

7.3.18 Undulate ray (*Raja undulata*) in Division 8.c (Cantabrian Sea)

ICES stock advice

ICES cannot provide catch advice on the status of this stock because of lack of reliable survey and catch data. ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, there should be no targeted fisheries on this stock in each of the years 2017 and 2018. Any possible provision for bycatch to be landed should be part of a management plan, including close monitoring of the stock and the fishery.

Stock development over time

Landings data prior to 2009 do not reflect the stock development as these data are not species specific. From 2009 management regulations have included this stock in the prohibited list.

Stock and exploitation status

Table 7.3.18.1 Undulate ray in Division 8.c. 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_{pa} , B_{lim}	?	?	?
Management plan	F_{MGT}	-	-	-	Not applicable	SSB_{MGT}	-	-	-
Qualitative evaluation	-	?	?	?	Unknown	-	?	?	?

Catch options

The ICES framework for category 6 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.

Table 7.3.18.2 Undulate ray in Division 8.c. For stocks in ICES data categories 3–6, one catch option is provided.

Recent advised landings for 2016			-
Discard rate			Unknown
Precautionary buffer	Not applied		-
Landings advice			-

Basis of the advice

Table 7.3.18.3 Undulate ray in Division 8.c. 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

This species has a patchy and coastal distribution, with traditionally limited data on stock status. Data from existing trawl surveys are limited, owing largely to a poor overlap between surveyed areas and the coastal habitat of this species.

ICES (2014) has previously advised *“that there should be no targeted fisheries on this stock. Any possible provision for bycatch to be landed should be part of a management plan, including close monitoring of the stock and fishery”*. In 2015 and 2016, European regulations were introduced to allow limited exploitation of this stock, through trip limits, which in 2016 were no more than 20 kg live weight per fishing trip, and an overall quota limit (25 tonnes for all of Subarea 8, which includes the stocks of undulate ray in divisions 8.c and 8.a–b). For the current stock, assuming regulations allowing for a limited bycatch are in place, data from these catches should be collated to evaluate the status of the stock. ICES also considers that there should be a management plan for this stock.

Recent observations on commercial trammelnet vessels from the Basque country found that undulate ray was the fourth most abundant skate species (ICES, 2016a). The earlier prohibition on landing this species may have resulted in fishers avoiding areas of local abundance and, therefore, commercial catch and effort data are limited and may not be informative.

Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

Basis of the assessment

Table 7.3.18.4 Undulate ray in Division 8.c. The basis of the assessment.

ICES stock data category	6 (ICES, 2016b).
Assessment type	None (ICES, 2016a).
Input data	None.
Discards and bycatch	Discarding is known to take place but cannot be quantified.
Indicators	None.
Other information	None.
Working group	Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF).

Information from stakeholders

Fishers have reported that undulate ray can be locally common in some areas, which has been confirmed by scientific observations on commercial fishing vessels.

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 7.3.18.5 Undulate ray in Division 8.c. 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		na
2012	No specific advice		na
2013	No specific advice	-	na
2014	No specific advice	-	na
2015	No directed fishery and bycatch should be mitigated	-	na
2016	No directed fishery and bycatch should be mitigated	-	
2017	Precautionary approach	-	
2018	Precautionary approach (same advice as for 2017)	-	

*Fishing opportunities are managed through an overall TAC by management unit, which includes all species of skates and rays. Since 2015–2016, there has been a specified TAC for this species in the management unit.

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

History of catch and landings

The distribution of this stock does not extend into the NEAFC regulatory area.

Table 7.3.18.6 Undulate ray in Division 8.c. Catch distribution by fleet in 2015 as estimated by ICES.

Catch (2015)	Landings	Discards
Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

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. Undulate ray (*Raja undulata*) in Divisions VIIIc (Cantabrian Sea). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2014. ICES Advice 2014, Book 7, Section 7.3.18.7.

ICES. 2016a. Report of the Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF), 15–24 June 2016, Lisbon, Portugal. ICES CM 2016/ACOM:20. 684 pp.

ICES. 2016b. General context of ICES advice. In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2016. ICES Advice 2016, Book 1, Section 1.2.

ICES. 2016c. 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.