

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

ICES stock advice

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, landings should be no more than 42 tonnes in each of the years 2017 and 2018. ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catches.

Stock development over time

Landings (2009-2015) have ranged from 46-77 tonnes. There are currently no stock size indicators.

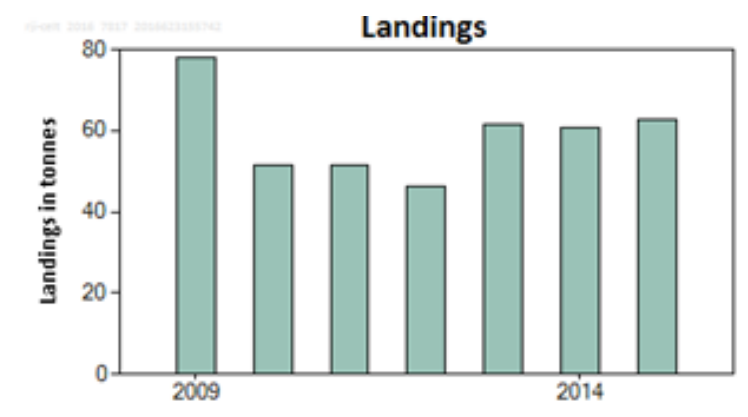


Figure 5.3.17.1 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. ICES estimated landings (in tonnes).

Stock and exploitation status

Table 5.3.17.1 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. State of the stock and fishery relative to reference points.

		Fishing pressure				Stock size			
		2013	2014	2015		2013	2014	2015	
Maximum sustainable yield	F_{MSY}	?	?	?	Undefined	MSY	?	?	?
Precautionary approach	F_{pa}, F_{lim}	?	?	?	Undefined	$B_{trigger}$?	?	?
Management plan	F_{MGT}	-	-	-	Not applicable	B_{pa}, B_{lim}	?	?	?
Qualitative evaluation	-	?	?	?	Unknown	SSB_{MGT}	-	-	-
						-	?	?	?

Catch options

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 applied previously (ICES, 2014) and has not been applied again.

The recent advised landings for 2015 and 2016 were originally derived using landings statistics from 2011-2013. In 2016, a review of the landing statistics of elasmobranchs (ICES 2016a) was conducted. As a result, the basis which was used to provide advice in 2014 for 2015 and 2016 has been adjusted to account for the update in the landing statistics in the period 2011-2013.

For this stock, ICES advises that catches remain at *status quo* in relation to the recent advised landings (adjusted), corresponding to landings of no more than 42 tonnes in each of the years 2017 and 2018.

Discarding is known to take place, but ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catch. In addition, discard survival, which might occur, has not been estimated.

Table 5.3.17.2 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. For stocks in ICES data categories 3–6, one catch option is provided.

Recent advised landings for 2015 and 2016	39 t	
Recent advised landings adjusted (2015–2016)* [39 x 1.08]	42 t	
Discard rate	Unknown	
Precautionary buffer	Not applied	-
Landings advice **	42 t	

* Recent advised landings adjusted for the revision of the landings statistics in 2011-2013

** (Recent advised catch)

Basis of the advice

Table 5.3.17.3 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Precautionary approach.
Management plan	There is no management plan for this stock.

Quality of the assessment

There is no assessment for this stock.

Issues relevant for the advice

The quality of ICES estimates of landings data for elasmobranchs has generally improved in recent years, especially following the WKSHARKS workshop in which ICES revised elasmobranch landings data for the period 2009-2015 (ICES, 2016a,b). Some official landings data from 7.f and 7.g attributed to *Leucoraja circularis* are considered to refer to *Raja microocellata* due to confusion over the common name 'sandy ray' and have therefore been reallocated to that stock.

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.

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. Whilst catch rates in this survey are increasing (ICES 2016b), this survey only covers a small part of the stock distribution area, and data are lacking for other regions.

Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

Basis of the assessment

Table 5.3.17.4 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. The basis of the assessment.

ICES stock data category	5 (ICES, 2016a)
Assessment type	No assessment (ICES, 2016b)
Input data	Landings data 2009–2015
Discards and bycatch	Discarding is known to take place but cannot be quantified.
Indicators	None
Other information	SpPGFS-WIBTS-Q4
Working group	Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF)

Information from stakeholders

No information was provided.

History of advice, catch, and management

Table 5.3.17.5 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. History of ICES advice and ICES estimates of landings**. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Predicted landings corresp. to advice	ICES species-specific landings: minimum estimate based on reported landings*
2011	No specific advice		51.5
2012	No specific advice		46.3
2013	No TAC, species-specific measures needed, catch to decrease by at least 20%	-	61.5
2014	No new advice, same as 2013	-	60.5
2015	Reduce landings by 20%	39	62.6
2016	No new advice, same as 2015	39	
2017	Precautionary approach	≤42	
2018	Precautionary approach (same value as advised catches for 2017)	≤42	

* Data revised in 2016 (ICES, 2016a).

** There is no a 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 catch and landings

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

Table 5.3.17.6 Sandy ray in subareas 6–7. Catch distribution by fleet in 2015 as estimated by ICES.

Data Source: ICES catch data for 2015. Catch distribution by fleet in 2015 as estimated by ICES.					
Catch (2015)	Landings				Discards
Unknown	% beam trawl	% otter trawl	% gillnets	% longlines	Discarding is known to take place but cannot be quantified.
	1%	55%	40%	4%	
	62.6 tonnes				

Table 5.3.17.7 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
2009		29.8	1.6		46.4	77.9
2010		16.0	0.1	0.1	35.3	51.5
2011	0.1	22.2	0.3	4.2	24.8	51.5
2012	0.0	8.4	2.9	0.1	34.8	46.3
2013	0.0	9.9	25.5		26.1	61.5
2014	0.3	4.6	22.2		33.4	60.5
2015	0.4	3.3	25.4		33.5	62.6

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. 2014. Sandy ray (*Leucoraja circularis*) in Subareas VI and VII (Celtic Sea and west of Scotland). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2014. ICES Advice 2014, Book 5, Section 5.3.29.13.
- ICES. 2016a. Report of the Workshop to compile and refine catch and landings of elasmobranchs (WKSHARKS), 19–22 January 2016, Lisbon, Portugal. ICES CM 2016/ACOM:40. 69 pp.
- ICES. 2016b. Report of the Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF), 15–24 June 2016, Lisbon, Portugal. ICES CM 2016/ACOM:20.
- ICES. 2016c. General context of ICES advice. In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2016. ICES Advice 2016, Book 1, Section 1.2.