





















SUMMARY OF 2015 ICES ADVICE FOR PELAGIC SPECIES

	Date	Status of key stocks in 2015 (more detail in the following pages)	ICES Catch advice	TAC for previous year	SSB Compared with previous yr	Pg
Blue whiting combined stock I-IX, XII & XIV	Sept 2015	Substantial downward revision of the historical SSB and recruitment and a small upward revision in fishing. Fishing mortality (F) has increased from a historical low in 2011 to above FMSY in 2014. SSB increased from 2010 to 2014 and is above MSY Btrigger. Recent recruitments are estimated above average. No new popular advice in September 2015.	776,391 Catches (2016)	839,866 (2015)		4
Barents Sea capelin	Oct 2015	The estimate of the 2014 year class at age 1, during the survey in August–September 2015, was found to be well below the long-term average. No new popular advice in October 2015.	Zero (2016)	6,000 (2015)		5
Capelin Iceland East Greenland Jan Mayen	May 2015	Adult stock size is probably stable and fishing pressure is unknown (2014). No new popular advice in June 2015.	54,000 (2015/16)	580,000 (2014/15)		5
Herring N Sea autumn spawners	June 2015	Adult stock size is large enough, and fishing pressure is low enough, to ensure a sufficient amount of offspring can be produced and ensure optimal use in the long term.	555,086 (2016)	445,000 (2015)		6
Icelandic summer spawners	June 2015	Adult stock size is large enough, but fishing pressure is too high to ensure an optimal use in the long term.	71,000 (2015/16)	83,000 (2014/15)		6
Norwegian spring spawning herring	Sept 2015	Stock is declining. Estimated below precautionary limits in 2014. Since 1998 five large year classes have been produced (1998, 1999, 2002, 2003 and 2004). Year classes 2005 and 2012 are small, 2013 estimated to be larger (close to av 1988–2012). No new pop advice in Sept 2015.	316,876 Catches (2016)	283,013 Catches (2015)		7
Mackerel in the North East Atlantic	Sept 2015	Adult stock size is large enough and the fishing pressure is low enough to ensure an optimal use in the long term. No new popular advice in September 2015.	667,385 (2016)	831,000 – 906,000 (2015) not followed		8

	Date	Status of key stocks in 2015 (more detail in the following pages)	ICES Catch advice	TAC for previous year	SSB Compared with previous yr	Pg
Norway pout in the North Sea	Oct 2015	Adult stock size is large enough to ensure an optimal use in the long term. Fishing pressure is below average. No new popular advice in October 2015.	390,000 (2016)	326,000 (2015)		9
Sandeel in the Dogger Bank (SA1)	Feb 2015	There is a risk that adult stock size is too small to produce a sufficient amount of offspring to maintain the stock. Fishing pressure is thought to be very low.	133,000 (2015)	57,000 (2014)		10
Sandeel in central and south North Sea (SA2)	Feb 2015	The number of young fish is low and there is a risk that the adult stock size is too small to produce a sufficient amount of offspring to maintain the stock. Fishing pressure is thought to be very low.	29,000 (2015)	Monitoring TAC <5,000t (2014)		10
Sandeel in north/central North Sea	Feb 2015	Adult stock is large enough to ensure an optimal use in the long term. However fishing pressure is unknown.	370,000 (2015)	270,000 (2014)		10
Sandeel in waters West of Scotland	Feb 2015	No information on adult stock size and fishing pressure is available.	Monitoring TAC of <5,000t (2015)	Monitoring TAC of <5,000t (2014)		11
Sandeel in Viking and Bergen Banks	Feb 2015	The stock size is unknown, but it is probably low. Fishing pressure is unknown, but it is probably very low.	Zero (2015)	Zero (2014)		11
Sandeel in the Kattegat	Feb 2015	The stock size and the fishing pressure are unknown, but they are thought to be very low.	219 (2015)	219 (2014)		11
Sandeel in Shetland	Feb 2015	The stock size is unknown. Fishing pressure is unknown, but it is probably very low and stable.	Zero (2015)	Zero (2014)		11
Sprat in the Baltic	May 2014	Adult stock size is large enough; however, fishing pressure is too high to ensure optimal use in the long term.	205,000 2015-16	240,000 2014-15		12
Sprat in the North Sea	June 2015	Adult stock size is large enough and fishing pressure is low enough to ensure a sufficient amount of offspring can be produced. Fishing year from July to June.	506,000 W catch 2015-16	227,000 W catch 2014-15		12
Sprat in the Skaggearak/ Kattegat	June 2015	Adult stock size is unknown, but it is probably increasing. Fishing pressure is unknown.	8,144 W catch 2015-16	6,787 W catch 2015-16		13

	Date	Status of key stocks in 2015 (more detail in the following pages)	ICES Catch advice	TAC for previous year	SSB Compared with previous yr	Pg
Sprat in the Celtic Sea and waters West of Scotland	June 2015	Adult stock size and fishing pressure are unknown.	3,500 2016-17	3,500 2014-15		13
Sprat in the English Channel	June 2015	Adult stock size is unknown, but it is probably increasing. Fishing pressure is unknown.	4,598	3,832		13
Text above generally taken from ICES popular advice: http://www.ices.dk/publications/our-publications/Pages/Popular-advice.aspx						

KEY

Fishing mortality – Removals from a stock by fishing.

Spawning Stock Biomass - total weight of all sexually mature fish in the stock.

MSY – Maximum Sustainable Yield.

FMSY – fishing at levels that catch the maximum proportion of a fish stock that can safely be removed on a continuous basis.

BMSY – spawning stock biomass that results from fishing at FMSY for a long time.

PA – Precautionary Approach

FPA – precautionary reference point for fishing mortality.

BPA – precautionary reference point for spawning stock biomass.

Mg'ment – Management Plan – agreed by all parties to maintain/rebuild stocks.

Btrigger – Value of spawning stock biomass that triggers a specific management action.


Cpue – Catch per unit effort.

Lpue – Landing per unit effort.



W catch is 'Wanted catch' - (see sprat) is used to describe fish that would be landed in the absence of the EU landing obligation. The 'unwanted catch' refers to the component that was previously discarded.

In the following tables a very simple statement has been included on the status of the spawning stock biomass in comparison with the previous year. This is an estimate based on ICES stock status information and is not necessarily definitive.



BLUE WHITING


Stock	TAC for 2015 Tonnes	Status of stock in September 2015	*Fishing mortality - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2016	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Inside safe biological limits					
<p>Blue whiting combined stock Sub-areas I-IX, XII and XIV</p> <p>September 2015 advice</p>	<p>839,866 tonnes</p>	<p>This year's assessment gave a substantial downward revision of the historical SSB and recruitment and a small upward revision re fishing. Fishing mortality (F) has increased from a historical low in 2011 to above FMSY in 2014. Spawning-stock biomass (SSB) increased from 2010 to 2014 and is above MSY Btrigger. Recent recruitments are estimated above average, but with an uncertainty. Additional survey information indicates recruitment above average in 2014 and 2015 and this is taken into account in the short-term forecast. Although there is scientific evidence to support the hypothesis of two components, there is insufficient information for ICES to conduct separate assessments. Blue whiting in ICES I-IX, XII, and XIV is therefore considered as a single stock for assessment.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Above 2. Increased risk 3. Not applicable 	<p>ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2016 should be no more than 776,391 tonnes. All catches are assumed to be landed.</p> <p>A management plan was agreed in 2008. ICES evaluated a NEAFC request concerning an alternative management plan in May 2013 and in October 2013. No agreement on the application of this new plan has been obtained.</p>	<p>IMPROVING</p>  <p>Spawning stock biomass</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Above trigger 2. Full reproductive capacity 3. Not applicable

CAPELIN


Stock	TAC for 2015 Tonnes	Status of stock	*Fishing mortality - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2016	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Reference points not fully defined					
Advice in October 2015					
Barents Sea capelin Subareas I and II, excluding Division IIa west of 5°W	6,000	The maturing component of the stock in autumn 2015 in the acoustic survey was estimated to be 446 thousand tonnes. The estimate of the 2014 year class at age 1, during the survey in August–September 2015, was found to be well below the long-term average.	1. Undefined 2. Undefined	ICES advises that when the management plan of the Joint Norwegian–Russian Fisheries Commission (JNRFC) is applied, there should be zero catch in 2016. In 2010, the JNRFC decided that the management plan should remain unchanged for five years.	WORSE  Spawning stock biomass 1. Undefined 2. Below 3. Undefined
Advice in May 2015					
Capelin in the Iceland East Greenland Jan Mayen area Subareas V and XIV and Division IIa west of 5°W	2014/15 580,000 for whole season	Maturing component of stock in winter 2014/15 estimated to be 971,000t. Estimated that 460,000t spawned in March 2015 (average of the last ten years). Autumn 2014 estimate of immature 1- and 2-yr-old capelin close to the long-term average. Recruitment in the last 11 years has been around 50% of the previous 25 years.	1. Undefined 2. Undefined	ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, the initial quota in 2015/2016 should be no more than 53,600 tonnes. The initial quota should be revised based on in-season acoustic survey information in autumn 2015. Final TAC should be set on the basis of survey information in autumn 2015 and winter 2015/2016.	STABLE  Spawning stock biomass 1. Undefined 2. Undefined

HERRING


Stock	TAC for 2015 Tonnes	Status of stock in June 2015	*Fishing mortality - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2016	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Inside safe biological limits					
Herring in IV and VIId North Sea, Eastern English channel - autumn spawners	445,000	Recruitment was below average between 2003 and 2013. Recruitment in 2014 is estimated to be strong and the 2015 recruitment is estimated to be low. Since 1996 the stock has fluctuated above Bpa and is now well above precautionary reference points. Fishing mortality has been below FMSY since 1996.	1. Appropriate 2. Harvested sustainably 3. Below limit	A management plan was agreed by EU and Norway in 2008. ICES advises that when the EU–Norway management plan is applied, catches in 2016 should be no more than 555,086t, including 518,242 t for the A-fleet. All catches are assumed to be landed. Activities that have a negative impact on the spawning habitat of herring should not occur.	<p>IMPROVED</p>  <p>Spawning stock biomass</p> <p>1. Undefined 2. Full reproductive capacity 3. Above trigger</p>
Herring Icelandic summer spawners Va	83,000 2014/15	Strong year classes 1999–2002, SSB reached its highest estimated level in the late 2000s then declined rapidly over two years due to <i>Ichthyophonus</i> infection. Since then infection mortality estimated to be negligible. SSB and biomass of age 3+ has declined slightly due to low 2011 year class entering the spawning stock. Fishing mortality (F) has been increasing and is currently just above FMSY.	1. Above 2. Not defined 3. Not applicable	There is no formal management plan for this stock. ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2015/2016 should be no more than 71,000t.	<p>SAME</p>  <p>Spawning stock biomass</p> <p>1. Above trigger 2. Full reproductive capacity 3. Not applicable</p>

Stock	TAC for 2015 Tonnes	Status of stock in September 2015	*Fishing mortality - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2016	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Stocks at risk of being outside safe biological limits and below biomass action point $B_{MSY-trigger}$					
<p>Norwegian spring spawners (Atlanto-Scandian). ICES sub area I, divisions IIa, Va, Vb.</p> <p>September 2015</p>	<p>283,013 (no agreed TAC – sum of autonomous quotas)</p>	<p>The stock is declining and estimated below precautionary limits in 2014. Since 1998 five large year classes have been produced (1998, 1999, 2002, 2003, and 2004). However the available information indicates year classes between 2005 and 2012 are small. The 2013 year class is estimated to be larger than the 2005–2012 year classes but close to average (1988–2012); however, the estimate is still uncertain. Fishing mortality in 2014 was below F_{pa} and F_{MSY} and the management plan target F.</p> <p>For the fishing seasons 2013, 2014 and 2015 a lack of agreement between the countries on their TAC share has led to autonomous quotas from the individual parties.</p>	<p>1. Appropriate</p> <p>2. Harvested sustainably</p> <p>3. Appropriate</p>	<p>ICES advises that when the EU, Faroe Islands, Iceland, Norway, and Russia management plan is applied, catches in 2016 should be no more than 316,876 tonnes.</p>	<p>WORSE</p> <p></p> <p>Spawning stock biomass</p> <p>1. Below trigger</p> <p>2. At increased risk</p> <p>3. Below trigger</p>

MACKEREL

Stock	TAC for 2015 Tonnes	Status of stock in September 2015	*Fishing mortality. Key - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2016	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Inside safe biological limits					
<p>Mackerel in the North East Atlantic (combines Southern, Western and North Sea spawning components).</p> <p>September 2015</p>	<p>1,235,000 Sum of unilateral quotas</p> <p>Mgment Plan advice was for a TAC of between 831,000 t and 906,000 t in 2015</p>	<p>Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) is estimated to have increased since the early 2000s and has been above MSY-Btrigger since 2009. The fishing mortality (F) has been declining since the mid-2000s, but remains above Fpa (or Fmsy). Recruitment shows an increasing trend since the late 1990s with two large year classes (2002 and 2006). The 2011 year class is estimated to be well above average (third in magnitude since 1990), but recruitment for 2013 appears to be the lowest since 2003. Over the last seven years the pelagic industry has encountered large shoals of mackerel over the entire distribution area which has expanded both south and north. The industry believes the stock size has greatly increased, is not confined to one area or one fleet and there are signs of good recruitment.</p>	<p>1. Above 2. Increased risk 3. Not applicable</p>	<p>There is currently no agreed long-term management plan for this stock.</p> <p>ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2016 should be no more than 667,385 tonnes. ICES further advises that the existing measures to protect the North Sea spawning component should remain in place.</p>	<p>Spawning stock biomass</p> <p>SAME</p>  <p>1. Above trigger 2. Full reproductive capacity 3. Not applicable</p>

NORWAY POUT

Stock	TAC for 2015 Tonnes	Status of stock in October 2015	*Fishing mortality - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2016	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Inside safe biological limits					
<p>Norway pout in the North Sea and Skagerrak & Kattegat Subarea IV and Division IIIa</p> <p>October 2015 advice</p>	326,000	<p>The stock size is highly variable from year to year, due to recruitment variability and a short life span. Stock size has increased and is above MSY Bescapement in 2015. Fishing mortality has been lower than the natural mortality for this stock and has decreased in recent years to below the long-term average F (0.6). Recruitment in 2014 is the highest estimate on record, while recruitment in 2015 is around average.</p> <p>The directed fishery for Norway pout was closed in 2005, the first half of 2006, and in 2007, as well as in the first half of 2011 and 2012. Historically, the fisheries have resulted in bycatches of other species, particularly whiting, blue whiting, haddock, saithe, and herring. Bycatches of these species have been low in the recent decade.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appropriated 2. Undefined 3. Not applicable 	<p>Due to the short-lived nature of this species a preliminary TAC is set every year, which is updated on the basis of advice in the first half of the year. TAC was not taken in 2008, 2009 or 2010 probably due to high fishing (fuel) costs in these years, and bycatch regulations in 2009 and 2010 (mainly in relation to whiting bycatch). There was a less than 30% uptake of ICES advised TAC for 2012 (late opening of the fishery at end of quarter 3 in 2012). In 2013 the quota uptake was also below 30%. ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches during 1 November 2015 – 31 October 2016 should be no more than 390,000 tonnes.</p>	<p>IMPROVING</p> <p></p> <p>Spawning stock biomass</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Above escapement 2. Full reproductive capacity 3. Not applicable

SANDEEL

Stock	TAC for 2014 Tonnes	Status of stock in February 2015	*Fishing mortality - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2015 Stock is generally assessed in October and updated in Feb/Mar	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Sandeel in North Sea IV and IIIa – divided into sub areas SA 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.					
Reference points not fully defined					
SA 1 Dogger Bank	57,000	SA 1 - Stock was below the lower biomass limit in 2014 and estimated below the precautionary biomass level in 2015. Recruitment in 2014 was average.	SA 1 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined	SA 1 – ICES advises when MSY approach is applied, catches in 2015 should be no more than 133,000t to maintain SSB in 2016 above MSY Bescapement.	SAME 1. Below escapement trigger 2. Increased risk 3. Undefined
SA 2 Central and South North Sea	5,000 Monitoring purposes	SA 2 – SSB has increased since 2014, but it remains below the precautionary biomass level. Recruitment in 2014 is estimated to be around the average.	SA 2 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined	SA 2 - ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2015 should be no more than 29,000t to maintain SSB in 2016 above MSY Bescapement.	SAME 1. Below escapement trigger 2. Increased risk 3. Undefined
SA 3 Central Eastern North Sea	154,000	SA 3 – SSB was below the lower biomass limit in 2013 and 2014, but following the high recruitment in 2013 and 2014, SSB is estimated to be above precautionary biomass level Bpa in 2015.	SA 3 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined	SA 3 – ICES advises when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2015 should be no more than 370,000t to maintain 2016 SSB above MSY Bescapement. Advised catch is mainly driven by a large recruitment in 2014 as estimated by the dredge survey, combined with a ceiling on F (Fcap) to ensure precautionarity.	IMPROVEMENT 1. Above escapement level 2. Low risk 3. Undefined

Stock	TAC for 2014 Tonnes	Status of stock in February 2015	*Fishing mortality - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2015 Stock is generally assessed in October and updated in Feb/Mar	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Sandeel in North Sea IV and IIIa –divided into sub areas SA 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.					
Reference points not fully defined					
SA 4 North and Central North Sea	<5,000	SA 4 – Survey data indicates 2014 year class is the strongest since 2009. Despite indications of low recruitment during 2010 to 2013, the catches taken in the southern part of SA 4 in 2013 and 2014 correspond to a high cpue.	SA 4 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined	SA 4 – ICES advises a monitoring TAC in 2015, with catches not exceeding 5,000t and with an associated sampling protocol in the fishery.	SAME 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined Stable
SA 5 Viking and Bergen Bank in North Sea	Zero	SA 5 - No landings have occurred since 2004 (except for 4 t landed in 2007). The available information is inadequate to evaluate stock status or trends. State of the stock is therefore unknown.	SA 5 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined	SA 5 - ICES advises when precautionary approach is applied, catches should not increase unless evidence it will be sustainable. This corresponds to zero catch in 2015.	SAME 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined
SA 6 Skagerrak and Kattegat Division IIIA	<219	SA 6 - Available information is inadequate to evaluate stock status or trends. The state of the stock is therefore unknown.	SA 6 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined	SA 6 - ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, catches in 2015 should be no more than 219 tonnes.	SAME 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined
Sandeel Shetland area (SA 7)	Zero catch	SA 7 - The available information is inadequate to evaluate stock status or trends. The state of the stock is therefore unknown. Figure	SA 7 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined	SA 7 - ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, no increase in the fisheries should take place unless there is evidence that this will be sustainable. This corresponds to zero catch in 2015.	SAME 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Undefined

SPRAT

Stock	TAC for 2015 Tonnes	Status of stock in May and June 2015	*Fishing mortality - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2016	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Inside safe biological limits					
Sprat in the Baltic Subdivisions 22 – 32	240,000	Spawning-stock biomass (SSB) has been declining from a historical high in the late 1990s, but remains above the MSY Btrigger. The fishing mortality has fluctuated between FMSY and Flim in recent years, and in 2014 was above Flim. The five year classes of 2009–2013 were at or below the average, but the 2014 year class is estimated to be very strong.	1. Above 2. Harvested unsustainably 3. Not applicable	ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2016 should be no more than 205,000 tonnes. ICES advises the consideration of a spatial management plan for the clupeid stocks in Subdivisions 25–26.	SAME 1. Above trigger 2. Full reproductive capacity 3. Not applicable
Sprat in the North Sea Subarea IV	227,000 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015	The spawning-stock biomass (SSB) has been at or above MSY Bescapement since 2013. Fishing mortality (F) has shown an overall decreasing trend since 2004. Recruitment (R) in 2014 is estimated as the highest in the time-series.	1. Undefined 2. Not applicable 3. Not applicable	ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, wanted catches from July 2015 to June 2016 should be no more than 506,000t. ICES cannot quantify the corresponding total catches.	IMPROVED 1. Above trigger 2. Full reproductive capacity 3. Not applicable

Stock	TAC for 2015 Tonnes	Status of stock in June 2015	*Fishing mortality - 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment Plan	TAC advice for 2016	*SSB Status 1. MSY 2. PA 3. Mg'ment plan
Reference points not fully defined					
Sprat in Skagerrak & Kattegat Division IIIa	6,787 July 2014 to June 2015	The survey biomass index is higher in 2015 than in the five previous years; the large magnitude of the increase is mainly driven by the very high third quarter International Bottom Trawl Survey (IBTS) index of the 2013 year class. The biomass index reflects ages 1 and 2 and the available information indicates an increase in these ages in 2015. The exploitation status of the stock is unknown.	1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Not applicable	ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, wanted catches ¹ from July 2015 through June 2016 should be no more than 8,144 tonnes. ICES cannot quantify the corresponding total catches.	SAME 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Not applicable
Sprat in Subarea VI and Divisions VIIa-c and f-k (Celtic Sea and West of Scotland)	<3,500 Predicted catch	The information available is insufficient to evaluate stock trends and exploitation. Stock identity for this species in this area is not defined.	1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Not applicable	ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, catches should be no more than 3,500 tonnes in each of 2016 and 2017.	SAME 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Not applicable
Sprat in Divisions VIId,e (Celtic Sea and West of Scotland)	3,832	The index of stock biomass (average landings per unit of effort of mid-water trawls) has increased substantially since 2008.	1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Not applicable	ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, catches in 2016 should be no more than 4,598 tonnes.	INCREASING 1. Undefined 2. Undefined 3. Not applicable

For further information:

ICES advice

<http://www.ices.dk/community/advisory-process/Pages/Latest-advice.aspx>

For further information contact: Karen Green. T: 07515 993499

E: k_green@seafish.co.uk

27 October 2015