Selective haddock (Melanogrammus aeglefinus) trawling: Avoiding cod (Gadus morhua) bycatch - DTU Orbit (12/12/2018)

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The critical condition of the North Sea cod stocks has resulted in restrictions on not only cod, but also haddock and other species that are caught together with cod. Thus full exploitation of the haddock stock is unachievable unless cod can be excluded from the haddock catch. We designed a selective trawl based on the behavioral differences between haddock and cod as they enter a trawl, i.e., cod stay close to the seabed whereas haddock rise above it. The trawl's fishing line is raised similar to 60 cm above the seabed to allow cod to escape beneath the trawl while haddock are retained. To collect the escapees, three sampling bags were attached beneath the raised fishing line. The selective haddock trawl reduced the total catch of cod by 55% during the day and 82% at night, and 99% of the marketable haddock was caught during the day and 89% at night. Cod escape rates were highly length dependent: smaller cod escaped the trawl in greater numbers than did larger individuals. Whiting, saithe, lemon sole, and plaice were included in the analysis. (C) 2009 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

General information
State: Published
Organisations: Section for Management Systems, National Institute of Aquatic Resources
Contributors: Krag, L. A., Holst, R., Madsen, N., Hansen, K., Frandsen, R.
Pages: 20-26
Publication date: 2010
Peer-reviewed: Yes

Publication information
Journal: Fisheries Research
Volume: 101
Issue number: 1-2
ISSN (Print): 0165-7836
Ratings:
BFI (2018): BFI-level 1
Web of Science (2018): Indexed yes
BFI (2017): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2017): CiteScore 1.94 SJR 0.941 SNIP 0.959
Web of Science (2017): Impact factor 1.874
Web of Science (2017): Indexed yes
BFI (2016): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2016): CiteScore 2.21 SJR 1.183 SNIP 1.153
Web of Science (2016): Impact factor 2.185
Web of Science (2016): Indexed yes
BFI (2015): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2015): CiteScore 2.01 SJR 1.092 SNIP 1.131
Web of Science (2015): Impact factor 2.23
Web of Science (2015): Indexed yes
BFI (2014): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2014): CiteScore 2.17 SJR 1.122 SNIP 1.305
Web of Science (2014): Impact factor 1.903
Web of Science (2014): Indexed yes
BFI (2013): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2013): CiteScore 1.85 SJR 1.049 SNIP 1.167
Web of Science (2013): Impact factor 1.843
ISI indexed (2013): ISI indexed yes
Web of Science (2013): Indexed yes
BFI (2012): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2012): CiteScore 1.78 SJR 0.948 SNIP 1.189
Web of Science (2012): Impact factor 1.695
ISI indexed (2012): ISI indexed yes
Web of Science (2012): Indexed yes
BFI (2011): BFI-level 1
Scopus rating (2011): CiteScore 1.7 SJR 1.162 SNIP 1.142