



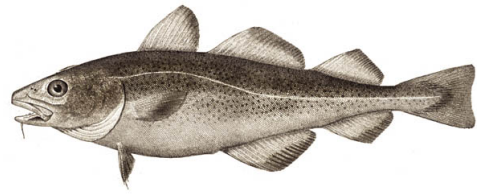


# Atlantic cod North Sea

Fishery:  North Sea  European Union  United Kingdom  Bottom trawls

## IDENTIFICATION



### SCIENTIFIC NAME

*Gadus morhua*

### SPECIES NAME(S)

Atlantic cod

### STOCK IDENTIFICATION

Population substructure is apparent with North Sea Atlantic cod (*González-Irusta and Wright 2016*)(*ICES 2019*)(*Jorde et al. 2018*). Numerous sub-populations both inshore and offshore mix throughout the range of this meta-stock. Until 2010, ICES provided advice on these sub-populations. In recent years, however, ICES has only provided advice for the overall meta-population given the uncertainty in mixing among the components by area and season. While the current ICES approach is reasonable given the uncertainty, different sub-populations are experiencing declines in biomass at different rates (*ICES 2019*)(*ICES 2019*).

This profile is for cod in North Sea, eastern English Channel, and Skagerrak (Subarea 4 Division 7.d and subdivision 20).



### RELATED LINKS:

- [European Commission \(EC\)](#)

## ASSESSMENT

### Strengths

- Managers have followed the scientific advice except for 2019.
- Area quotas are in effect which aim to limit exploitation on more vulnerable sub-components.
- Harvesters have complied with the discard ban and reporting requirements.
- Harvesters have generally complied with set quotas.
- Managers have initiated a management strategy evaluation process.

### Weaknesses

- Model used to provide advice has a severe retrospective pattern that overestimates stock size and underestimates fishing mortality relative to the terminal year.
- Because of the retrospective pattern, projections are likely optimistic
- Stock is at a low level of abundance, having only briefly been above  $B_{lim}$  since 1996.
- Fishing mortality has not been below  $F_{PA}$  or  $F_{MSY}$  since 1963 and has recently been trending up.
- Recruitment has been low since the late 1990s.
- Managers have not agreed on a management plan for this stock.

## SCORES

### Management Quality:

Management Strategy	Managers Compliance	Fishers Compliance
1.9	9.3	8

### Stock Health:

Current Health	Future Health
4.6	3.9

## FIPS

No related FIPs

## MSC

- Scottish Fisheries Sustainable Accreditation Group (SFSAG) North Sea cod:  
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.

- Support the initiation of an industry led North Sea cod fishery improvement project or Marine Stewardship Council certification.
- Engage with the Seafish Discard Action Group (DAG) and the North Sea Advisory Council (NS AC) by participating in meetings.