

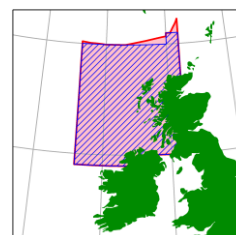
# WEST OF SCOTLAND COD

## Division 6.a



### ADVICE FOR 2023

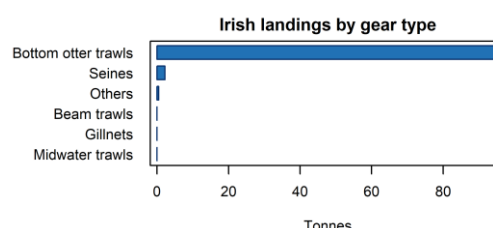
ICES advises that when the MSY approach and precautionary considerations are applied, there should be zero catch in each of the years 2023 and 2024.



■ TAC/Management area  
■ Assessment area

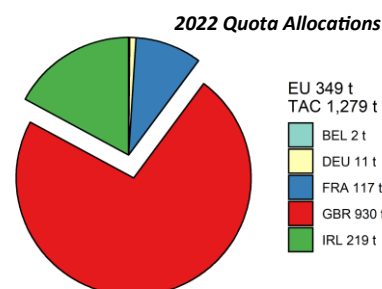
### KEY POINTS

ICES Assessment Category	I (Quantitative Assessment)	
Management Plan	WWMAP (bycatch)	
Advice Basis	ICES MSY approach	Catch=0 t
Ranges	F <sub>MSY</sub> Range Lower	Not Appropriate (bycatch)
	F <sub>MSY</sub>	Catch=809 t
	F <sub>MSY</sub> Range Upper	Not Appropriate (bycatch)
Landing Obligation	From 2019	No derogations or exemptions



### MANAGEMENT IN 2022

- Quota is exclusively for bycatch in fisheries for other species.
- Division 6.a cod falls under a quota exchange mechanism related to the Landing Obligation, through which up to 6% of national quota is made available to other Member States who lack quota.
- The TAC Area covers Division 6.a, EU and international waters of 5.b east of 12° 00' W. The assessment covers Division 6.a only and landings in the past have been adjusted to include substantial area misreporting estimates for landings reported in 4 but thought to be taken in 6.a.



### KEY STOCK CONSIDERATIONS

- The 2022 ICES advice for this stock is biennial and is relevant for 2023 and 2024.
- The stock collapsed in the early 1980s, with SSB dropping from 40,000 t to below 3,100 t in 2006, with no indications of recovery despite significant management measures.
- There is no targeted fishery for cod in Division 6.a. Landings are from bycatch in the mixed bottom trawl fishery targeting haddock, saithe, hake, anglerfish and megrim. ICES has provided a technical service for cod in Division 6.a which states that: "For cod in Division 6.a, catches in 2023 are estimated to be between 1,642 t and 2,562 t, assuming fishing mortality on cod does not change or increases by the same proportion as the change advised for haddock. Under the scenario resulting in lower catch, spawning-stock biomass (SSB) in 2024 is expected to decrease by 5.6% while the higher catch option is expected to result in a decrease in SSB of 44%."
- There is increasing evidence that cod in the north of 6.a are in fact part of the North Sea population. This will be investigated in the near future, ICES is identifying research needs and developing a roadmap for further research on cod in the northern shelf seas (including cod in the Celtic Seas).