

Wolffish in Subarea 1

Advice June 2023 for 2024-2026

Recommendation for 2024 – 2026

Atlantic wolffish: The Scientific Council advises that there should be no directed fishery and bycatch should be kept to the lowest possible level.

Spotted wolffish: The Scientific Council advises that the TAC should not exceed mean catches from the period 2012 to 2015 when indices were increasing for both stocks. This corresponds to a catch of 775 tonnes.

Management objectives

No explicit management plan or management objectives have been defined by the Government of Greenland.

Management unit

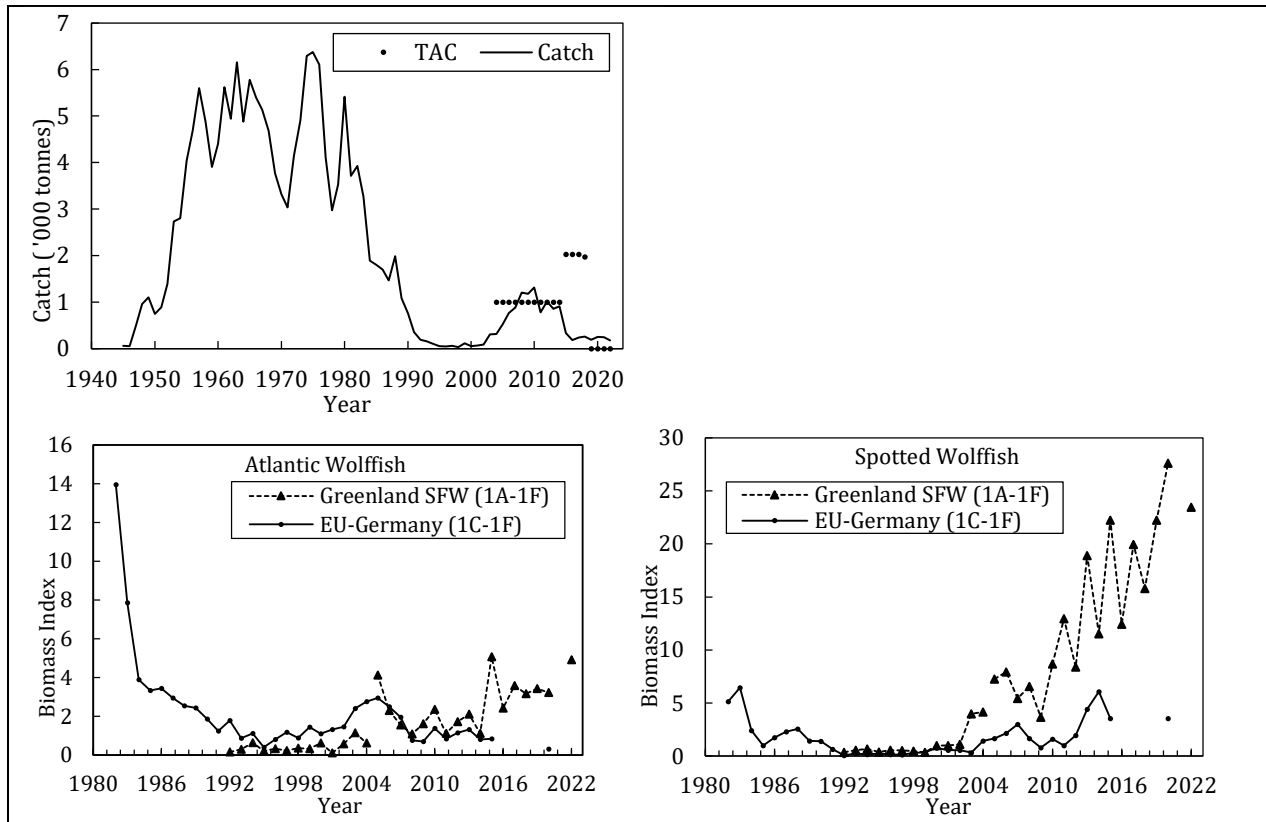
Atlantic wolffish is known to be more connected to the offshore banks in South and West Greenland and is considered a single unit.

Spotted wolffish is found in all areas both inshore and offshore, but is known to be the dominant species of wolffish in the coastal regions and the fjords in South, West and North Greenland. It is presumed to be a single stock.

Stock status

Atlantic wolffish: The biomass remains below the higher level of the 1980s. Recruitment and fishing mortality are unknown.

Spotted wolffish: Biomass in recent years is close to the higher levels observed in the early 1980s. Recruitment and fishing mortality are unknown.



Reference points

No reference points have been defined.

Assessment

No analytical assessment was performed. The assessment is based upon a qualitative evaluation of survey indices, length composition in surveys, and fishery data. The assessment is considered data limited and with relatively high uncertainty, as surveys do not fully cover the distribution of the stock.

The next assessment will be in 2026.

Human impact

Mainly fishery related mortality. Other mortality sources (e.g. pollution, shipping, oil-industry) are undocumented.

Biological and environmental interactions

There is no integrated summary information available on the structure, status and trends of the marine ecosystem for the area inhabited by this stock.

Ecosystem sustainability of catches

Wolffish is included in the piscivore guild. There are currently no Ecosystem Production Units defined nor TCI information for the distribution area of this stock.

Fishery

Wolffish are primarily taken as a bycatch in other fisheries. The commercial fishery for wolffish in West Greenland occurred from the 1950s to 1979 with catches of around 5 000 t per year. After 1980, the cod fishery gradually stopped in West Greenland and catches of wolffish also decreased during this period. In 2022, 165 t

of wolffish was landed to factories mostly taken as bycatch in inshore small boat fisheries and 10 t was reported from offshore vessels.

Recent catch estimates ('000 tonnes) are as follows:

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Atlantic wolffish TAC		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0	0	0	0	0
Spotted wolffish TAC		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0	0	0	0	0
Wolffish TAC	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.03	2.0	0	0	0	0	0
STATLANT 21	0.9	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	
STACFIS	0.9	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	

Special comments

The ICES HCR for data limited stocks, which was previously used to provide advice for spotted wolffish, is no longer considered appropriate for this stock.

The two species are not usually separated in the landings. Given the different status of the Atlantic and spotted wolffish stocks, **SC recommends** *speciation of the landings for these two species*.

Sources of Information

SCR Doc. 20/056, 23/020 and; SCS Doc. 23/14.