

## Blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*) in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a (other areas)

### ICES stock advice

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, there should be zero catches in each of the years 2018 and 2019. This advice is unlikely to change until the scientific information is sufficient to assess the status of the stock. Closed areas to protect spawning should be maintained.

### Stock development over time

Trends in landings suggest depletion in Subarea 2. Landings have also declined strongly in Subarea 12 from 2002 onwards. Landings from other areas are minor, but there is some evidence of a persistent decline in Subarea 4. While declines in catch in the early part of the time series reflect depletion of the stock, declines in catch in recent years may be more indicative of a reduction in effort directed towards spawning aggregations.

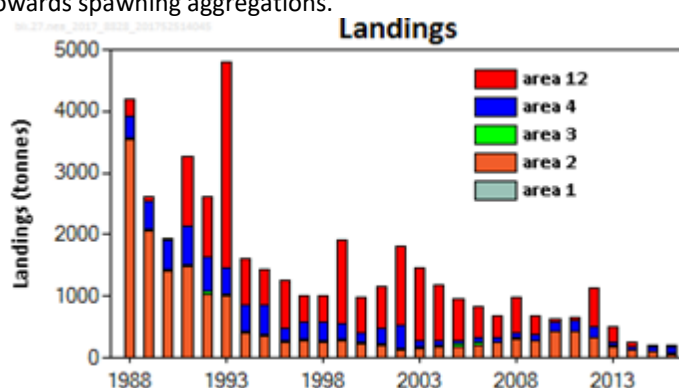


Figure 1 Blue ling in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a.

### Stock and exploitation status

Table 1 Blue ling in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a. State of the stock and fishery relative to reference points.

		Fishing pressure			Stock size					
		2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016			
Maximum sustainable yield	$F_{MSY}$	?	?	?	Unknown	$MSY B_{trigger}$	?	?	?	Unknown
Precautionary approach	$F_{pa}, F_{lim}$	?	?	?	Unknown	$B_{pa}, B_{lim}$	?	?	?	Unknown
Management plan	$F_{MGT}$	—	—	—	Not applicable	$B_{MGT}$	—	—	—	Not applicable
Qualitative evaluation	-	?	?	?	Unknown	-	⊗	⊗	⊗	Below possible Ref. Points

### Catch options

The ICES framework for category 5 stocks was applied (ICES, 2012). New data do not change the perception of this stock.

Table 2 Blue ling in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a. The basis for the catch options.

Advised catch (2016–2017)		-*
Discard rate		Unknown
Precautionary buffer	Not applied	-
Catch advice		0 tonnes

\* Previous advice was for no directed fisheries for blue ling in these areas and a reduction in bycatches.

### Basis of the advice

**Table 3** Blue ling in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Precautionary approach.
Management plan	ICES is not aware of any agreed precautionary management plan for 2017 in this area.

### Quality of the assessment

No standardized abundance estimates are available for blue ling in these areas. Landings reported in the past from subareas 8 and 9 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 1 and 2 and divisions 3.a and 4.a. From this it is inferred that the stock in subareas 1 and 2 is depleted. Recent trends in landings may also be influenced by decline in effort.

### Issues relevant for the advice

There is no information to present for this stock.

### Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

### Basis of the assessment

**Table 4** Blue ling in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a. Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	5 ( <a href="#">ICES, 2016</a> ).
Assessment type	Catch trends-based assessment (ICES, 2017).
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

No information is available.

## History of the advice, catch, and management

**Table 5** Blue ling in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a. ICES advice and official landings. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Predicted catch corresp. to advice	TAC EU in subareas 2 and 4*	TAC EU in Subarea 3	TAC EU in Subarea 12	ICES landings in divisions 3.a and 4.a, and in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12
2003	No direct fisheries**	-	138	25		1462
2004	Biennial**	-	138	25		1171
2005	No direct fisheries**	-	119	25		966
2006	Biennial**	-	119	25		839
2007	No direct fisheries	-	950	20		679
2008	Biennial	-	78	15		969
2009	No direct fisheries	-	66	13		687
2010	Biennial	-	56	11		628
2011	No direct fisheries, and a reduction in catches should be considered ***	-	56	1	815	720
2012	No new advice, same as 2011	-	56	8	815	1136
2013	No direct fisheries, and a reduction in bycatches should be considered	-	53		774	500
2014	No new advice, same as 2013	-	53		697	261
2015	No direct fisheries, and a reduction in bycatches	-	53		558	208
2016	No direct fisheries, and a reduction in bycatches	-	53		446	205
2017	Biennial	-	53		357	
2018	Precautionary approach	0				
2019	Precautionary approach	0				

\* EU waters of Subarea 5 were included until 2010.

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

\*\*\* Advice for Division 12.b to be consistent with Subarea 6.

## History of the catch and landings

**Table 6** Blue ling in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a. Catch distribution by fleet in 2016 as estimated by ICES.

Catch (2016)	Landings		Discards
	Longline 42%	Bottom trawl 58%	
205 tonnes	205 tonnes		negligible

**Table 7** Blue ling in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a. History of the official total landings and landings by area. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	Areas					Total
	1	2	3.a	4.a	12	
1988		3537	22	363	263	4185
1989		2058	23	459	70	2610
1990		1412	21	501	5	1939
1991		1479	21	627	1147	3274
1992		1039	38	554	971	2602
1993		1020	23	415	3335	4793
1994	3	419	18	424	752	1616
1995	5	359	20	483	573	1440
1996	0	267	12	190	788	1257
1997	1	291	21	270	417	1000
1998	1	278	6	286	438	1009
1999	0	291	6	265	1353	1915
2000	1	249	14	130	594	988
2001	3	208	24	252	675	1162
2002	1	149	9	377	1270	1806
2003	1	147	19	101	1194	1462
2004	0	174	19	83	895	1171
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	566	969
2009	1	285	0	89	312	687
2010	1	422	0	155	50	628
2011	3	486	0	176	55	720
2012	1	336	0	166	633	1136
2013	0	202	1	43	254	500
2014	4	127	0	50	80	261
2015	0	113	0	83	12	208
2016	0.84	87	1	87	29	205

**Table 8** Blue ling in subareas 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12, and in divisions 3.a and 4.a. Landings inside and outside the NEAFC Regulatory Area (RA) as estimated by ICES; landings in tonnes. Note that ICES cannot quantify the catches.

Year	Inside the NEAFC RA	Outside the NEAFC RA	Catches
2014	80	181	261
2015	12	196	208
2016	0	205	205

### Summary of the assessment

There is no assessment for blue ling in this area.

## 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. 2016. Advice bass. *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2016. ICES Advice 2016, Book 1, Section 1.2.
- ICES. 2017. Report of the Working Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep-sea Fisheries Resources (WGDEEP), 24 April–1 May 2017, Copenhagen, Denmark. ICES CM 2017/ACOM:14. 702 pp.