European sprat
North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat

Fishery:
North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat
European Union Division 3a
Denmark
Midwater trawls

IDENTIFICATION

SCIENTIFIC NAME(S)
Sprattus sprattus

SPECIES NAME(S)
European sprat

STOCK IDENTIFICATION

European Union Division 3a

ASSESSMENT

Strengths
- Analytical assessment, conducted in the North Sea since 2013, has expanded to include the Skagerrak and Kattegat population in a single unit. Biomass reference points for the new unit were defined in 2018, including a revised fishing mortality cap (F\text{\textsc{msy}}). The merging of the North Sea and Skagerrak and Kattegat into a single assessment unit has improved the performance of the stock assessment model.
- The newly assessed stock unit is indicated to be in a healthy condition.
- The F\text{\textsc{msy}} cap designed to ensure the advice strategy is precautionary, despite uncertainty in forecasts of abundance.
- Since 2017, the timing of TACs and management advice for Subarea 4 in the North Sea (where the majority of the catch occurs) has been aligned to the ICES advice timing (TAC for the 3a unit is per calendar year, while the advice for the assessment unit is applicable for 1 July - 30 June of the following year).
- Uncertainties in the forecast can lead to unexpectedly high fishing mortality (F): in the former North Sea assessment unit, the F\text{\textsc{msy}} proxy, F\text{\textsc{cap}}, was often exceeded by relatively large proportions.
- Stock structure is not completely understood, and depletion of functionally discrete local populations in the periphery of the assessment unit is a concern.
- Directed impacts of the fishery on sea mammals and birds is considered to be minimal.
- Weaknesses
- There are no explicit management objectives for this stock.
- TACs have not consistently conformed to catches advised by ICES, and in Division 3a, they have been up to 6 times the advised limit. Further, the TAC timing is misaligned with the advice timing (TAC for the 3a unit is per calendar year, while the advice for the assessment unit is applicable for 1 July - 30 June of the following year).
- Uncertainties in the forecast can lead to unexpectedly high fishing mortality (F): in the former North Sea assessment unit, the F\text{\textsc{msy}} proxy, F\text{\textsc{cap}}, was often exceeded by relatively large proportions.
- Stock structure is not completely understood, and depletion of functionally discrete local populations in the periphery of the assessment unit is a concern.
- Direct impacts of the fishery on sea mammals and birds is considered to be minimal.

SCORES

Management Quality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Strategy</th>
<th>Managers Compliance</th>
<th>Fishers Compliance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 6</td>
<td>≥ 6</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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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>≥ 6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

FIPS
No related FIPs

MSC
No related MSC fisheries

RECOMMENDATIONS

BETAILERS & SUPPLY CHAIN
- Press ICES to conduct further scientific research to fully define the stock structure to improve management.
- Press regional advisory bodies, national fisheries administrations and the European Commission to develop a multi-species, ecosystem-based management plan, with specific management objectives for the pelagic fisheries in the North Sea and associated areas.
- Ensure that managers set the TAC in line with scientific advice.
- Engage with the EU Pelagic Advisory Council (https://www.pelagician.Engage.org/) directly or through one of the General Assembly members, to

RELATED LINKS:
- ICES
- European Commission (EC)
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

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- Press regional advisory bodies, national fisheries administrations and the European Commission to develop a multi-species, ecosystem-based management plan, with specific management objectives for the pelagic fisheries in the North Sea and associated areas.
- Ensure that managers set the TAC in line with scientific advice.
- Engage with the EU Pelagic Advisory Council (https://www.pelagician.Engage.org/) directly or through one of the General Assembly members, to
ensure sustainable exploitation.

- Engage as a stakeholder in all MSC certifications for this stock and support the MSC Client groups to ensure all conditions attached to the Certifications are fully addressed.

Fishery Profile
https://www.fishsource.org/fishery_page/6268
This profile last updated on 18 July 2019