**SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET**

**Amblyraja radiata**

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<th>English name:</th>
<th>Scientific name:</th>
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<td>Starry ray /Thorny skate</td>
<td><em>Amblyraja radiata</em></td>
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**Taxonomical group:**
Class: Elasmobranchii  
Order: Rajiformes  
Family: Rajidae

**Species authority:**  
Donovan, 1808

**Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms:**
*Raja radiata*

**Generation length:**  
11

**Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes):**  
–

**Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes):**  
–

**Global / European IUCN Red List Category:**
VU/NE

**Helcom Red List Category:**
LC  
Least Concern

**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 –/–/LC

**Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region**

The starry ray is the most common ray in the North Sea and in the HELCOM area. It reproduces in the Kattegat and the Sound and has been found in the south-western parts of the Baltic. This small-bodied ray is of little commercial importance but it is often caught as bycatch in demersal fisheries. Bottom trawl survey data from the Kattegat shows strong fluctuation without any clear long-term trend. The population in the Sound shows signs of a small increase since the early 1990s. In the North Sea the species abundance increased in the 1990s but has decreased in the last decade (ICES 2012).

Starry ray. Photo by David Andersson, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.
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).
Habitat and ecology
The starry ray is a demersal living skate species occurring on soft bottoms (occasionally also hard bottoms). It is found at various depths, from 10 to 850 m, but most often between 30 and 200 m. The starry ray reproduces throughout the year; the species is oviparous and deposits its egg-case in algae and seagrass beds. Starry rays feeds on crustaceans, fish and polychaete worms. It can reach a maximum total length of over 1 meter but is seldom over 60 cm in the North Sea and HELCOM area. The maximum reported age is 28 years. (Froese & Pauly 2012)

Description of major threats
In the previous HELCOM assessment (HELCOM 2007) the species was considered threatened and several factors were mentioned as threats: habitat loss due to effects of sand and gravel extraction, trawling, eutrophication of sand bottoms (since the species inhabits clean oxygenated sand bottoms where it can bury and breathe), and fisheries (as by-catch in demersal fisheries).

Assessment justification
The bottom trawl survey data from IBTS survey in the Kattegat shows strong fluctuation but no clear long-term trend. The population in the Sound shows signs of a small increase since the early 1990s. The starry Ray is according to assessment of the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) showing increased abundance in the North Sea in the 1990s but decreased abundance over the last decade. It is globally red-listed as Vulnerable (VU A2b), but as Least Concern (LC) in the North-east Atlantic. This is a widespread, common ray with no evidence of decline within the HELCOM area during the assessment period, hence it is currently considered Least Concern (LC) within the HELCOM area.

Recommendations for actions to conserve the species
No protection actions currently needed in the HELCOM area.

Common names
D - Sternrochen; GB –Starry ray; DK - Tærbe; FIN – Kynsirausku; LV - Ėrkšķu raja; LT - Žvaigždėtoji raja; PL - Raja promienista; RU -Zvjozdchatij skat ; S – Klorocka

References