Haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds)

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach is applied, catches in 2027 should be no more than 23 894 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 relating to the commercial fisheries.

Stock development over time

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

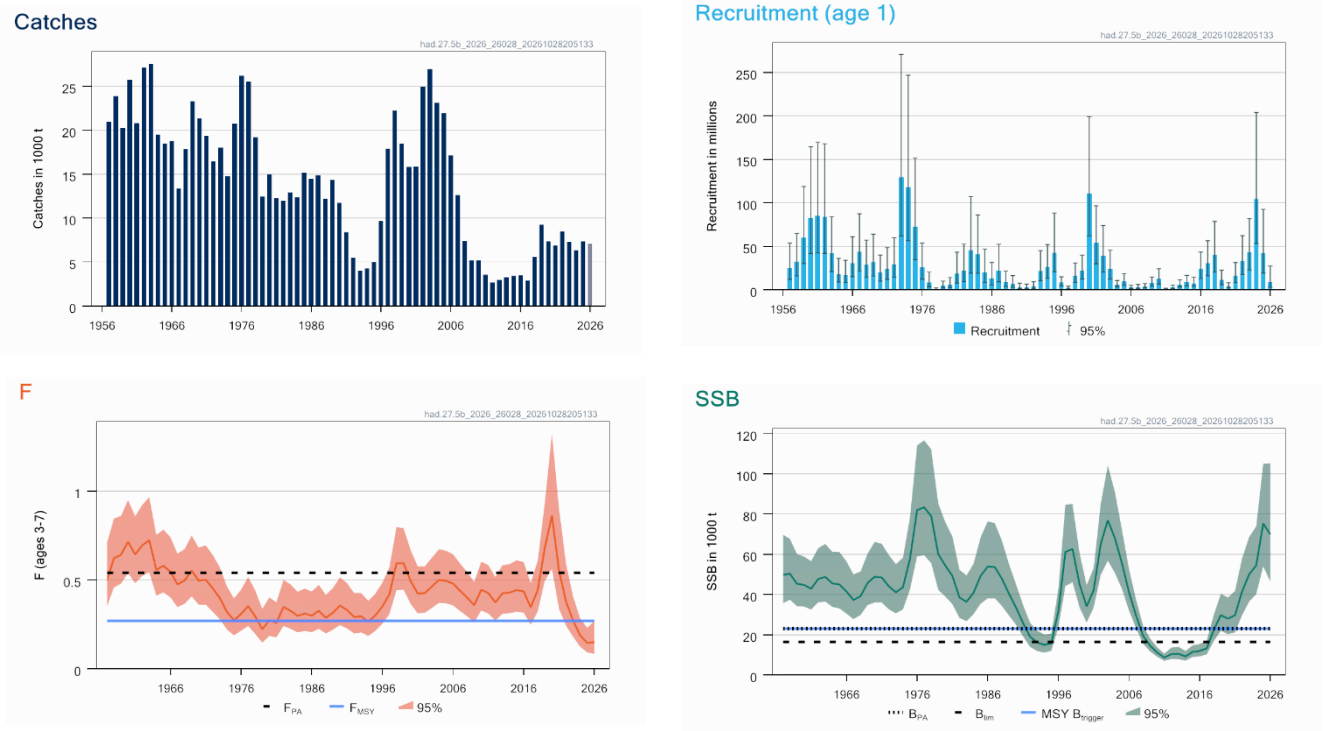


Figure 1 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). Summary of the stock assessment. Catch in 2026, shaded in a lighter colour, is estimated for the full year based on reported catch in Q1–Q3 and used in the assessment to produce an estimate of F in 2026.

Catch scenarios

Table 1 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). Assumptions made for the interim year and in the forecast.

Variable	Value	Notes
$F_{ages\ 3–7}$ (2026)	0.151	Based on catch estimate of 7 101 tonnes in 2026
Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2027)	113 693	In tonnes
$R_{age\ 1}$ (2027)	12 688	Median of resampled estimates from 2000–2025; in thousands
Landings (2026)	7 101	Catch estimate for 2026 based on catch statistics to the end of September extrapolated to the entire year; in tonnes
Discards (2026)	0	Discard is considered negligible; in tonnes

Table 2 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). Annual catch scenarios. Weights are in tonnes.

Basis	Total catch (2027)	$F_{ages\ 3–7}$ (2027)	Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2028)	% SSB change*	% advice change**
ICES advice basis					
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: F_{MSY}	23 894	0.27	105 467	−7	22
Other scenarios					
F = 0	0	0	133 619	18	−100
$F = F_{2026}$	15 094	0.157	115 797	2	−23
$F = F_{PA}$	39 762	0.54	87 187	−23	102

* SSB 2028 relative to SSB 2027 (113 693 tonnes).
** The advice value for 2027 relative to the advice value for 2026 as issued in 2025 (19 653 tonnes).

The 22% increase in catch advice is due to the correction of an error in the input data for the assessment, which resulted in a higher estimate of spawning-stock biomass (SSB).

Basis of the advice

Table 3 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach
Management plan	A management plan (Fiskidagaskipan og umsitingarætlan, 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.

In the 2026 assessment, a calculation error in the summer survey age-based indices was corrected. The error had caused some fish in the 30–40 cm length range to be omitted during 2014–2025. Age allocation in both survey time-series was also revised to make greater use of annual age–length keys from age 1 onwards. These revisions led to higher estimates of spawning-stock biomass. Subsequently, fishing pressure (F) was also revised downwards.

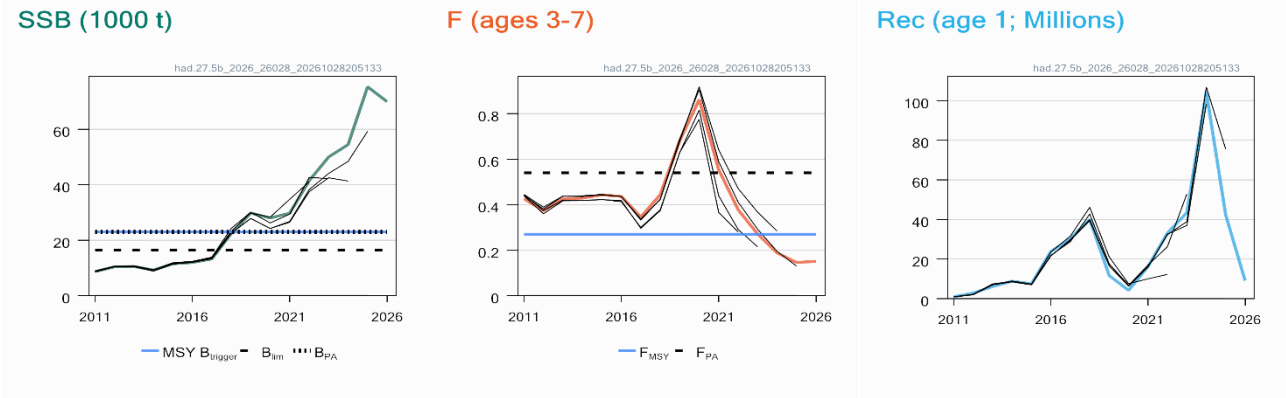


Figure 2 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). Historical assessment results. Results of the last five assessments are plotted, with the solid coloured line representing the current assessment. The final year F in 2026 for the current assessment is based on extrapolated catch.

Issues relevant for the advice

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

In 2021, the Faroese authorities implemented a management plan (Fiskidagaskipan og umsitingarætlan, 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; 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 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). Reference points, values, and their technical basis. Weights are in tonnes.

Framework	Reference point	Value	Technical basis	Source
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach	MSY $B_{trigger}$	23 030	B_{PA}	ICES (2022)
	F_{MSY}	0.27	Stochastic simulations based on a segmented regression stock–recruitment relationship	ICES (2022)
Precautionary approach	B_{lim}	16 458	The lowest biomass that has led to good recruitment; in 1994 from the 2022 assessment	ICES (2022)
	B_{PA}	23 030	$B_{lim} \times \exp(1.645 \times \sigma)$, where $\sigma = 0.204$	ICES (2022)
	F_{PA}	0.54	F_{P05}; the F that leads to spawning-stock biomass (SSB) ≥ B_{lim} with 95% probability	ICES (2022)
Management plan	SSB_{mgt}	Not applicable		
	F_{mgt}	Not applicable		

Basis of the assessment

Table 5 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	1 (ICES, 2025)
Assessment type	SAM with catch-at-age data and age-disaggregated indices, using catches in the model and in the forecast (ICES, 2026)
Input data	Commercial catches (mainly Faroese 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	None
Other information	Interbenchmark in 2022 (ICES, 2022)
Working group report	Northwestern Working Group (NWWG)

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 6 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). ICES advice and catch. Weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Agreed total allowable catch (TAC)*	ICES catch
1987	No increase in F	17 000		14 882
1988	No increase in F	18 000		12 178
1989	No increase in F	11 000		14 325
1990	No increase in F	11 000		11 726
1991	Total allowable catch (TAC)	11 000		8 429
1992	TAC	13 000–15 000		5 476
1993	Reduction in F	8 000		4 026
1994	No fishing	0	6 200	4 252
1995	No fishing	0	6 200	4 948
1996	TAC	8 300	12 600	9 642
1997	F = F(95)	9 300		17 924

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Agreed total allowable catch (TAC)*	ICES catch
1998	F = F(96)	16 000		22 210
1999	F < proposed F_{pa} (0.25)	9 000		18 482
2000	F < proposed F_{pa} (0.25)	22 000		15 799
2001	F < proposed F_{pa} (0.25)	20 000		15 891
2002	No fishing	0		24 929
2003	F < proposed F_{PA} (0.25)	12 000		26 942
2004	F < proposed F_{PA} (0.25)	21 000		23 100
2005	F< proposed F_{PA} (0.25)	19 000		21 944
2006	F < proposed F_{PA} (0.25)	18 000		17 154
2007	F < 0.20	16 000		12 630
2008	F_{PA}	14 000		7 388
2009	No fishing and recovery plan	0		5 196
2010	No fishing and recovery plan	0		5 202
2011	No direct fishing; minimize bycatch, implement recovery plan	0		3 546
2012	No direct fishing; minimize bycatch, implement recovery plan	0		2 634
2013	No direct fishing; minimize bycatch, implement recovery plan	0		2 924
2014	No direct fishing; minimize bycatch, implement recovery plan	0		3 252
2015	No direct fishing; minimize bycatch, implement recovery plan	0		3 421
2016	No direct fishing; minimize bycatch, implement recovery plan	0		3 470
2017	Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach (F ≤ 0.17)	≤ 3 500		2 863
2018	MSY approach (F ≤ 0.165)	≤ 4 570		5 549
2019	MSY approach	≤ 7 366		9 218
2020	MSY approach	≤ 11 590		7 329
2021	MSY approach	≤ 11 440		6 882
2022	MSY approach	≤ 8 639		8 444
2023	MSY approach	≤ 11 853		7 310
2024	MSY approach	≤ 12 145		6 318
2025	MSY approach	≤ 12 204		7 368
2026	MSY approach	≤ 19 653		
2027	MSY approach	≤ 23 894		

* Not applicable since 1997.

History of the catch and landings

Table 7 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). Catch distribution by fleet in 2025 as estimated by ICES. Weights are in tonnes.

Catch	Landings		Discards
7 368	Longlines 76%	Trawls 24%	Negligible
	7 368		

There are no reported catches in NEAFC regulatory areas.

Table 8 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). History of commercial catch by country. Weights are in tonnes.

Year	Faroe Islands	UK (England)	France	Germany	Iceland	Norway	UK (Scotland)	Spain	Greenland	Russia	Total
2000	15185	19	6	1	0	403	185	0	0	0	15 799
2001	15406	4	8	2	0	323	148	0	0	0	15 891
2002	24474	11	2	6	4	255	177	0	0	0	24 929
2003	26419	14	4	1	0	319	185	0	0	0	26 942
2004	22589	8	0	6	0	246	186	49	0	16	23 100
2005	20616	1	0	0	0	257	1 070	0	0	0	21 944
2006	16975	1	12	1	0	58	106	0	1	0	17 154
2007	12499	0	4	0	0	69	50	0	9	0	12 631
2008	7284	0	3	0	0	31	65	0	0	10	7393

Year	Faroe Islands	UK (England)	France	Germany	Iceland	Norway	UK (Scotland)	Spain	Greenland	Russia	Total
2009	5087	0	2	0	0	11	91	0	6	0	5197
2010	5110	0	1	0	0	6	73	0	12	0	5202
2011	3544	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3546
2012	2631	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2634
2013	2924	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2924
2014	2827	350	0	0	0	2	74	0	0	0	3252
2015	2966	428	1	0	0	5	21	0	0	0	3421
2016	3201	252	5	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	3470
2017	2771	86	1	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	2863
2018	5383	143	0	0	0	23	0	0	0	0	5549
2019	9010	167	0	0	0	42	0	0	0	0	9218
2020	7095	183	1	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	7329
2021	6859	0	4	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	6882
2022	8195	240	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	8444
2023	6695	587	0	0	0	28	0	0	0	0	7310
2024	5631	627	1	0	0	59	0	0	0	0	6318
2025*	6550	699	1	0	0	118	0	0	0	0	7368

* Preliminary.

Summary of the assessment

Table 9 Haddock in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). Assessment summary. Recruitment is in thousands. Weights are in tonnes.

Year	Recruitment (age 1)			Spawning-stock biomass (SSB)			Total catch	Fishing pressure (ages 3–7)		
	Low	R	High	Low	SSB	High		Low	F	High
1957	12090	25501	53793	35631	49880	69827	20995	0.35	0.50	0.71
1958	16145	32363	64872	37419	50323	67678	23871	0.46	0.62	0.85
1959	30345	60052	118843	34203	45368	60178	20239	0.48	0.64	0.86
1960	41832	82960	164526	34030	44771	58903	25727	0.54	0.72	0.95
1961	42463	84862	169596	32530	42915	56617	20831	0.48	0.64	0.86
1962	42008	83997	167956	36129	47748	63103	27151	0.52	0.69	0.92
1963	21063	42056	83970	36488	48765	65172	27571	0.54	0.72	0.97
1964	9003	18034	36126	33845	45548	61299	19490	0.41	0.56	0.75
1965	8456	16984	34113	33090	45007	61214	18479	0.43	0.58	0.78
1966	15160	30401	60968	30484	41513	56532	18766	0.40	0.55	0.74
1967	21705	43597	87572	27780	37283	50036	13381	0.35	0.48	0.65
1968	14289	28611	57287	29867	39226	51518	17852	0.37	0.50	0.67
1969	15982	31977	63980	34753	45835	60450	23272	0.41	0.55	0.75
1970	9958	19978	40081	36050	48868	66244	21361	0.36	0.50	0.68
1971	12061	24222	48646	35995	48469	65266	19393	0.36	0.50	0.70
1972	14600	29577	59919	32613	44116	59676	16485	0.32	0.45	0.64
1973	61957	129522	270768	30644	41112	55154	18035	0.28	0.40	0.57
1974	56599	118225	246950	32622	43643	58387	14773	0.22	0.32	0.46
1975	34698	72594	151878	42524	57871	78757	20715	0.188	0.27	0.40
1976	12184	25624	53890	58934	82024	114162	26211	0.22	0.31	0.45
1977	3298	8221	20495	59538	83354	116697	25555	0.24	0.35	0.52
1978	369	932	2355	55530	78963	112284	19200	0.196	0.30	0.44
1979	2155	4663	10089	42279	60072	85354	12424	0.147	0.22	0.34
1980	2577	6052	14211	38947	54403	75993	15016	0.185	0.27	0.40
1981	7808	18397	43344	35166	49229	68914	12233	0.177	0.26	0.38
1982	9448	22283	52554	28383	38544	52343	11937	0.24	0.35	0.50
1983	19201	45432	107499	26736	36387	49522	12894	0.23	0.33	0.48
1984	19130	40560	85994	30265	40961	55438	12378	0.21	0.30	0.43
1985	8406	19865	46946	35468	49339	68634	15143	0.21	0.31	0.45
1986	5596	13272	31479	38096	53962	76436	14477	0.21	0.30	0.44

Year	Recruitment (age 1)			Spawning-stock biomass (SSB)			Total catch	Fishing pressure (ages 3–7)		
	Low	R	High	Low	SSB	High		Low	F	High
1987	9219	21979	52402	38117	53676	75585	14882	0.23	0.33	0.47
1988	3850	9156	21775	34318	47918	66907	12178	0.199	0.29	0.42
1989	2930	6920	16343	29609	40485	55355	14325	0.22	0.32	0.46
1990	1404	3305	7780	24968	33591	45191	11726	0.25	0.36	0.52
1991	1215	2848	6675	19157	25847	34873	8429	0.23	0.33	0.48
1992	1699	3977	9312	13939	19017	25944	5476	0.199	0.29	0.43
1993	10597	21881	45179	11872	16206	22123	4026	0.21	0.30	0.43
1994	13217	26215	51996	11125	14979	20166	4252	0.185	0.27	0.38
1995	20672	42752	88418	12019	15751	20642	4948	0.21	0.30	0.42
1996	4515	8249	15071	23667	31840	42835	9642	0.25	0.35	0.49
1997	1143	2258	4460	44188	61198	84756	17924	0.31	0.42	0.57
1998	8605	16319	30947	46155	62650	85040	22210	0.44	0.59	0.80
1999	12489	22347	39984	33510	45112	60730	18482	0.45	0.59	0.79
2000	61718	110877	199191	26016	34103	44704	15799	0.37	0.49	0.67
2001	30003	53847	96643	33559	42246	53180	15891	0.31	0.42	0.58
2002	20229	38713	74085	49755	65172	85366	24929	0.32	0.43	0.58
2003	12500	23862	45550	56796	76944	104239	26942	0.34	0.46	0.63
2004	3302	5979	10827	50734	68008	91164	23100	0.37	0.50	0.67
2005	5186	9862	18754	42720	55562	72263	21944	0.37	0.50	0.67
2006	1452	2777	5313	32001	41109	52810	17154	0.36	0.48	0.65
2007	1699	3244	6193	23210	29516	37535	12631	0.33	0.44	0.59
2008	2118	3918	7248	15475	19449	24444	7393	0.30	0.40	0.55
2009	4055	7719	14691	11648	14551	18179	5197	0.26	0.36	0.49
2010	6611	12688	24351	9029	11130	13721	5203	0.33	0.45	0.60
2011	476	931	1820	7047	8683	10698	3546	0.31	0.43	0.58
2012	1482	2830	5405	7917	10396	13650	2634	0.27	0.37	0.52
2013	3190	6082	11596	7893	10542	14080	2924	0.31	0.43	0.58
2014	4628	8772	16627	7106	9222	11968	3252	0.31	0.43	0.59
2015	3935	7522	14380	8942	11491	14766	3421	0.32	0.44	0.61
2016	13009	23792	43514	9268	11975	15474	3470	0.32	0.44	0.60
2017	16257	30301	56475	10232	13235	17120	2863	0.25	0.35	0.48
2018	20316	40000	78758	16833	22458	29962	5549	0.32	0.44	0.61
2019	6015	11661	22608	21959	29791	40416	9218	0.50	0.68	0.94
2020	2117	4178	8246	20329	28001	38570	7329	0.56	0.86	1.32
2021	8352	16189	31379	21124	29728	41836	6882	0.34	0.55	0.91
2022	17683	33207	62361	29647	41456	57969	8444	0.24	0.38	0.59
2023	22983	43410	81991	36465	50001	68563	7310	0.180	0.27	0.41
2024	53386	104368	204036	40106	54451	73926	6318	0.124	0.188	0.28
2025	19263	42254	92688	53930	75303	105147	7368	0.092	0.146	0.23
2026*	2985	9056	27471	46488	69945	105238	7101	0.085	0.151	0.27

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

Sources and references

Fiskidagaskipan og umsitingarætlan. 2019. Frágreiðing og tilmæli frá arbeiðsbólkinum at gera uppskot til umsitingarætlan 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*]). 34 pp. https://lms.cdn.fo/media/12444/fiskidagaskipan-og-umsitingar%C3%A6tlan-fr%C3%A1grei%C3%B0ing-fr%C3%A1-arbei%C3%B0sb%C3%B3lki-mai-2019.pdf?s=k4aSmLc1W4eXb_RidnITC-WYwDA

ICES. 2022. Interbenchmark protocol on Faroese demersal stocks (IBPFAR 2022). ICES Scientific Reports. 4:87. 52 pp. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.21565164

ICES. 2025. Advice on fishing opportunities. *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2025. ICES Advice 2025, section 1.1.1. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.30712466

ICES. 2026. Northwestern Working Group (NWWG). ICES Scientific Reports. 08:37. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.32414577

Download the stock assessment data and figures

Recommended citation: ICES. 2026. Haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) in Division 5.b (Faroes grounds). *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2026. ICES Advice 2026, had.27.5b. https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.30932063