

SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

Scyliorhinus canicula

English name: Lesser spotted dogfish /Small-spotted catshark	Scientific name: <i>Scyliorhinus canicula</i>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Elasmobranchii Order: Carcharhiniformes Family: Scyliorhinidae	Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: –	Generation length: 11	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	
IUCN Criteria: –	HELCOM Red List Category:	LC Least Concern
Global / European IUCN Red List Category LC/NE	Habitats Directive: –	
Previous HELCOM Red List Category (2007): EN		
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/–, Estonia –/–, Finland –/–, Germany –/– (Baltic Sea), Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland –/–, Russia –/–, Sweden <i>Prohibited to fish for and land this species all year round</i> / LC		

Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region

The lesser spotted dogfish is a small and widespread catshark, living in coastal areas from West Africa to Norway. The species is considered one of the most abundant shark species in the Northeast Atlantic. The lesser spotted dogfish reproduces in the Kattegat and the northern parts of the Sound. The population trend in the North Sea is increasing (ICES 2012) and there are no signs of any significant population changes in the HELCOM area over the last thirty years.

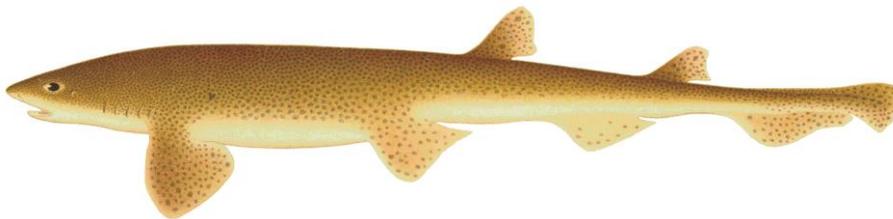
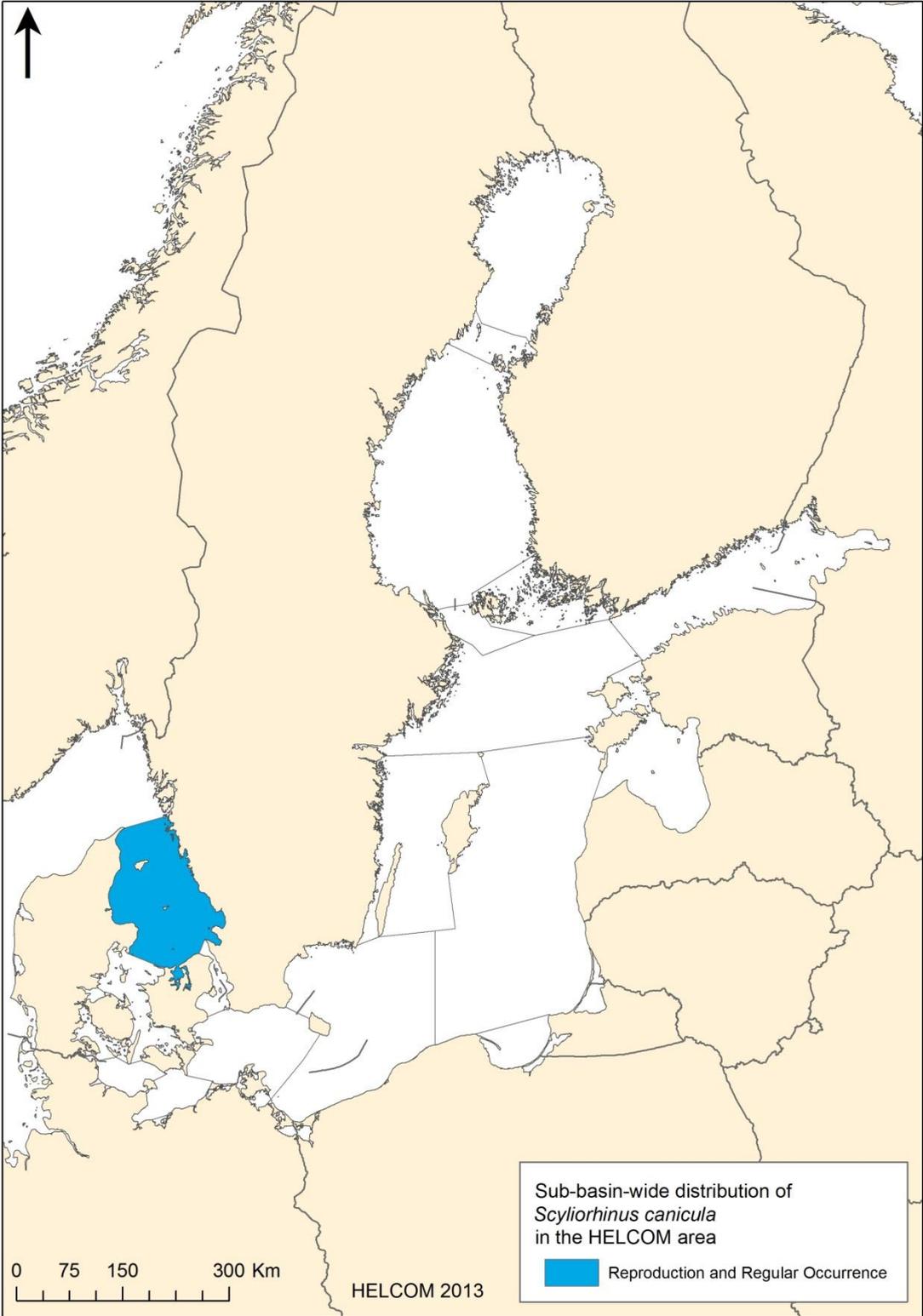


Illustration by von Wright (1895)

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

The lesser spotted dogfish is a demersally living shark species found at depths of 3–110 m, rarely to 400 m. It is oviparous with a single egg laid per oviduct at a time, spawning in November to July and attaches its egg-cases to algae and sea-grasses. Juveniles hatch after 8–9 months of development. Adults grow slowly and mature after 3–5 years. The species lives on sandy, coralline, algal, gravel or muddy bottoms; it is rarely found in mid-water. The lesser spotted dogfish feeds on molluscs and crustaceans, small cephalopods, polychaete worms, and small bony fish. The maximum total length is 100 cm but usually not above 60 cm, and the maximum reported age 12 years (Froese & Pauly 2012).

Description of major threats

The lesser spotted dogfish was considered threatened in the previous HELCOM assessment (HELCOM 2007). In that assessment the species was assumed to be threatened by fisheries (caught as by-catch in demersal fisheries and also as a target species) and probably also by habitat loss due to eutrophication, sand and gravel extraction etc.

Assessment justification

The lesser spotted dogfish is considered one of the most abundant shark species in the Northeast Atlantic. There are no signs of any significant population changes in the HELCOM area over the last three generations (31.5 years). In the adjacent North Sea area the abundance is increasing according to survey data (ICES 2012) and immigration is probable into the HELCOM area. Although data from the HELCOM area are scarce and the population is most likely rather small, both population size and distribution area are well above threshold level for being red-listed. Furthermore, since there is no evidence of decrease within the HELCOM area the species is considered Least Concern (LC).

Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

No protection actions currently needed in the HELCOM area.

Common names

D - Kleingefleckter Katzenhai; GB - Starry ray; DK - Småplettet rødhaj; FIN - Pistepunahai; LV - Mazā kaķhaizivs; LT - Mažadėmis katryklis; PL - Rekinek psi; RU - ; S - Småfläckig rødhaj

References

- Fries, B. Smitt, F. S. Von Wright, W. (1895). Skandinaviens fiskar. Norstedt, Stockholm.
- Froese, R., Pauly, D. (eds.) (2012). FishBase. World Wide Web electronic publication.
Available at: www.fishbase.org, version (12/2012).
- 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.
- ICES (2012). ICES Advice 2012. Book 6.