

Sole (*Solea solea*) in divisions 7.h–k (Celtic Sea South, southwest of Ireland)

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, catches in 2022 should be no more than 213 tonnes.

Stock development over time

ICES cannot assess the stock and the exploitation status relative to maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and precautionary approach (PA) reference points, because the reference points are undefined.

Catches

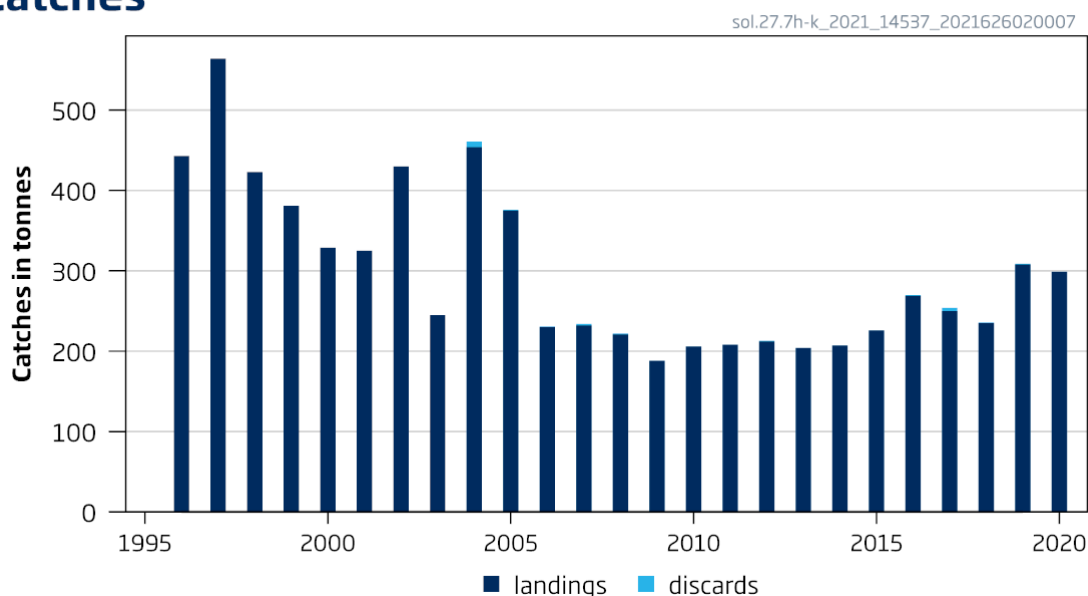


Figure 1 Sole in divisions 7.h–k. ICES estimated catches. Discard estimates are available from 2004.

Catch scenarios

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 where there is no ancillary information clearly indicating that the current level of exploitation is appropriate for the stock. Discarding is considered negligible. The precautionary buffer was applied in 2020, as the stock was downgraded after a benchmark in 2020 (ICES, 2020), and its application has therefore not been considered again.

Table 1 Sole in divisions 7.h–k. The basis for the catch options.

Advised catch for 2021 issued in 2020	213 tonnes	
Discard rate	< 1%	
Precautionary buffer	Not applied	-
Catch advice	213 tonnes	
% advice change	0%	

Basis of the advice

Table 2 Sole in divisions 7.h–k. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Precautionary approach
Management plan	The European Parliament and the Council have published a multiannual management plan (MAP) for Western Waters (EU, 2019). This plan applies to demersal stocks, including sole in ICES divisions 7.h–k. The MAP stipulates that when the F_{MSY} ranges are not available, the precautionary approach should be applied.

Quality of the assessment

This stock was benchmarked in 2020, and it was concluded that a category 5 approach should be used to provide advice for this stock.

Area misreporting is considered to be an issue for this stock; however, it remains difficult to fully quantify. The sampling levels in 2020 are lower due to the impact of COVID-19; however, discards are still considered negligible.

Issues relevant for the advice

There is uncertainty in stock identity.

Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

Basis of the assessment

Table 4 Sole in divisions 7.h–k. Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	5 (ICES, 2021)
Assessment type	No assessment
Input data	ICES estimated catch
Discards and bycatch	Considered negligible
Indicators	None
Other information	Last benchmark in 2020 (ICES, 2020)
Working group	Working Group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion (WGCSE)

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 5 Sole in divisions 7.h–k. History of ICES advice, agreed TAC, official landings, and ICES estimated landings and discards (tonnes).

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Agreed TAC	Official landings	ICES landings	ICES discards
1996	No advice	-	-	825	443	
1997	No advice	-	-	742	564	
1998	No advice	-	-	759	423	
1999	No advice	-	-	406	381	
2000	No advice	-	-	302	329	
2001	No advice	-	650	347	325	
2002	No advice	-	650	515	430	
2003	Reduce TAC to recent landings	330	390	486	245	
2004	Reduce TAC to recent average (2000–2002)	360	390	449	454	7
2005	Reduce TAC to recent average (2001–2003)	335	650	392	375	1
2006	Reduce TAC to recent average (2002–2004)	380	650	288	230	1
2007	Reduce TAC to recent average (2003–2005)	287	650	278	232	2
2008	Reduce TAC to recent average (2004–2006)	300	650	220	221	1
2009	Same advice as last year	300	553	208	188	0

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Agreed TAC	Official landings	ICES landings	ICES discards
2010	No advice	-	498	228	206	0
2011	No increase in catches	-	423	224	208	0
2012	No increase in catches	-	423	234	212	1
2013	Decrease catches by 8% (15% increase, followed by 20% PA reduction)	< 200	402	213	204	0
2014	Increase catches by 11%	< 252	382	242	207	0
2015	Average catch (2011–2013)	< 225	382	244	226	0
2016	Precautionary approach (decrease recent advised value by no more than 9%)	≤ 205	382	330	269	1
2017	Precautionary approach (increase recent advised value by no more than 9%)	≤ 223	382	281	250	4
2018	Precautionary approach (increase recent advised value by no more than 20%)	≤ 268	382	283	235	1
2019	Precautionary approach (decrease recent advised value by no more than 32%)	≤ 311	382	288*	308	1
2020	Precautionary approach	≤ 213	329	284*	299	< 1
2021	Precautionary approach	≤ 213	280			
2022	Precautionary approach	≤ 213				

* Preliminary official landings.

History of the catch and landings

Table 6 Sole in divisions 7.h–k. Catch distribution by fleet in 2020 as estimated by ICES.

Catch	Landings			Discards
299 tonnes	Otter trawl 52%	Beam trawl 47%	Other 1%	< 1 tonne
	299 tonnes			

Table 7 Sole in divisions 7.h–k. History of official landings by country, ICES unallocated and estimated values. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	Official landings						ICES landings
	Belgium	France	UK	Ireland	Other countries	Total	
1951	21	150	91	56	0	318	
1952	37	220	88	44	0	389	
1953	23	227	100	54	0	404	
1954	13	317	167	75	0	572	
1955	125	634	174	65	0	998	
1956	251	511	98	64	0	924	
1957	454	359	86	67	0	966	
1958	397	605	72	88	0	1162	
1959	241	576	61	101	0	979	
1960	0	506	48	96	0	650	
1961	197	525	61	110	0	893	
1962	144	397	31	123	0	695	
1963	149	502	25	127	0	803	
1964	310	578	34	118	0	1040	
1965	335	1128	15	123	0	1601	
1966	123	0	36	118	0	277	
1967	168	474	20	123	0	785	
1968	113	474	29	116	0	732	
1969	175	633	23	120	0	951	
1970	436	537	19	122	0	1114	
1971	394	1382	4	93	0	1873	
1972	203	1011	11	131	7	1363	
1973	406	390	6	108	4	914	
1974	369	143	5	116	15	648	
1975	210	207	24	97	2	540	

Year	Official landings						ICES landings
	Belgium	France	UK	Ireland	Other countries	Total	
1976	638	19	11	152	33	853	
1977	519	103	12	126	140	900	
1978	290	23	11	73	60	457	
1979	384	29	18	109	0	540	
1980	522	27	42	162	0	753	
1981	576	107	83	195	0	961	
1982	471	104	108	172	0	855	
1983	411	176	129	176	51	943	
1984	474	120	151	156	194	1095	
1985	318	25	200	201	280	1024	
1986	442	38	261	188	3	932	
1987	271	44	193	168	0	676	
1988	254	53	166	182	0	655	
1989	252	84	177	206	0	719	
1990	353	66	144	266	0	829	
1991	358	55	234	306	0	953	
1992	312	43	217	255	0	827	
1993	317	44	214	237	0	812	
1994	338	42	174	184	0	738	
1995	433	47	192	243	0	915	
1996	375	50	148	182	70	825	443
1997	368	58	113	203	0	742	564
1998	346	74	111	221	7	759	423
1999	101	0	97	207	1	406	381
2000	8	78	95	111	10	302	329
2001	13	99	111	124	0	347	325
2002	154	108	124	129	0	515	430
2003	170	133	78	105	0	486	245
2004	157	102	79	111	0	449	454
2005	90	93	112	97	0	392	375
2006	36	99	88	63	1	288	230
2007	31	79	91	77	0	278	232
2008	10	58	80	72	0	220	221
2009	11	79	58	61	0	208	188
2010	20	87	51	71	0	228	206
2011	10	95	54	65	0	224	208
2012	18	85	46	85	0	234	212
2013	4	76	47	85	0	213	204
2014	42	61	54	85	0	242	207
2015	40	74	53	77	0	244	226
2016	91	77	63	99	0	330	269
2017	75	81	39	86	0	281	250
2018	96	91	33	63	0	283	235
2019*	75	88	48	70	8	288	308
2020*	88	102	50	37	7	284	299

* Preliminary official landings.

Summary of the assessment

There is no assessment for sole in this area.

Sources and references

EU. 2019. Regulation (EU) 2019/472 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2019 establishing a multiannual plan for stocks fished in the Western Waters and adjacent waters, and for fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/1139 and (EU) 2018/973, and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007 and (EC) No 1300/2008. Official Journal of the European Union, L 83: 1–17. <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/472/oj>.

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[Download the stock assessment data and figures.](#)

Recommended citation: ICES. 2021. Sole (*Solea solea*) in Divisions 7.h-k (Celtic Sea South, southwest of Ireland). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, sol.27.7h-k. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.7864>.