European plaice
North Sea and Skagerrak

IDENTIFICATION

Scientific Name
Pleuronectes platessa

Species Name(s)
European plaice

Stock Identification
It has been recently determined, based on larval drift, otolith characteristics, genetics, and tagging studies, that plaice in the North Sea and Skagerrak conforms a single stock, and a combined assessment and advice was conducted in 2015 (ICES, 2015a,b).

ASSESSMENT

Strengths
- A precautionary plaice and sole management plan is in operation; goal of stage one (recovery plan) is achieved. The plaice spawning stock is at a historical high and increasing further.
- Mixed fisheries advice takes into consideration the status of other North Sea species.
- Uncertainty in the assessment has been resolved.

Weaknesses
- Bottom trawls, with high bycatch rates and impacts on the sea bed, dominate catches.
- Rules of the second stage of the management plan are not yet defined.
- Changes in management measures have contributed to increased discarding of undersized plaice in the southern North Sea.

SCORES

Management Quality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Strategy</th>
<th>Managers Compliance</th>
<th>Fishers Compliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 6 to ≥ 8</td>
<td>8.6 to 10</td>
<td>9.1 to 10</td>
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Stock Health:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Health</th>
<th>Future Health</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 6 to &lt; 10</td>
<td>&lt; 6 to 8.9</td>
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FIPS

No related FIPs

MSC

- Cooperative Fishery Organisation (CVO) North Sea plaice and sole: MSC Certified
- DFPS Denmark North Sea Plaice: MSC Certified
- DFPS Denmark North Sea & Skagerrak hake and plaice: MSC Certified

RECOMMENDATIONS

Retailers & Supply Chain

- Monitor the progress in closing out conditions placed upon the MSC certification of the fishery and if agreed timelines are met, offer assistance in closing conditions where possible.