

# Sandeel



Sandeels are small bottom-dwelling fish, that are actually not related to true eels.



With 30+ species of sandeels around the world, this family offers an example of the richness and diversity of life in the ocean.



Sandeels in EU waters are only caught by industrial trawling, a fishing practice that often impacts and destroys important habitats, like sandbanks.



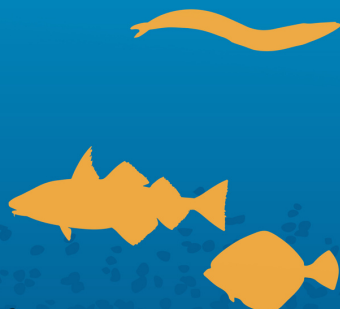
Sandeels are not fished for direct human consumption, but turned into fishmeal to feed salmon and other high-value fish in aquaculture. The global demand for fishmeal is driving the overfishing of small fish, like sandeels.



Sandeels are key species in the oceanic food web. Many fish species, sea birds and marine mammals are dependent on them as prey, and threatened with starvation when sandeels are gone.



Of the four sandeel stocks managed and fished by the EU, two have a scientific catch advice of zero due to their poor state.



It is crucial that member states respect sandeels' essential role as prey for many marine animals and set quotas lower than maximally allowed to ensure a healthy ocean ecosystem.

