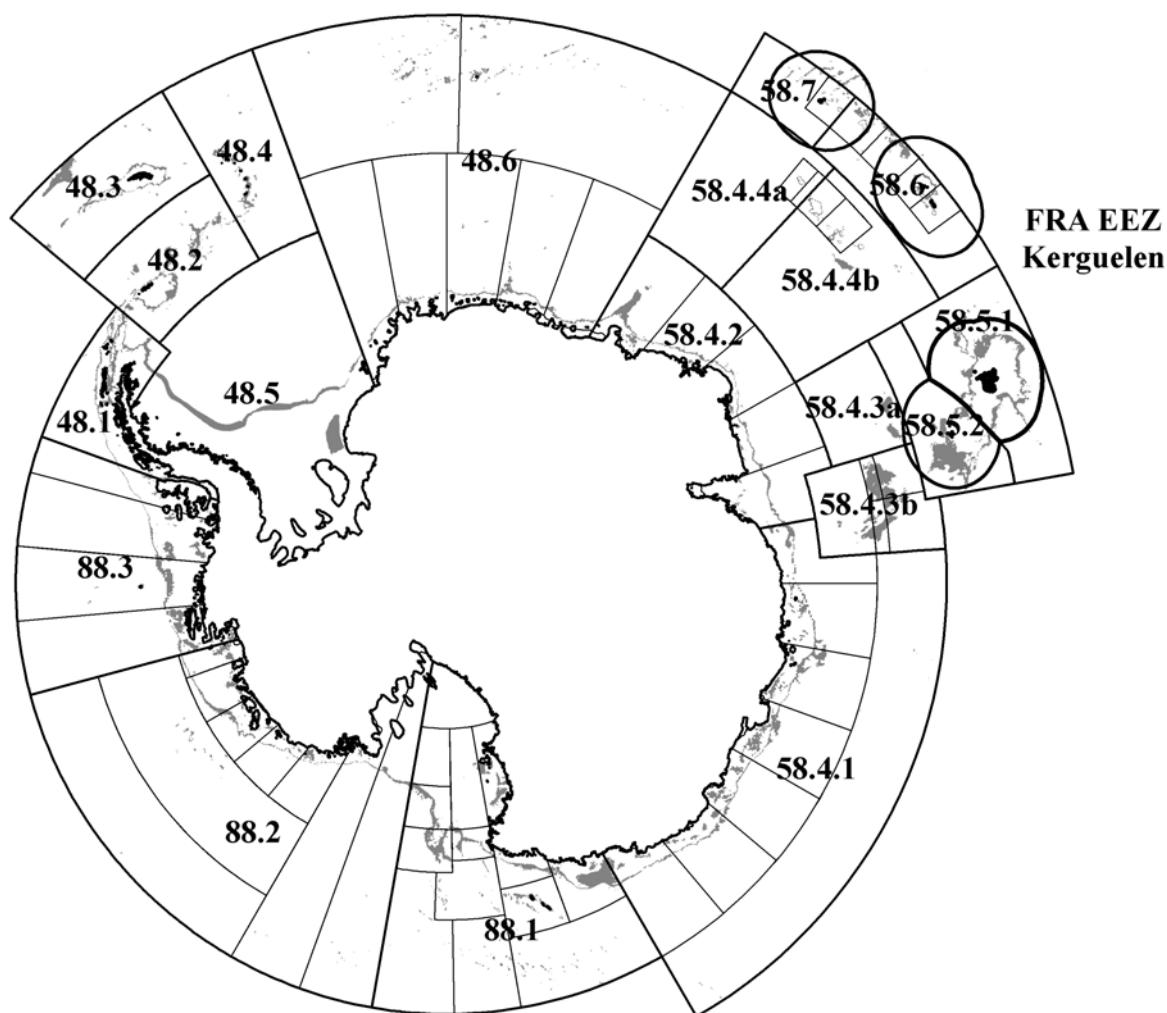


**Fishery Report 2013: *Dissostichus eleginoides* Kerguelen Islands
French EEZ (Division 58.5.1)**



**FRA EEZ
Kerguelen**

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The map on the cover page shows the management areas within the CAMLR Convention Area, the specific region related to this report is outlined in bold. Depths between 600 and 1 800 m (the ‘fishable depths’ for *Dissostichus* spp.) are shaded.

Throughout this report the CCAMLR fishing season is represented by the year in which that season ended, e.g. 2013 represents the 2012/13 CCAMLR fishing season (from 1 December 2012 to 30 November 2013).

**FISHERY REPORT 2013: *DISSOSTICHUS ELEGINOIDES*
KERGUELEN ISLANDS, FRENCH EEZ (DIVISION 58.5.1)**

Introduction to the fishery

1. This report describes the licensed longline fishery for Patagonian toothfish (*Dissostichus eleginoides*) in the French Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) around the Kerguelen Islands in Division 58.5.1.
2. The fishery, targeting *D. eleginoides*, began as a trawl fishery in 1985 but targeting other species between 1979 and 1984 caught small amounts of toothfish as by-catch. Trawling continued to 2001 and intermittently through 2006 and 2010; a longline fishery began in 1992 and continues to the present. The fishery is active throughout the year with the exception of a summer closure period (1 February to either 1 or 15 March) which has been in place since 2004.
3. Within the South African and French EEZs, fishing seasons, catch limits for target and by-catch species, as well as vessel licensing, are allocated by the country of national jurisdiction. Within the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1, the season extends from 1 September to 31 August. French conservation measures, specific to the EEZ, have restricted the longline fishery to waters outside the 12 n mile zone and no shallower than 500 m.
4. For the 2013 season, a catch limit set by France of 5 100 tonnes was allocated among seven longline vessels.

Reported catch

5. Reported catches of *D. eleginoides* over the past 10 seasons are presented in Table 1. The total catch for the 2013 season was 3 239 tonnes, and the catch history is shown in Table 1. The highest reported catch of 5 235 tonnes was recorded in 2011.
6. The average (unstandardised) catch per hook decreased from 0.37 kg/hook in 2000 to 0.18 in 2004 and remained stable at 0.23 kg/hook since 2011.
7. Depredation (sperm and killer whales) has an impact on the catch hauled from each line. Roche et al. (2007) estimated that the depredation in 2004 was 348 tonnes for a landed catch of 10 900 tonnes. This implies a depredation rate of 3%.
8. Fishing effort in Division 58.5.1 is widely distributed throughout the French EEZ. The highest catches (>5 000 tonnes) were recorded from north of the islands.

Table 1: Catch history of *Dissostichus eleginoides* in the French EEZ at Kerguelen Island (Division 58.5.1) and estimated IUU catch in tonnes. (Source: STATLANT data for past seasons, fine-scale data for current season.)

Season	Reported catch (tonnes)			Estimated IUU catch (tonnes)
	Longline	Trawl	Total	
1988	0	892	892	
1989	0	1311	1311	0
1990	0	1243	1243	0
1991	26	2982	3008	0
1992	679	7079	7758	0
1993	243	3354	3597	0
1994	749	4632	5381	0
1995	1467	4129	5596	0
1996	1233	3478	4710	833
1997	1048	4012	5059	6094
1998	1747	2967	4714	7156
1999	2062	2669	4730	1237
2000	3046	3093	6139	2600
2001	2593	2153	4747	4550
2002	3976	178	4154	6300
2003	5291	0	5291	5518
2004	5171	0	5171	536
2005	5073	0	5073	268
2006	4911	245	5156	144
2007	5201	0	5201	451
2008	4850	0	4850	720
2009	5238	0	5238	0
2010	4915	235	5151	22
2011	5235	0	5235	*
2012	4899	0	4899	*
2013	3239	0	3239	*

* Not estimated.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing

9. Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing was first detected in this region in 1996 and in some years IUU catches have exceeded legal catches, resulting in total removals exceeding 10 000 tonnes in some seasons.

10. Estimates of IUU catch in Division 58.5.1 are presented in Table 1. Due to increased surveillance, IUU fishing has virtually been eliminated inside the French EEZ at Kerguelen. There were no official reports of IUU fishing in the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1 but in 2010, an estimated 22 tonnes was illegally removed from the fishery. However, following the

recognition of methodological issues in its assessment, no estimates of the IUU catch of *Dissostichus* spp. have been provided since 2010 (SC-CAMLR-XXIX, paragraph 6.5).

Data collection

11. CCAMLR has developed a framework for designing and undertaking research fishing designed to lead to an assessment of these toothfish stocks in the short to medium term, established under the provisions of CM 41-01. This research-planning framework has three phases: prospecting phase, biomass estimation phase and assessment development phase with a set of decisions and review for the progression between stages.

12. In order to obtain the data necessary for a stock assessment, catch limits for research fishing by commercial vessels are set at a level intended to provide sufficient information (including sufficient recaptures of tagged fish) to achieve a stock assessment within a time period of 3–5 years. These catch limits are also set so that they provide reasonable certainty that exploitation rates at the scale of the stock or research unit will not negatively impact the stock. Appropriate exploitation rates are based on estimates from areas with assessed fisheries and are not more than 3–4% of the estimated stock size. In 2012 and 2013, CCAMLR put in place a more structured approach to setting catch limits, and spatially constraining research, in fisheries with little data. This process attempts to use all available information combined with a regular review process to make progress while recognising the inherent uncertainties and data limitations in data-poor fisheries.

Biological data

13. The collection of biological data is conducted as part of the CCAMLR Scheme of International Scientific Observation. In longline fisheries targeting *D. eleginoides*, biological data collection includes representative samples of length, weight, sex and maturity stage as well as collection of otoliths for age determination of the target and most frequently taken by-catch species.

Length distributions of catches

14. The length-frequency distributions of *D. eleginoides* caught in this fishery are presented in Figure 1 for 2004–2013. The majority of *D. eleginoides* caught by longline range from 50 to 100 cm in length, with a single strong mode for all seasons at approximately 70–80 cm. These length-frequency distributions are unweighted (i.e. they have not been adjusted for factors such as the size of the catches from which they were collected). The interannual variability exhibited in the figure may reflect differences in the fished population but is also likely to reflect changes in the gear used, the number of vessels in the fishery and the spatial and temporal distribution of fishing.

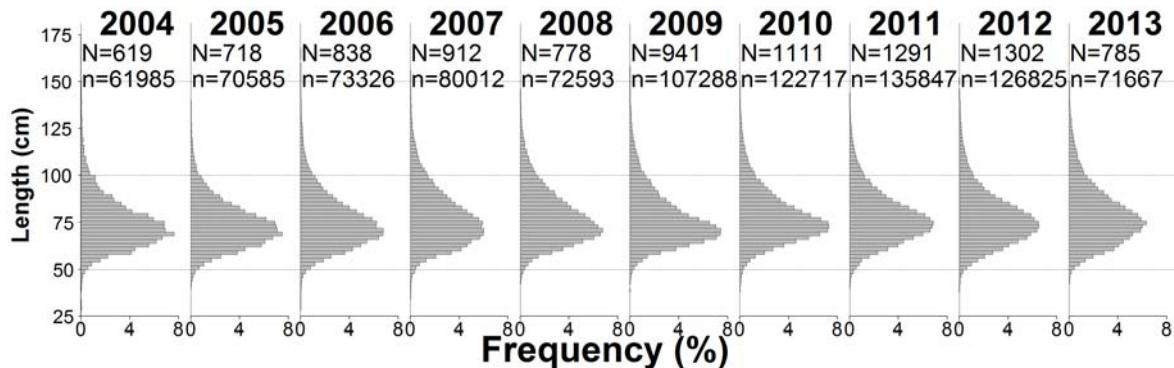


Figure 1: Annual length-frequency distributions of *Dissostichus eleginoides* caught in the French EEZ at the Kerguelen Islands in Division 58.5.1 from 2004 to 2013. The number of hauls from which fish were measured (N) and the number of fish measured (n) in each year are provided.

Tagging

15. Within the French EEZ vessels are required to tag and release toothfish at a rate of one fish per tonne of green weight caught throughout the season.

16. Tagging commenced in 2006 and to date, a total of 28 435 *D. eleginoides* have been tagged in the longline catches in the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1, of which 2 270 have been recaptured (Table 2). An additional 152 fish which were tagged in the Australian EEZ at Heard Island (Division 58.5.2) have been recaptured in Division 58.5.1.

Table 2: The number of individuals of *Dissostichus eleginoides* tagged and recaptured in each year in the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1.

Year	Tagged	Recaptured						
		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2013
2006	708	2	4	7	8	2	1	2
2007	2 372		35	73	79	78	59	41
2008	2 693			23	108	85	84	57
2009	4 322				44	122	126	101
2010	5 166					46	146	152
2011	5 423						58	236
2012	5 027							138
2013	2 724							77
Total	28 435							2 270

17. The tagging program undertaken by France in its EEZ in Division 58.5.1 has achieved a similar tag-recapture rate to the tagging program undertaken by Australia in Division 58.5.2, which indicates that tagged fish move mainly short distances but some fish make longer forays around the slope as well as long-distance movements outside the division. Fish from the tagging program at Heard Island (Division 58.5.2) have also shown movement of sub-adult/adult fish between zones (Heard to Kerguelen and also Crozet) but the proportion of exchange between stocks is relatively small (Williams et al., 2002; WG-FSA-07/48 Rev. 1).

Life-history parameters

Data collection

18. The life histories of *D. mawsoni* and *D. eleginoides* are characterised by slow growth, low fecundity and late maturity. Both *D. mawsoni* and *D. eleginoides* appear to have protracted spawning periods, taking place mainly in winter, but which may start as early as late autumn and extend into spring. However, as this is the period least accessible to fishing, and thus the collection of biological data, specific life-history traits for these species are limited (WG-FSA-08/14). The areas that are considered to be the most likely spawning grounds for *D. mawsoni* include the north of the Ross Sea associated with the Pacific–Antarctic Ridge (SSRU 881B–C), and the Amundsen Ridge (SSRU 881E) in the Amundsen Sea. In the Cooperation Sea, *D. mawsoni* most likely spawn on BANZARE Bank (Division 58.4.3b).

19. *Dissostichus eleginoides* occur throughout the Kerguelen Islands shelf, from shallow waters (<10 m) to depths of at least 2 000 m. As fish grow, they move to deeper water and are recruited to the trawl fishery on the shelf slopes and subsequently to the longline fishery in deeper waters. On the Kerguelen Plateau (Divisions 58.5.1 and 58.5.2), a general east–west deep-sea movement of adult fish occurs and spawning is restricted to the westerly zone during the early winter (Lord et al., 2006).

Parameter estimates

20. There are no specific life-history parameters for *D. eleginoides* in the French EEZ. However, the metapopulation of the Indian Ocean sector has been validated by Appleyard et al. (2004) and thus it is likely that the parameters used in the stock assessment for Heard Island, such as growth rate and natural mortality, would be valid for the stock in Division 58.5.1.

Stock assessment status

21. Cooperative work between France and Australia on analyses of catch, effort and other data (survey, tagging) to be used to progress understanding of fish stocks and fishery dynamics for Divisions 58.5.1 and 58.5.2 is ongoing (see WG-SAM-11/20).

22. Three biomass survey cruises (named POKER 1, 2 and 3) have been conducted during 2006 (Duhamel and Hautecoeur, 2009), 2010 and 2013 respectively to estimate biomass and recruitment of *D. eleginoides* on the whole shelf and surrounding banks. The results have been included in a stock assessment CASAL model (WG-FSA-11/28, WG-FSA-12/09).

23. The update of the stock assessment is in progress. The model presented during WG-FSA-13 includes the reduction of the number of fisheries and seasons, an update of data weighting to the Francis method, a biomass estimate and length-frequency distributions from the latest POKER survey (2013).

24. However, the integrated stock assessment using CASAL, which was presented in WG-FSA-12/09, was used to provide management advice and to determine a catch limit of 5 100 tonnes for the 2013 season.

25. No new information was available on the state of fish stocks in Division 58.5.1 outside areas of national jurisdiction and thus the prohibition of directed fishing for *D. eleginoides*, described in CM 32-13, shall remain in force for the 2014 season.

By-catch of fish and invertebrates

Fish by-catch

26. Catch limits for by-catch (macrourids, rajids and other species) inside the French EEZ are set by France. Primary by-catch species from the longline fishery in the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1 are the macrourid *Macrourus carinatus*, rajid skates and blue antimora (*Antimora rostrata*). The latter species is fully discarded, while the others are partly or totally retained. The spatial distribution of by-catch indicates specific areas of higher catch rates that differed between species (WG-FSA-10/34).

27. The catch histories for by-catch species over the past 10 years are provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Catch history for by-catch species (macrourids, rajids and *Antimora rostrata*) taken in the fishery for *Dissostichus eleginoides* in the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1. (Source: fine-scale data.)

Season	Macrourids		Rajids		<i>Antimora rostrata</i> Reported catch (tonnes)
	Reported catch (tonnes)	Reported catch (tonnes)	Number released alive		
2004	939	1 134	-		12
2005	779	974	-		47
2006	686	597	-		54
2007	782	546	1 954		56
2008	816	376	3 593		68
2009	957	415	3 432		45
2010	887	456	2		58
2011	860	437	535		52
2012	690	433	15 878		26
2013	454	219	2 052		42

Assessments of impact on affected populations

28. No stock assessments of individual by-catch species are presently undertaken but biomass of a part of the stocks is now available from the biomass surveys and could help in the future.

Mitigation measures

29. WG-FSA recommended that, where possible, areas with high by-catch rates should be avoided, particularly those shown in WG-FSA-09/42. A plan of action to avoid high-concentration areas of by-catch has been proposed to the longliners during 2010 and results will be further analysed.

Incidental mortality of birds and mammals

Incidental mortality

30. A summary of the historic seabird mortality by longline in the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1 since 2007 is presented in Table 4. The three most common species injured or killed in the fishery were white-chinned petrel (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*), grey petrel (*P. cinerea*) and northern giant petrel (*Macronectes halli*).

31. In 2013, there were 18 seabird mortalities observed inside the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1, leading to an estimated extrapolated mortality of 70 birds (WG-FSA-12/66 Rev. 2). These consisted of 16 *P. aequinoctialis* and two *M. halli* (Table 4).

Table 4: Number of seabirds killed and injured in the longline fishery of the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1.

Season	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>	<i>Procellaria cinerea</i>	<i>Macronectes halli</i>
2007	57	10	3
2008	271	14	5
2009	111	6	2
2010	63	15	5
2011	49	7	8
2012	41	5	
2013	16		2
Total	608	57	25

32. The level of risk of incidental mortality of seabirds in Division 58.5.1 is category 5 (high) (SC-CAMLR-XXX, Annex 8, paragraph 8.1).

33. There have been no reports of incidental mortalities of marine mammals since 2007.

Mitigation measures

34. The requirements of CM 25-02 ‘Minimisation of the incidental mortality of seabirds in the course of longline fishing or longline fishing research in the CAMLR Convention Area’ apply to this fishery. There is an exemption to the requirement for night setting by achieving the sink rates described in CM 24-02 and subject to a seabird by-catch limit. France has applied the CCAMLR mitigation measures for the last three seasons and these will continue for the upcoming fishing season.

35. Additional measures for the upcoming season will also be applied (WG-IMAF-11/10 Rev. 1), including:

- (i) changes to the bird exclusion device to ensure it is effective in all weather conditions
- (ii) closure of fishing areas and quota allocation reduction to vessels that have high by-catch rates
- (iii) education and training will be strengthened by regular meetings between TAAF and fishing masters of vessels with high by-catch
- (iv) data will continue to be collected and submitted using CCAMLR standard methods and forms
- (v) a demographic study on the white-chinned petrel will be undertaken at Kerguelen Island, as well as the continued population counts of white-chinned petrels on the Kerguelen archipelago.

Ecosystem implications and effects

36. There is no formal evaluation available for this fishery.

Current management advice and conservation measures

37. In addition to those CCAMLR conservation measures that are applied in this fishery, various national conservation and fisheries enforcement measures are applicable, such as:

- annual fishing season closure (February and half of March)
- annual catch limit and limitation on the number of longline vessels allowed to operate in the fishery (seven)
- allocation of fishing effort permitting not more than two longliners simultaneously per 0.5° latitude $\times 1^{\circ}$ longitude rectangle
- obligatory observer and vessel logbooks
- one French observer on board each licensed vessel
- minimum fishing depth limit of 500 m
- minimum legal size limit for *D. eleginoides* of 60 cm
- mitigation measures for the reduction of seabird mortality
- a single catch landings site at Réunion Island

- unless retained for commercial processing, all skates are to be released alive
- mandatory port inspection.

38. The limits in force and the advice of WG-FSA to the Scientific Committee for the forthcoming season:

- (i) WG-FSA was unable to provide management advice for the fishery in the French EEZ in Division 58.5.1, as no new information was available on the state of fish stocks and recommended that a prohibition of directed fishing for *D. eleginoides*, described in CM 32-13, remain in force.
- (ii) biological parameters for *D. eleginoides* in Division 58.5.1 (French EEZ) are to be estimated in order to aid the development of a stock assessment for this area
- (iii) France is to continue its tagging program in Division 58.5.1
- (iv) France is to continue its effort to reduce seabird by-catch
- (v) zones of specific high by-catch should also be avoided.

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