

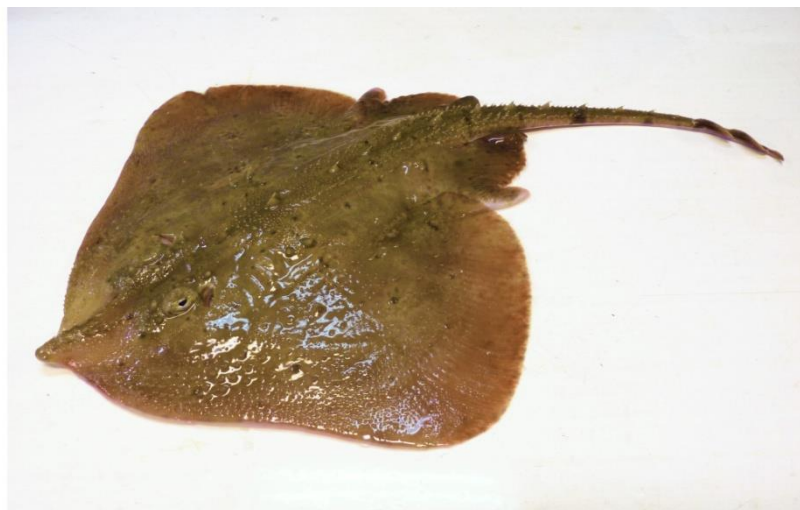
## SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

*Amblyraja radiata*

English name: <b>Starry ray /Thorny skate</b>	Scientific name: <b><i>Amblyraja radiata</i></b>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Elasmobranchii Order: Rajiformes Family: Rajidae	Species authority: Donovan,1808	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: <i>Raja radiata</i>	Generation length: 11	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): –	
IUCN Criteria: –	<b>HELCOM Red List Category:</b>	<b>LC Least Concern</b>
Global / European IUCN Red List Category VU/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 –/LC		

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

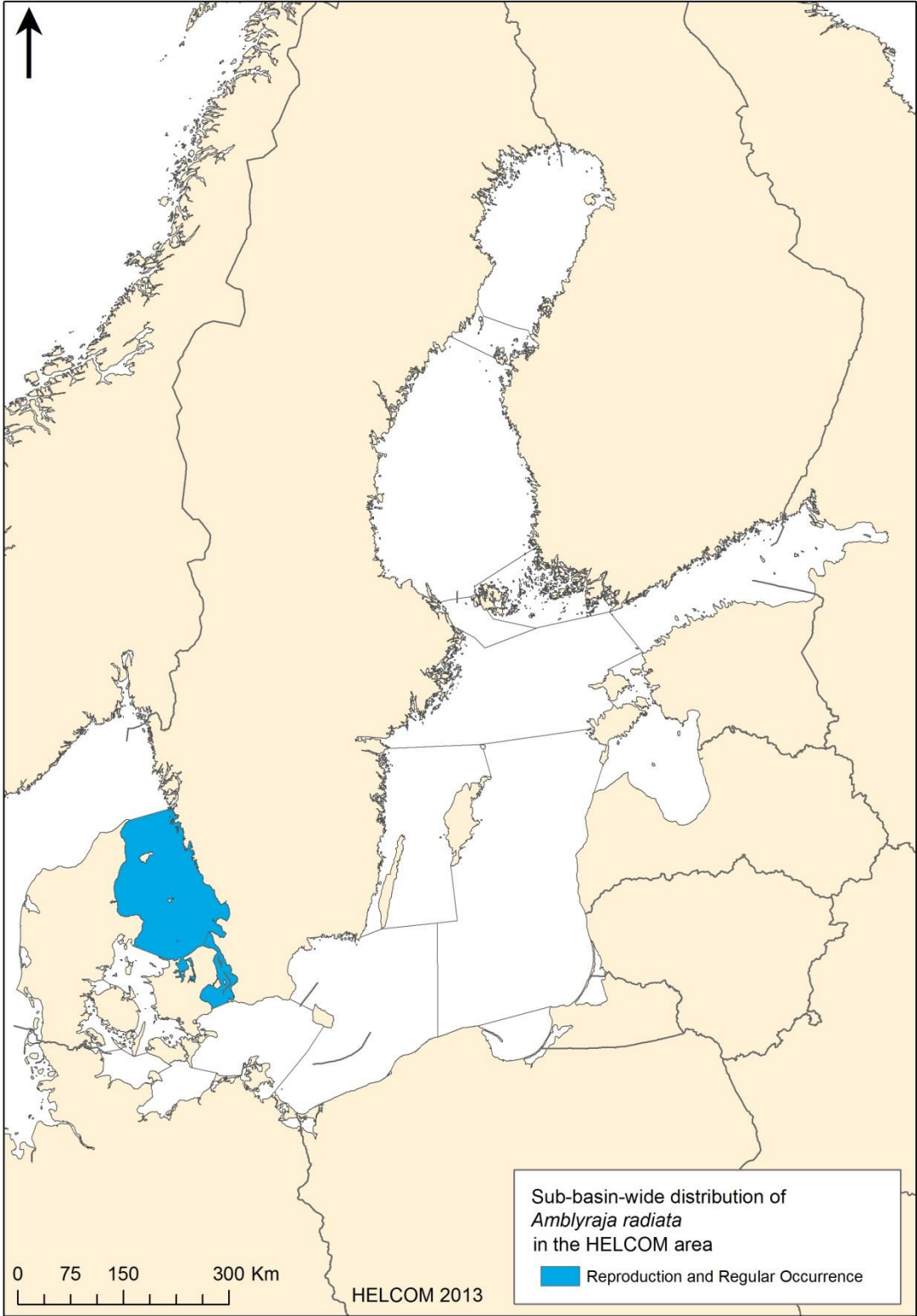
The starry ray is the most common ray in the North Sea and in the HELCOM area. It reproduces in the Kattegat and the Sound and has been found in the south-western parts of the Baltic. This small-bodied ray is of little commercial importance but it is often caught as bycatch in demersal fisheries. Bottom 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).



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*Amblyraja radiata*

### Habitat and ecology

The starry ray is a demersally 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 - Ērkšķu raja; LT - Žvaigždėtoji raja; PL - Raja promienista; RU -Zvjozdchatij skat ; S – Klorocka

### References

- Froese, R., Pauly, D. (eds.) (2012). FishBase. World Wide Web electronic publication.  
Available at: [www.fishbase.org](http://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 Advice2012, Book 6.