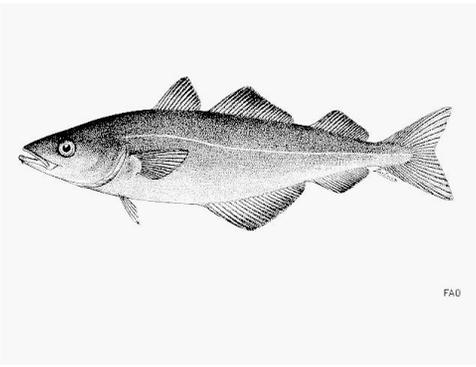


Saithe North Sea, Skagerrak, west of Scotland and the Rockall

Fishery:  North Sea, Skagerrak, west of Scotland and the Rockall  North Sea, Skagerrak, west of Scotland and the Rockall  Germany  Single boat
 bottom otter trawls

IDENTIFICATION



SCIENTIFIC NAME

Pollachius virens

SPECIES NAME(S)

Saithe

STOCK IDENTIFICATION

The stock structure is not totally clear, migrations are detected among the areas according to tagging experiments (Jakobsen and Olsen, 1987; Jákupsstovu, 1999 in ICES, 2014b). Magnitude of migrations seem to differ among the areas studied due to the topography or distance and further studies are recommended (Homrum et al., 2013). Four assessment units are considered within the NE Atlantic region for evaluation of the stock condition as well as for management purposes:

- 1 – Barents Sea (Subareas I and II, Northeast Arctic)
- 2 – Icelandic (Division Va)
- 3 – North Sea, Skagerrak, west of Scotland and the Rockall (Divisions IIIa, IV and Subarea VI)
- 4 – Faroe Islands (Division Vb).



RELATED LINKS:

- [European Commission \(EC\)](#) , [Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries \(DoF\)](#)
- [International Council for the Exploration of the Sea \(ICES\)](#) , [Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries \(DoF\)](#)

ASSESSMENT

Strengths

Although increasing in the last years the spawning stock is just below its MSY reference point but above biomass limit reference point. Fishing mortality is around target but decreasing since 2009. A precautionary management plan is in place and compliance is high. Due to stock condition and if new data is available a second advice could be released in November. ICES recommends a reduction in landings. About 90% of the total landings are from certified fisheries (Marine Stewardship Council). Almost all certified fisheries have been making good progresses in meeting the imposed conditions, namely, the environmental issues. The Integral Management Plan North Sea (IBN 2015) will identify protected areas as the management of human uses and impacts on the ecosystems, especially fisheries.

MSC conditions were all closed by the 4th annual surveillance audit; the fishery was re-certified in 2013 and no new conditions were raised. Of the protected species, only spurdog and twaite shad are captured in very low numbers. The fleet uses a strategy to minimize bycatch that is considered to be “clearly working”; discarding is negligible. Non-target species comprise <1% of the catch, the only species of concern is Atlantic cod and this fishery is not hindering its recovery. Sensitive areas are protected under Natura 2000 network and OSPAR habitats; fishing operations are not considered to impact the seabed ecosystem. Logbooks and observers onboard also help to monitor and record data.

Weaknesses

There is uncertainty in recruitment estimates due to surveys limited coverage. The management plan should be re-evaluated again in 4 years (2016) since the long-term performance of the Harvest Control Rule is not clear. Environmental impacts of the fishery are mostly related with protected species (e.g. common skate), retained and bycatch species (cod, whiting and ling) and fishing in sensitive habitats (e.g. corals).

The impacts of the fleet on protected areas are understood but not deeply quantified.

SCORES

Management Quality:

Management Strategy	Managers Compliance	Fishers Compliance
8.7	10	10

Stock Health:

Current Health	Future Health
7.8	8

FIPS

No related FIPs

MSC

- [Germany North Sea saithe trawl:](#)

MSC Recertified

RECOMMENDATIONS

RETAILERS & SUPPLY CHAIN

- Monitor the performance of the fishery and its management to ensure the fishery continues to be eligible for condition-free MSC re-certification.