

Green Crab Fishery

The green crab (*Carcinus maenas*) fishery is characterized by its sporadic nature, often occurring as incidental bycatch in the velvet crab (*N. puber*) fishery. Both landings and effort exhibit fluctuations (Figure 1), with peak landings recorded in 2002, followed by a decline until 2008, after which landings stabilized at around 20 tonnes annually. Subsequently, there was a decline in landings to 1.7 tonnes in 2017, with figures remaining relatively stable from 2018 to 2021. Market conditions and the availability of other species likely influence these fluctuations.

LPUE has shown a steady trend around 0.2-0.3 kg/creeel since 2011, although there was a drop to 0.1 kg/creeel in 2017. Interpretation of LPUE is challenging due to the opportunistic nature of the fishery. Despite the widespread occurrence of this species, it is unlikely that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the population. However, the data does serve as an indicator of annual changes. Moreover, irregular reporting and resulting low confidence in data consistency currently impede analytical analyses for the green crab fishery.

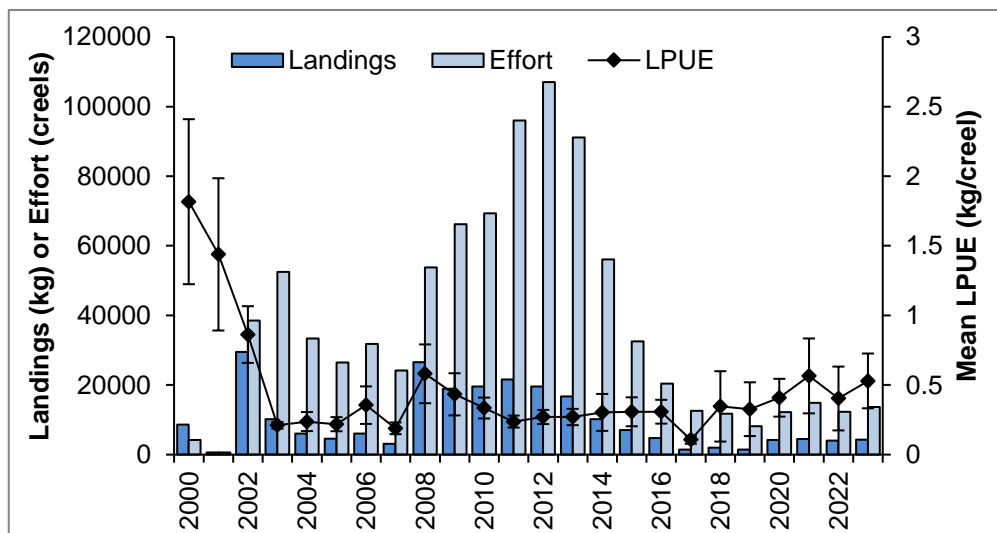


Figure 1 Total green crab landings (kg), total numbers of creels, and the average LPUE obtained from SSMO logbook data with 95% confidence intervals shown.

Reported landings of green crabs are sporadic with high values east of Yell and around Bressay and west of Scalloway (Figures 2-4). However, due to its widespread distribution, this is not deemed an accurate representation of its overlap with the fishery

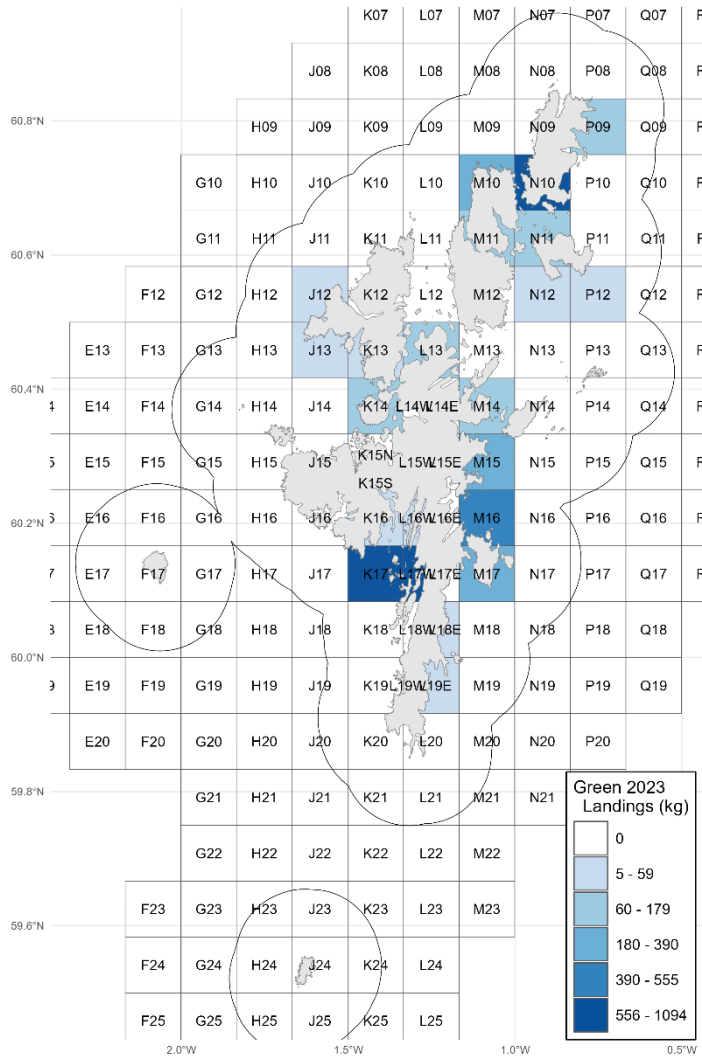


Figure 2 Geographic distribution of green crab landings per SSMO stat square in 2023.



Figure 3 Geographic distribution of green crab effort per SSMO stat square in 2023.



Figure 4 Geographic distribution of green crab LPUE per SSMO stat square in 2023.