

Fishery

Saithe are mainly targeted by French, German and Norwegian otter-trawlers but some UK vessels also participate in the fishery. Catches occur year-round in the northern North Sea, to the west and north of Shetland and on the southern and western limits of the Norwegian Trench (Rhinne) usually in depths greater than 150 m. Fishing also occurs in the Norwegian fjords. The fisheries targeting saithe have a relatively low impact on the other demersal stocks. Landings of saithe from ICES Sub-areas IV, VI and Division IIIa have been stable for several years at a level well below the agreed TAC.



Pollachius virens

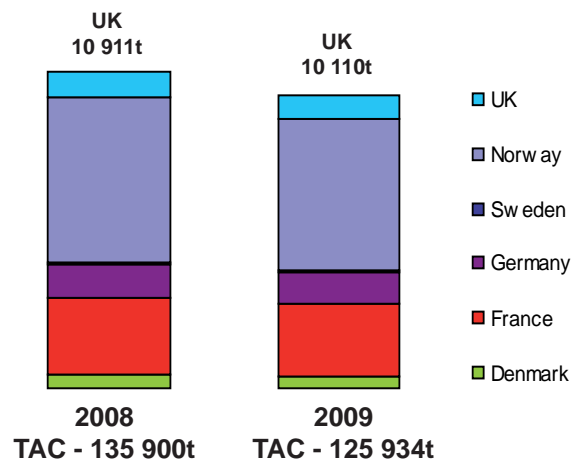
Surveys

Cefas carries out an annual research vessel survey to provide age-length distribution of selected species for ICES Working group input and biological studies

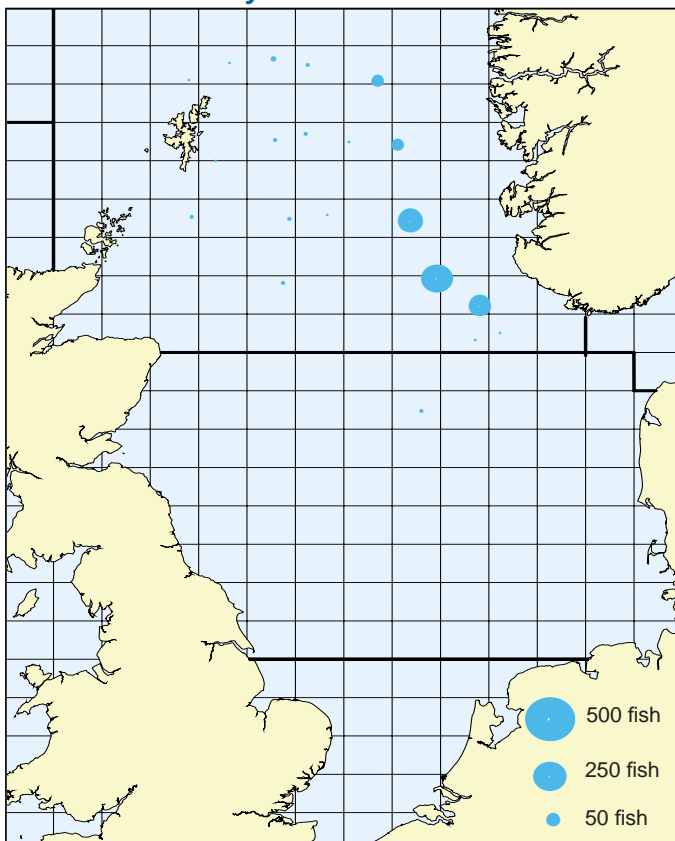
Abundance of saithe in 2008 (fish per 30 minutes trawling) was lower than the survey series average.

Over the last four years Fisheries Science Partnership (FSP) surveys have also taken place in the North Sea, results of which can be found on the cefas website. <http://www.cefas.co.uk/FSP/default.htm>

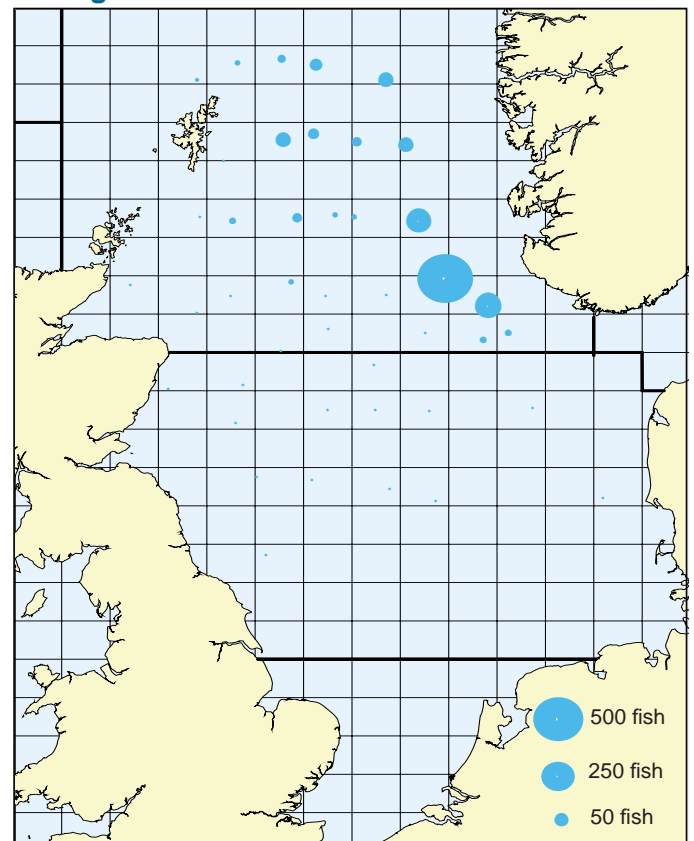
UK quota and other member states' share of the TAC as decided by the EU Council - Saithe in ICES Division IIIa and Sub-area IV: EC waters of Divisions IIa, IIb, IIc and IIId.



2008 Stock survey



Average 1998-2007



Classification of Stock Status

Spawning biomass in relation to precautionary limits	Fishing mortality in relation to precautionary limits	Fishing mortality in relation to highest yield	Fishing mortality in relation to agreed target
Full reproductive capacity	Harvested sustainably	Appropriate	Appropriate

State of stock/exploitation:

Based on the most recent estimates of SSB (in 2008) and fishing mortality (in 2007), ICES classifies the stock as having full reproductive capacity and being harvested sustainably. SSB was below B_{pa} from 1984 to 1998 (and was below B_{lim} from 1990 to 1993), but increased in the late 1990s and is estimated to have been at or above B_{pa} since 1998. Fishing mortality has declined since 1986, and has been below F_{pa} since 1997.

Precautionary Approach reference points (unchanged since 1998):

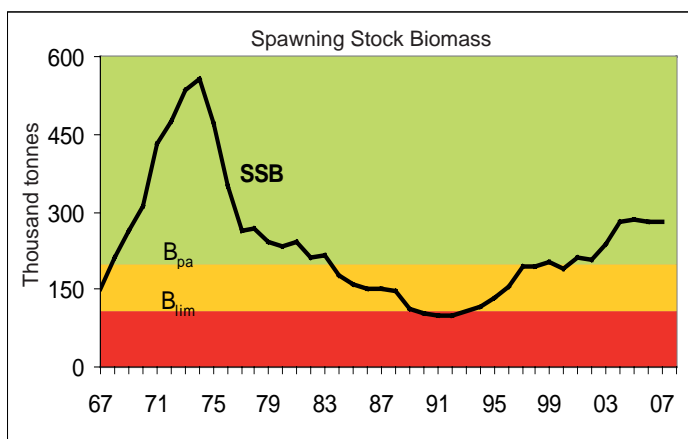
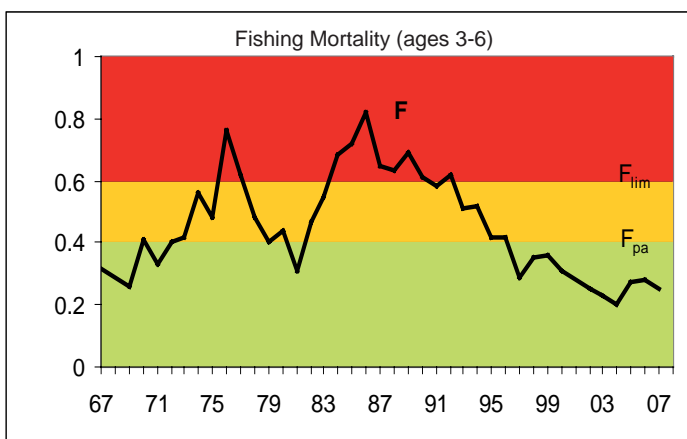
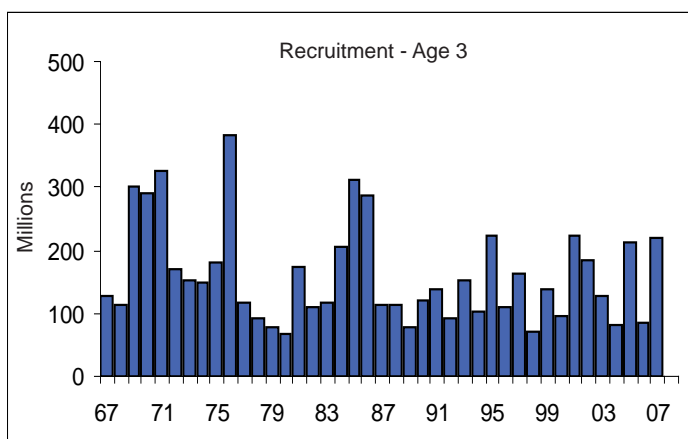
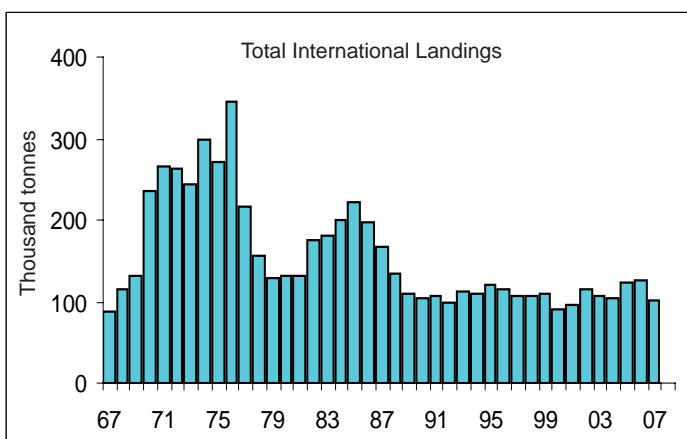
B_{lim} is 106 000 t.

B_{pa} is 200 000 t. This should afford a high probability of maintaining SSB above B_{lim} .

F_{lim} is 0.60. The fishing mortality estimated to lead to the stock falling below B_{lim} in the long term.

F_{pa} is 0.40, which should provide a 95% probability of avoiding F_{lim} , taking into account the uncertainty of the assessment.

SAITHE in the North Sea, Skagerrak, West of Scotland and Rockall



Exploitation boundaries in relation to precautionary limits

ICES recommended that the exploitation boundaries in relation to precautionary limits imply landings of less than 175 000 t in 2009, and the SSB is expected to remain above B_{pa} (200 000 t) in 2009.

The TAC agreed for 2009 for ICES Division IIIa and Sub-area IV: EC waters of Divisions IIa, IIIb, IIIc and IIId is 125 934 t.