

# ROCKALL HADDOCK

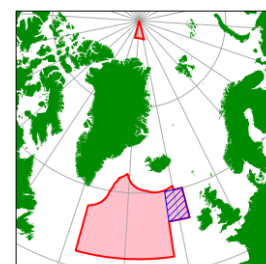
## Division 6.b



### ADVICE FOR 2023

ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches should be no more than 4,078 t in each of the years 2023 and 2024.

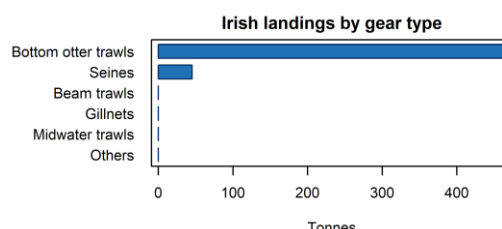
ICES notes the existence of a precautionary management plan, developed and adopted by some of the relevant management authorities for this stock.



■ TAC/Management area  
■ Assessment area

### KEY POINTS

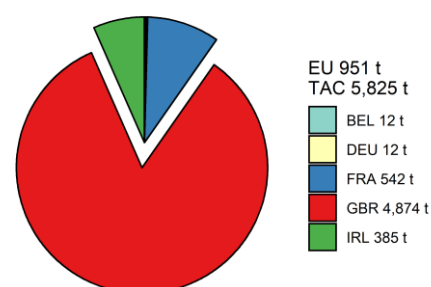
ICES Assessment Category	3 (Survey-Based Assessment)	
Management Plan	WVWMAP (target); No management plan has been agreed between all the relevant management authorities.	
Advice Basis	ICES MSY approach	Catch=4,078 t
Ranges	F <sub>MSY</sub> Range Lower	Not available
	F <sub>MSY</sub>	Not available
	F <sub>MSY</sub> Range Upper	Not available
Landing Obligation	From 2016	No derogations or exemptions



### MANAGEMENT IN 2022

- There is no internationally agreed TAC for haddock in Division 6.b. Since 2004 an autonomous TAC has been set for EU fleets (and UK fleets since 2021) operating in Division 6.b and Sub-areas 12 and 14.
- Part of Division 6.b falls (since 1999) within international waters fished by non EU vessels (mainly Russian).
- Following the NEAFC agreement in March 2001, NEAFC has maintained an area closure to all fishing except long-lining in the SW corner of the Rockall Bank, this continued in 2022. Data are inadequate to fully evaluate the impact of this measure on the stock status.
- The Irish fleet generally caught their full quota and in 2022 almost full uptake was achieved by October.

### 2022 Quota Allocations



### KEY STOCK CONSIDERATIONS

- Most of the Irish landings of Rockall haddock come from trips where haddock was the dominant species. They are mainly landed with megrim, saithe and anglerfish.
- The main Irish fleet catching haddock from Division 6.b uses otter trawls although there have also been some landings from demersal seiners since 2014.
- Advice for 2023 is down by 30% on the 2022 advice owing to a change in assessment basis (from category 1 to category 3) and a decline in the survey biomass indices. The advice reduction is capped in the new category 3 rule which is applied this year.
- In the past the Irish haddock fishery operated on the bank both within and beyond 12 nautical miles of Rockall. Since 2021 Irish fishing vessels have been excluded from within 12 nm.

- In 2022 ICES assessed the efficacy of the Rockall haddock closure for the protection of juvenile haddock and concluded that the overall impact of the current closure area continues to be difficult to assess. The Rockall Haddock Box does coincide with areas of high juvenile and adult haddock densities, with high densities also observed outside the box to the northeast. For most years since the closure, haddock densities of age classes 1+ have been higher inside than outside the box.

## Haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) in Division 6.b (Rockall)

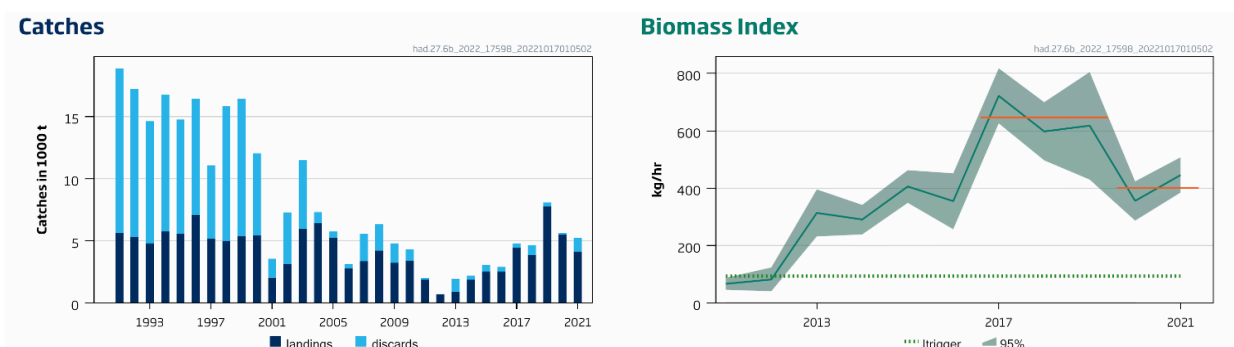
### ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches should be no more than 4078 tonnes in each of the years 2023 and 2024.

ICES notes the existence of a precautionary management plan, developed and adopted by some of the relevant management authorities for this stock.

### Stock development over time

The fishing pressure proxy on the stock is below  $F_{MSY}$  proxy (Figure 2), and the stock-size index is above MSY  $B_{trigger}$  proxy ( $I_{trigger}$ ).



**Figure 1** Haddock in Division 6.b. Summary of the stock assessment. ICES landings and discards, and stock biomass index from the Rock-WIBTS-Q3 survey. The horizontal orange lines indicate the average of the biomass index from 2017 to 2019 and from 2020 to 2021.

### Catch scenarios

ICES framework for category 3 stocks was applied (rfb rule, method 2.1, ICES, 2022c). A survey biomass index was used as an indicator of stock development. The advice is based on the recent advised catches (2022), multiplied by the ratio of the mean of the last two index values (index A) and the mean of the three preceding values (index B), a ratio of observed mean length in the catch relative to the target mean length, a biomass safeguard, and a precautionary multiplier. The stability clause was considered and applied to limit the decrease in catch advice to 30%. The discard rate (mean 2019–2021) was 9.2%.