

**Greenland halibut in Division 1A inshore – Upernavik**

Advice June 2024 for 2025-2026

**Recommendation for 2025 and 2026**

Following the application of the ICES guidance on data limited stocks (DLS) method 3.2, the Scientific Council recommends that catch should not exceed 5 801 t.

**Management objectives**

No explicit management plan or management objectives have been defined by the Government of Greenland. A management plan is currently under development.

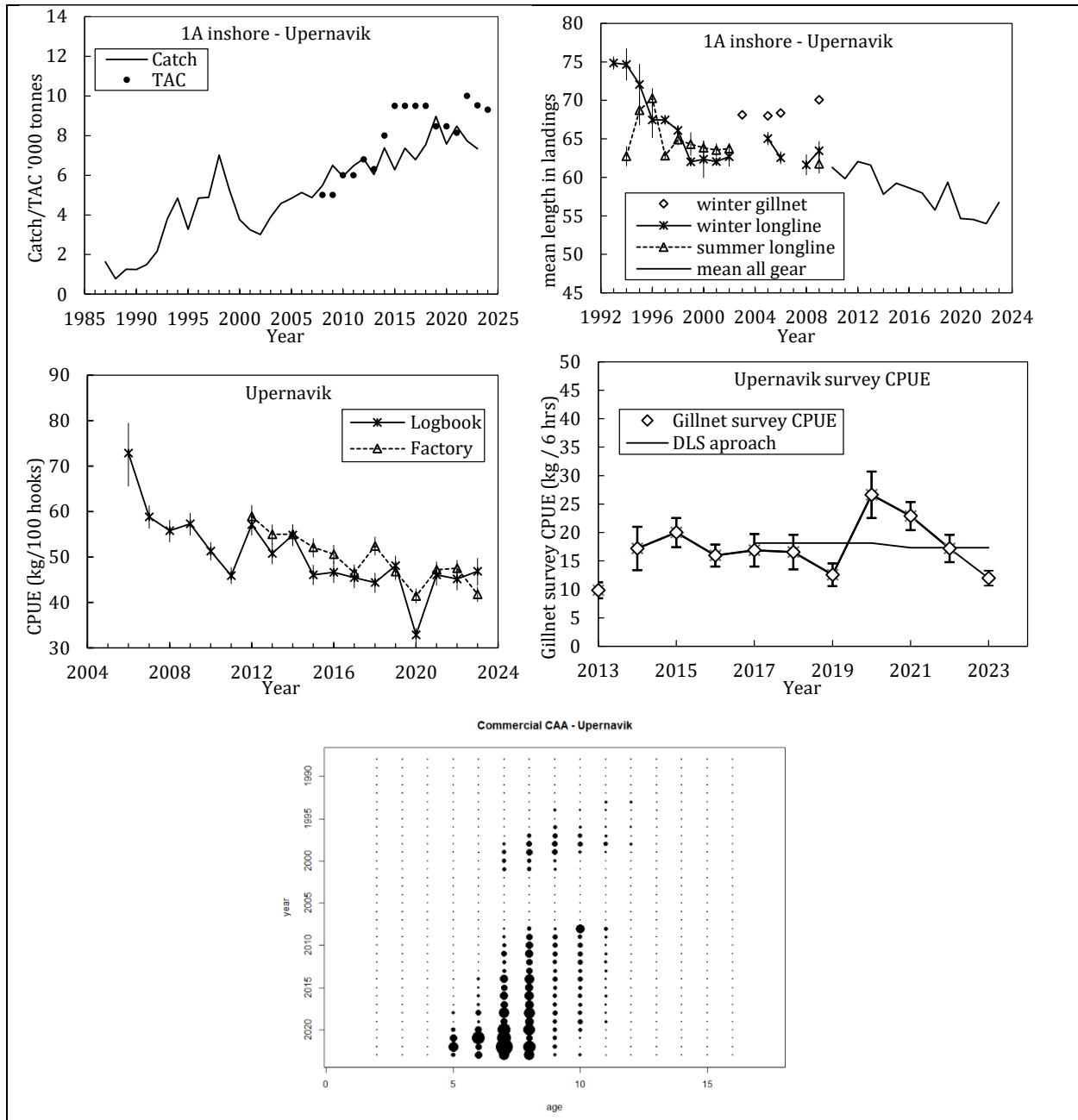
**Management unit**

Three inshore stocks in Division 1A (Disko Bay, Uummanaq and Upernavik) are believed to recruit from the Subareas 0+1 offshore spawning stock (in the Davis Strait), and there is little migration between the separated areas and the stock in Subareas 0+1 offshore. Separate advice is given for each area, within the specific management unit, in Division 1A inshore.

**Stock status**

The commercial logbook CPUE has decreased by 18 % and the factory data based CPUE has decreased by 29 % since 2012. The mean size of the landed fish has decreased from 62 cm in 2013 to 57 cm in 2023 equivalent to a 23 % reduction in mean weight. The gillnet survey NPUE and CPUE increased relative to earlier levels in 2020 and 2021 but has decreased since then. The fishery is currently based on ages 7 and 8.

The gradual reduction in the size of the landed fish and minor decrease in CPUE could indicate a slow decrease of the stock.



**Reference points**

Could not be established.

**Assessment**

Survey indices, mean length in the landings, commercial CPUEs and catch at age information were considered the best information to monitor the stock.

**Basis for advice**

The ICES Harvest Control Rule 3.2 for data limited stocks was used as a basis for giving TAC advice (mean survey index 2021-2023/mean 2017-2020=0.956). Should changes in excess of +- 20% be generated using this rule, a 20% cap is applied. In 2022, no precautionary buffer was applied.



This results in the following advised catch:

2025 and 2026 Catch<sub>advised</sub> = 5 801 t (catch advised for 2023 and 2024=6 070\*0.956)

Multi-year advice is recommended when applying this index-ratio based rule. Also, Greenland has requested advice for as many years as is considered appropriate. A two year advice cycle is suggested at this time.

The next assessment is planned for 2026.

This rule should be reviewed in the next assessment.

#### *Human impact*

Mainly fishery-related mortality. Retrieval of lost fishing gear (lost gillnets, longlines and more) by the GINR research vessel RV Sanna was conducted in 2023. Other mortality sources (e.g. pollution, shipping, oil-industry) are undocumented.

#### *Biological and Environmental interactions*

No studies were reviewed in this assessment.

### **Ecosystem sustainability of catches**

The impact of bottom fishing activities on VMEs in Subarea 0 was assessed in 2016. Three areas have been designated as marine refuges, that exclude bottom contact fisheries: Disko Fan, Davis Strait and Hatton Basin. Areas in Subarea 1 have also been closed to bottom fishing to protect benthic habitats.

Greenland halibut is included in the piscivore guild. There is no EPU nor TCIs defined for this region. The ecosystem sustainability of catches cannot be evaluated. Greenland shark is a bycatch species of concern in the fishery given its low reproductive rate, slow growth rate and limited ecological information.

### **Fishery**

Catches increased from the mid 1980s and peaked in 1998 at a level of 7 000 t. Landings then decreased sharply, but then increased from 2015-2019 to 9 000 t, and has decreased steadily since then, with the catch in 2023 being 7 300 t.

Recent catch estimates ('000 ton) are as follows:

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1A Upernavik - TAC	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.5	8.5	8.5	9.9	10.0	9.5	9.3
1A Upernavik - Catch	6.3	7.4	6.8	7.5	9.0	7.6	8.5	7.7	7.3	
STACFIS Total	6.3	7.4	6.8	7.5	9.0	7.6	8.5	7.7	7.3	

### **Effects of the fishery on the ecosystem**

Greenland halibut in the area is targeted with longlines and gillnets. Both gears select adult fish with large body size and do not retain recruits or small-sized fish. Ghost fishing by lost gillnets has been observed, but its effects are unknown.

### **Special comments**

Recruits are mainly received from the offshore stock in Subareas 0+1 offshore.

### **Sources of Information**

SCR Doc. 24/027, 028, 035; SCS Doc. 24/014.