	197	-
2014	Same catch value advised for 2013	-	395	222	217
2015	Same catch value advised for 2013	-	395	194	193

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice ***	TAC *	Official landings #	ICES landings
2016	Precautionary approach	≤ 194	395	175	174
2017	Precautionary approach	≤ 194	395	134	134
2018	Precautionary approach	≤ 194	395	133	133
2019	Precautionary approach	≤ 194	395	133	133
2020	Precautionary approach	≤ 155	355	126 **	126 **
2021	Precautionary approach	≤ 155	155		
2022	Precautionary approach	≤ 155			
2023	Precautionary approach	≤ 155			

* For subareas 8, 9, and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1.

** Preliminary.

*** Advice is for wanted catch/landings.

In 2019, official landings from 2006 onwards have been revised (ICES, 2019).

History of the catch and landings

Table 5 Plaice in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a. Catch distribution by fleet in 2020 as estimated by ICES.

Catch (2020)	Landings			Discards
Unknown	29% trawl	31% nets	40% other	Unknown
	126 tonnes			

Table 6 Plaice in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a. History of official landings. All weights are in tonnes. The landings data for 1999 are incomplete.

Year	Belgium	France	Portugal	Spain	Total
1994		365	33	1	399
1995		319		12	331
1996		248		14	262
1997		255		3	258
1998		219		6	225
1999	1			3	4
2000	15	193		22	230
2001		201		22	223
2002	1	167		11	179
2003	1	217	1	4	223
2004		229	163	7	399
2005	4	186	1	33	224
2006	2	248	1	5	256
2007	5	214	41	4	263
2008	2	98	89	4	193
2009	2	133	101	8	244
2010	2	200	112	12	325
2011	2	208	65	9	283
2012	3	183	63	4	252
2013	0	147	45	5	197
2014	1	164	51	6	222
2015	2	142	45	5	194
2016	1	121	49	4	175
2017	1	98	33	2	134
2018	0	90	39	3	133
2019	0	94	36	3	133
2020	0	76	46	4	126

Summary of the assessment

There is no assessment for plaice in this area.

Sources and references

EU. 2019. Regulation (EU) 2019/472 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2019 establishing a multiannual plan for stocks fished in the Western Waters and adjacent waters, and for fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/1139 and (EU) 2018/973, and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007 and (EC) No 1300/2008. Official Journal of the European Union, L 83: 1–17. <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/472/oj>.

ICES. 2012. ICES Implementation of Advice for Data-limited Stocks in 2012 in its 2012 Advice. ICES CM 2012/ACOM:68. 42 pp. <http://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.5322>

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ICES. 2021a. Advice on fishing opportunities. In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, section 1.1.1. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.7720>.

ICES. 2021b. Working Group for the Bay of Biscay and the Iberian Waters Ecoregion (WGBIE). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:48. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8212>.

[Download the stock assessment data and figures.](#)

Recommended citation: ICES. 2021. Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*) in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a (Bay of Biscay and Atlantic Iberian waters). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, ple.27.89a, <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.7825>.