

King scallop, *Pecten maximus*

ADVICE

Landings of king scallops may be increased in line with the increasing survey index plus increasing commercial Landings per Unit Effort (LPUE). It is advised that **landings in 2025 should be no more than 516 tonnes**.

FISHERY AND STOCK TRENDS

In 2023, 629 tonnes of scallops were landed by dredge by UK registered vessels from the ICES rectangles 37E3, 37E4, 38E4, 39E3 and 39E4 (excluding the Clyde fishery). This is an increase from recent years, but still a reduction in landings from a peak in 2014 (Fig 1). The LPUE series is derived from reported landings data. The LPUE trend has decreased from a peak in 2014. Having increased in the last two years, LPUE is now back above the time series average (Fig 1).

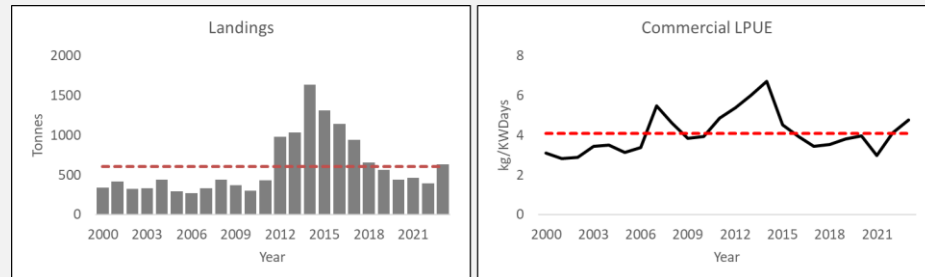


Fig 1. King scallops in ICES rectangles 37E3, 37E4, 38E4, 39E3 and 39E4 (excluding Clyde fishery). Landings and LPUE. Red dashed line indicates time series average.

Stock Survey

A survey has examined trends in scallop stocks within NI waters from 1992. The survey Index (standardized biomass caught during the survey) increased in 2024 but is still down from a peak in 2014 (Fig 2). The recruitment index (standardized catch of scallops below 106mm) also increased in 2023.

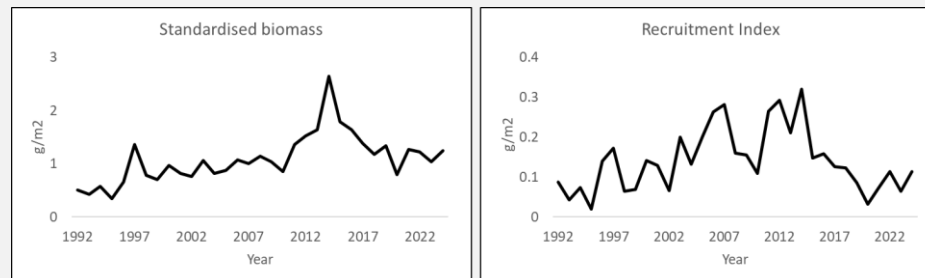


Fig 2. King scallop survey in ICES rectangles 37E3, 37E4, 38E4, 39E3 and 39E4 (excluding Clyde fishery). Summary of the stock assessment. Standardised biomass and recruitment index

Table 1. Scallops in ICES rectangles 37E3, 37E4, 38E4, 39E3 and 39E4. State of the stock relative to qualitative fishing pressure and survey index.

Fishing Pressure				Survey Index				
2021	2022	2023	Increasing; Below average	2021	2022	2023	2024	Increasing; Above average
↑	↓	↑		↑	↓	↓	↑	

ADVICE BASIS

The Northern Ireland annual scallop survey is used to indicate stock trends. The advice is based on the ratio of the mean of the last two index values (Index A) and the mean of the three preceding values (Index B), multiplied by the recent average landings (3 years).

The precautionary buffer was considered and not applied as there is an increase in LPUE and survey indices.

Table 2 King scallops in ICES rectangles 37E3, 37E4, 38E4, 39E3 and 39E4. Basis for advice. *

Index A (2023 - 2024)	1.14
Index B (2020–2022)	1.10
Index ratio (A/B)	1.04
Recent landings for 2021-2023	496 t
Precautionary Reduction	Not Applied
Landings advice**	516 t
% Advice change ^	+4.1 %

* 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.

** [Mean recent landings (2021-2023)] × [Index Ratio] × [Precautionary buffer].

^ Advice change is based on the current advised landings compared to mean recent landings.

REFERENCE POINTS

The stock status relative to candidate reference points is unknown.

QUALITY OF THE ASSESSMENT

Survey data is only available for 39E3 and 39E4 from 2011 onwards when the survey was extended to cover the North Coast (ICES area VIa), historically the survey concentrated on the Irish Sea only (ICES area VIIa).

Commercial landings and effort information are derived from reported landings data from all UK vessels. These data are reliant on accurate self-reporting from commercial fishers. Methods for automated data collection would provide more detail on effort trends, including the duration over which pots are deployed.

The landings and effort in 2020 may have been impacted by Covid-19 due to market factors and public restrictions to limit Covid-19 spread.

ISSUES RELEVANT FOR THE FISHERY

EU Minimum Landing Size of 110mm.

Commercial landings and effort information are derived from reported landings data from all UK vessels. Irish vessels may also fish in the indicated ICES rectangles, but this information is not recorded in this assessment.

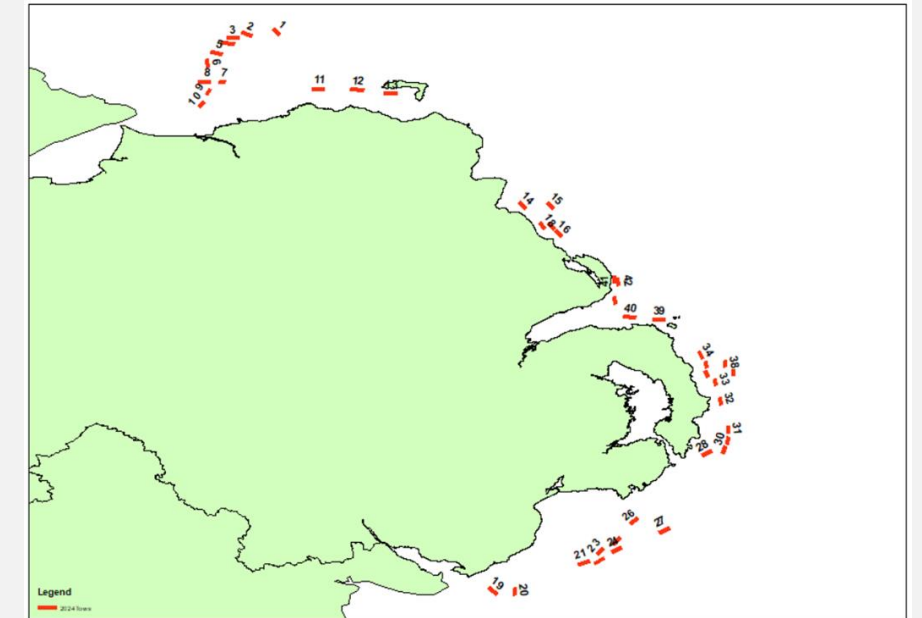


Fig 3. Location of tows carried out during the 2024 scallop survey.

SUMMARY OF THE ASSESSMENT

Table 3 King scallop in ICES rectangles 37E3, 37E4, 38E4, 39E3 and 39E4 (excluding Clyde fishery). Assessment summary.

Year	Landings Tonnes	Effort kwDays	Survey standardised catch
2000	340.07	108238.76	1.022
2001	413.33	152708.47	0.844
2002	325.31	118123.80	0.782
2003	332.84	109645.10	1.056
2004	441.44	140868.00	0.814
2005	293.23	93492.30	0.878
2006	267.63	81503.38	1.078
2007	332.01	60768.74	1.002
2008	440.05	93123.09	1.141
2009	371.05	93517.88	1.041
2010	302.04	73395.50	0.850
2011	430.90	86627.31	1.360*
2012	979.00	183777.39	1.565
2013	1028.87	166088.40	1.640
2014	1633.60	261199.08	2.640
2015	1310.27	290699.52	1.793
2016	1138.25	281619.84	1.641
2017	942.81	263764.06	1.388
2018	658.20	180969.11	1.179
2019	565.47	149221.82	1.343
2020	442.05	109516.15	0.797
2021	466.30	161059.95	1.264
2022	393.34	94293.12	1.226
2023	629.12	134577.79	1.036
2024			1.245

*Indicates the first year the survey was extended to cover ICES area VIa.