

## Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*) in Division 6.b (Rockall)

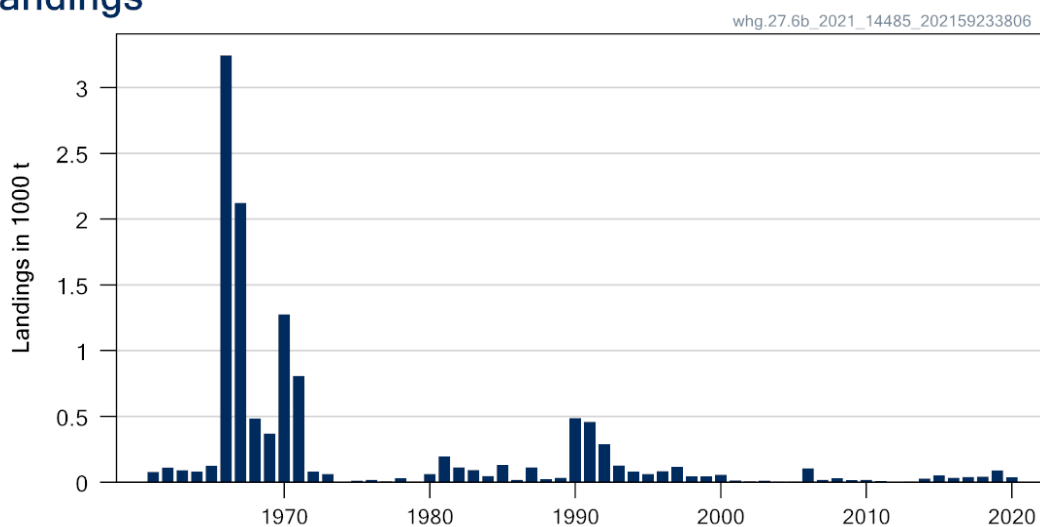
### ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, landings should be no more than 7 tonnes in each of the years 2022, 2023, 2024. ICES cannot quantify the corresponding total catches.

### Stock development over time

ICES cannot assess the stock and exploitation status relative to MSY and precautionary approach (PA) reference points because information is not available.

## Landings



**Figure 1** Whiting in Division 6.b. Official landings in thousand tonnes.

### Catch scenarios

ICES framework for category 6 stocks was applied (ICES, 2012). For stocks without information on abundance or exploitation, ICES considers that a precautionary reduction of catches should be implemented. The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2018 and has therefore been considered this year. The stock status relative to candidate reference points is unknown; therefore, the precautionary buffer was applied in the advice.

**Table 2** Whiting in Division 27.6.b. ICES framework for category 6 applied.

Advised landings for 2021 issued in 2018		9 (tonnes)
Discard		Uncertain
Precautionary buffer	Applied	0.8
Landings advice*		7 (tonnes)
% Advice change**		-20%

\* Advice for 2022, 2023 and 2024 [advice for 2021 × precautionary buffer].

\*\* Advice value 2022 relative to advice value 2021.

## Basis of the advice

**Table 3** Whiting in Division 27.6.b. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Precautionary approach
Management plan	The EU multiannual plan (MAP) for stocks in Western Waters and adjacent waters (EU, 2019) takes into account bycatch of this species. There is no agreed shared management plan with UK for this stock, and ICES provides advice according to ICES precautionary approach.

## Quality of the assessment

Only landings data are available. There is uncertainty on the accuracy of historical landings. Some discard data are available, but they are based on a low number of samples, so the estimates are too uncertain to quantify total discards.

## Issues relevant for the advice

The management area affecting this stock is much larger than the assessment area.

## Reference points

No reference points are defined for this stock.

## Basis of the assessment

**Table 4** Whiting in Division 6.b. The basis of the assessment.

ICES stock data category	6 ( <a href="#">ICES, 2021a</a> )
Assessment type	No assessment
Input data	Official landings statistics.
Discards and bycatch	Not included and considered uncertain
Indicators	None
Other information	None
Working group	Working Group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion ( <a href="#">WGCSE</a> )

## History of the advice, catch, and management

**Table 5** Whiting in Division 6.b. History of ICES advice, the agreed TAC, and official landings. Weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Landings corresponding to advice	Agreed TAC*	Official landings
2001	No advice	-		4000	14
2002	No advice	-		3500	7
2003	No advice	-		2000	13
2004	No advice	-		1600	4
2005	No advice	-		1600	4
2006	No advice	-		1360	105
2007	No advice	-		1020	17
2008	No advice	-		765	31
2009	No advice	-		547	16
2010	No advice	-		431	18
2011	No advice	-		323	9
2012	No increase in catch	-		307	1
2013	20% reduction in catches (last 3-year average)	11		292	3
2014	Same advice as for 2013	11		292	29

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Landings corresponding to advice	Agreed TAC*	Official landings
2015	Same advice as for 2013	11		263	52
2016	Precautionary approach (same advised catch value as provided for 2015)	≤ 11		213	33
2017	Precautionary approach (same advised catch value as provided for 2015)	≤ 11		213	40
2018	Precautionary approach (same advised catch value as provided for 2015)	≤ 11		213	43
2019	Precautionary approach		≤ 9	1113	89**
2020	Precautionary approach		≤ 9	937	38**
2021	Precautionary approach		≤ 9	937	
2022	Precautionary approach		≤ 7		
2023	Precautionary approach		≤ 7		
2024	Precautionary approach		≤ 7		

\* Subarea 6; EC waters of Division 5.b; EC and international waters of subareas 12 and 14.

\*\* Preliminary.

### History of the catch and landings

**Table 6** Whiting in Division 6.b. History of official landings by country. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	Faroe Islands	France	Ireland	Norway	Spain	UK (E.& W, NI)	UK (Scotland)	UK (all)	Total
1989	-	-	-	-	-	16	18		34
1990	-	-	-	-	-	6	482		488
1991	-	-	-	-	-	1	459		460
1992	-	-	-	-	-	5	283		288
1993	-	-	32	-	-	10	86		128
1994	-	-	10	-	-	2	68		80
1995	-	-	4	-	-	5	53		62
1996	-	-	23	-	-	26	36		85
1997	-	-	3	-	-	49	65		117
1998	-	-	1	-	-	20	23		44
1999	-	-	-	-	< 0.5	< 0.5	44		44
2000	-	-	-	-	-	< 0.5	58		58
2001	-	-	10	-	-	-	4		14
2002	-	-	-	-	-	-	7		7
2003	-	-	2	-	-	-	11		13
2004	< 0.5	-	3	-	-	-	1		4
2005	-	-	3	-	-	-	1		4
2006	-	-	104	-	-	-	1		105
2007	-	-	16	-	-	-	1		17
2008	-	-	23	-	-	-	8		31
2009	-	-	4	-	-	-	12		16
2010	-	-	2	-	-	-	16		18
2011	-	-	3	-	-	-	6		9
2012	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		1
2013	-	-	< 0.5	-	-	-	3		3
2014	-	-	6	-	-	-		23	29
2015	-	-	6	-	-	-		46	52
2016	-	-	9	1	-	-		20	33
2017	-	-	7	-	-	-		32	40
2018	-	-	9	< 0.5	-	-		34	43
2019*	-	< 0.5	24	-	-	-		65	89
2020*	-	< 0.5	13	-	-	-		25	38

\*Preliminary.

## Summary of the assessment

There is no assessment for this stock.

## 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>.

ICES. 2012. ICES Implementation of Advice for Data-limited Stocks in 2012 in its 2012 Advice. ICES CM 2012/ACOM:68. 42 pp.

ICES. 2021a. Advice on fishing opportunities. In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, section 1.1.1. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.7720>.

ICES. 2021. Working Group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion (WGCSE). Draft report. ICES Scientific Reports. 3:56. 1082 pp. <http://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8139>. Publication of the full report is expected at the end of October 2021.

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

Recommended citation: ICES. 2021. Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*) in Division 6.b (Rockall). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2021. ICES Advice 2021, whg.27.6b. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.7886>.