

Guidelines for Shore-Based Flounder Recreational Fishing Survey.

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To assess the catch of flounder by anglers, a special survey is being organized in the open part of the Baltic Sea and the Irbe strait. The survey will use a direct interview method, later supplemented with online questionnaires. The survey is based on the preliminary research conducted by the institute in 2020-2021.

1. Survey Period:

- Every year from September 1st to December 31st - according to the institute's preliminary research, this is the most active period for flounder fishing.

2. Survey Locations:

The open part of the Baltic Sea and the Irbe Strait, from Liepaja to Kolka, ICES fishing subdivision 28. The survey will start in 10 locations (Kolka, Sikrags, Mazirbe, Luzna, Staldzene, Uzava, Jurkalne, Labrags, Vergale, Liepaja). In each survey session, 2 fishing spots will be visited, selected randomly. In the following years, based on the results obtained from interviews, the number of locations may be increased. Additional data can be collected during the Latvian flounder fishing championship.

3. Survey Frequency:

Surveys will be conducted twice a month from September 1st to December 31st.

4. Data Collection:

Flounder fishing is done from the shore. Each angler is allowed to use 2 fishing rods. During the survey, researchers will interview anglers, asking them pre-prepared questions:

- Which region are you from (local, Kurzeme, Vidzeme, Zemgale, Latgale, Riga)?
- How long have you been fishing in the sea (how many years have you been fishing for flounders)?
- How often do you fish (per year)?
- How many times have you fished for flounders at sea this year?
- How big are flounders typically (in quantity or kg)?
- Favourite flounder fishing spots?
- Composition of the catch (species, quantity, weight)?

If the angler agrees, researchers will also measure the catch weight.

5. Further Work:

To determine the number of flounder anglers in Latvia, an online survey will be conducted in collaboration with a sociological research company. The final design of the study will be developed in collaboration with the ICES Recreational Fishing Survey (ICES WGRFS) working group.