

SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

Lycodes gracilis

English name: Checker eelpout	Scientific name: <i>Lycodes gracilis</i>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Actinopterygii Order: Perciformes Family: Zoarcidae	Species authority: Sars, 1867	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: Often mistaken for <i>L. vahlii</i>	Generation length: 5 years	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Not known	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Not known	
IUCN Criteria: –	HELCOM Red List Category:	DD Data Deficient
Global / European IUCN Red List Category: NE/NE	Habitats Directive: –	
Previous HELCOM Red List Category (2007): –		
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/–, Estonia –/–, Finland –/–, Germany –/–, Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland –/–, Russia –/–, Sweden –/LC		

Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region

The checker eelpout is a strictly marine species with its primary distribution in the Skagerrak and in deeper parts of the Kattegat in the HELCOM area (Froese & Pauly 2012). Virtually nothing is known about its biology or status within the HELCOM area.



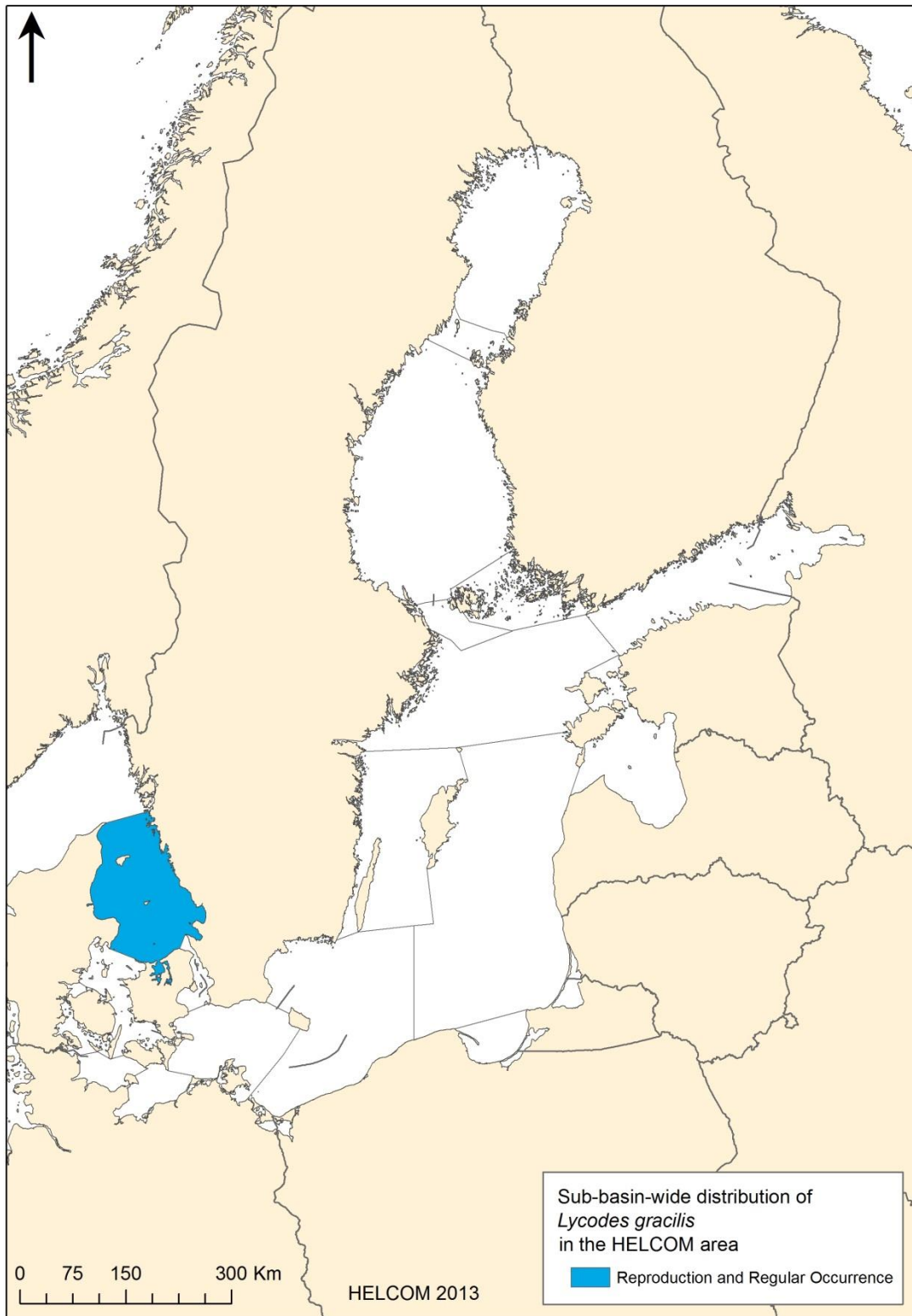
Checker eelpout. Photo: Anders Salesjö
Photography, Undervattenbilder.se.

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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 checker eelpout lives on soft bottoms at depths between 90 to 365 m at temperatures of 2–6 °C (Anderson & Fedorov 2004).

Description of major threats

No major threats identified within HELCOM area.

Assessment justification

Assuming the same generation time as for *Zoarces viviparus* (i.e. 5 years), gives an assessment window from 1995–2010. Bottom trawling surveys in the Skagerrak and Kattegat show a clear downward trend in CPUE since the beginning of 1990s and from 1995 to 2010 the checker eelpout has decreased more than 80%. Looking at a shorter timeframe 2002–2010 gives the same result. However seen on a longer timescale this might be a natural return to lower values. The uncertainty in the decline (0–80%) results in a DD status.

Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

There is a need to improve the knowledge on distribution and abundance of this species together with essential habitat requirements and population structure of the species before any recommendations can be given.

Common names

DK: Almindelig ålebrosme; FI: Kalpapyrstö; GB: Checker eelpout; LV: Valsa lucītis; RU: Tonkij likod; SE: Ålbrosme

References

- Anderson, M.E., Fedorov, V.V. (2004). Family Zoarcidae Swainson 1839. Eelpouts. California Academy of Sciences. Annotated Checklists of Fishes (34):58.
- Froese, R., Pauly, D. (eds.) (2012). FishBase. World Wide Web electronic publication. Available at: www.fishbase.org, version (10/2012).
- HELCOM (2012). Checklist of Baltic Sea Macro-species. Baltic Sea Environment Proceedings No. 130. Helsinki Commission, Helsinki. 203 pp.