ICES Advice on fishing opportunities, catch, and effort
Celtic Seas, Greater North Sea, and Oceanic Northeast Atlantic ecoregions
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ICES | International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
CIEM | Conseil International pour l'Exploration de la Mer

Blackmouth dogfish (*Galeus melastomus*) in subareas 6 and 7 (West of Scotland, southern Celtic Seas, and English Channel)

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, catches in each of the years 2022 and 2023 should be decreased by no less than 36% compared to the average catches in 2018–2020. ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catches or landings.

Stock development over time

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.
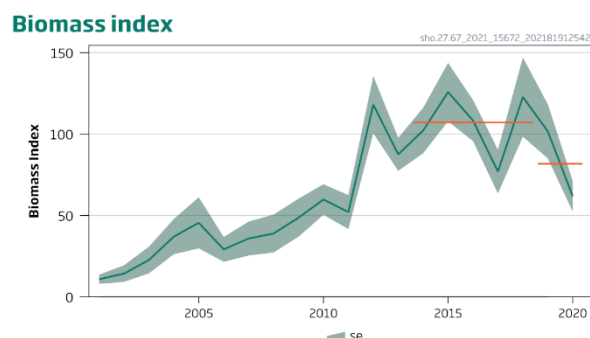

Figure 1   Blackmouth dogfish in subareas 6 and 7. Summary of the stock assessment. Biomass indicator from the Spanish SP-PORC-WIBTS-Q3 survey (G5768 [kg hr^{-1}]) with standard error. The horizontal lines show the mean stock indicators for 2019–2020 and 2014–2018.

Catch scenarios

The ICES framework for category 3 stocks was applied (ICES, 2012). A biomass index from the Spanish Porcupine Bank Survey (SPGFS-WIBTS-Q3) was used as an indicator of stock development. The advice is based on the ratio of the mean of the two last index values (index A) and the mean of the five preceding values (index B). The index is estimated to have decreased by more than 20% and thus the uncertainty cap was applied. The stock size relative to candidate reference points is unknown. The precautionary buffer has not been recently applied and has therefore been considered this year. The stock status relative to candidate reference points is unknown and therefore the precautionary buffer was applied in the advice.

Both catch and landings are unknown and discard levels are highly variable. Discard survival is also unknown. Because landings and catches are both unquantified, ICES cannot provide advice on fishing opportunities but provides an indication of the relative change in catch implied.

Table 1 Blackmouth dogfish in subareas 6 and 7. The basis for the catch scenarios.

Index A (2019–2020)		82
Index B (2014–2018)		107
Index ratio(A/B)		0.76
Uncertainty cap	Applied	0.80
Average catch (2018–2020)		Unknown
Discard rate		Unknown
Precautionary buffer	Applied	0.80
Catch advice *		NA
% Advice change **		−36%

* ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catches or landings.

** [1- (uncertainty cap × precautionary buffer) × 100]

Basis of the advice

Table 2 Blackmouth dogfish in subareas 6 and 7. The basis of the advice.

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

Quality of the assessment

Landings and discards data are incomplete and uncertain. Only two countries have declared discards, and these are considered to be underestimates.

Discard survival is unknown and may occur in some métiers.

Stock trends were evaluated using the Spanish SP-PORC-WIBTS-Q3 survey on the Porcupine Bank. Whilst this survey only covers a small area of the stock range, the survey area is an important fishing ground where the species is abundant.

Issues relevant for the advice

This stock is classified as Category 2 in the NEAFC categorization of deep-sea species/stocks, which implies that NEAFC requires measures stipulating that directed fisheries are not authorized and that bycatches should be minimized.

Scyliorhinids are considered to be productive species in comparison to other demersal elasmobranchs.

Annual international landings reported as blackmouth dogfish are of a similar magnitude as that which may be observed in a single survey haul, indicating that reported species-specific landings are not reflective of stock abundance and most of the commercial catch would be discarded.

Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

Basis of the assessment

Table 3 Blackmouth dogfish in subareas 6 and 7. Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	3 (ICES, 2021a)
Assessment type	Survey trends-based assessment (ICES, 2021b)
Input data	Survey: SP-PORC-WIBTS-Q3 (G5768)
Discards and bycatch	Unknown
Indicators	None
Other information	None
Working group	Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF)

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 4   Blackmouth dogfish in subareas 6 and 7. History of ICES advice, the agreed TAC and estimates of landings. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Landings corresp. to advice	Agreed TAC	ICES landings
2002	No advice	-	No TAC	
2003	No advice	-	No TAC	
2004	No advice	-	No TAC	
2005	No advice	-	No TAC *	Not available
2006	No advice	-	No TAC *	Not available
2007	No advice	-	No TAC *	Not available
2008	No advice	-	No TAC *	Not available
2009	No advice	-	No TAC *	Not available
2010	No advice	-	No TAC **	Not available
2011	No advice	-	No TAC **	Not available
2012	No advice	-	Zero TAC ^	Not available
2013	No advice	-	Zero TAC/No TAC ^^	Not available
2014	No advice	-	No TAC	Not available
2015	No advice	-	No TAC	Not available
2016	Precautionary approach	Increase by no more than 20% compared to the average catches in 2012–2014	No TAC	Not available
2017	Biennial advice	Same catch value as advised for 2016	No TAC	Not available
2018	Precautionary approach	Catches could be increased by no more than 20% compared to the average catches in 2014–2016	No TAC	Not available
2019	Precautionary approach (Same advice as for 2018)	Catches could be increased by no more than 20% compared to the average catches in 2014–2016	No TAC	Not available
2020	No catch advice requested	-	No TAC	Not available
2021	No catch advice requested	-	No TAC	
2022	Precautionary approach	Catches should be decreased by no less than 36% compared to the average catches in 2018–2020		
2023	Precautionary approach	Catches should be decreased by no less than 36% compared to the average catches in 2018–2020		

* *Galeus melastomus* was included in the TAC for "deep-sea sharks" in the EU and international waters of ICES subareas 6–9.
** *Galeus melastomus* was included in the bycatch TAC for "deep-sea sharks" in the EU and international waters of ICES subareas 6–9.
^ The TAC for "deep-sea sharks" was zero.
^^ *Galeus melastomus* was removed from the EU list of "deep-sea sharks" in an in-year amendment (EU, 2013).

History of the catch and landings

The distribution of this stock extends into the NEAFC Regulatory Area. Estimates of landings are considered uncertain and therefore the proportional split of total catches cannot be determined.

Table 5   Blackmouth dogfish in subareas 6 and 7. Catch distribution by fleet in 2020 as estimated by ICES.

Catch (2020)	Landings	Discards
Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Summary of the assessment

Table 6 Blackmouth dogfish in subareas 6 and 7. Assessment summary. Biomass index from the SP-PORC-WIBTS-Q3 trawl survey (in kg hr^{-1}) (SE: standard error).

Year	Biomass index − SE	Biomass index	Biomass index + SE
2001	8.0	10.8	13.6
2002	9.2	14.3	19.4
2003	14.4	22.7	30.9
2004	26.2	37.0	47.9
2005	29.8	45.5	61.2
2006	21.5	29.2	36.8
2007	25.4	35.9	46.3
2008	27.3	38.9	50.6
2009	36.9	48.6	60.3
2010	50.4	59.8	69.2
2011	41.6	52.1	62.5
2012	100.5	118.1	135.6
2013	77.4	87.5	97.6
2014	88.2	102.2	116.2
2015	107.8	125.8	143.7
2016	95.6	108.3	120.9
2017	63.5	77.0	90.4
2018	98.4	122.7	147.0
2019	85.0	101.7	118.3
2020	52.3	61.8	71.2

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.

EU. 2013. Council regulation (EU) No. 1182/2013 of 19 November 2013 amending Regulations (EC) No. 754/2009, (EU) No. 1262/2012, (EU) No. 39/2013 and (EU) No. 40/2013 as regards certain fishing opportunities. Official Journal of the European Union, L 313: 15–29. http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/1182/oj.

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 on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF). ICES Scientific Reports, 3:59. http://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8199.

Download the stock assessment data and figures.

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