

Haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) in divisions 7.b–k (southern Celtic Seas and English Channel)

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach and precautionary considerations are applied, there should be zero catch in 2026.

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

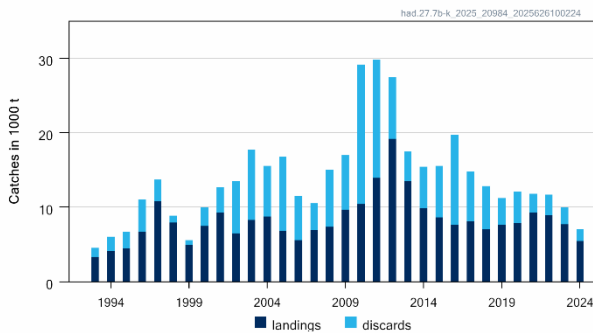
Non-fisheries conservation considerations

Conservation aspects and associated management measures may exist at a national or regional level but were not reviewed by ICES.

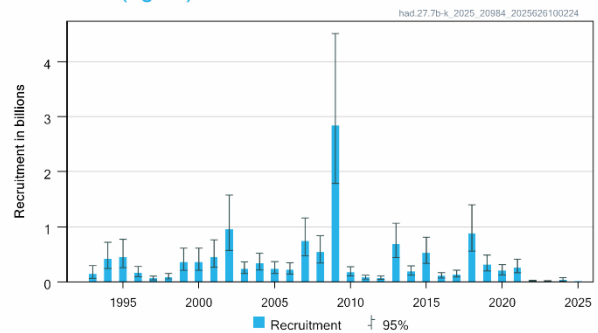
Stock development over time

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

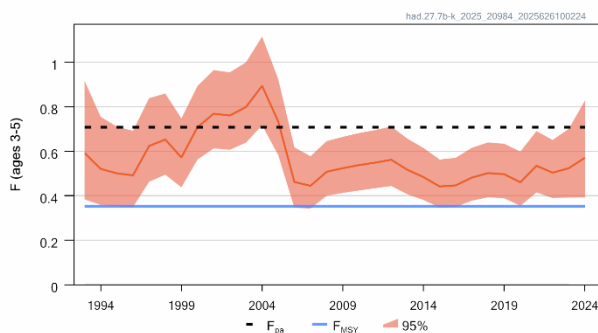
Catches



Recruitment (age 0)



F



SSB

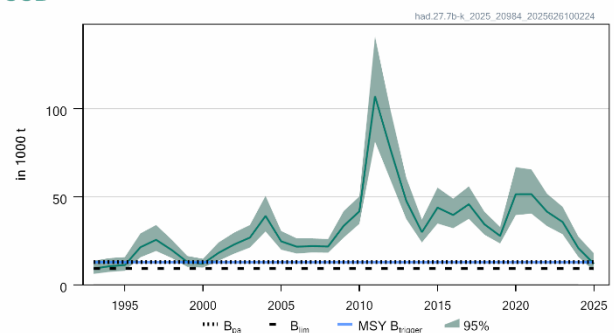


Figure 1 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. Summary of the stock assessment. The assumed recruitment value for 2025 is shaded in a lighter colour.

Catch scenarios

Table 1 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. Values in the forecast and for the interim year.

Variable	Value	Notes
F _{ages 3–5} (2025)	0.53	F = F _{average (2022–2024)}
Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2026)	7464	Short-term forecast; in tonnes
R _{age 0} (2025, 2026)	17 786	Median recruitment, resampled from 2022–2024; in thousands
Total catch (2025)	4784	Short-term forecast; in tonnes
Projected landings (2025)	4158	Short-term forecast; assuming average landings ratio by age 2022–2024; in tonnes
Projected discards (2025)	626	Short-term forecast; Assuming average discard ratio by age 2022–2024; in tonnes

Table 2 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. Annual catch scenarios. Weights are in tonnes.

Basis	Total catch (2026)	Projected landings (2026)	Projected discards (2026)	F _{total} (2026)	F _{projected landings} (2026)	F _{projected discards} (2026)	Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2027)	% SSB change*	% advice change^	% probability SSB < B _{lim} in 2027#
ICES advice basis										
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: F = 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7647	2	-100	77
Other scenarios										
F _{MSY} × SSB ₂₀₂₆ /MSY B _{trigger}	1381	1194	187	0.205	0.155	0.05	6252	-16	-70	92
F _{MSY lower} × SSB ₂₀₂₆ /MSY B _{trigger}	905	786	119	0.129	0.097	0.032	6731	-10	-81	88
EU MAP ^^: F _{MSY}	2177	1872	305	0.353	0.267	0.086	5451	-27	-53	96
EU MAP^^: F _{MSY lower}	1471	1272	199	0.221	0.167	0.054	6159	-17	-68	93
F _{PA}	3632	3089	543	0.708	0.535	0.173	4033	-46	-22	99
SSB ₂₀₂₇ = B _{lim} ^^^										
SSB ₂₀₂₇ = B _{PA} = MSY B _{trigger} ^^^										
SSB ₂₀₂₇ = SSB ₂₀₂₆	173	151	22	0.023	0.017	0.006	7464	0	-96	79
F = F ₂₀₂₅	2984	2552	432	0.53	0.402	0.131	4659	-38	-36	99

* SSB 2027 relative to SSB 2026.

^ Advice value for 2026 relative to the advice value for 2025 (4644 tonnes).

^^ EU multiannual plan (MAP) for the Western Waters (EU, 2019).

^^^ These options were left blank because they cannot be achieved in 2027, even with zero catch in 2026.

The probability of SSB being below B_{lim} in 2027. This probability relates to the short-term probability of SSB < B_{lim} and is not comparable to the long-term probability of SSB < B_{lim} tested in simulations when estimating fishing mortality reference points

The decrease in advice is mainly due to a reduction in stock size following recent low recruitments and a low recruitment assumption for 2025 and 2026. ICES provides zero-catch advice for this stock in 2026 because the spawning-stock biomass (SSB) is forecast to remain below B_{lim} in 2027 under all catch scenarios.

Basis of the advice

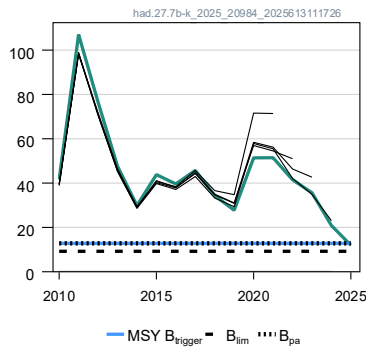
Table 3 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach
Management plan	ICES is aware of the multiannual management plan (MAP) that has been adopted by the EU for this stock (EU, 2019) and that ICES considers to be precautionary. There is no agreed shared management plan between the EU and UK for this stock, and ICES provides advice according to ICES MSY approach. Catch scenarios consistent with the MAP F _{MSY} ranges are provided.

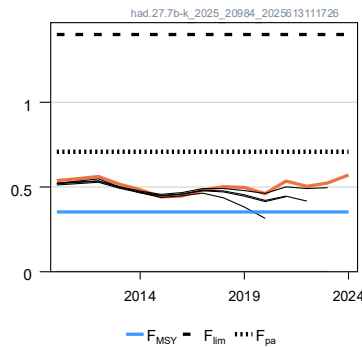
Quality of the assessment

UK catch and sample data were revised for 2021–2023, but the overall impact on the assessment and short-term forecast is considered negligible.

SSB (1000t)



F(ages 3-5)



Rec (age 0; Billions)

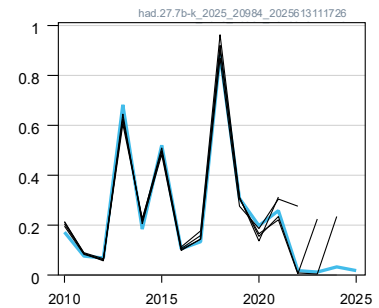


Figure 2 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. Historical assessment results (final-year recruitment assumption and spawning-stock biomass [SSB] estimate included for each line).

Issues relevant for the advice

Recent recruitment has been extremely low, which has led to a large reduction in stock size. The SSB in 2026 is forecast to be below B_{lim} , and the SSB in 2027 is highly dependent on the assumed recruitment in 2025. The main driver for the recent low recruitment is unknown but may persist into 2025; therefore, the recruitment assumption in the forecast was based on the last three years only. If recruitment in 2025 is at a similar level to 2022–2024, then it is highly likely that the stock will remain below B_{lim} , even with zero catch.

The assessment and the advice are for divisions 7.b–k, including the rectangles 33E2 and 33E3, as haddock in these rectangles are considered to be part of the haddock.27.7b–k stock (western English Channel and southern Celtic Seas). Landings data used in the haddock.27.7a assessment exclude those reported from rectangles 33E2 and 33E3 (Table 8). Data from these rectangles are incorporated into the advice for haddock.27.7b–k. In 2024, haddock landings in 33E2 and 33E3 were 4.93 times the landings from the rest of division 7a and constituted 9% of the landings from the haddock.27.7b–k stock. The spatial limitation of the advice should be considered when setting total allowable catch (TACs) for the two management areas that span the haddock.27.7a and 27.7b–k stocks.

ICES notes that the assessment area does not correspond to the TAC area.

Mixed-fisheries considerations

Haddock in divisions 7.b–k is caught as part of a mixed fishery with cod and whiting (ICES, 2025a).

Reference points

Table 4 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. Reference points, values, and their technical basis.

Framework	Reference point	Value	Technical basis	Source
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach	MSY B_{trigger}	12 822	B_{PA} ; in tonnes	ICES (2020)
	F_{MSY}	0.353	Based on simulation using a segmented regression stock–recruitment relationship (EqSim)	ICES (2020)
Precautionary approach	B_{lim}	9227	Lowest observed spawning-stock biomass (SSB); in tonnes	ICES (2020)
	B_{PA}	12 822	B_{lim} combined with the assessment error; $B_{\text{lim}} \times \exp(1.645 \times \sigma)$; $\sigma = 0.20$ (default setting); in tonnes	ICES (2020)
	F_{PA}	0.708	F_{P05} ; the F that leads to $SSB \geq B_{\text{lim}}$ with 95% probability	ICES (2020)
Management Plan*	MAP MSY B_{trigger}	12 822	MSY B_{PA} ; in tonnes	EU (2019), ICES (2020)
	MAP B_{lim}	9227	Lowest observed SSB; in tonnes	EU (2019), ICES (2020)
	MAP F_{MSY}	0.353	F_{MSY}	EU (2019), ICES (2020)
	MAP range $F_{\text{MSY lower}}$	0.221	Consistent with ranges resulting in no more than 5% reduction in long-term yield compared with MSY	EU (2019), ICES (2020)
	MAP range $F_{\text{MSY upper}}$	0.521	Consistent with ranges resulting in no more than 5% reduction in long-term yield compared with MSY	EU (2019), ICES (2020)

* EU multiannual plan (MAP) for the Western Waters and adjacent waters (EU, 2019).

Basis of the assessment

Table 5 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	1 (ICES, 2023)
Assessment type	Age-based stochastic analytical assessment: SAM* (Nielsen and Berg, 2014; ICES, 2025b)
Input data	Commercial catches (age composition of landings and discards); vector autoregressive spatio-temporal (VAST) standardized survey index (combined IGFS-WIBTS-Q4 [G7212] and EVHOE-WIBTS-Q4 [G9527]); maturity data (surveys and observer data; constant for all years); age-dependent natural mortality (time invariant; Lorenzen, 1996). Stock weights were based on Q1 catch weights, smoothed with a 3-year running average.
Discards and bycatch	Included in the assessment for the full time-series. Full observer-based estimates from 2005, partial observer-based estimates from 1993 to 2004.
Indicators	None
Other information	This stock was benchmarked in 2020 (ICES, 2020)
Working groups	Working Group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion (WGCSE)

* [View assessment in Transparent Assessment Framework \(TAF\)](#)

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 6 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. ICES advice, the agreed total allowable catch (TAC), official landings and ICES estimates of landings and discards. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Landings corresponding to advice	Agreed TAC	Official landings	ICES landings ^{##}	ICES discards ^{^^^}	ICES catch
1987	Not dealt with				3000 ^{^^}	2600 ^{^^}	n/a	2600 ^{^^}
1988	Not dealt with				4000 ^{^^}	3600 ^{^^}	n/a	3600 ^{^^}
1989	Not dealt with				4200 ^{^^}	3200 ^{^^}	n/a	3200 ^{^^}
1990	Not dealt with				2900 ^{^^}	2000 ^{^^}	n/a	2000 ^{^^}
1991	Not dealt with				2900 ^{^^}	2300 ^{^^}	n/a	2300 ^{^^}
1992	Not dealt with				2900 ^{^^}	2700 ^{^^}	n/a	2700 ^{^^}
1993	Not dealt with				3400 ^{^^}	3348	1208	4556
1994	Not dealt with				4076	4131	1886	6017
1995	Not dealt with			6000*	4468	4470	2218	6688
1996	Not dealt with			7000**	6653	6756	4309	11065
1997	Not dealt with			14000	10270	10827	2883	13710
1998	Not dealt with			20000	7360	7928	934	8862
1999	Not dealt with			22000***	5247	4970	586	5556
2000	No expansion of catches			16600***	6656	7499	2503	10002
2001	No expansion of catches			12000***	9702	9278	3418	12696
2002	No expansion of catches		8000	9300***	7089	6488	7073	13561
2003	No expansion of catches		7200	8185***	8241	8292	9456	17748
2004	No increase in F			9600***	8453	8777	6750	15527
2005	No increase in effort			11520***	6867	6839	9953	16792
2006	No increase in effort			11520***	5621	5592	5899	11491
2007	No increase in effort			11520***	6628	6961	3552	10513
2008	Same advice as last year			11579***	6234	7392	7660	15052
2009	Same advice as last year			11579 [^]	9308	9664	7322	16986
2010	Same advice as last year			11579 [^]	9999	10429	18701	29130
2011	See scenarios			13316 [^]	13709	13957	15807	29764
2012	No increase in catch and technical measures to reduce discard rates			16645 [^]	18221	19196	8285	27481
2013	Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) transition		< 9500	14148 [^]	13098	13538	3962	17501
2014	MSY transition	< 5281	< 3602	9479 [^]	9372	9846	5619	15464
2015	MSY approach	< 10434	< 5605	8342 [^]	8229	8608	6941	15549
2016	MSY approach	≤ 8590	≤ 6078	7258 [^]	7024	7648	12065	19713
2017	MSY approach	≤ 12444	≤ 7751	7751 [^]	7374	8099	6691	14789
2018	MSY approach	≤ 8358	≤ 5911	6910 [^]	6595	7046	5798	12844
2019	MSY approach	≤ 6317		8329 [^]	6861	7656	3603	11259
2020	Management plan	16671 (range 11418–23262)		10859 [^]	7308	7859	4260	12119
2021	Management plan	18382 (range 12128–25454)		15000 [^]	8480	9267	2519	11786
2022	MSY approach	≤ 15946		15000 [^]	8045	8900	2805	11706
2023	MSY approach	≤ 11901		11901 [^]	6871 [#]	7729	2259	9988
2024	MSY approach	≤ 8252		8252 [^]	4966 [#]	5484	1624	7108
2025	MSY approach	≤ 4644		6353 [^]				
2026	MSY approach	0						

* Applies to subareas 7–10.

** Increased in-year to 14 000 tonnes.

*** Includes separate Division 7.a allocation.

[^] Applies to 7b–k, 8, 9 and 10; EU waters of Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) 34.1.1.

^{^^} Values presented to the nearest 100.

^{^^^} Discard estimates are available from 2005; prior to 2005, discard estimates are based on limited sampling.

[#] Preliminary.

^{##} Including landings from rectangles 33E2 and 33E3 since 2003.

History of the catch and landings

Table 7 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. Catch distribution by fleet in 2024, as estimated by ICES.*

Catch	Landings					Discards				
	Otter trawls	Beam trawls	Seines	Gillnets	Other	Otter trawls	Beam trawls	Seines	Gillnets	Other
7108 tonnes	62%	5%	28%	3%	2%	56%	38%	5%	1%	1%
	5484 tonnes					1624 tonnes				

* 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.

Table 8 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. History of official landings by country and ICES estimates of landings and discards. Weights are in tonnes.

Year	Official landings						ICES estimates			
	Belgium	France	Ireland	UK	Others	Total	Landings from rectangles 33E2 and 33E3**	Landings	Discards ***	Catch
1993	51	1839	1262	256	0	3408		3348	1208	4556
1994	123	2788	908	240	17	4076		4131	1886	6017
1995	189	2964	966	266	83	4468		4470	2218	6688
1996	133	4527	1468	439	86	6653		6756	4309	11065
1997	246	6581	2789	569	85	10270		10827	2883	13710
1998	142	3674	2788	444	312	7360		7928	934	8862
1999	51	2725	2034	278	159	5247		4970	586	5556
2000	90	3088	3066	289	123	6656		7499	2503	10002
2001	165	4842	3608	422	665	9702		9278	3418	12696
2002	132	4348	2188	315	106	7089		6488	7073	13561
2003	118	5781	1867	393	82	8241	64	8292	9456	17748
2004	136	6130	1715	313	159	8453	53	8777	6750	15527
2005	167	4174	2037	292	197	6867	35	6839	9953	16792
2006	99	3191	1874	274	183	5621	26	5592	5899	11491
2007	119	4143	1931	385	50	6628	222	6961	3552	10513
2008	109	3638	1800	566	121	6234	194	7392	7660	15052
2009	131	5430	2983	716	48	9308	285	9664	7322	16986
2010	170	6240	2609	852	128	9999	267	10429	18701	29130
2011	211	8389	3323	1657	129	13709	374	13957	15807	29764
2012	232	11793	4129	1901	166	18221	473	19196	8285	27481
2013	174	8747	2699	1455	23	13098	410	13538	3962	17501
2014	99	6375	2092	785	21	9372	444	9846	5619	15464
2015	118	5679	1657	769	6	8229	322	8608	6941	15549
2016	88	4487	1730	692	27	7024	468	7648	12065	19713
2017	110	4885	1677	690	12	7374	715	8099	6691	14789
2018	89	4470	1444	583 ^c	9	6595 ^c	532	7046	5798	12844
2019	90	4526	1559	516 ^c	170	6861 ^c	764	7656	3603	11259
2020	107	3808	2628	543	222	7308	559	7859	4260	12119
2021	157	4250	3408	517 ^c	149	8480 ^c	827	9267	2519	11786
2022	193	3787	3132	588	234	8045	865	8900	2805	11706
2023*	108	2849	2987	642	286	6871	831	7729	2259	9988
2024*	81	1880	2118	615	272	4966	503	5484	1624	7108

* Preliminary landings.

** Landings in the southern part of Division 7.a (rectangles 33E2 and 33E3) are included in the assessment and are considered part of the stock.

*** Prior to 2005, discard estimates are based on limited sampling.

^c Incomplete/missing as a result of part of the data being unavailable under data confidentiality clauses.

Summary of the assessment

Table 9 Haddock in divisions 7.b–k. Assessment summary. “High” and “low” refer to 95% confidence intervals. Weights are in tonnes and recruitment in thousands.

Year	Recruitment (age 0)			SSB			Landings	Discards**	Fishing mortality (ages 3–5)		
	Low	Value	High	Low	Value	High			Low	Value	High
1993	63921	137233	294627	6191	9180	13611	3348	1208	0.38	0.59	0.92
1994	240138	415201	717886	7322	10514	15098	4131	1886	0.36	0.52	0.76
1995	256741	445054	771489	7970	11193	15717	4470	2218	0.35	0.5	0.71
1996	94730	162533	278868	15623	21338	29144	6756	4309	0.35	0.49	0.69
1997	34020	58453	100432	19211	25529	33923	10827	2883	0.46	0.62	0.84
1998	50943	87948	151836	15221	19731	25577	7928	934	0.5	0.65	0.86
1999	206952	355595	611000	10198	12906	16333	4970	586	0.44	0.57	0.75
2000	208148	356498	610580	9800	12019	14740	7499	2503	0.56	0.71	0.89
2001	264812	448808	760645	13688	18142	24046	9278	3418	0.61	0.77	0.97
2002	570031	947619	1575321	17719	22918	29643	6488	7073	0.61	0.76	0.96
2003	148303	230802	359194	21168	26793	33913	8292	9456	0.64	0.8	1
2004	213527	331747	515418	30283	39083	50439	8777	6750	0.72	0.89	1.12
2005	148648	233643	367237	19935	24664	30517	6839	9953	0.58	0.73	0.93
2006	141975	221041	344139	17754	21611	26304	5592	5899	0.35	0.46	0.62
2007	475289	742024	1158453	18373	21986	26310	6961	3552	0.34	0.45	0.58
2008	339967	533341	836706	18200	21734	25953	7392	7660	0.4	0.51	0.65
2009	1784636	2836932	4509704	26793	33489	41857	9664	7322	0.41	0.52	0.67
2010	107672	171943	274579	34616	41656	50127	10429	18701	0.42	0.54	0.68
2011	48940	75878	117641	81294	107034	140924	13957	15807	0.43	0.55	0.7
2012	43406	68285	107423	59290	76540	98809	19196	8285	0.44	0.56	0.71
2013	437528	682452	1064481	37339	47619	60729	13538	3962	0.41	0.52	0.66
2014	116902	184042	289741	24078	29869	37054	9846	5619	0.38	0.48	0.62
2015	333777	520136	810546	34796	43809	55156	8608	6941	0.35	0.44	0.56
2016	67252	105130	164341	32112	39617	48877	7648	12065	0.35	0.45	0.57
2017	84793	133491	210155	37426	45714	55837	8099	6691	0.38	0.48	0.62
2018	556581	882380	1398886	28443	34322	41416	7046	5798	0.39	0.5	0.64
2019	195677	307288	482561	23464	27747	32813	7656	3603	0.39	0.5	0.63
2020	125818	197797	310953	39567	51386	66736	7859	4260	0.36	0.46	0.6
2021	162773	258155	409428	40432	51446	65460	9267	2519	0.42	0.54	0.69
2022	10349	17786	30567	33346	41511	51676	8900	2805	0.39	0.5	0.65
2023	6721	11913	21116	28705	35632	44230	7729	2259	0.39	0.52	0.7
2024	13656	32666	78140	15903	20867	27381	5484	1624	0.39	0.57	0.83
2025		17786*		7894	11964	17811					

* Median resampled from 2022–2024 as estimated by stochastic projection.

** Discard estimates are available from 2005; prior to 2005, discard estimates are based on limited sampling.

Sources and references

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[Download the stock assessment data and figures](#)

Recommended citation: ICES. 2025. Haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) in Divisions 7.b-k (southern Celtic Seas and English Channel). In Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2025. ICES Advice 2025, had.27.7b-k. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202608>