

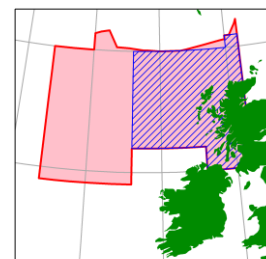
WEST OF SCOTLAND HERRING

(Division 6.a North)



ADVICE FOR 2024

ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches in 2024 should be no more than 1,454 t.



□ TAC/Management area
▨ Assessment area

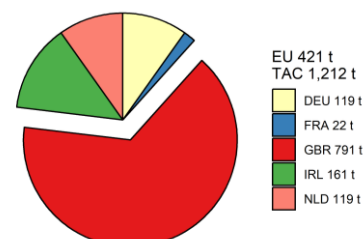
KEY POINTS

ICES Assessment Category	3 (Survey biomass trend)	
Management Plan	No	
Advice Basis	ICES MSY approach	Catch=1,454 t
Ranges	F _{MSY} Range Lower	Not Appropriate
	F _{MSY}	Not available
	F _{MSY} Range Upper	Not Appropriate
Landing Obligation	From 2015	No derogations or exemptions

MANAGEMENT IN 2023

- Since 2022 ICES gives separate advice for the 6.aN and 6.aS/7.b-c herring populations. These populations mix across the stock areas.
- In 2023, a TAC of 1,212 t was agreed for herring in 6.b and 6.aN, UK and international waters of 5.b. This supersedes the scientific monitoring TAC which was in place from 2016-2022.
- Since 2015 all targeted herring fishing is prohibited in the part of the ICES zones subject to this TAC between 56°N and 57°30'N, with the exception of a six nautical mile limit measured from the baseline of the United Kingdom's territorial sea.
- Irish and Dutch vessels are not allowed to fish herring inside the UK (Scottish) 6-12 nautical mile limits, including the outlying Hebridean Islands. German and French vessels have access to herring fishing between 6 and 12 nautical miles in Scottish waters in most areas, though not the mainland limits east of the Butt of Lewis.

2023 Quota Allocations for Herring in 5.b, 6.b and 6.aN



KEY STOCK CONSIDERATIONS

- This stock was benchmarked in 2022 and is now assessed separately from herring in 6.a South, 7.b-c. This was made possible by the development of a genetically split acoustic survey index, which is used as an indicator of stock development.
- The split survey biomass index is available from 2014-2022. The index decreased from 43,886 t in 2021 to 33,283 t in 2022. It is above the lowest observed level in 2019 (10,508 t).
- The current assessment represents autumn-spawning herring. Further genetic work is required to facilitate an assessment of the smaller Spring-spawning herring component in 6.a North. There is evidence that autumn-spawning herring in 6.a North are genetically the same population as the North Sea autumn-spawning stock (NSAS) and a combined assessment should be considered.
- Genetic sampling of the catch is also required as the stocks recover and the fishing expands.
- Catches from 6.a North have been below the monitoring TAC from 2019-2022. As a result, sampling levels are also low.