

## SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

*Chimaera monstrosa*

English name: <b>Rabbit-fish</b>	Scientific name: <b><i>Chimaera monstrosa</i></b>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Holocephali Order: Chimaeriformes Family: Chimaeridae	Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: –	Generation length: Not known	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): By-catch (F02)	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): By-catch (F02)	
IUCN Criteria: –	<b>HELCOM Red List Category:</b>	<b>NA Not Applicable</b>
Global / European IUCN Red List Category: NT/NE	Habitats Directive: –	
Previous HELCOM Red List Category (2007): VU		
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/–, Estonia –/–, Finland –/–, Germany –/–, Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland –/–, Russia –/–, Sweden –/EN		

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

This species is widespread throughout the Northeast Atlantic and it is recorded from the deeper areas of Skagerrak and Kattegat. In the HELCOM area the rabbit-fish is however only a rare visitor. *The rabbit-fish* is taken in deepwater trawl fisheries in the Northeast Atlantic and is either landed as byproduct or is a component of discarded bycatch. Survival rates of discards are likely low given the depths of capture and the soft body structure of this chondrichthyan fish. The suspected high rate of mortality in discards, its unproductive life history characteristics, and the increasing trend of deepsea water fishing in North East Atlantic has led to it being globally assessed as Near Threatened. In Sweden the species was listed as Endangered due to a very restricted extent of occurrence coupled with a population decrease.

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Rabbit-fish. Photo by David Andersson, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

### Habitat and ecology

The rabbit-fish prefer upper continental slope habitats at depths of 300 to 500 m with a reported maximum depth of 1 663 m. It reaches maturity at 11–13 years and has a maximum lifespan up to 30 years. It feeds mainly on bottom-dwelling invertebrates.

### Description of major threats

There is a continuing trend of increasing deepwater fishing activities in the North Atlantic, while regulation is often lagging. Deepwater chondrichthyans, like the rabbit-fish, are potentially at risk from these activities since its slow population turnover rate makes its sensitive to exploitation, and it has low survival in bycatch.

### Assessment justification

No regular occurrence of mature individuals in the HELCOM area, hence categorized as Not Applicable (NA) for assessment.

### Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

No protection actions currently needed in the HELCOM area but findings of this species should be recorded.

### Common names

D -Seekatze; ES –; GB –; DK –; FIN –Sillikuningas; LV -Eiropas himēra; LT -Europinė chimera; PL - Chimera; RU -Evropeiskaja chimera; S – Havmus

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### References

- Dagit, D.D., Hareide, N., Clò, S. (2007). *Chimaera monstrosa*. In: IUCN 2012. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Available at: [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org) (viewed 27 January 2013)
- 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.
- 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>