**Test and demonstration of a selective topless trawl (38699-1)**

The cod stock in Kattegat was at a critical level and ICES recommended a 0-TAC for cod. In the economically important fishery for primary Nephrops and flatfish in Kattegat cod were caught as by-catch. The aim of the project was to develop and test a cod selective topless trawl design in the Nephrops directed fishery in Kattegat to allow an economically feasible fishery with a minimal by-catch of cod. The design idea was based on utilizing behavioral differences between the species, specifically that most fish stay low in the trawl, whereas gadoids like cod raise further aft in the gear and therefore can escape above the cut-back headline. The top of the trawl was cut 10-20 meters back, which allowed cod to escape above the headline. The catch of flatfish and Nephrops were not expected to be affected by the change in design due to their strong preference for the lower part of the gear.

The results of the project led to the implementation of a topless trawl design into the technical legislation in Kattegat.

The project was coordinated by DTU Aqua.

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