



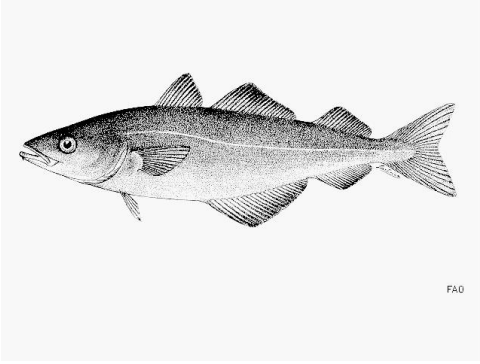


# Saithe North Sea, Skagerrak, west of Scotland and the Rockall

Fishery:  North Sea, Skagerrak, west of Scotland and the Rockall  North Sea, Skagerrak, west of Scotland and the Rockall  United Kingdom  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.

Although declining, the stock is just below its MSY reference point but well 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. Conditions defined for MSC certification include quantifying, assessing and managing impacts of bycatch of blue skate, change in DFFU/Doggerbank fishing patterns has significantly reduced the likelihood of impact on common skate. Condition on developing a strategy to monitor and avoid sensitive habitats was met and closed by the 2nd annual surveillance audit.

### 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).

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## 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

- [Scottish Fisheries Sustainable Accreditation Group \(SFSAG\) saithe:](#)
  - MSC Certified
- [SFSAG Northern Demersal Stocks:](#)
  - MSC Recertified

## 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.