3.4.5  Advice June 2012

ECOREGION  Barents Sea and Norwegian Sea
STOCK  Beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in Subareas I and II

Advice for 2013

ICES advises on the basis of the MSY approach that a commercial fishery can operate on *Sebastes mentella* in Subareas I and II, given that the total catch level, including bycatches and discards, does not exceed 47 000 tonnes. Measures currently in place to protect juveniles have proven successful and should be maintained.

Stock status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F (Fishing Mortality)</th>
<th>SSB (Spawning-Stock Biomass)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSY (F_{MSY})</td>
<td>Appropriate</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precautionary approach (F_{pa},F_{lim})</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSB (Spawning-Stock Biomass)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSY (B_{trigger})</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precautionary approach (B_{pa},B_{lim})</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recruitment at Age 2  Spawning Stock Biomass

Fishing mortality demersal  Fishing mortality pelagic

**Figure 3.4.5.1**  Results from the statistical catch-at-age assessment run showing the estimated recruitment-at-age 2, spawning-stock biomass from 1992 to 2011, and annual fishing mortality coefficients from the demersal and pelagic fleets.
Figure 3.4.5.2  Beaked redfish *Sebastes mentella* in Subareas I and II. Recruitment-at-age 2, spawning-stock biomass and total stock biomass estimated from statistical catch-at-age for the period 1992–2011.

Figure 3.4.5.3  *Sebastes mentella* in Subareas I and II. Total international landings 1965–2011 in national and international waters.

Spawning-stock biomass has steadily increased from 1992 to 2005. Due to poor year classes during the period 1996–2003, the spawning-stock biomass is decreasing.

**Management plans**

No specific management objectives have so far been implemented.
Biology

This species is long-lived (maximum age 75 years), and inhabits pelagic and epibenthic habitats from 300 to 1400 m in the North Atlantic. The male and female aggregate to mate; the female releases live larvae (ovoviviparous) along the continental slope from 62°N to 74°N during March–April. The size and age at first maturity (50%) are 31 cm and 11 years. Larvae are pelagic and drift northward along the continental slope in the surface layers and eventually disperse over the shelf in the Barents Sea. The juveniles are predominantly distributed in the Barents Sea and Svalbard areas. Adults are widely distributed on the shelf, slope, and the open ocean, but south of 69°N hardly on the shelf.

The fisheries

A pelagic fishery for *S. mentella* has developed in the Norwegian Sea outside EEZs since 2004. This fishery is managed by the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) who, by consensus, adopted a TAC for 2012 of 7500 t. Other catches of *S. mentella* are taken as bycatches in the demersal cod/haddock/Greenland halibut fisheries, as juveniles in the shrimp trawl fisheries, and occasionally in the pelagic blue whiting and herring fisheries in the Norwegian Sea.

**Catch distribution**

Total landings (2011) = 12.4 kt, of which 67% is taken by pelagic trawl in international waters in the Norwegian Sea and 33% as bycatch in the Barents Sea and adjacent waters.

**Scientific basis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input data</td>
<td>Catch numbers-at-age from the pelagic and demersal fleets and numbers-at-age from three surveys in the Barents Sea (BS-NoRu-Q1-Btr, Eco-NoRu-Q3-Btr, Ru-Q4-Btr).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discards and bycatch</td>
<td>Not available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td>Additional information from the Norwegian Sea pelagic surveys, international 0-group survey in Barents Sea (Eco-NoRu-Q3), and Norwegian Sea slope surveys. Cod consumption on juveniles (BS-NoRu-Q1-Btr, Eco-NoRu-Q3-Btr, Ru-Q4-Btr).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other information</td>
<td>Last benchmark was in February 2012 (ICES, 2012b). Assessment methodology has been revised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working group report</td>
<td>AFWG (ICES, 2012a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ECOREGION  Barents Sea and Norwegian Sea
STOCK  Beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in Subareas I and II

Reference points

At present, no fishing mortality or biomass reference points are defined for this stock. $F_{0.1} = 0.065$ is considered as a good candidate for $F_{\text{MSY}}$ proxy, and used as a basis for advice.

Outlook for 2013


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Landings (2013)</th>
<th>Basis</th>
<th>$F$ (2013)</th>
<th>SSB (2014)</th>
<th>%SSB change $^1$</th>
<th>%TAC change $^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zero catch</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0^*F_{sq}$</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>−100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status quo</td>
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<td>$F_{sq}$</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>−2</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>$F_{0.1}$</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>$F_{0.1}$</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>−6</td>
<td>+288</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weights in thousand tonnes.
$^1$ SSB 2014 relative to SSB 2013.
$^2$ Catch 2013 relative to TAC 2012.

Considering the low productivity of the stock and the longevity of $S. \text{mentella}$, projections are shown for longer periods, e.g. 3- and 8-year periods (respectively until 2015 and 2020) in addition to the usual short-term prediction.

The table below provides expected changes in SSB by 2015 and 2020 assuming three different catch scenarios for the years 2013–2020. The SSB levels are given as percentages of the SSB in 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SSB (2011=100%)</th>
<th>Fishing scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projection year</td>
<td>zero catch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Catch in thousand tonnes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fishing scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zero catch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 2013–2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 2013–2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MSY approach**

Following the ICES MSY approach implies a fishing mortality of 0.065, corresponding to landings of no more than 47 000 t in 2013. This is expected to keep SSB at the present level in 2020.

**Additional considerations**

The assessment model used and its outputs are an appropriate basis for advice. In contrast to the qualitative assessment last year which concluded that the stock needed to be rebuilt, estimates of biomass this year show that SSB has increased by more than 300% since 1992. In the absence of biomass reference points for this stock, it is considered that this is sufficient to allow a fishery.

The current estimate of fishing mortality is far below the assumed natural mortality (0.05) and $F_{\text{MSY}}$ proxy ($F_{0.1}$). Fishing at $F_{0.1}$, which is close to the assumed value of natural mortality is considered not to be detrimental to the stock.
However, following several consecutive low recruitments (1998–2005) for this long-lived, late-maturing species, SSB is expected to decline in the near future, together with landings. Explorations of a multi-annual TAC advice would lead to predicted landings of 44 kt for 2013–2015, or 40 kt for 2013–2020.

Documentation of the fishing effort involved and the catches taken in the international fishery is very important, and NEAFC is requested to continue to provide timely and consistent information for future stock assessments and advice. National reporting of length distributions in the demersal and pelagic commercial catches needs to be increased.

**Uncertainties**

The current analytical assessment should be expanded to include separate age groups up to 30 years. Furthermore, it is important that every nation should follow the ICES recommendations for the age reading of mature fish of 20 years or more. The sample size of aged *S. mentella* should be increased to ensure that reliable age–length keys can be estimated.

In order to assess the state of the stock, it is necessary to survey the whole distribution area of *S. mentella* in Subareas I and II, both the pelagic and the demersal components. Currently, the survey series do not appropriately cover the geographical distribution of the adult population. Priority should be given to data collection over the slope and open Norwegian Sea regions, where the adult population is most abundant, and to including these new surveys in the analytical assessment in the future. The acoustic/trawl survey conducted in 2008 and 2009 and planned in 2013 in the Norwegian Sea could be considered as a biomass index of the mature fish, but the time-series is still too short.

**Comparison with previous assessment and advice**

The assessment methodology was revised during the redfish stocks benchmark meeting in February 2012 (ICES, 2012b). The implementation of a new analytical assessment model in 2012 and the updated data for 2011 (landings and survey) have changed the perception of the stock. The new assessment indicates a significant increase in the spawning-stock biomass over the last two decades and in the number of juveniles in recent years.

Last year’s advice was for no directed fishery and limited bycatch. This year’s advice is based on the MSY approach.

**Assessment and management areas**

The analytical assessment and advice are provided for ICES Subareas I and II combined. The fishery for *S. mentella* operates in national and international waters, which are managed under different schemes and by different management organizations. In international waters, the fishery is managed by NEAFC and, in recent years, an Olympic fishery has been conducted with a set TAC, which is not derived from a harvest control rule. In national waters, the redfish fishery is a bycatch fishery with specific bycatch regulations. It is important that management decisions taken at national and international levels are coordinated to ensure that the total catch in ICES Subareas I and II does not exceed the recommended level.

**Sources**


Figure 3.4.5.4 Beaked redfish *Sebastes mentella* in Subareas I and II. Distribution, area of larval extrusion, larval drift, and migration routes.
Table 3.4.5.1  Beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in Subareas I and II. ICES advice, management, and landings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ICES Advice</th>
<th>Predicted catch corresp. to advice</th>
<th>Agreed TAC</th>
<th>Official landings$^1$</th>
<th>ICES Advice corresp. to TAC and landings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Precautionary TAC</td>
<td>70$^1$</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>F ≤ F$_{0.1}$; TAC</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Status quo F; TAC</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Status quo F; TAC</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>F at F$_{med}$; TAC</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>If required, precautionary TAC</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>If required, precautionary TAC</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>If required, precautionary TAC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Lowest possible F</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Catch at lowest possible level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Catch at lowest possible level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>No directed fishery, reduce bycatch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>No directed fishery, reduce bycatch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>No directed fishery, bycatch at lowest possible level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>No directed fishery, bycatch at lowest possible level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>No directed fishery, bycatch at lowest possible level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>No directed fishery, bycatch at lowest possible level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>No directed trawl fishery and low bycatch limits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>No directed trawl fishery and low bycatch limits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>No directed trawl fishery and low bycatch limits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>No directed trawl fishery and low bycatch limits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15.5$^1$</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Protection of juveniles, no directed trawl fishery and low bycatch limits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14.5$^1$</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Protection of juveniles, no directed trawl fishery and low bycatch limits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10.5$^3$</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Protection of juveniles, no directed trawl fishery and low bycatch limits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8.6$^3$</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Protection of juveniles, no directed trawl fishery and low bycatch limits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.9$^3$</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Protection of juveniles, no directed fishery and low bycatch limits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.5$^3$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>F$_{0.1}$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weights in thousand tonnes.

$^1$ Includes both *Sebastes mentella* and *S. marinus*.

$^2$ Includes the pelagic catches in the Norwegian Sea outside the EEZ.

$^3$ TAC set by the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) for an Olympic fishery in international waters.
Table 3.4.5.2  Beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in Subareas I and II. Nominal catch (t) by country, as used by the working group. For some countries landings are provided as redfish (*Sebastes* spp.) and the allocation to *S. marinus* is performed during the working group meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Estonia</th>
<th>Faroe Islands</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Iceland</th>
<th>Latvia</th>
<th>Lithuania</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Poland</th>
<th>Portugal</th>
<th>Russia</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,182</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>963</td>
<td>6,260</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12,814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6,511</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>5,021</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>176</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>6,346</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10,284</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>925</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>99</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>81</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8,598</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>73</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>177</td>
<td>134</td>
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<td>140</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>11,209</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>130</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13,937</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>3,775</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,152</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>3,904</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,375</td>
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<td>235</td>
<td>2,879</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5,493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,147</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,760</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>5,023</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8,465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>3,808</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>2,483</td>
<td>2,513</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>4,710</td>
<td>2,496</td>
<td>1,804</td>
<td>11,413</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>1,027</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>684</td>
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¹ Provisional figures.
² Including EU catches not split by country.
Table 3.4.5.3  Beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in Subareas I and II. Nominal catch (t) by country in the pelagic fishery in international waters in Division IIa. These catches are also included in Table 3.4.5.2.

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<th>France</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Iceland</th>
<th>Latvia</th>
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<th>Norway</th>
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1 Provisional figures.
2 As reported to NEAFC.
3 EU not split by country.
4 As reported in a working document.