

Explanations on the ICES advice for 2024

North Sea saithe



The stock is assessed to be just within safe biological limits in 2023. According to the latest assessment, the stock was fished just below F_{MSY} in 2022. The productivity of the stock has been lower in the last 10 years than in previous decades, suggesting additional unfavourable environmental impacts.

ICES recommends a maximum catch of 73,815 tonnes under the MSY approach for 2024. This represents an increase of 25% compared to last year. This increase is explained by a higher estimate of stock biomass compared to last year's assessment.

All the larger fleets fishing directly for saithe saw a decrease in catch rates compared to the years around 2015, but between 2020 and 2022 there is a reversal of the trend and some increase in catch rates have been observed. The interpretation of the commercial data is not easy, however, as changes in catch patterns may also result from economic conditions. This increases the uncertainty around stock estimates. Since the scientific survey is not specifically targeting saithe either, the assessment as a whole is considered uncertain.

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<https://www.thuenen.de/en/thuenen-topics/fisheries/understanding-fish-stock-developments-scientific-basis-for-sustainable-use/ices-advice-on-fishing-opportunities-whats-behind-it>