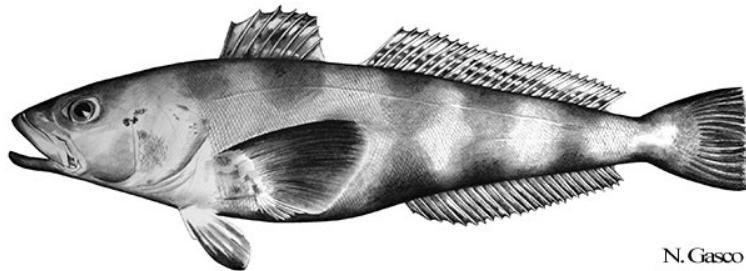


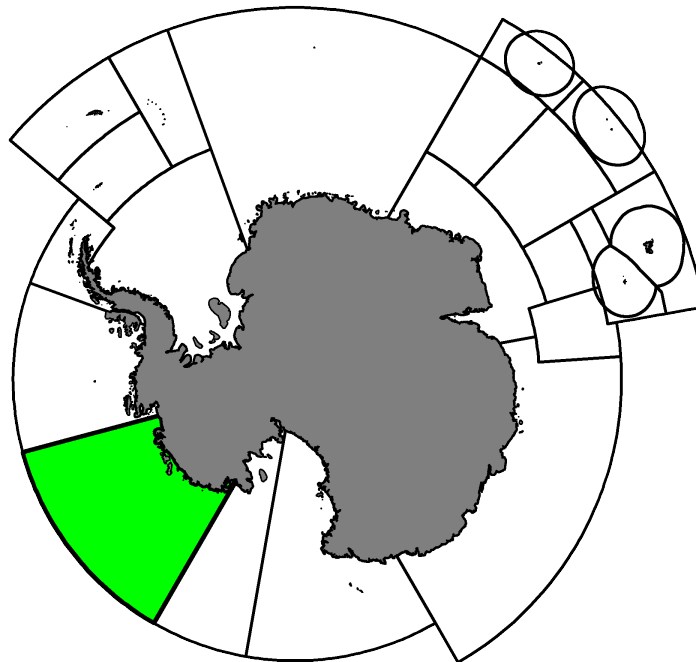
Fishery Report 2020: *Dissostichus mawsoni* in Subarea 88.2

CCAMLR Secretariat

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Antarctic Toothfish, *Dissostichus mawsoni* Norman, 1937.



Map of the management areas within the CAMLR Convention Area. SSRUs 882C to 882I within Subarea 88.2, are shaded in green. Throughout this report, “2020” refers to the 2019/20 CCAMLR fishing season (from 1 December 2019 to 30 November 2020).

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1. Introduction to the fishery

1.1. History

This report describes the exploratory longline fishery for Antarctic toothfish (*Dissostichus mawsoni*) in Small Scale Research Units (SSRUs) 882C to 882I within Subarea 88.2 in the Amundsen Sea region (Figure 1). The area spans 150°W to 105°W longitude and from the Antarctic Continent to 60°S latitude. Fishing occurs around seamounts and ridges, the Marie Byrd Seamount, the Continental slope, and the Continental shelf areas with polynyas. SSRU 882I has had a catch limit of 0 tons since it was first defined (Conservation Measures [32-02](#), [41-01](#), [41-10](#)).

The fishery began in 2003 on the ridge complex in SSRU 882H, and expanded to the continental slope and shelf areas beginning in 2006. The SSRUs were redefined in 2011, moving the northern extent of SSRUs 882C-G from 55°S to 70° 50'S recognising the differences between toothfish inhabiting seamounts and those inhabiting the continental slope regions.

Prior to 2017, this fishery was an exploratory fishery for *Dissostichus* spp., however, in order to better align the target species with the assessment process the target species was specified as *D. mawsoni*, with any Patagonian toothfish (*D. eleginoides*) caught counting towards the catch limit for *D. mawsoni*.

The only type of fishing gear allowed in this fishery is bottom longline gear. Three types of bottom longline gear are used; Autoline, Spanish Line, and trotline (See the CCAMLR [Gear Library](#) for details). Although toothfish do inhabit shallow water to some degree, they are mainly a deep-water species and the fishery is restricted to fishing deeper than 550m (Conservation Measure [22-08](#)). Most fishing occurs between 800 and 1800m depth.

The fishery has started on 1 December of each year. The duration of fishing activities in Subarea 88.2 has decreased over time, from more than two months to less than 4 weeks in recent years. Vessels tend to begin fishing in SSRU 882H, where most of the fishing has occurred, before moving south to fish in the Research Blocks (see Fig. 1). Although in recent years some vessels may gain access to the polynyas in SSRU 882F shortly after the fishery opens.

Sea ice is a major constraint on when and where fishing can occur within open areas. Significant sea ice can prevent access by vessels to many areas, especially early in the fishing season. Typically, a large sea ice bridge occurs along the continental slope and can prevent access to fishing areas in polynyas on the continental shelf and especially to Research Blocks 882_1 and 882_3.

1.2. Conservation Measures currently in force

The limits on the exploratory fishery for *D. mawsoni* in Subarea 88.2 are defined in Conservation Measure [41-10](#).

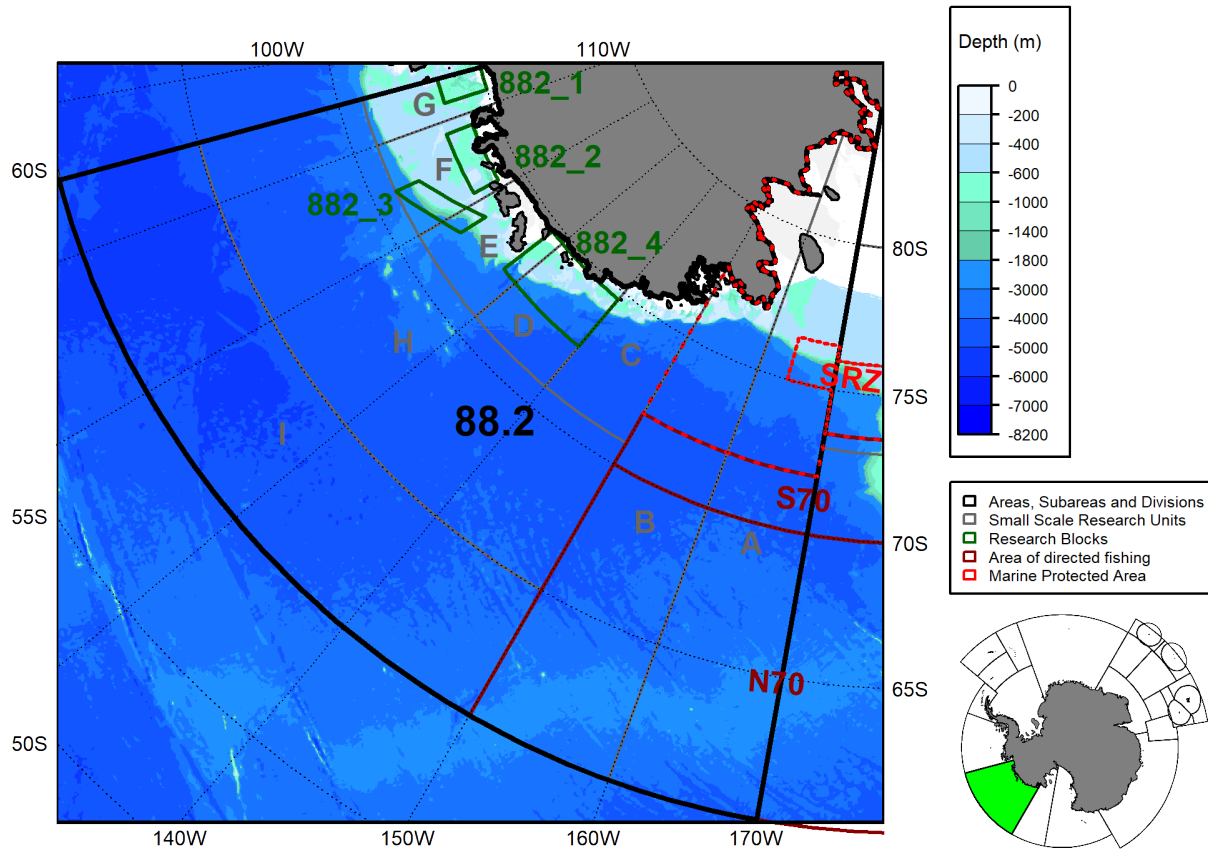


Figure 1: Location of Small Scale Research Units, Areas of directed fishing and Marine Protected Areas in Subarea 88.2. This report discusses fishing in SSRUs 882C to 882I within Subarea 88.2. The fishable depth range (600m-1800m) is highlighted in shades of green.

1.3. Active vessels

In 2020, 11 vessels participated in this fishery. For the 2021 fishing season, a total of 18 vessels notified their intention to participate in this fishery (1 from Australia; 3 from New Zealand; 5 from the Republic of Korea; 1 from the Russian Federation; 3 from the United Kingdom; 5 from Ukraine).

1.4. Timeline of spatial management

In 2011, the Commission revised the boundaries of the SSRUs in Subarea 88.2 such that 76% of the yield was assigned to the region between 70° 50'S and 65°S (redefined as SSRU 882H) and the remaining 24% of the yield was assigned to the region south of 70° 50'S (SSRUs 882C-G) as outlined in SC-CAMLR-XXX, Annex 7, paragraph 6.127.

In 2014, the Scientific Committee agreed to a two-year research plan in SSRUs 882C-H (for the 2015 and 2016 seasons) in which the catch limit for SSRU 882H was 200 tonnes, the fishing elsewhere was restricted to four Research Blocks (see Fig. 1) and the combined catch limit for the Research Blocks was 419 tonnes with no more than 200 tonnes to be taken from any one of the Research Blocks, this overarching 419 tonne limit was removed in 2019.

In developing the research plan, the Scientific Committee noted (SC-CAMLR-XXXIII, Paragraph 3.169) that:

- (i) declining recaptures by year of release in SSRU 882H indicate a loss of tagged fish from the seamounts and annual immigration of untagged fish
- (ii) increasing rate of decline in recaptures by year of release, *i.e.*, recaptures of tags released in more recent years are declining at a faster rate than the declines observed in tags released in earlier years
- (iii) all estimates of biomass on the seamounts from tag recaptures are biased high, with the least biased being those from fish which have been at liberty for one year
- (iv) simulations indicate that the trends observed in the tag-recapture data are difficult to replicate but could be replicated with an exploitation rate on the seamounts of around 20% and an immigration and emigration of tagged fish at around 20%.

2. Reported catch

2.1. Latest reports and limits

The catches of *D. mawsoni* from Subarea 88.2 are provided in Table 1. In this fishery, the catch of *D. mawsoni* reached a maximum of 753 tonnes in 2019. In 2020, 643 tonnes of *D. mawsoni* were caught.

The catches reported from Subarea 88.2 include catch data from particular vessels that CCAMLR has agreed should be quarantined as there is no confidence in the amount and/or the location of those catches. All ancillary data associated with these vessels (*e.g.*, by catch, tagging, observer data) are also quarantined and not included in the data presented in this report.

Table 1. Catch (tonnes) and effort history for *Dissostichus mawsoni* in this exploratory fishery (SSRUs 882C to 882I). Source: Fine scale data and past estimates for IUU catch (-: no IUU estimate available; q: catch data currently quarantined).

Season	Number of vessels	Catch limit (tonnes)	Catch	Estimated IUU catch (tonnes)
2003	1	375	106	0
2004	2	375	362	0
2005	2	375	270	0
2006	7	487	425	15
2007	7	547	347	0
2008	4	567	416	0
2009	10	567	484	0
2010	5	575	314	0
2011	11	575	570	-
2012	5	530	412	-
2013	12	530	475 (q: 1)	-
2014	14	390	392 (q: 34)	-
2015	7	819	396 (q: 227)	-
2016	9	619	430 (q: 186)	-
2017	9	619	466 (q: 158)	-
2018	9	619	313 (q: 296)	-
2019	13	1000	753	-
2020	11	894	643	-

Table 2: Catch and catch limits by Research Block and in SSRU 882H in 2020 for *Dissostichus mawsoni* in Subarea 88.2. Source: Fine scale data.

Research Block	Catch limit	Catch (% of catch limit)
882_1	192	97 (50.5%)
882_2	232	220 (94.8%)
882_3	182	46 (25.3%)
882_4	128	136 (106.2%)
882H	160	133 (83.1%)

2.2. By-catch

Catch limits for by-catch species groups (macrourids, rajids and other species) are defined in Conservation Measures 41-01 and 33-03 and provided in Table 3. The total by-catch in SSRU 882H and in each of the Research Blocks is defined in Annex 41-10/A.

If the by-catch of any one species is equal to, or greater than, 1 tonne in any one haul or set, then the fishing vessel must move at least 5 nautical miles away for a period of at least five days.

If the catch of *Macrourus* spp. taken by a single vessel in any two 10-day periods in a single SSRU exceeds 1 500kg in a 10-day period and exceeds 16% of the catch of *D. mawsoni* in that period, the vessel shall cease fishing in that SSRU for the remainder of the season.

Skates thought to have a reasonable chance of survival are released at the surface in accordance with Conservation Measure 33-03. The current by-catch limits and move-on rules for rajids are given in Conservation

Measure [33-03](#).

Table 3. Reported catch and catch limits for by-catch species (*Macrourus* spp., Rajids and others) in this fishery (SSRUs 882C to 882I). see Conservation Measure [33-03](#) for details. Source: fine-scale data.

Season	<i>Macrourus</i> spp.		Rajids			Other catch	
	Catch Limit (tonnes)	Reported Catch (tonnes)	Catch Limit (tonnes)	Reported Catch (tonnes)	Number Released	Catch Limit (tonnes)	Reported Catch (tonnes)
2003	0	18	0	0	0	0	8
2004	60	37	50	0	0	140	8
2005	60	20	50	0	0	140	3
2006	78	84	50	<1	865	100	12
2007	88	54	50	<1	0	100	13
2008	88	17	50	0	0	100	4
2009	90	58	50	<1	265	100	13
2010	92	49	50	0	0	100	15
2011	92	51	50	<1	168	100	13
2012	84	29	50	<1	0	120	11
2013	84	25 q	50	<1	0	120	8 q
2014	62	7 q	50	<1	28	120	3 q
2015	99	14 q	50	<1 q	192 q	120	5 q
2016	99	50 q	50	<1 q	861 q	120	2 q
2017	99	21 q	31	<1 q	314 q	99	2 q
2018	99	16 q	31	<1 q	104 q	99	2 q
2019	160	21	50	<1	217	160	3
2020	143	42	45	<1	571	143	5

2.3. Vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs)

All Members are required to submit, within their general new (Conservation Measure [21-01](#)) and exploratory (Conservation Measure [21-02](#)) fisheries notifications requirements, information on the known and anticipated impacts of their gear on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs, as shown in the [CCAMLR VME taxa classification guide](#)), including benthic communities and benthos such as seamounts, hydrothermal vents and cold-water corals. All of the VMEs in CCAMLR’s [VME Registry](#) are currently afforded protection through specific area closures.

By the end of this fishing season, there were no VMEs and 17 VME Risk Areas designated in SSRUs 882C-H.

2.4. Incidental mortality of seabirds and marine mammals

The risk levels for birds in this fishery is category 1 (low) south of 65°S, category 3 (average) north of 65°S and overall is category 3 (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, Annex 7, Table 14 and Figure 2).

Conservation Measure [25-02](#) applies to this fishery and in recent years has been linked to an exemption for night setting in Conservation Measure [24-02](#) and subject to a bird by catch limit. Offal and other discharges are regulated under annual conservation measures (*e.g.*, Conservation Measures [41-09](#) and [41-10](#)).

There have been no reports of incidental seabird mortalities in Subarea 88.2 in this fishery.

In 2020, one seal mortality was reported by a vessel in this fishery.

3. Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing

Past estimates of Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) catch in this fishery are shown in Table 1. Following the recognition of methodological issues regarding the estimation of IUU catch levels since 2011, evidence of IUU presence or activity has continued to be recorded but no corresponding estimates of the IUU catch for *D. mawsoni* have been provided (SC CAMLR-XXIX, paragraph 6.5). One IUU-listed fishing vessel was observed in Subarea 88.2 in 2006 and 2010. Unmarked fishing gear, potentially from an IUU vessel, was reported in this Subarea in 2016.

4. Data collection

4.1. Data collection requirements

Fishery data is collected by vessels and by observers. Extensive information about location, fishing effort, and catch is recorded by vessels and also documented by observers. The collection of biological data as part of the CCAMLR Scheme of International Scientific Observation (SISO) includes representative samples of length, weight, sex and maturity stage, as well as collection of otoliths for age determination of the target and most frequently taken by-catch species.

This fishery is managed under the umbrella of the exploratory fisheries Conservation Measure 41-01 and, as such, have an associated data collection plan (Annex 41-01/A), a research plan (Annex 41-01/B) and a tagging program (Annex 41-01/C).

The collection of biological data in this fishery is conducted under Conservation Measure 23-05.

4.2. Length frequency distributions

The recent length frequency distributions of *D. mawsoni* caught in this fishery are shown in Figure 2. These length frequency distributions are unweighted; they have not been adjusted for factors such as the size of the catches from which they were collected. The interannual variability exhibited in the figure may reflect changes in the fished population but is also likely to reflect changes in the gear used, the number of vessels in the fishery and the spatial and temporal distributions of fishing.

The length frequency distribution of the *D. mawsoni* catch in SSRU 882H appears to be very stable with little evidence of change in length over time (Figure 2). In the Research Blocks there is distinct bimodality and this is reflected in the overall length frequency distribution for the Subarea.

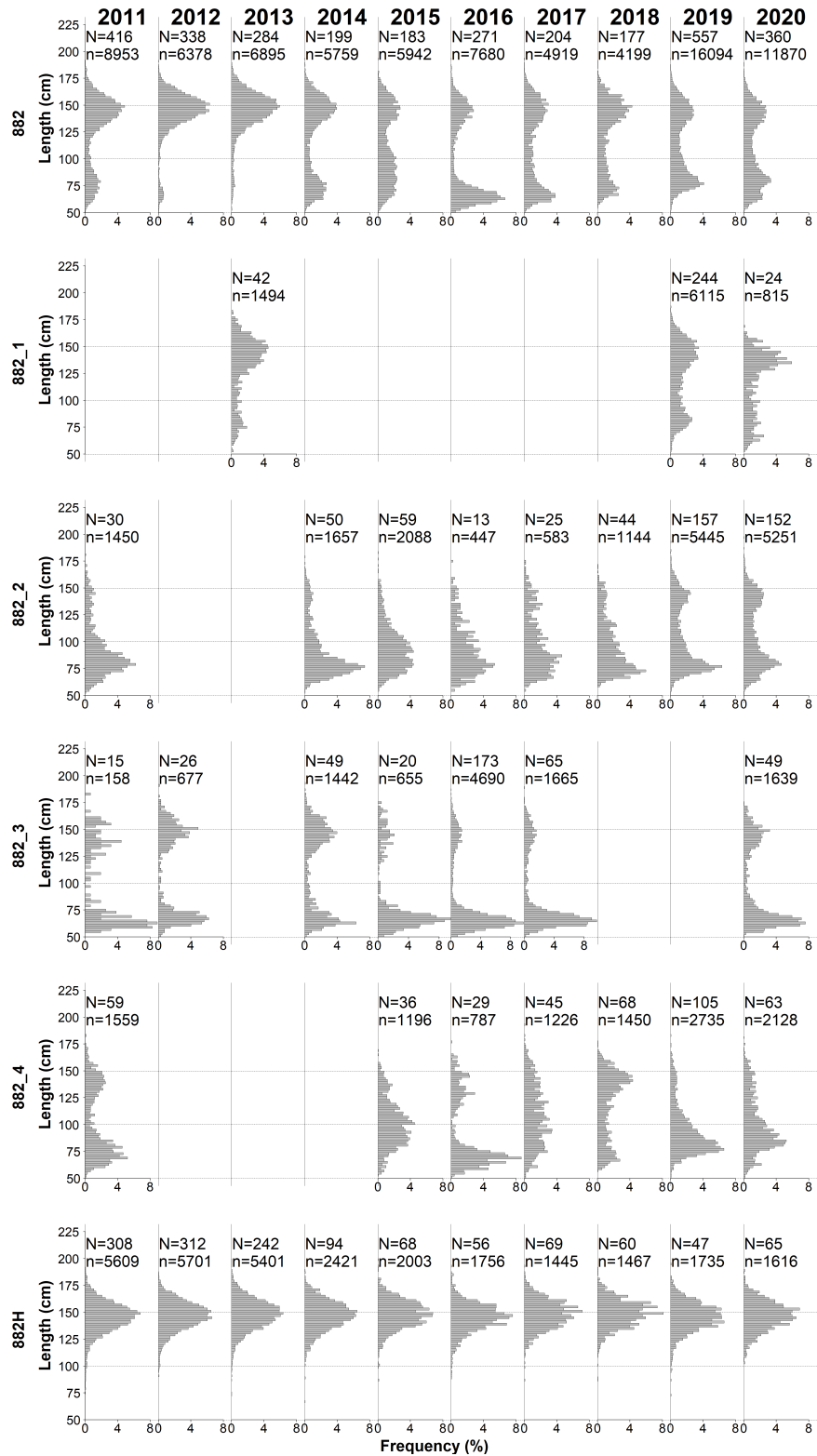


Figure 2. Annual length frequency distributions of *Dissostichus mawsoni* caught in this fishery (top panel) and its five areas. The number of hauls from which fish were measured (N) and the number of fish measured (n) in each year are indicated. Note: length frequency distributions are only shown where more than 150 fish were measured.

4.3. Tagging

Under Conservation Measure 41-01, each longline vessel fishing in exploratory fisheries for toothfish has been required to tag and release *D. mawsoni* and *D. eleginoides* according to the CCAMLR tagging protocol and the required tagging rate per tonne of green weight caught specified in the fishery-specific Conservation Measure. In order to ensure that there is sufficient overlap between the length distribution of those fish that are tagged by a vessel and of all the fish that are caught by that vessel, each vessel is required to achieve a minimum tag-overlap statistic of 60% (see Annex 41-01/C, footnote 3). To avoid low sample size artefacts, the requirement for a 60% tag-overlap statistic does not apply to vessels that tag at the required rate but tag less than 30 fish (Table 4).

Table 4. Annual tagging rate (number of fish tagged per tonne of total catch), reported by vessels operating in this exploratory fishery (SSRUs 882C to 882I). The tag-overlap statistics (CM 41-01) for *D. mawsoni* and *D. eleginoides* respectively are provided in brackets (NC: Tag-overlap statistic is Not Calculated for less than 30 fish tagged; -: no fish were tagged).

Flag State	Vessel name	Fishing Season										
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Argentina	Argenova XXI	1 (NC,-)										
Australia	Antarctic Chieftain					1.8 (72.8,-)						
Australia	Antarctic Discovery							3.2 (87.7,-)		3.1 (88.6,-)	3.1 (83.8,-)	
Spain	Tronio	1.2 (47.9,NC)										
Spain	Yanque							3.5 (83.3,-)				
United Kingdom	Argos Froyanes	1 (60.9,NC)	1 (79.6,-)	1 (70.5,-)	1.1 (NC,-)	1.2 (77.4,-)		1.4 (70.3,-)		3.4 (88,-)		3.3 (91.4,-)
United Kingdom	Argos Georgia	1.1 (NC,-)	1 (54.2,-)			1.2 (NC,-)		2.4 (76.1,-)				3.3 (82.3,-)
United Kingdom	Nordic Prince										3 (88.4,-)	3 (82.2,-)
Republic of Korea	Greenstar										3 (84.5,-)	3 (NC,-)
Republic of Korea	Hong Jin No. 701				1.3 (NC,-)			3.2 (87.9,-)				
Republic of Korea	Hong Jin No. 707		0.9 (74.8,-)	1.7 (61.2,-)							3.4 (NC,-)	
Republic of Korea	Jung Woo No. 3	1.1 (NC,-)	1.1 (86,-)									
Republic of Korea	Kingstar										3.5 (60.1,-)	
Republic of Korea	Kostar				1.1 (NC,-)	1 (NC,-)	3.1 (NC,-)					
Republic of Korea	Sunstar				1.1 (NC,-)	1 (65.8,-)	3.2 (78.7,-)	3.2 (82.3,-)				3.7 (NC,-)
Norway	Argos Georgia									3.9 (79.4,-)		
Norway	Seljevaer				1.2 (NC,-)	1.1 (85,-)	2.9 (75.2,-)					
New Zealand	Antarctic Chieftain		1 (88.9,-)	1 (91.4,NC)	1.1 (85.6,-)	1 (82,-)						
New Zealand	Janas		1.1 (79.7,-)	1 (81.2,-)	1.1 (83.4,-)	1.4 (NC,-)		4.3 (94.2,NC)	10 (NC,-)			
New Zealand	San Aspiring		1.1 (87.3,-)									3.9 (79.8,-)
Russian Federation	Chio Maru No. 3											
Russian Federation	Gold Gate		1.1 (75.1,-)									
Russian Federation	Mys Velikan									5 (NC,-)		
Russian Federation	Oladon 1							3.1 (86.5,-)				
Russian Federation	Palmer				1 (78.8,-)	1 (NC,-)		1.1 (59.5,-)				
Russian Federation	Sparta	1.2 (75.4,NC)	1.1 (59.8,NC)	1.2 (NC,-)	1 (NC,-)				3.3 (83.2,-)			
Russian Federation	Ugulan								3.3 (68,-)			
Russian Federation	Volk Arktiki										3.1 (94.2,-)	
Russian Federation	Yantar 31				2.2 (NC,-)	1 (NC,-)	3 (NC,-)	3.1 (79.6,-)				
Ukraine	Calipso										3.5 (74.7,-)	3.3 (85.8,-)
Ukraine	Koreiz										3.1 (68.9,-)	3 (65.3,-)
Ukraine	Marigolds								3.5 (NC,-)	3.8 (NC,-)	4.1 (NC,-)	
Ukraine	Polus 1											2.7 (NC,-)
Ukraine	Simeiz				1.7 (NC,-)	1.2 (NC,-)					3.2 (62.9,-)	3.8 (NC,-)
Uruguay	Altamar										3.1 (85.8,-)	
Uruguay	Badaro									3.2 (62,-)		
Uruguay	Proa Pioneer								3.2 (86.3,-)	3 (77.2,-)	3.1 (81.6,-)	3 (82.8,-)
Uruguay	Ross Star		1.1 (NC,-)									

To date in this area, 16121 *D. mawsoni* have been tagged and released (842 have been recaptured; Table 5), and, 6 *D. eleginoides* have been tagged and released (4 have been recaptured).

Table 5. Number of *D. mawsoni* tagged in recent fishing Seasons in this exploratory fishery (SSRUs 882C to 882I). The number of fish recaptured by each vessel in each Season is provided in brackets.

Flag State	Vessel name	Fishing Season										
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Argentina	Argenova XXI	8 (0)										
Australia	Antarctic Chieftain						385 (26)					
Australia	Antarctic Discovery								476 (4)		553 (12)	463 (66)
Spain	Tronio	52 (4)										
Spain	Yanque							57 (1)				
United Kingdom	Argos Froyanes	250 (38)	68 (2)	210 (49)	15 (4)	67 (3)		262 (8)		337 (11)		110 (10)
United Kingdom	Argos Georgia	9 (1)	58 (13)			13 (5)		78 (2)				96 (4)
United Kingdom	Nordic Prince										194 (11)	429 (19)
Republic of Korea	Greenstar										236 (4)	12 (0)
Republic of Korea	Hong Jin No. 701				7 (0)				545 (0)			
Republic of Korea	Hong Jin No. 707		40 (3)	38 (1)								13 (0)
Republic of Korea	Jung Woo No. 3	6 (0)	35 (0)									
Republic of Korea	Kingstar											50 (2)
Republic of Korea	Kostar				11 (0)	10 (0)	5 (0)					
Republic of Korea	Sunstar				8 (1)	33 (1)	76 (0)	73 (0)				26 (0)
Norway	Argos Georgia									45 (2)		
Norway	Seljevaer				9 (1)	30 (0)	449 (20)					
New Zealand	Antarctic Chieftain		46 (1)	59 (9)	321 (42)	170 (19)						
New Zealand	Janas		30 (3)	99 (17)	62 (0)	21 (0)		323 (0)	1 (0)			
New Zealand	San Aspiring		190 (17)									46 (1)
Russian Federation	Chio Maru No. 3		44 (2)									
Russian Federation	Gold Gate		44 (16)									
Russian Federation	Mys Velikan									2 (0)		
Russian Federation	Oladon 1							101 (0)				
Russian Federation	Palmer				55 (3)	24 (0)		44 (2)				
Russian Federation	Sparta		50 (3)	36 (10)	12 (3)	27 (0)			178 (0)			
Russian Federation	Ugulan								61 (0)			
Russian Federation	Volk Arktiki										159 (2)	
Russian Federation	Yantar 31				2 (0)	13 (0)	18 (0)	86 (0)				
Ukraine	Calipso										52 (1)	76 (0)
Ukraine	Koreiz										282 (18)	478 (35)
Ukraine	Marigolds								13 (0)	5 (0)	13 (0)	
Ukraine	Polus 1											21 (0)
Ukraine	Simeiz				4 (0)	12 (0)					248 (8)	21 (2)
Uruguay	Altamar										352 (13)	
Uruguay	Badaro									208 (9)		
Uruguay	Proa Pioneer								216 (5)	408 (18)	184 (14)	243 (9)
Uruguay	Ross Star		16 (0)									
	Total	325 (43)	621 (60)	442 (86)	506 (54)	420 (28)	933 (46)	1024 (13)	1490 (9)	1005 (40)	2362 (85)	1995 (146)

5. Research

5.1. Status of the science

Catch and Effort Details of catch and effort for this fishery were updated for 2019 in WG-FSA-19/12. The data are used to develop the catch limits using the [trend analysis](#) but data collection is also designed to provide the information necessary to inform a future integrated stock assessment.

Age composition Little age information is currently available to develop annual age-length keys, particularly in SSRUs 882C-G, and since 2014 in SSRU 882H (WG-FSA-19/12). Age compositions of the catch based on available annual age-length keys were calculated for the North for the years where adequate age data were available. Results showed weak evidence of truncation in the proportion of older fish. However, the number of age samples to support this conclusion were small, and no new age data have been made available since 2014. Age frequencies in the South were calculated using a single age-length key for all years. Overall, fish are younger in the South and the relative magnitude of the modes of young and old fish in the South depends on where fishing takes place. Catches in Research Block 882_1 have showed a dominant mode of old fish while the other Research Blocks are dominated by younger fish. The youngest fish sampled in the South were four years old (WG-FSA-19/12).

Tag-recapture data In the South, the required tagging rate for commercial fishing was increased from 1 fish per tonne of catch to 3 fish per tonne beginning in the 2015 season (in addition to constraining fishing to four Research Blocks). The required tagging rate for the North remained at 1 fish per tonne of catch for 2015 and 2016 but increased to 3 fish per tonne from the 2017 season (Conservation Measure [41-10](#)). Tag recapture data are used for mark-recapture biomass estimation and also to detect movements related to stock structure.

5.2. Research plans

No research plans under Conservation Measure [24-01](#) targeting toothfish have been proposed for this fishery. The Scientific Committee did agree a temporary research plan in 2014 to provide fishery structure on the Continental slope and shelf, and to collect the necessary data for stock assessment.

6. Stock status

6.1. Summary of current status

As a data-limited fishery, this fishery does not have such estimates.

6.2. Assessment method

Catch limits are determined annually in the northern and southern areas using [trend analysis](#) while data are collected to inform an integrated stock assessment (SC-CAMLR-38, Paragraphs 3.141–3.143).

6.3. Year of last assessment, year of next assessment

Research plans for data-limited fisheries are reviewed annually.

7. Climate Change and environmental variability

The impact of Anthropogenic climate change in the short-term could be expected to be related to changes in sea ice and physical access to fishing grounds, whereas longer-term implications are likely to include changes in ecosystem productivity affecting target stocks (FAO 2018).

In anticipation of potential impacts of climate change on targeted fish stocks, the Scientific Committee indicated that changes in productivity parameters may impact assessments and management advice, and these changes may be related to long-term environmental change, shorter-term variability, or potential effects of fishing (SC-CAMLR XXXVII paragraph 3.51, Annex 9 paragraph 2.28).

The parameters that could be evaluated for the effects of environmental variability and change would include mean recruitment, recruitment variability, mean length at age, mean weight at length, natural mortality, and maturation ogives.

Other factors that may impact assumptions underlying the assessments that could also be considered, including stock distribution (for example, for its impact on tagged fish distribution or research survey interpretation), sex ratio (indicating maturation or other sex specific changes), and the ages or lengths observed in the fishery (indicating changes in vulnerability patterns or mortality).

There is no formal evaluation of the impacts of climate change and environmental variability available for this particular fishery.

Additional Resources

- Fishery Summary: [pdf](#), [html](#)
- Species Description: [pdf](#), [html](#)
- Trend Analysis: [pdf](#), [html](#)
- Fisheries Documents Browser