

SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

Molva molva

English name: Ling	Scientific name: <i>Molva molva</i>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Actinopterygii Order: Gadiformes Family: Lotidae	Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: –	Generation length: 12.7 years	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Fishing (F02.02.01; F02.03)	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Fishing (F02.02; F02.03)	
IUCN Criteria: A2d	HELCOM Red List Category:	EN Endangered
Global / European IUCN Red List Category NE / NE	Habitats Directive: –	
Previous HELCOM Red List Category (2007): VU		
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark <i>TAC regulation by EU in Kattegat</i> / –, Finland –/–, Germany –/– (Baltic Sea), Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland –/–, Russia –/–, Sweden <i>TAC regulation by EU in Kattegat</i> / EN		

Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region

Ling is found mostly in the Kattegat and the northern part of the Sound. The stock in the Kattegat and the Sound are believed to belong to the North Sea population. Ling are sporadically observed in the south-western Baltic. The spawning stock in the Kattegat and the northern Sound, marginal to the North Sea population, is presently at a very low level. A drastic decrease was observed in commercial Swedish landings over the assessment period (data from 1975–2011), from above 30 tonnes in the beginning of the 1970s in the Kattegat to less than 1 tonne in 2008 (Fiskeriverket 2011). Since 2008 the landings have been below 1 tonne.

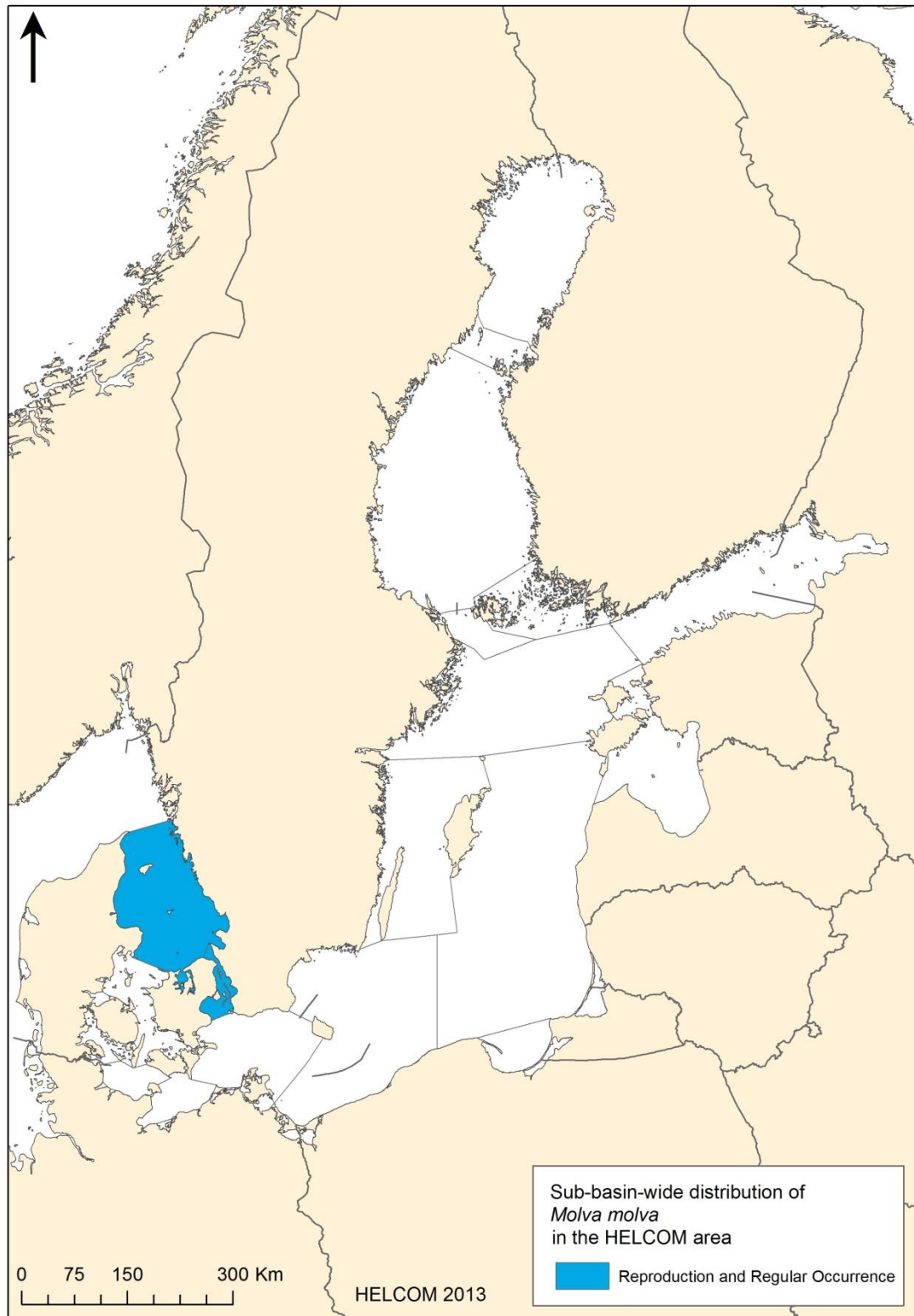


Ling. Photo by Vivica von Vietinghoff, Deutsches Meeresmuseum.

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*Molva molva***Distribution map**

The map shows the sub-basins in the HELCOM area where the species is known to occur regularly and to reproduce (HELCOM 2012).



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Habitat and ecology

Ling lives mostly on hard bottoms, from shallow waters down to 1000 meters depth but is most commonly present between 100 and 400 meters (Muus & Nielsen 1999). Ling can be observed in sparse shoals. Ling can reach a maximum length of 2 meters and a weight of 45 kg. It is a voracious predatory fish foraging mostly on other fish, crabs and cephalopods. Ling becomes sexually mature at ages 5–8. Spawning occurs from 20 to 300 m. The biggest females may lay up to 60 million eggs. The juveniles are pelagic during the first 2 years of life.

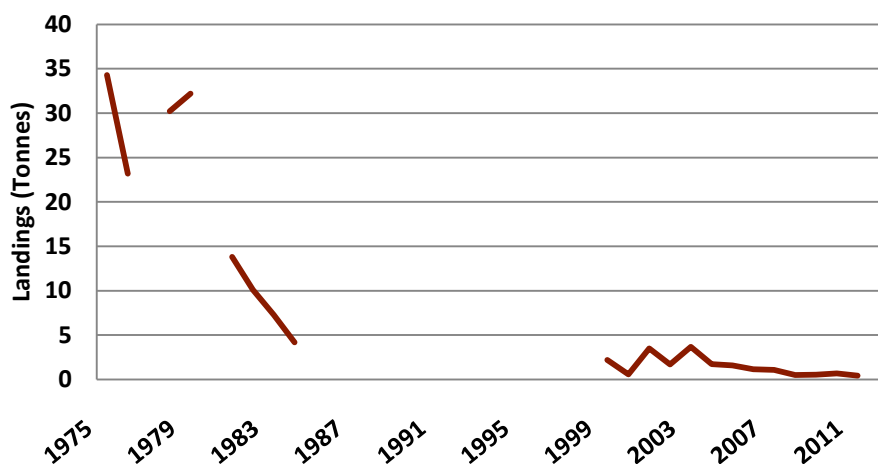
Description of major threats

The major threat is commercial fishing, i.e. demersal trawling and seining.

Assessment justification

Commercial Swedish landings showed a drastic decrease over the assessment period (data from 1975–2011), from above 30 tonnes in the beginning of the 1970s in the Kattegat to less than 1 tonne since 2008. This results in an estimated 50–99% decrease in three generations time, resulting in EN A2d status. This is not downgraded due to immigration from outside the HELCOM area since the situation is severe also in adjacent areas (Skagerrak).

Landings



Swedish landings of ling from the Kattegat according to Sweden statistics. Missing data are due to the fact that in some years landings of ling in the Skagerrak and Kattegat have been combined, preventing the use of the data.

Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

The knowledge of biology of the species should be increased and tools for investigation species on hard bottoms should be developed. Reduced fishing effort would be beneficial for this species as well.

Common names

D – Leng ; DK - Lange; GB – Ling; FIN –Molva; LT - Paprastoji molva; LV: Jūras līdaka; PL - Molwa; RUS - Mol'va; S – Långa

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References

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- HELCOM (2007). HELCOM Red list of threatened and declining species of lampreys and fish of the Baltic Sea. Baltic Sea Environmental Proceedings No. 109. Helsinki Commission, Helsinki. 40 pp.
- HELCOM (2012). Checklist of Baltic Sea Macro-species. Baltic Sea Environment Proceedings No. 130. Helsinki Commission, Helsinki. 203 pp.
- Muus, B.J., Nielsen, J.G. (1999). Sea fish. Scandinavian Fishing Year Book, Hedehusene, Denmark. 338 pp.
- Svensson, M., Degerman, E., Florin, A.-B., Hagberg, J., Kullander, S. O., Nathanson, J. E. & Stenberg, C. (2010). Fiskar – Fish. Pisces. In Gärdenfors, U. (ed.) Rödlistade arter i Sverige 2010 – The 2010 Red List of Swedish Species. ArtDatabanken, SLU, Uppsala. P. 323–332. Red List categories available also at <http://www.artfakta.se/GetSpecies.aspx?SearchType=Advanced>.