Blackbellied angler Southern Celtic Sea and Bay of Biscay

Fishery: Southern Celtic Sea and Bay of Biscay

ASSESSMENT

Strengths
- The average stock biomass indicator in the last two years is higher than the average of the 3 previous years for both species, and the abundance index suggests medium recruitment for \( L. \) piscatorius and the highest observed for \( L. \) budegassa (ICES 2014b, 2014c).
- Underreporting of landings is thought to have decreased as a result of improved enforcement (ICES 2014a).
- Effort has decreased steadily and the stock is not expected to be affected by the recent increases in trawling effort.
- Biological sampling is carried out by the countries contributing most to catches.

Weaknesses
- No biological reference points are set.
- Ageing problems and difficulties estimating and quantifying discards of small anglerfish have led to uncertainty in catch estimates and advice.
- The majority of anglerfish catches (for both species) consist of immature fish.
- There are indications that discarding of small anglerfish has increased in recent years.
- Management of the two anglerfish species under a combined TAC prevents effective control of the single-species exploitation rates and could potentially lead to overexploitation of either species (ICES 2014b, 2014c).
- In the last two years TAC has been set at higher levels than ICES advice.
- Although ICES considers different anglerfish stocks in different areas for each species, the boundaries are not based on biological criteria (ICES, 2014c).
- The impacts of the fishery on PET species and habitat are not known.
- Trawl activity has considerable overlap with nursery grounds and in the Southwest UK region, a high degree of overlap is known to occur on anglerfish nursery grounds (Koch and Pacitto 2013).

SCORES

Management Quality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Strategy</th>
<th>Managers Compliance</th>
<th>Fishers Compliance</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>10</td>
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Stock Health:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Health</th>
<th>Future Health</th>
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<td>≥ 6</td>
<td>≥ 6</td>
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FIPS

- United Kingdom monkfish - gillnet/trawl:
  Stage 3, Progress Rating C, Type Fp, Evaluation Start Date: 1 Jul 2018

MSC

No related MSC fisheries.