

### 9.3.6 Blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*) in Subareas I, II, VIII, IX, and XII, and Divisions IIIa and IVa (other areas)

#### ICES stock advice

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied there should be no directed fisheries for blue ling in these areas for the years 2016 and 2017, and a reduction in bycatches should be considered until the scientific information is sufficient to prove the fishery sustainable. Measures should be implemented to minimize the bycatch. Closed areas to protect spawning aggregations should be maintained and expanded where appropriate.

#### Stock development over time

Trends in landings suggest depletion in Subarea II. Landings have also declined strongly in Subarea XII from 2002 onwards. Catches in other areas are minor, but there is some evidence of a persistent decline in Subarea IV.

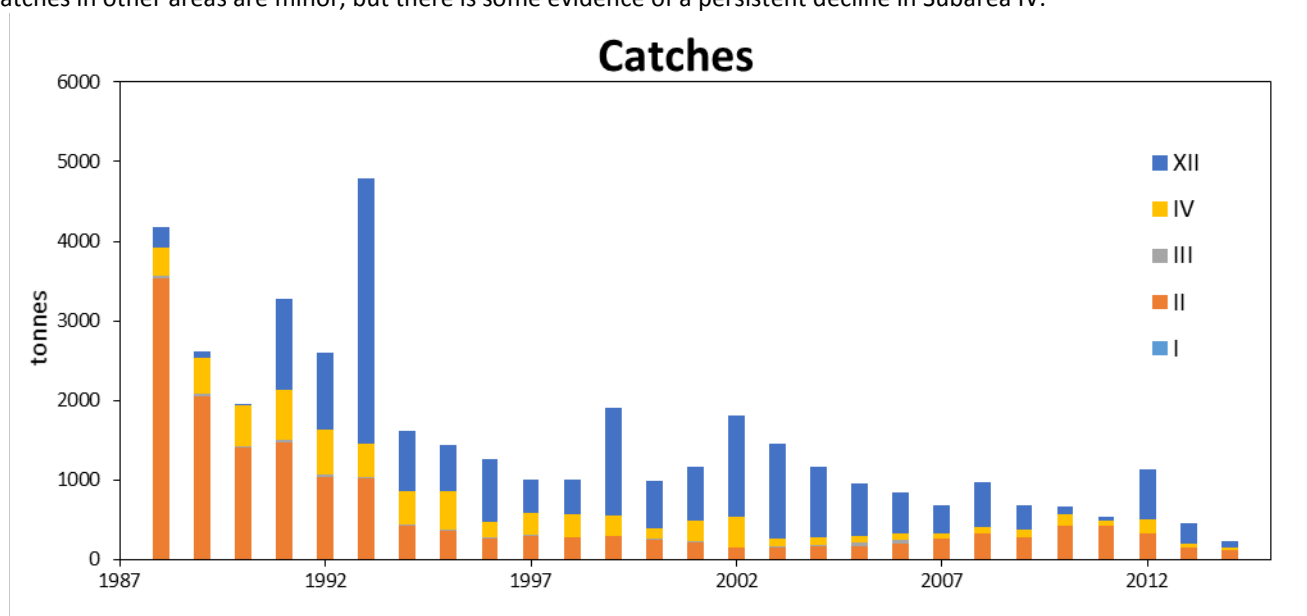


Figure 9.3.6.1 Blue ling in the northeast Atlantic. Catches by subarea.

#### Stock and exploitation status

Table 9.3.6.1 Blue ling in the northeast Atlantic. State of the stock and fishery, relative to reference points.

		Fishing pressure			Stock size					
		2012	2013	2014	2013	2014	2015			
Maximum Sustainable Yield	$F_{MSY}$	?	?	?	Undefined	MSY	?	?	?	Undefined
Precautionary approach	$F_{pa}$ , $F_{lim}$	?	?	?	Undefined	$B_{pa}$ , $B_{lim}$	?	?	?	Undefined
Management Plan	$F_{MGT}$	-	-	-	Not applicable	$SSB_{MGT}$	-	-	-	Not applicable
Qualitative evaluation	-	?	?	?	Unknown	-	?	?	?	Undefined

### Catch options

The ICES framework for category 4, 5, and 6 stocks was applied (ICES, 2012). For this stock, current catches are zero and new data available do not change the perception of this stock. Therefore, ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, there should be no directed fisheries for blue ling, and a reduction in bycatches should be considered until the scientific information is sufficient to prove the fishery sustainable. Measures should be implemented to minimize the bycatch. Closed areas to protect spawning aggregations should be maintained and expanded where appropriate.

**Table 9.3.6.2** Blue ling in the northeast Atlantic. Catch option table.

Recent advised catch (2013)			0 (tonnes)
Discard rate			Negligible
Precautionary buffer	Not applied		-
Catch advice			0 (tonnes)

### Basis of the advice

**Table 9.3.6.3** Blue ling in the northeast Atlantic. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Precautionary approach.
Management plan	There is no management plan for this stock.

### Quality of the assessment

No standardized abundance estimates are available for blue ling in these areas. Landings reported in the past from Subareas VIII and IX as blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*) are now considered to be Spanish ling *Molva macrophthalma*. ICES does not provide advice on the latter species.

The landings data are considered to reflect the abundance of the species in Subareas I–IV. From this it is inferred that the stock in Subareas I and II is depleted. In Subarea XII, the landings trend may also be influenced by decline in effort.

### Issues relevant for the advice

No additional information to present for this stock.

### Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

### Basis of the assessment

**Table 9.3.6.4** Blue ling in the northeast Atlantic. The basis of the assessment.

ICES stock data category	5.3.0 (ICES, 2015a).
Assessment type	Catch trends-based assessment (ICES, 2015b).
Input data	Official landings.
Discards and bycatch	Discarding is considered to be negligible.
Indicators	None.
Other information	None.
Working group	Working Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep-Sea Fisheries Resources ( <a href="#">WGDEEP</a> ).

**Information from stakeholders**

There is no information from stakeholders for this stock.

**History of advice, catch and management**

**Table 9.3.6.5** Blue ling in the northeast Atlantic. History of ICES advice, the agreed TAC, and ICES estimates of catch. All weights are in thousand tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Predicted catch corresp. to advice	TAC EU			ICES catches Divisions IIIa and IVa, and Subareas I, II, VIII, IX, and XII
			Subareas II and IV*	Subarea III	Subarea XII	
2003	No direct fisheries**	-	0.138	0.025		1.5
2004	Biennial**	-	0.138	0.025		1.2
2005	No direct fisheries**	-	0.119	0.025		1
2006	Biennial**	-	0.119	0.025		0.8
2007	No direct fisheries	-	0.95	0.02		0.7
2008	Biennial	-	0.078	0.015		1
2009	No direct fisheries	-	0.066	0.013		0.7
2010	Biennial	-	0.056	0.011		0.6
2011	No direct fisheries, and a reduction in catches should be considered ***	-	0.056	0.01	0.815	0.5
2012	No new advice, same as 2011	-	0.056	0.008	0.815	1.1
2013	No direct fisheries, and a reduction in bycatches should be considered	-	0.053		0.774	0.5
2014	No new advice, same as 2013	-	0.053		0.697	0.2
2015	No direct fisheries, and a reduction in bycatches	-	0.053		0.558	
2016	No direct fisheries, and a reduction in bycatches	-				
2017	Biennial	-				

\* EU waters of Subarea V were included until 2010.

\*\* Advice for blue ling in the Northeast Atlantic (not split in different assessment units).

\*\*\* Advice for Division XIIb to be consistent with Subarea VI.

## History of catch and landings

**Table 9.3.6.6** Blue ling in the northeast Atlantic. Catch distribution by fleet in 2014 as estimated by ICES.

Total catch	Commercial landings	Commercial discards
0.24 kt	Trawl and longline	Negligible
	0.24kt	

**Table 9.3.6.7** Blue ling in the northeast Atlantic. History of total official catch (tonnes).

Year	I	II	III	IV	XII	Total
1988		3 537	22	363	263	4 185
1989		2 058	23	459	70	2 610
1990		1 412	21	501	5	1 939
1991		1 479	21	627	1 147	3 274
1992		1 039	38	554	971	2 602
1993		1 020	23	415	3 335	4 793
1994	3	419	18	424	752	1 616
1995	5	359	20	483	573	1 440
1996	0	267	12	190	788	1 257
1997	1	291	21	270	417	1 000
1998	1	278	6	286	438	1 009
1999	0	291	6	265	1 353	1 915
2000	1	249	14	130	594	988
2001	3	208	24	252	675	1 162
2002	1	149	9	377	1 270	1 806
2003	1	147	19	101	1 194	1 462
2004	0	174	19	83	895	1 171
2005	1	171	49	70	675	966
2006	0	202	42	94	501	839
2007	0	263	0	62	354	679
2008	0	329	2	74	564	969
2009	1	285	0	89	312	687
2010	1	422	0	155	92	670
2011	0	434	0	50	50	534
2012	1	336	0	166	633	1 136
2013	0	159	1	46	254	460
2014*	4	118	0	38	80	240

\* Preliminary.

## Summary of the assessment

There is no assessment for the species in this area; the advice is based solely on catch data.

## Sources and references

- ICES. 2012. ICES Implementation of Advice for Data-limited Stocks in 2012 in its 2012 Advice. ICES CM 2012/ACOM:68. 42 pp.
- ICES. 2015a. Advice basis. *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2015. ICES Advice 2015, Book 1. In preparation.
- ICES. 2015b. Report of the Working Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep-Sea Fisheries Resources (WGDEEP), 20–27 March 2015, ICES Headquarters, Copenhagen. ICES CM 2015/ACOM:17.