Cod (*Gadus morhua*) in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). Replacing advice provided for this stock in November 2025.

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

Please note that this advice replaces the advice released in November 2025 for this stock (ICES, 2025a)

ICES advises that when the precautionary approach (PA) is applied, catches should be no more than 403 tonnes in 2026 and 2027. ICES is not in a position to advise on the corresponding level of fishing effort.

This is a reissue of the 2026 advice, extended to cover 2027, because the assessment methods used have only been tested for biennial advice provision.

Non-fisheries conservation considerations

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

Stock development over time

Stock size is above $I_{trigger}$. No reference points for fishing pressure have been defined for this stock.

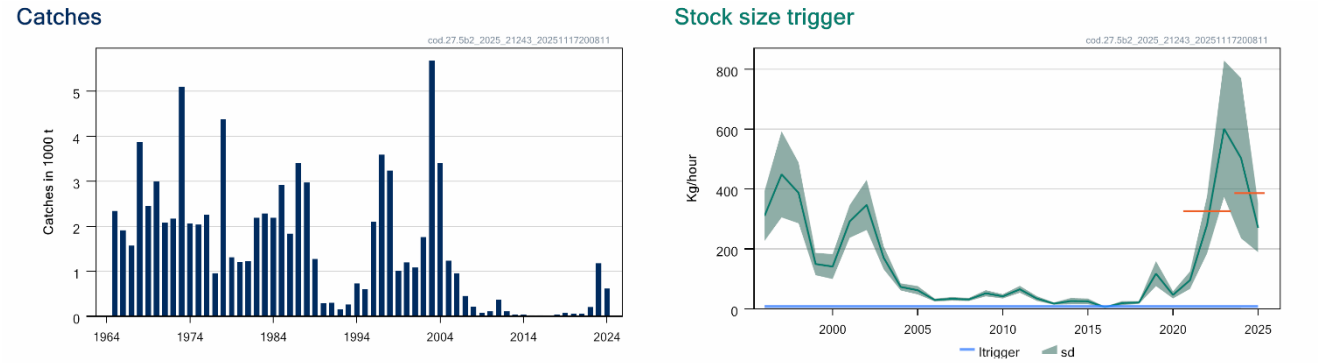


Figure 1 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). Summary of the stock assessment. Catches and stock-size indicator from Faroese summer survey. The horizontal orange lines indicate the average of the stock-size indicator for 2021 to 2023 and for 2024 to 2025.

Catch scenarios

ICES framework for Category 3 stocks was applied (ICES, 2022). The advice is based on the *rb* rule to provide precautionary advice. A survey biomass index was used as an indicator of stock development. The advice is based on the last catch advice, 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 biomass safeguard, and a precautionary multiplier. The stability clause was considered and applied to limit the decrease in catch advice to 30%.

Table 1 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). The basis for the catch scenarios.*

A_y Advice for 2025	575
Biomass index	
Index A (2024–2025)	387
Index B (2021–2023)	326
r: Stock biomass trend (index ratio A/B)	1.186
Biomass safeguard	
Last index value (I_{2025})	270 kg/hour
Index trigger value ($I_{trigger}$)	8 kg/hour
b: index relative to trigger value, min{$I_{2025}/I_{trigger}$, 1}	1.00
Precautionary multiplier to maintain biomass above B_{lim} with 95% probability	
m: multiplier (generic multiplier based on life history)	0.50
RB calculation**	341
Stability clause (+20%/−30% compared to A_y, only considered if b=1)	0.7
Catch advice A_{y+1} for 2026**	403
% advice change***	−30%

* The figures in the table are rounded. Calculations were done with unrounded inputs, and computed values may not match exactly when calculated using the rounded figures in the table.
** Formula: $A_{y+1} = A_y \times r \times b \times m$, limited by stability clause if applicable.
*** Advice value for 2026 relative to the advice value for 2025 (575 tonnes).

The advice for 2026 and 2027 has decreased by 30% in relation to 2025 because of the application of the stability clause.

Basis of the advice

Table 2 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Precautionary approach
Management plan	ICES is not aware of any agreed precautionary management plan for cod in this area

Quality of the assessment

The assessment is based on catch rates in the Faroese summer survey. 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.

Issues relevant for the advice

The Faroe Bank (shallow areas < 200 m) was closed to commercial fisheries from 2008 to 2021, and catches during that time were limited to those from a small handline fishery and bycatch from fisheries in deeper waters. In 2022, the fishery reopened to longlining and is managed by effort (fishing days). There is no management plan for this stock.

Reference points

Table 3 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). Reference points, values, and their technical basis.

Framework	Reference point	Value	Technical basis	Source
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach	$I_{trigger}$	8	Biomass index trigger value, defined as $I_{trigger} = I_{loss} \times 1.4$, where I_{loss} is the lowest observed historical biomass index value, mean of standardized survey CPUE; in kg/hour	ICES (2022, 2023)
	$F_{MSY\ proxy}$	Not defined		
	F_{PA}	Not defined		
Management plan	SSB_{mgt}	Not defined		
	F_{mgt}	Not defined		

Basis of the assessment

Table 4 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	3 (ICES, 2025b)
Assessment type	Survey biomass index applying the *rb* rule for advice (ICES, 2025)
Input data	Landings and Faroese summer groundfish bottom-trawl survey FO-GFS-Q3 [G3284]
Discards and bycatch	Discarding is considered negligible
Indicators	Spring survey FO-GFS-Q1 [G1264], and mean length frequencies from the spring FO-GFS-Q1 [G1264] and summer FO-GFS-Q3 [G3284] surveys
Other information	None
Working group	Northwestern Working Group (NWWG)

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 5 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). History of ICES advice, the agreed total allowable catch (TAC), and landings. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES Advice	Predicted catch corresponding to advice	Agreed TAC**	Landings*
1987	No assessment	-		3 500
1988	No assessment	-		3 100
1989	Addition to Faroe Plateau TAC	~2000		1 400
1990	Access limitation may be required	-		600
1991	Access limitation may be required			400
1992	No fishing	300		154
1993	TAC	500		266
1994	TAC	500		725
1995	Precautionary TAC	500		601
1996	Precautionary TAC	500	1000	2 106
1997	Effort at present levels	700		3 594
1998	Effort at present levels	-		3 239
1999	Effort not to exceed that exerted in 1996–1997	-		1 001
2000	Effort not to exceed that of 1996–1998	-		1 194
2001	Effort not to exceed that of 1996–1999	-		1 080
2002	Effort not to exceed that of 1996–2000	-		1 756
2003	Effort not to exceed that of 1996–2001	-		5 676
2004	Effort not to exceed that of 1996–2002	-		3 411
2005	Effort not to exceed that of 1996–2002	-		1 232
2006	Effort not to exceed that of 1996–2002	-		955
2007	Effort not to exceed that of 1996–2002	-		450
2008	No fishing	0		218
2009	No fishing	0		80
2010	Same advice as last year	0		105
2011	Same advice as last year	0		370
2012	Same advice as last year	0		108
2013	Same advice as last year	0		38
2014	Same advice as last year	0		39
2015	Same advice as last year	0		24
2016	Same advice as last year	0		19
2017	Precautionary approach	0		14
2018	Precautionary approach	0		31
2019	Precautionary approach	0		70
2020	Precautionary approach	0		65
2021	Precautionary approach	0		60
2022	Precautionary approach	0		200
2023	Precautionary approach	78		1 178
2024	Precautionary approach	78		616
2025	Precautionary approach ***	575		
2026	Precautionary approach	403		

Year	ICES Advice	Predicted catch corresponding to advice	Agreed TAC**	Landings*
2027	Precautionary approach	403		

* Prior to 1992, official landings are presented. Thereafter, ICES estimates are presented (catches on the Faroe Bank are considered to be taken only by Faroese and Norwegian vessels).
** Not applicable since 1997.
*** In the advice rule, A_{y-1} was based on average catch (2021–2023) instead of previous advice.

History of the catch and landings

Table 6 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). Catch distribution by fleet in 2024 as estimated by ICES. All weights are in tonnes.

Catch	Landings	Discards
616	100% hooks and lines	Negligible
	616	

There are no reported catches from the NEAFC regulatory areas.

Table 7 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). Nominal catches by country as officially reported to ICES. From 1992, catches by the Faroe Islands and Norway are used in the assessment. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	Faroe Islands	Correction of Faroese catches in Subdivision 5.b.2***	Norway	UK (Scotland)	Total	ICES estimates
1986	1 836		6	63	1 905	1 905
1987	3 409		23	47	3 479	3 479
1988	2 966		94	37	3 097	3 097
1989	1 270		128	14	1 412	1 412
1990	289				289	289
1991	297				297	297
1992	122		32		154	154
1993	264		2		266	266
1994	717		8		725	725
1995	561		40		601	601
1996	2 051		55		2 106	2 106
1997	3 459		135		3 594	3 594
1998	3 092		147		3 239	3 239
1999	1 001		88		1 089	1 350
2000	*	1145	49		1 194	1 194
2001	1 094	−65	51		1 080	1 080
2002	1 840	−109	25		1 756	1 756
2003	5 957	−353	72		5 676	5 676
2004	3 607	−214	18		3 411	3 411
2005	1 270	−75	37		1 232	1 232
2006	1 005	−60	10		955	955
2007	471	−28	7		450	450
2008	231	−14	1		218	218
2009	81	−5	4		80	80
2010	111	−7	1		105	105
2011	393	−23			370	370
2012	115	−7	0		108	108
2013	40	−2			38	38
2014	40	−2	1		39	39
2015	26	−2	0		24	24
2016	19	−1	1		19	19
2017	14	−1	1		14	14
2018	33	−2			31	31

Year	Faroe Islands	Correction of Faroese catches in Subdivision 5.b.2***	Norway	UK (Scotland)	Total	ICES estimates
2019	74	−4			70	70
2020	55	−3	13		65	65
2021	63	−4	2		61	60
2022	213	−13			213	200
2023	1 243	−74	9		1 252	1 178
2024**	652	−39	3		655	616

* No reported catch
**Preliminary
*** Correction of Faroes catches is to account for the use of different conversion factors from gutted to round weight.

Summary of the assessment

Table 8 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.2 (Faroe Bank). Assessment summary. Biomass index, used in the application of the *rb* advice method (ICES, 2022) in kg/hour from Faroes summer survey. Catches are in tonnes. Low and high index values are one standard deviation from the midpoint value.

Year	Biomass index			Total catch
	Low	Value	High	
1965				2 341
1966				1 909
1967				1 569
1968				3 871
1969				2 457
1970				3 002
1971				2 079
1972				2 168
1973				5 101
1974				2 068
1975				2 036
1976				2 258
1977				959
1978				4 379
1979				1 306
1980				1 203
1981				1 229
1982				2 184
1983				2 284
1984				2 189
1985				2 913
1986				1 836
1987				3 409
1988				2 966
1989				1 270
1990				289
1991				297
1992				154
1993				266
1994				725
1995				601
1996	230	310	390	2 106
1997	310	450	590	3 594
1998	290	390	490	3 239
1999	112	150	187	1 001
2000	99	141	183	1 194
2001	240	290	350	1 080
2002	260	350	430	1 756

2003	132	170	210	5 676
2004	61	73	85	3 411
2005	48	62	76	1 232
2006	25	29	34	955
2007	27	33	39	450
2008	26	31	36	218
2009	42	52	62	80
2010	35	42	49	105
2011	54	65	76	370
2012	26	34	42	108
2013	13.8	17.4	21	38
2014	15.3	26	36	39
2015	15.4	25	34	24
2016	3.6	5.4	7.2	19
2017	12.3	18.9	26	14
2018	16.7	21	26	31
2019	76	117	159	70
2020	34	46	58	65
2021	66	96	125	60
2022	185	280	380	200
2023	370	600	830	1 178
2024	240	500	770	616
2025	189	270	351	

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Download the stock assessment data and figures

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