

Species: Atlantic Cod

OSPAR Recommendation 2014/14:

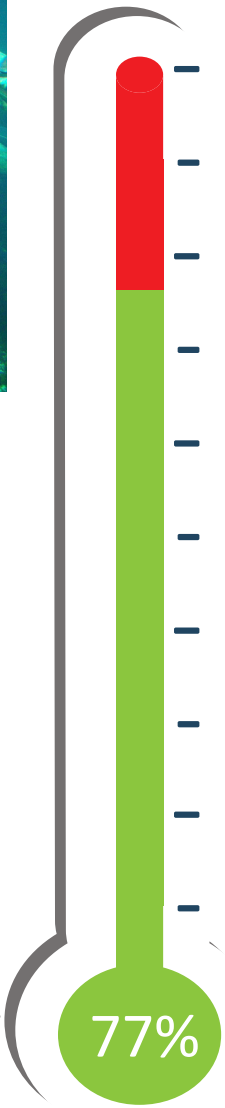
Contracting Parties are required to report progress with implementation of recommendations every six years, with initial more frequent reporting until 2019.

Measures taken by Contracting Parties to protect Cod include measures through the Common Fisheries Policy, national fisheries measures and a range of research programmes



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Cod (*Gadus morhua*) is a benthopelagic species, distributed in a variety of habitats, from the shoreline down to the continental shelf and beyond to depths of 600 m. The species forms large schools during the day, and performs seasonal (spawning and wintering) migrations. Several spawning grounds of different stocks have been identified. In the OSPAR Maritime Area, the species is found from Greenland and Iceland to the Barents Sea, and south to the English Channel and the Celtic Sea. In the NorthEast Atlantic, the Northeast arctic cod stock in the Barents Sea, the Icelandic stock and the much smaller North Sea stock range widely. There are also local, stationary races which always remain close inshore.



Action Highlights

Each Recommendation requires Contracting Parties to report on the methods used to implement the measures. The methods are Legislation, Administrative action and Negotiated agreement, or any combination of these. Some recent examples include:

1. Contracting Parties deliver this through their EU Common Fisheries Policy requirements or through the annual fisheries management cycle in the case of Norway
2. Sweden has specific management measures in coastal waters in the first 3 months of each year.
3. The Netherlands has a cod avoidance plan and monitors angling catches
4. Parties undertake a range of research programmes covering genetics, population structure, migration, life history, spawning areas, gear development, optimal management and real time closures.

Engagement

The engagement index (left) measures how well Contracting Parties have engaged with the national measures in the Recommendation. The higher the score the greater the number of actions that Contracting Parties, which have reported, have taken to implement the measures in the Recommendation. Click here for more information on the index.

References:

- Background Document on Atlantic Cod (OSPAR Publication 623)
- OSPAR Recommendation 2014/14
- OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats (Agreement 2008-06)

Condition

The International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) states that most Atlantic cod stocks are still outside Safe Biological Limits (SBL) but it should also be observed that the situation has improved in recent years. It is reasonable to consider that stocks need to be at least above SBL not to qualify as being threatened or declining, and that they are not being harvested outside such limits. Consequently, all cod stocks in OSPAR Regions II and III that have been identified by OSPAR to be under threat and/or in decline, with the exception of the Celtic Sea, are still under threat.



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