

5.3.19 Small-eyed ray (*Raja microocellata*) in divisions 7.d and 7.e (English Channel)

ICES stock advice

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, landings should be no more than 36 tonnes in each of the years 2017 and 2018. ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catches.

Stock development over time

Landings (2009-2015) have ranged between 27 and 56 tonnes. There are currently no stock size indicators.

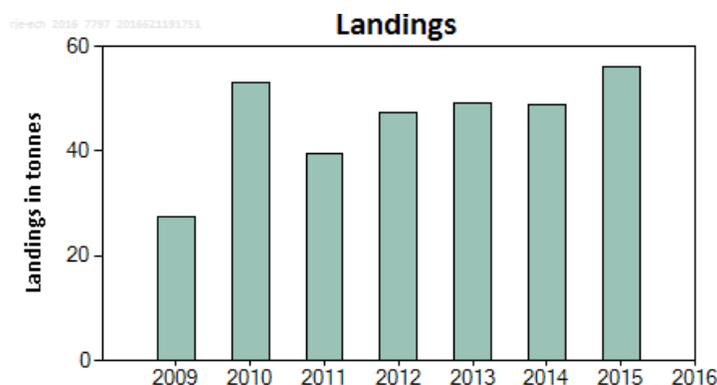


Figure 5.3.19.1 Small-eyed ray in divisions 7.d and 7.e. ICES estimated landings for 2009–2015 (in tonnes).

Stock and exploitation status

Table 5.3.19.1 Small-eyed ray in divisions 7.d and 7.e. State of the stock and fishery relative to reference points.

		Fishing pressure			Stock size					
		2013	2014	2015	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	-	?	?	?	Unknown

Catch options

The ICES framework for category 5 stocks was applied (ICES, 2012). For stocks without information on abundance or exploitation, ICES considers that a precautionary reduction of catches should be implemented unless there is ancillary information clearly indicating that the current level of exploitation is appropriate for the stock. The precautionary buffer was applied previously (ICES, 2014) and has not been applied again.

The recent advised landings for 2015 and 2016 were originally derived using landings statistics from 2011-2013. In 2016, a review of the landing statistics of elasmobranchs (ICES 2016a) was conducted. As a result, the basis which was used to provide advice in 2014 for 2015 and 2016 has been adjusted to account for the update in the landing statistics in the period 2011-2013.

Discarding is known to take place, but ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catch. In addition, discard survival, which is likely to occur, has not been estimated.

Table 5.3.19.2 Small-eyed ray in divisions 7.d and 7.e. For stocks in ICES data categories 3–6, one catch option is provided.

Recent advised landings (2015–2016)			43 t
Recent advised landings adjusted (2015–2016)* [43 t x 0.84]			36 t
Discard rate			Unknown
Precautionary buffer	Not applied		-
Landings advice **			36 t

*Recent advised landings adjusted for the revision of the landings statistics in 2011-2013

** (Recent advised landings adjusted).

Basis of the advice

Table 5.3.19.3 Small-eyed ray in divisions 7.d and 7.e. The basis of the advice.

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

Quality of the assessment

There is no assessment for this stock.

Issues relevant for the advice

This species is an occasional bycatch species in most fisheries operating in the English Channel. It has a patchy distribution in the Channel and is observed infrequently in trawl surveys.

Since legal obligations to declare most demersal elasmobranchs to species level were introduced, a greater proportion of data have been reported to this level. The apparent increase in landings from 2009 to 2010 might also be influenced by the introduction of mandatory species-specific reporting of skate landings. Landings from the southern North Sea (division 4.c) are attributed to this stock.

In the 2016 TAC and quota regulations (Council Regulation (EU) 2016/72), small-eyed ray (*Raja microocellata*) were prohibited for being landed in divisions 7.d and 7.e. This was subsequently updated (Council Regulation (EU) 2016/458), to allow landings of the species in Division 7.d, whilst in Division 7.e they are a species that should not be retained. (“When accidentally caught, this species shall not be harmed. Specimens shall be promptly released. Fishermen shall be encouraged to develop and use techniques and equipment to facilitate the rapid and safe release of the species.”)

Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock

Basis of the assessment

Table 5.3.19.4 Small-eyed ray in divisions 7.d and 7.e. The basis of the assessment.

ICES stock data category	5 (ICES, 2016b)
Assessment type	No assessment (ICES, 2016c)
Input data	Landings data 2009–2015
Discards and bycatch	Discarding is known to take place but cannot be quantified.
Indicators	None
Other information	None
Working group	Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF)

Information from stakeholders

No information has been provided.

History of advice, catch, and management

Table 5.3.19.5 Small-eyed ray in divisions 7.d and 7.e. History of ICES advice and ICES estimates of landings**. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Predicted landings corresp. to advice	ICES species-specific landings: minimum estimate based on reported landings*
2011	No specific advice		40
2012	No specific advice		47
2013	No TAC, species-specific measures needed, catch to decrease by at least 20%		49
2014	No new advice, same as 2013		49
2015	decrease at least 20% from last 3 years' average	43	56
2016	No new advice, same as 2015	43	
2017	Precautionary approach	≤36	
2018	Precautionary approach (same value as advised catches for 2017)	≤36	

* Data revised in 2016 (ICES, 2016a) and include landings from the southern North Sea (division 4.c).

** There is no a specific TAC for this stock. Fishing opportunities are managed through an overall TAC by management unit, which includes all species of skates and rays.

History of catch and landings

The distribution of this stock does not extend into the NEAFC regulatory area.

Table 5.3.19.6 Small-eyed ray in divisions 7.d and 7.e. Catch distribution by fleet in 2015 as estimated by ICES.

Catch (2015)	Landings				Discards
	% beam trawl	% bottom trawls	% fixed nets	% other gear	
Unknown	9%	57%	26%	9%	Discarding is known to take place but cannot be quantified
	56 tonnes				

Table 5.3.19.7 Small-eyed ray in divisions 7.d and 7.e. ICES estimates of landings by country (in tonnes). Data revised in 2016 (ICES, 2016a) and include landings from the southern North Sea (division 4.c).

Year	Belgium	UK	France	Total Landings
2009		14.8	12.6	27.4
2010	0.6	37.4	15.1	53.0
2011	1.4	25.4	12.8	39.6
2012	1.6	30.9	14.9	47.3
2013	1.0	29.1	19.0	49.1
2014	0.8	33.2	14.9	48.9
2015	1.7	36.8	17.4	56.0

Summary of the assessment

There is no assessment for this stock.

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. 2014. Small-eyed ray (*Raja microocellata*) in the English Channel (Divisions VIIId, e). *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2014. ICES Advice 2014, Book 5, Section 5.3.29.8.

ICES. 2016a. Report of the Workshop to compile and refine catch and landings of elasmobranchs (WKSHARKS), 19–22 January 2016, Lisbon, Portugal. ICES CM 2016/ACOM:40. 69 pp.

ICES 2016b. General context of ICES advice. *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2016. ICES Advice 2016, Book 1, Section 1.2.

ICES. 2016c. Report of the Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF), 15–24 June 2016, Lisbon, Portugal. ICES CM 2016/ACOM:20.