

Explanations on the ICES advice for 2026



Redfish Greenland/Irminger Sea

The German fleet mainly fishes for redfish on the Greenland Shelf and, until 2020, in the Irminger Sea. Two redfish species, the beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) and the golden redfish (*Sebastes norvegicus*, formerly *Sebastes marinus*), occur in several stocks there. The status of these stocks varies. The two species are also caught together on the East Greenland Shelf. It is often difficult to distinguish between golden redfish (*Sebastes norvegicus*) and beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*), resulting in misreporting between the co-occurring species or both species being reported together as "redfish". This complicates the assessment and management of stocks.

The golden redfish stock on the East Greenland Shelf is part of the stock largely found on the Iceland Shelf. The spawning stock biomass has been within safe biological limits since 2003 and has been fished according to the MSY principle since 2006. The ICES catch recommendation of no more than 41,345 tonnes for 2026 is 11.9% below the recommended maximum catch for 2025, and follows the ICES MSY approach. In the medium term, however, the production of young fish is a cause for concern, as it has been low since 2014. It is expected that the spawning stock biomass will decrease in the future as a result.

The exact status of the beaked redfish stock on the Greenland Shelf cannot be accurately assessed. The stock has declined sharply since 2010 and has not improved in subsequent years. As the most recent values for the biomass index of the Greenland Shallow Water Survey have been close to zero in recent years, ICES recommends zero catches from this stock for 2025 and 2026.

In the neighboring Irminger Sea, there are two other beaked redfish stocks that are caught with pelagic trawls. These two stocks have also declined so sharply that ICES has recommended zero catches for the shallow stock since 2010 and for the deep stock since 2017. In 2021 and 2024, the stock status of the shallow beaked redfish stock in the Irminger Sea was assessed again for the first time since 2013. The result of the survey was slightly more positive, as the resulting biomass index showed the highest value since 2005, but remains at a historically low level below possible reference points. Despite the slightly more positive assessment, the recommendation of a zero catch remains until 2027. The deep stock (> 500 m water depth) has been fished since the 1990s with a fishing mortality rate well above F_{MSY} . The results of the stock assessments indicate very low values below B_{lim} for the deep stock in 2024, and a zero

catch is also recommended until 2027. While Russia, for example, continues to fish these stocks, the EU currently does not allow fishing for either stock.

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