

Cod (*Gadus morhua*) in Subdivision 5.b.1 (Faroe Plateau)

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach is applied, catches in 2026 should be no more than 6 075 tonnes. ICES is not in a position to advise on the corresponding level of fishing effort.

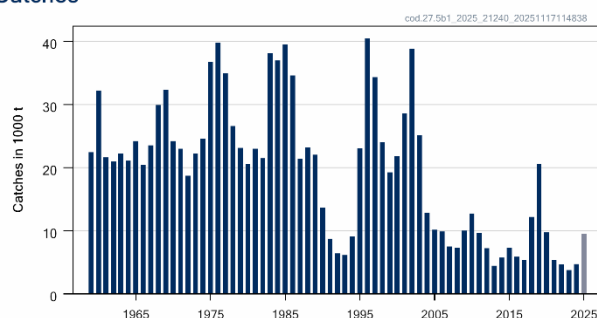
Non-fisheries conservation considerations

ICES has not identified any conservation aspects other than those related to the commercial fisheries.

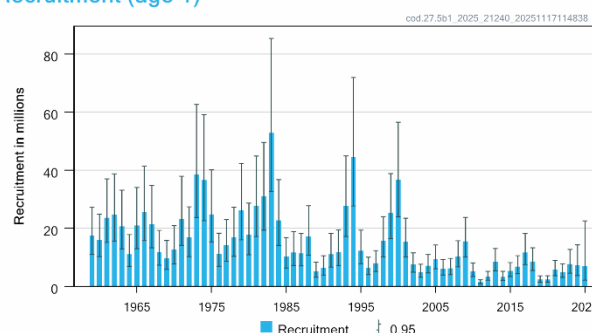
Stock development over time

Fishing pressure on the stock is above F_{MSY} and below F_{PA} ; spawning-stock size is below MSY $B_{trigger}$ and B_{PA} but above B_{lim} .

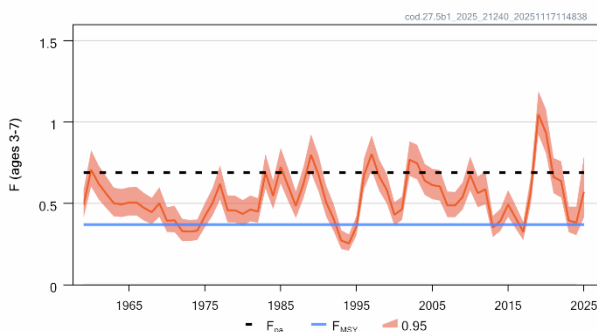
Catches



Recruitment (age 1)



F



SSB

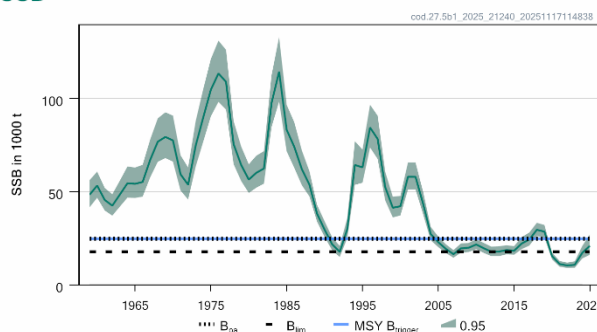


Figure 1 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Summary of the stock assessment. Catch in 2025, shaded in a lighter colour, is estimated for the full year based on reported catch in Q1–Q3 and used in the assessment to produce an estimate of F in 2025.

Catch scenarios

Table 1 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Assumptions made for the interim year and in the forecast.

Variable	Value	Notes
$F_{ages\ 3-7}$ (2025)	0.57	Based on catch-at-age estimate of 9 514 tonnes in 2025
Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2026)	22933	Based on $F = 0.57$; tonnes
$R_{age\ 1}$ (2026)	5713	Median of resampled estimates from 2013 to 2023; in thousands
Landings (2025)	9514	Catch estimate for 2025 based on catch statistics to the end of September extrapolated to the entire year; in tonnes
Discards (2025)	0	Discarding is considered negligible; in tonnes

Table 2 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Annual catch scenarios. All weights are in tonnes.

Basis	Total catch (2026)	$F_{(3-7)}$ (2026)	Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2027)	% SSB change*	% advice change**	% probability of $SSB \leq B_{lim}$ (2027)
ICES advice basis						
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: $F_{MSY} \times SSB_{2026}/MSY_{trigger}$	6075	0.34	28455	24	113	5.7
Other scenarios						
$F = 0$	0	0	35757	56	-100	0.42
$F = F_{2025}$	9322	0.58	24474	7	227	16.1
$F = F_{PA}$	10623	0.69	22914	0	273	22

* SSB 2027 relative to SSB 2026 (22933 tonnes).

**The advice value for 2026 relative to the advice value 2025 as issued in 2024 (2 848 tonnes).

The advice for 2026 is higher than the advice in 2025 because the stock has increased due to improved recruitment in the last 5 years and is now above B_{lim} .

The fishing mortality in 2025 differs slightly between the assessment ($F = 0.57$, based on catch-at-age data of 9 514 tonnes) and the forecast ($F = 0.58$).

Basis of the advice

Table 3 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach
Management plan	A management plan (Fiskidagaskipan og umsitingarættan, 2019) was implemented in 2021, but ICES has not been requested to evaluate it

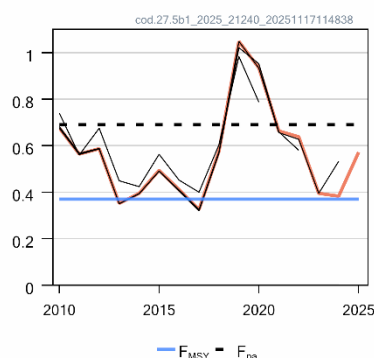
Quality of the assessment

Starting with the summer survey in 2021, there was a change in survey vessel and a further change in survey footgear in the summer 2024 survey. The indices have not been adjusted for these changes and therefore may not be directly comparable.

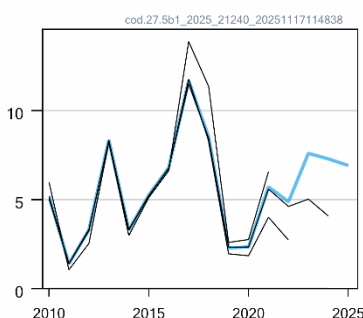
The assessment is mainly driven by catches, with little weight given to survey indices.

In recent years recruitment has been underestimated in the assessment.

F (ages 3-7)



Rec (age 1; Millions)



SSB (1000 t)

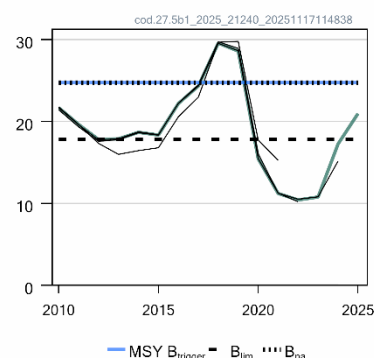


Figure 2 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Historical assessment results. Results of the last five assessments are plotted, with the solid coloured line representing the current assessment. The results for the 2021 assessment are prior to the interbenchmark and are not directly comparable to the results for the other years.

Issues relevant for the advice

Faroe Plateau cod and Faroe haddock are caught in a mixed fishery.

Faroe Plateau cod is assessed to have been in a poor state (below B_{lim} from 2020 to 2024) but is now estimated to be above B_{lim} .

In 2021 the Faroese authorities implemented a management plan (Fiskidagaskipan og umsitingarættan, 2019) with a control rule that regulates the number of fishing days for cod, haddock, and saithe in the Faroe Plateau fishery. The management plan has not been evaluated by ICES, and therefore ICES bases its advice on the MSY approach.

ICES cannot quantify the relationship between effort and F for this stock.

Reference points

Table 4 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Reference points, values, and their technical basis. All weights are in tonnes.

Framework	Reference point	Value	Technical basis	Source
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach	MSY $B_{trigger}$	24 739	B_{PA}	ICES (2022)
	F_{MSY}	0.37	Stochastic simulations assuming segmented regression, Ricker and Beverton and Holt stock–recruitment relationships	ICES (2022)
Precautionary approach	B_{lim}	17 803	B_{loss} in 1992 from the 2022 assessment	ICES (2022)
	B_{PA}	24 739	$B_{lim} \times \exp(1.645 \times \sigma)$, where $\sigma = 0.20$	ICES (2022)
	F_{PA}	0.69	F_{P05} ; the F that leads to spawning-stock biomass (SSB) $\geq B_{lim}$ with 95% probability	ICES (2022)
Management plan	SSB_{mgt}	Not applicable		
	F_{mgt}	Not applicable		

Basis of the assessment

Table 5 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	1 (ICES, 2023)
Assessment type	SAM with catch-at-age data and age-disaggregated indices, using catches in the model and in the forecast (ICES, 2025)
Input data	Commercial catches, ages, and length frequencies from catch sampling; survey indices (FO-GFS-Q1, G1264, and FO-GFS-Q3, G3284); annual maturity data from FO-GFS-Q1 (G1264); natural mortality set at 0.2. Preliminary estimate of catch-at-age in the year (January to September) in which the assessment is carried out.
Discards and bycatch	Discarding is considered negligible
Indicators	Co-occurrence of high recruitment of cod with sandeel abundance
Other information	The stock was interbenchmarked in 2022 (ICES, 2022)
Working group	North-Western Working Group (NWWG)

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 6 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. ICES advice and catch. All weights are in tonnes.

Fishing year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Agreed total allowable catch (TAC)***	ICES catch
1987	No increase in F	< 31000		21391
1988	No increase in F (revised estimate)	< 29000 (23000)		23182
1989	No increase in F	< 19000		22068
1990	No increase in F	< 20000		13692
1991	Total allowable catch (TAC)	< 16000		8750
1992	No increase in F	< 20000		6396
1993	No fishing	0		6107
1994	No fishing	0	8500/12500*,**	9046
1995	No fishing	0	12500*	23045
1996	F at lowest possible level	-	20000**	40422
1997	80% of F(95)	< 24000		34304
1998	30% reduction in effort from 1996/97	-		24005
1999	F less than proposed F_{PA} (0.35)	< 19000		19245
2000	F less than proposed F_{PA} (0.35)	< 20000		21833
2001	F less than proposed F_{PA} (0.35)	< 16000		28577
2002	75% of F(2000)	< 22000		38834
2003	75% of F(2001)	< 32000		25167
2004	25% reduction in effort	-		12840
2005	Rebuilding plan involving large reduction	-		10119
2006	Rebuilding plan involving large reduction	-		9844
2007	Rebuilding plan involving large reduction in effort	-		7511
2008	No fishing; development of a rebuilding plan	0		7315
2009	No fishing; development of a rebuilding plan	0		9979
2010	No fishing; development of a rebuilding plan	0		12762
2011	Reduce F to below F_{pa}	< 16000		9692
2012	Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) framework, reduce F by 30%	< 10000		7205
2013	MSY approach, $F < 0.20$	< 4800		4473
2014	MSY approach, reduce F by 69%	< 3600		5711
2015	MSY approach, reduce F by 23%	< 4500		7329
2016	Lowest possible level (LPL) and develop a mixed-fishery management plan	-		5876
2017	MSY approach ($F \leq 0.16$)	≤ 2800		5360
2018	MSY approach ($F \leq 0.22$)	≤ 4579		12214
2019^	MSY approach	≤ 9354		20609
2020	MSY approach	≤ 11679		9748
2021	MSY approach	≤ 6247		5412
2022	MSY approach	≤ 2206		4656
2023	MSY approach	0		3732
2024	MSY approach	0		4682
2025	MSY approach	≤ 2848		
2026	MSY approach	≤ 6075		

* From 01 September in the quota year to 31 August the following year.

** The TAC was increased during the quota year.

*** Not applicable since 1997.

^ Since 2019 fishing year equals calendar year

History of the catch and landings

Table 7 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Catch distribution by fleet in 2024 as estimated by ICES. All weights are in tonnes.

Catch	Landings				Discards
4682	Longlines 53%	Handlines 13%	Trawls 32%	Gillnets 2%	Negligible
	4 682				

There are no catches reported from the NEAFC regulatory areas.

Table 8 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. History of commercial landings; catches in this table are those officially reported by each country and may differ from the ICES estimated catch. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	Denmark	Faroe Islands	France	Germany	Iceland	Norway	Greenland	Portugal	UK	Total
1986	8	34492	4	8		83			-	34595
1987	30	21303	17	12		21			8	21391
1988	10	22272	17	5		163				22467
1989		20535		7		285				20827
1990		12232		24		124				12380
1991		8203	*	16		89			1	8309
1992		5938	3**	12		39			74	6066
1993		5744	1**	+		57			186	5988
1994		8724		2**		36			56	8818
1995		19079	2**	2		38			43	19164
1996		39406	1**	+		507			126	40040
1997		33556		+		410			61**	34027
1998		23308				405			27**	23740
1999		19156		39		450			51	19696
2000		***	1	2		374			18	395
2001		29762	9**	9		531*			50	30361
2002		40602	20	6	5	573			42	41248
2003		30259	14	7		447			15	30742
2004		17540	2	3**		414		1	15	17975
2005		13556				201			24	13781
2006		11629	7	1**		49	5			11691
2007		9905	1**			71	7		360	10344
2008		9394	1			40			383	9818
2009		10736	1			14	7		300	11058
2010		13878	1			10			312	14206
2011		11348								11348
2012		8437			28					8466
2013		5331			20		2			5333
2014		6655				2			226	6883
2015		7812				33	14		367	8174
2016		6736				31	5		456	7232
2017		6215	2			16	5		388	6625
2018		13297	2			69			504	13872
2019		22282	1			219			233	22735
2020		10614	2			163			0	10779
2021		5875	3			65			0	5942
2022		4855	1			26			505	5387
2023		4835	2			14			239	5090
2024		5929	2			104			243	6278

* Included in ICES Subdivision 5.b.2.

** Reported as ICES Division 5.b.

*** No reported catch.

Summary of the assessment

Table 9 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Assessment summary. Weights are in tonnes and recruitment in thousands. “High” and “low” refer to 95% confidence intervals.

Year	Recruitment (age 1)			Spawning-stock biomass (SSB)			Total catch	Fishing pressure (ages 3-7)		
	Low	R	High	Low	SSB	High		Low	F	High
1959	11027	17329	27234	41643	48382	56212	22415	0.41	0.49	0.59
1960	10231	15929	24803	46754	53311	60788	32255	0.60	0.71	0.83
1961	15124	23648	36978	39927	45574	52021	21598	0.53	0.62	0.73
1962	15573	24550	38703	37175	42520	48634	20967	0.47	0.56	0.67
1963	12908	20670	33100	42008	48494	55981	22215	0.42	0.50	0.60
1964	6819	11023	17817	46826	54550	63549	21078	0.42	0.50	0.59
1965	12962	21005	34040	46671	54218	62986	24212	0.43	0.51	0.60
1966	15754	25528	41366	47366	55249	64445	20418	0.43	0.51	0.60
1967	13251	21446	34710	57774	67175	78106	23562	0.39	0.47	0.56
1968	7290	11850	19262	66095	76867	89394	29930	0.37	0.45	0.54
1969	5849	9602	15765	68063	79419	92669	32371	0.42	0.50	0.60
1970	7700	12693	20924	66151	77524	90852	24183	0.33	0.39	0.48
1971	14069	23088	37891	50645	59353	69559	23010	0.32	0.40	0.49
1972	10247	16750	27379	45834	53749	63031	18727	0.27	0.33	0.41
1973	23665	38507	62656	63536	74766	87981	22228	0.27	0.33	0.40
1974	22620	36580	59156	76951	89971	105194	24581	0.28	0.33	0.40
1975	15299	24777	40128	90509	104768	121273	36775	0.35	0.42	0.50
1976	6885	11228	18309	98236	113496	131125	39799	0.43	0.50	0.59
1977	8678	14129	23004	94110	108978	126196	34927	0.52	0.62	0.73
1978	10303	16768	27291	64834	75499	87919	26585	0.38	0.46	0.55
1979	16013	26044	42358	55742	64339	74261	23112	0.38	0.46	0.55
1980	10861	17637	28639	49357	56526	64736	20513	0.37	0.44	0.52
1981	17183	27755	44831	52192	60171	69370	22963	0.39	0.46	0.55
1982	19316	30944	49571	54337	62460	71797	21489	0.38	0.45	0.53
1983	32704	52832	85348	84639	97510	112339	38133	0.59	0.69	0.81
1984	14044	22708	36716	98467	114479	133094	36979	0.47	0.55	0.64
1985	6302	10296	16823	71722	83261	96656	39484	0.62	0.72	0.84
1986	7136	11600	18856	62866	74109	87363	34595	0.51	0.61	0.71
1987	7050	11347	18262	53480	62119	72155	21391	0.41	0.49	0.57
1988	10731	17257	27752	47451	53812	61026	23182	0.53	0.62	0.72
1989	3109	5082	8307	34001	38240	43007	22068	0.69	0.80	0.93
1990	3878	6392	10535	25758	29666	34166	13692	0.57	0.68	0.80
1991	6646	11016	18257	18555	21781	25567	8750	0.42	0.51	0.61
1992	7153	11790	19433	14986	17699	20903	6396	0.33	0.40	0.50
1993	17184	27785	44927	25148	30046	35898	6107	0.22	0.27	0.34
1994	27674	44618	71937	53721	64358	77100	9046	0.21	0.26	0.31
1995	7815	12291	19332	54812	63095	72629	23045	0.30	0.36	0.42
1996	4081	6395	10019	73747	84452	96711	40422	0.59	0.68	0.78
1997	5096	7913	12286	67576	78337	90812	34304	0.70	0.80	0.92
1998	10106	15562	23963	45319	52432	60661	24005	0.58	0.67	0.77
1999	16455	25274	38820	36215	41407	47342	19245	0.50	0.58	0.68
2000	23929	36767	56494	37265	42188	47761	21833	0.37	0.43	0.51
2001	10081	15383	23475	51207	58022	65745	28577	0.40	0.47	0.54
2002	4873	7500	11544	51201	57960	65613	38834	0.67	0.77	0.88
2003	3115	4872	7620	37836	43456	49909	25167	0.65	0.75	0.86
2004	4622	7120	10966	23926	27300	31150	12840	0.55	0.64	0.74
2005	6041	9279	14253	20266	22913	25905	10119	0.53	0.61	0.71
2006	3888	5972	9173	17097	19302	21792	9844	0.52	0.61	0.71
2007	4019	6220	9627	14575	16495	18668	7511	0.42	0.49	0.57
2008	6712	10272	15719	17315	19637	22270	7315	0.42	0.49	0.57
2009	10049	15450	23754	17624	19910	22492	9979	0.46	0.54	0.63
2010	3368	5209	8055	19210	21678	24464	12762	0.58	0.68	0.79

Year	Recruitment (age 1)			Spawning-stock biomass (SSB)			Total catch	Fishing pressure (ages 3-7)		
	Low	R	High	Low	SSB	High		Low	F	High
2011	880	1400	2226	17137	19635	22497	9692	0.48	0.56	0.67
2012	2108	3300	5167	15429	17788	20507	7205	0.50	0.59	0.70
2013	5339	8349	13055	15434	17881	20716	4473	0.29	0.35	0.42
2014	2094	3291	5173	16408	18669	21241	5711	0.33	0.40	0.47
2015	3364	5251	8195	16177	18337	20786	7329	0.42	0.49	0.58
2016	4370	6791	10554	19199	22185	25635	5876	0.35	0.41	0.49
2017	7494	11670	18171	21069	24320	28072	5360	0.28	0.33	0.39
2018	5478	8523	13260	26222	29557	33315	12214	0.50	0.58	0.67
2019	1462	2299	3616	25403	28580	32156	20609	0.92	1.05	1.19
2020	1493	2332	3644	13689	15439	17414	9748	0.81	0.93	1.08
2021	3659	5713	8918	9781	11202	12829	5412	0.56	0.66	0.78
2022	3074	4877	7737	9071	10417	11962	4656	0.54	0.64	0.76
2023	4534	7593	12714	9165	10775	12667	3732	0.32	0.40	0.48
2024	3709	7283	14301	14202	17240	20929	4682	0.31	0.38	0.48
2025	2122	6912	22513	16165	20958	27172	9514*	0.41	0.57	0.79

* Catch estimate based on catch statistics to the end of September extrapolated to the entire year.

Sources and references

Fiskidagaskipan og umsitingarættan. Frágreiðing og tilmæli frá arbeiðsbólkinum at gera uppskot til umsitingarættan og at eftirmeta skipanina í fiskiskapinum eftir botnfiski undir Føroyum. (Fisheries management plan and harvest control rule for cod, haddock and saithe in Faroese waters [in Faroese]). 2019. https://lms.cdn.fo/media/12444/fiskidagaskipan-og-umsitingar%C3%A6ttan-fr%C3%A1grei%C3%B0ing-fr%C3%A1-arbei%C3%B0sb%C3%B3lki-mai-2019.pdf?s=k4aSmLc1W4eXb_RidnITC-WYwDA

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