

9.4.2 EU request to review the advice for alfonsinos/golden eye perch (*Beryx* spp.) in the Northeast Atlantic

Advice summary

Please note: the present advice replaces the advice given for this stock in June 2016.

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, landings should be no more than 280 tonnes in each of the years 2017 and 2018. Discarding is known to take place, but ICES cannot quantify the corresponding catches.

ICES advises that exploitation of alfonsinos should not be allowed on seamounts that have not previously been fished for the species.

Request

The present advice is in response to the alfonsinos component of the following request from the European Commission:

On the basis of the results of the ARQDAÇO survey carried out in 2016, ICES is requested to review its advice for seabream in Subarea X and alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic.

Background: On 3 June ICES provided its advice on the state of the red seabream* (*Pagellus bogaraveo*) stock in Subarea X (Azores ground) and alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic. In its advice ICES indicates that survey data available from the Azores (1995-2013) was the only source of information on stock trends. However, the last survey has been conducted in 2013 and ICES pointed out that resuming these surveys would provide information that could be used in delivering advice on fishing opportunities. In October 2016 the Azores authorities transmitted the results of the survey ARQDAÇO on deep-sea species, including red seabream and alfonsinos, carried out from 26 April to 15 July 2016.

* Starting in 2017, the common name used by ICES for this species is the blackspot seabream.

Stock development over time

The two species (*Beryx splendens* and *Beryx decadactylus*) considered in this advice are often reported in a single group (*Beryx* spp.). Catches have generally varied between 300 and 600 tonnes, except for higher catches in the period 1993 to 2000 because of large catches taken in Division 10.b. Species-specific landing trends in the Azores fishery showed similar trends for both species.

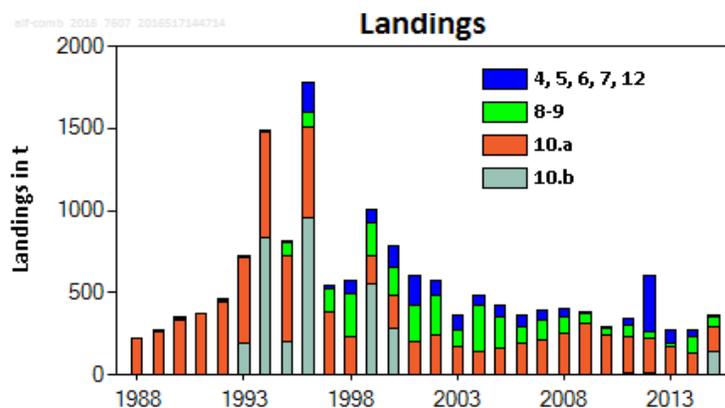


Figure 9.4.2.1 Alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic. Landings (tonnes) from the main fishing areas for the two species combined.

Stock and exploitation status

Table 9.4.2.1 Alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic. 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}	?	?	?	Undefined	$MSY B_{trigger}$?	?	?	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

Elaboration on advice

ICES provided advice on this stock in June 2016. The ARCDAÇO survey was not conducted in 2014 and 2015, and the 2016 survey was not completed in time for the data to be used in the advice. After the survey was conducted in 2016, ICES was asked to review the advice that it had provided for 2017 and 2018.

The ARCDAÇO survey was not used to derive catch advice in the past because it was not considered adequate to indicate trends. ICES still considers that the survey is not adequate to provide advice for this stock. As a result, the ICES framework for category 5 stocks was applied.

Catch options

The ICES framework for category 5 stocks (stocks without information on abundance or exploitation) was applied (ICES, 2012). New data do not change the perception of the stock. The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2012 and has not been applied this year. Therefore, ICES maintains the same landings advice for 2017 and 2018, i.e. landings should be no more than 280 tonnes.

Table 9.4.2.2 Alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic. For stocks in ICES category 5, one catch option is provided.

Recent advised catch	280 tonnes	
Discard rate	less than 10%, not quantified for the entire stock	
Precautionary buffer	Not applied	-
Landings advice*	280 tonnes	

*= recent advised catch.

Basis of the advice

Table 9.4.2.3 Alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Precautionary approach
Management plan	There is no management plan for alfonsinos in this area.

Quality of the assessment

The uncertainty of the stock structure and general absence of data on species composition of the catches and biological parameters are important limiting factors for the knowledge of these fish stocks.

Survey data are available from the Azores (1995–2016), but the survey is not considered to provide a reliable indicator of abundance as it may not be optimally designed for these highly mobile and aggregative species, *B. decadactylus* in particular.

Issues relevant for the advice

As a consequence of the spatial distribution of alfonosinos associated with seamounts, their life history, and their aggregation behaviour, these species are easily overexploited and can only sustain low rates of exploitation. To prevent depleting localized aggregations that have not yet been mapped and assessed, the exploitation of new seamounts should not be allowed.

ICES estimates discard rates in the Azores (Division 10.a) to be between 6% and 10%. Directed fisheries in Division 10.b are assumed to have negligible discarding.

Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

Basis of the assessment

Table 9.4.2.4 Alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic. The basis of the assessment.

ICES stock data category	5 (ICES, 2016a)
Assessment type	No assessment (ICES, 2016b)
Input data	Landings
Discards and bycatch	Not included, discarding is considered negligible (less than 10%).
Indicators	None
Other information	None
Working group	Working Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep-Sea Fisheries Resources (WGDEEP)

Information from stakeholders

There is no available information.

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 9.4.2.5 Alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic. ICES advice, the agreed TAC, and ICES landings. Weights are in thousand tonnes.

Years	ICES advice	Predicted landings corresp. to advice	Predicted catch corresp. to advice	EU TAC*	ICES landings
2003	Fishery should not be allowed to expand, unless proven to be sustainable and accompanied by programmes to collect data on (by)catch				0.37
2004	Biennial				0.49
2005	Fisheries accompanied by programmes to collect data on (by)catch		-	0.328	0.42
2006	Biennial		-	0.328	0.37
2007	Fishery should not be allowed to expand, unless proven to be sustainable		-	0.328	0.40
2008	Biennial		-	0.328	0.40
2009	Fishery should not be allowed to expand, unless proven to be sustainable		-	0.328	0.38
2010	Biennial		-	0.328	0.29
2011	Fisheries should not be allowed to expand, and a reduction in catches should be considered		-	0.328	0.34
2012	No new advice, same as 2011		-	0.328	0.61
2013	20% Reduction in catches (last 3 years' average)	-	0.28	0.312	0.25
2014	No new advice, same as 2013	-	0.28	0.296	0.28
2015	Same catch advice as 2013	-	0.28	0.296	0.37
2016	Same advice as 2015	-	0.28	0.296	**
2017	Precautionary approach (same value as advised catches for 2016)	≤ 0.28	-		
2018	Precautionary approach (same value as advised catches for 2016)	≤ 0.28	-		

* TAC within EU and international waters for EU vessels of subareas 3–10, 12, and 14.

** Landings information not available for all areas

History of catch and landings

Table 9.4.2.6 Alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic. Catch distribution by fleet in 2015 as estimated by ICES.

Total catch (2015)	Landings			Discards
Unknown	40% trawls	50% longlines	10% other fisheries	Assumed less than 10%
	146 t	184 t	35 t	

Table 9.4.2.7 Alfonsinos in the Northeast Atlantic. Landings inside and outside the NEAFC Regulatory Area (RA) as estimated by ICES, and official landings. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	Inside the NEAFC RA	Outside the NEAFC RA	Landings
1988			225
1989			272
1990			353
1991			371
1992			460
1993			729
1994			1488
1995			817
1996			1776
1997			545
1998			579
1999			1001
2000			785
2001			607
2002			577
2003			361
2004			485
2005			422
2006			367
2007			396
2008			407
2009			383
2010			291
2011			342
2012			605
2013			282
2014	0	272	272
2015	141	224	365

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

ICES. 2016b. Report of the Working Group on Biology and Assessment of Deep-sea Fisheries Resources (WGDEEP), 20–27 April 2016, ICES HQ, Copenhagen, Denmark. ICES CM 2016/ACOM:18. 648 pp.