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 and with precautionary consideration is applied, catches in 2027 should be no more than 552 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 F_{PA}. Spawning-stock size is below MSY $B_{trigger}$ and B_{PA} but above B_{lim}.

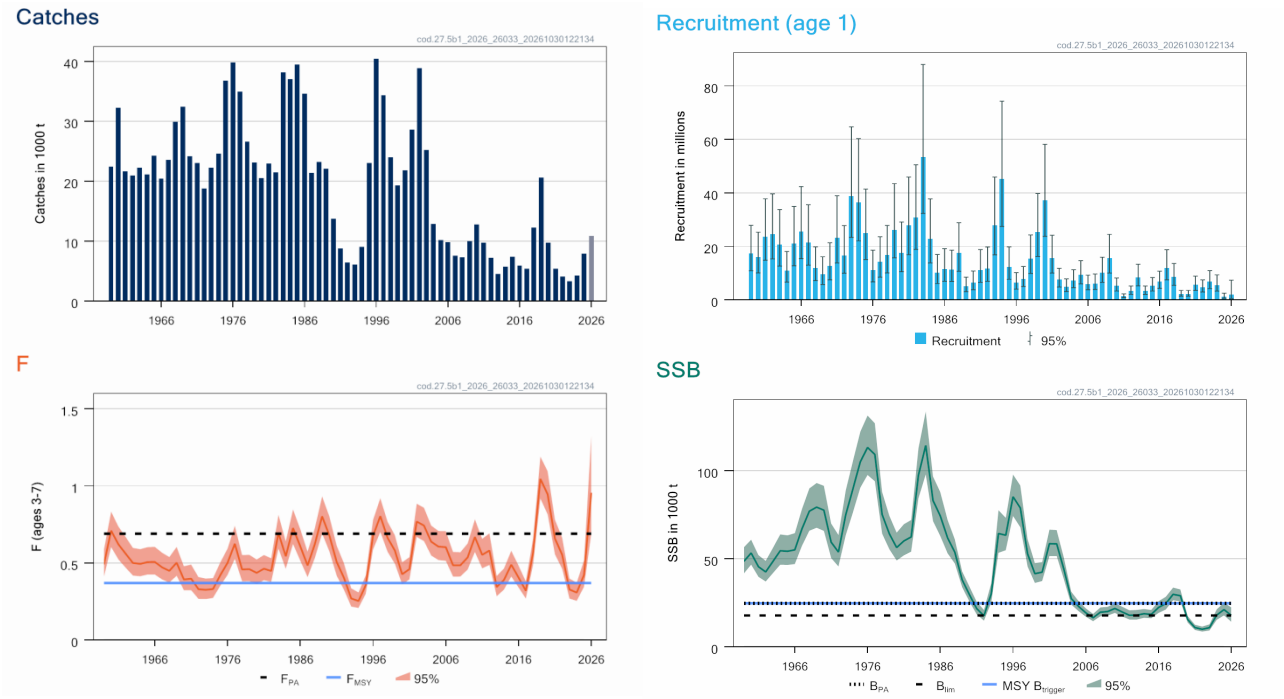


Figure 1 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Summary of the stock assessment. Catch in 2026, shaded in a lighter colour, is estimated for the full year based on reported catch in Q1–Q3 and used in the assessment to produce an estimate of F in 2026.

Catch scenarios

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

Variable	Value	Notes
$F_{ages\ 3–7}$ (2026)	0.96	Based on catch-at-age estimate of 10 866 tonnes in 2026
Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2027)	13 805	Based on F = 0.96; tonnes
$R_{age\ 1}$ (2027)	5 542	Median of resampled estimates from 2014 to 2024; in thousands
Landings (2026)	10 866	Catch estimate for 2026 based on catch statistics to the end of September extrapolated to the entire year; in tonnes
Discards (2026)	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 (2027)	$F_{(3–7)}$ (2027)	Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2028)	% SSB change*	% advice change**	% probability of SSB ≤ Blim (2028)
ICES advice basis						
SSB (2028) = B_{lim}	552	0.045	17 839	29	−91	50
Other scenarios						
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: $F_{MSY} \times SSB_{2027}/MSYB_{trigger}$	2 297	0.206	15 547	13	−62	69
F = 0	0	0	18 296	33	−100	45
F = F_{2025}	7 602	0.974	9 191	−33	25	97
F = F_{PA}	6 090	0.69	10 974	-21	0	93

* SSB 2028 relative to SSB 2027 (13 805 tonnes).
**The advice value for 2027 relative to the advice value 2026 as issued in 2025 (6 075 tonnes).

The advice for 2027 is lower than the advice in 2026 because the stock is predicted to fall below B_{lim} in 2027, so the advice is based on the F that gets the stock back to B_{lim} in 2028.

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 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.

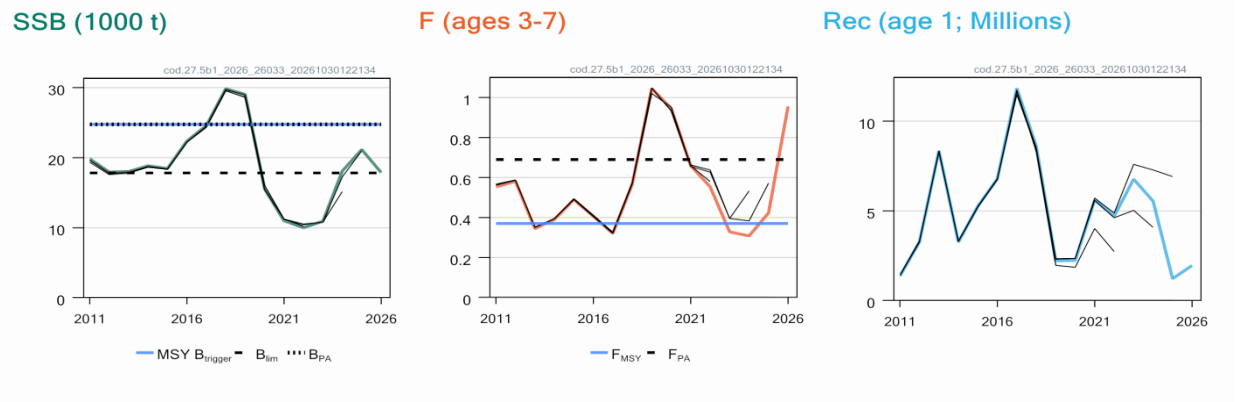


Figure 2 Cod in Subdivision 5.b.1. Historical assessment results. Results of the last five assessments are plotted, with the solid coloured line representing the current assessment.

Issues relevant for the advice

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

Faroe Plateau cod is assessed to be around B_{lim} in recent years and is predicted to fall below B_{lim} in 2027.

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 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) ≥ 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, 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, 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	Correlation of high recruitment of cod with sandeel abundance (ICES, 2026)
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	< 31 000		21 391
1988	No increase in F (revised estimate)	< 29 000 (23 000)		23 182
1989	No increase in F	< 19 000		22 068
1990	No increase in F	< 20 000		13 692
1991	Total allowable catch (TAC)	< 16 000		8 750
1992	No increase in F	< 20 000		6 396
1993	No fishing	0		6 107
1994	No fishing	0	8 500/12 500*,**	9 046
1995	No fishing	0	12 500*	23 045
1996	F at lowest possible level	-	20 000**	40 422
1997	80% of F(95)	< 24 000		34 304
1998	30% reduction in effort from 1996/97	-		24 005
1999	F less than proposed F_{PA} (0.35)	< 19 000		19 245
2000	F less than proposed F_{PA} (0.35)	< 20 000		21 833
2001	F less than proposed F_{PA} (0.35)	< 16 000		28 577

Fishing year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Agreed total allowable catch (TAC)***	ICES catch
2002	75% of F(2000)	< 22 000		38 834
2003	75% of F(2001)	< 32 000		25 167
2004	25% reduction in effort	-		12 840
2005	Rebuilding plan involving large reduction	-		10 119
2006	Rebuilding plan involving large reduction	-		9 844
2007	Rebuilding plan involving large reduction in effort	-		7 511
2008	No fishing; development of a rebuilding plan	0		7 315
2009	No fishing; development of a rebuilding plan	0		9 979
2010	No fishing; development of a rebuilding plan	0		12 762
2011	Reduce F to below F_{pa}	< 16 000		9 692
2012	Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) framework, reduce F by 30%	< 10 000		7 205
2013	MSY approach, F < 0.20	< 4 800		4 473
2014	MSY approach, reduce F by 69%	< 3 600		5 711
2015	MSY approach, reduce F by 23%	< 4 500		7 329
2016	Lowest possible level (LPL) and develop a mixed-fishery management plan	-		5 876
2017	MSY approach (F ≤ 0.16)	≤ 2 800		5 360
2018	MSY approach (F ≤ 0.22)	≤ 4 579		12 214
2019^	MSY approach	≤ 9 354		20 609
2020	MSY approach	≤ 11 679		9 937
2021	MSY approach	≤ 6 247		5 397
2022	MSY approach	≤ 2 206		4 045
2023	MSY approach	0		3 285
2024	MSY approach	0		4 259
2025	MSY approach	≤ 2 848		7 914
2026	MSY approach	≤ 6 075		
2027	SSB (2028) = B_{lim}	≤ 552		

* 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 2025 as estimated by ICES. All weights are in tonnes.

Catch	Landings				Discards
7 914	Longlines 53%	Handlines 20%	Trawls 24%	Gillnets 3%	Negligible
	7 914				

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	34 492	4	8		83			-	34 595
1987	30	21 303	17	12		21			8	21 391
1988	10	22 272	17	5		163				22 467
1989		20 535		7		285				20 827
1990		12 232		24		124				12 380
1991		8 203	*	16		89			1	8 309
1992		5 938	3**	12		39			74	6 066
1993		5 744	1**	+		57			186	5 988
1994		8 724		2**		36			56	8 818
1995		19 079	2**	2		38			43	19 164
1996		39 406	1**	+		507			126	40 040
1997		33 556		+		410			61**	34 027
1998		23 308				405			27**	23 740
1999		19 156		39		450			51	19 696
2000		***	1	2		374			18	395
2001		29 762	9**	9		531*			50	30 361
2002		40 602	20	6	5	573			42	41 248
2003		30 259	14	7		447			15	30 742
2004		17 540	2	3**		414		1	15	17 975
2005		13 556				201			24	13 781
2006		11 629	7	1**		49	5			11 691
2007		9 905	1**			71	7		360	10 344
2008		9 394	1			40			383	9 818
2009		10 736	1			14	7		300	11 058
2010		13 878	1			10			312	14 206
2011		11 348								11 348
2012		8 437			28					8 466
2013		5 331			20		2			5 333
2014		6 655				2			226	6 883
2015		7 812				33	14		367	8 174
2016		6 736				31	5		456	7 232
2017		6 215	2			16	5		388	6 625
2018		13 297	2			69			504	13 872
2019		22 282	1			219			233	22 735
2020		10 614	2			163			0	10 779
2021		5 875	3			65			0	5 942
2022		4 855	1			26			0	4 882
2023		4 835	2			14			0	4 851
2024		5 927	1			104			162	6 194
2025		10 682	0			192			150	11 024

* Included in ICES Subdivision 5.b.2.
** Reported as ICES Division 5.b.
*** No reported catch.
^ Total includes catches from the Faroe-Icelandic ridge, which are not included in this assessment but are included in the Icelandic cod assessment (cod.27.5a)

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	10856	17394	27870	41641	48533	56566	22415	0.41	0.49	0.59
1960	10038	15945	25328	46666	53305	60889	32255	0.60	0.71	0.83
1961	14845	23690	37805	39771	45531	52125	21598	0.52	0.62	0.74

Year	Recruitment (age 1)			Spawning-stock biomass (SSB)			Total catch	Fishing pressure (ages 3-7)		
	Low	R	High	Low	SSB	High		Low	F	High
1962	15292	24619	39635	37067	42554	48853	20967	0.47	0.56	0.67
1963	12617	20648	33791	41879	48549	56280	22215	0.42	0.50	0.60
1964	6631	10956	18104	46629	54581	63889	21078	0.41	0.49	0.59
1965	12719	21087	34960	46509	54276	63340	24212	0.43	0.51	0.60
1966	15415	25549	42346	46995	55094	64589	20418	0.43	0.51	0.61
1967	12988	21501	35595	57487	67184	78517	23562	0.39	0.47	0.57
1968	7160	11911	19813	65912	77029	90021	29930	0.37	0.45	0.54
1969	5705	9590	16120	67647	79345	93066	32371	0.42	0.50	0.61
1970	7492	12647	21348	65830	77604	91484	24183	0.32	0.39	0.48
1971	13807	23193	38960	50409	59432	70071	23010	0.32	0.40	0.49
1972	9937	16618	27792	45609	53832	63538	18727	0.27	0.33	0.41
1973	23357	38876	64707	63288	74975	88819	22228	0.27	0.33	0.40
1974	22065	36487	60336	76416	89878	105712	24581	0.27	0.33	0.40
1975	15089	24998	41414	90303	105029	122156	36775	0.35	0.42	0.50
1976	6673	11131	18567	97593	113245	131407	39799	0.42	0.50	0.59
1977	8510	14176	23614	94020	109273	127000	34927	0.53	0.63	0.74
1978	10035	16710	27824	64265	75205	88008	26585	0.38	0.46	0.55
1979	15720	26151	43505	55361	64188	74424	23112	0.38	0.46	0.55
1980	10559	17534	29116	49012	56389	64877	20513	0.36	0.44	0.52
1981	16854	27828	45949	51938	60161	69686	22963	0.39	0.46	0.55
1982	18865	30884	50560	54064	62426	72082	21489	0.38	0.45	0.53
1983	32313	53345	88065	84311	97535	112832	38133	0.59	0.69	0.81
1984	13825	22860	37798	97915	114410	133683	36979	0.46	0.54	0.64
1985	6084	10168	16993	71375	83118	96792	39484	0.62	0.73	0.85
1986	6937	11532	19172	62869	74340	87905	34595	0.51	0.61	0.72
1987	6873	11305	18594	53112	61923	72195	21391	0.41	0.48	0.57
1988	10676	17549	28849	47261	53708	61033	23182	0.53	0.62	0.73
1989	3039	5082	8497	33874	38137	42936	22068	0.69	0.80	0.93
1990	3788	6391	10783	25684	29681	34300	13692	0.57	0.68	0.80
1991	6536	11091	18821	18448	21764	25675	8750	0.42	0.51	0.61
1992	6938	11709	19759	14856	17646	20961	6396	0.33	0.40	0.50
1993	16835	27814	45952	24988	30068	36182	6107	0.22	0.27	0.34
1994	27450	45171	74333	53375	64377	77646	9046	0.21	0.25	0.31
1995	7690	12335	19786	54861	63412	73295	23045	0.30	0.36	0.42
1996	4000	6386	10195	74255	85251	97876	40422	0.59	0.68	0.78
1997	4982	7884	12477	67896	78891	91666	34304	0.70	0.80	0.92
1998	9846	15457	24264	45527	52783	61196	24005	0.57	0.66	0.77
1999	16225	25398	39756	36270	41553	47605	19245	0.50	0.58	0.68
2000	23737	37171	58208	37359	42419	48164	21833	0.36	0.43	0.51
2001	9993	15547	24189	51538	58579	66583	28577	0.39	0.46	0.54
2002	4795	7524	11806	51592	58500	66334	38834	0.67	0.77	0.89
2003	3079	4914	7844	38089	43831	50440	25167	0.64	0.74	0.86
2004	4565	7170	11261	23990	27440	31385	12840	0.55	0.64	0.74
2005	5980	9364	14663	20280	22988	26056	10119	0.52	0.61	0.71
2006	3772	5906	9248	17102	19352	21899	9844	0.51	0.60	0.71
2007	3874	6115	9653	14556	16523	18756	7511	0.41	0.49	0.57
2008	6566	10235	15956	17301	19685	22398	7315	0.41	0.49	0.57
2009	9999	15651	24499	17714	20073	22745	9979	0.46	0.54	0.63
2010	3304	5208	8208	19274	21810	24679	12762	0.57	0.67	0.78
2011	838	1358	2200	17236	19830	22815	9692	0.47	0.55	0.66
2012	2039	3257	5203	15491	17936	20766	7205	0.49	0.58	0.69

Year	Recruitment (age 1)			Spawning-stock biomass (SSB)			Total catch	Fishing pressure (ages 3-7)		
	Low	R	High	Low	SSB	High		Low	F	High
2013	5248	8359	13315	15464	18014	20986	4473	0.28	0.34	0.42
2014	2029	3248	5199	16480	18828	21509	5711	0.33	0.39	0.47
2015	3303	5257	8366	16213	18443	20979	7329	0.41	0.49	0.58
2016	4285	6788	10751	19255	22349	25939	5876	0.34	0.41	0.48
2017	7486	11853	18766	21196	24566	28472	5360	0.27	0.32	0.38
2018	5433	8599	13608	26398	29823	33694	12214	0.49	0.57	0.66
2019	1378	2211	3549	25816	29026	32636	20609	0.92	1.05	1.19
2020	1397	2227	3550	13777	15551	17555	9748	0.82	0.95	1.10
2021	3519	5591	8885	9554	10977	12611	5397	0.56	0.66	0.78
2022	2949	4698	7485	8644	9996	11560	4045	0.46	0.55	0.66
2023	4187	6770	10948	9284	10908	12817	3285	0.27	0.33	0.40
2024	3286	5542	9347	15307	18075	21343	4259	0.25	0.31	0.37
2025	583	1208	2504	17850	21149	25058	7914	0.35	0.42	0.52
2026*	512	1945	7387	14224	17867	22444	10866	0.69	0.96	1.33

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

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Download the stock assessment data and figures

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