

# changing the groundgear to reduce the capture of small flatfish in a *Nephrops* trawl

## TARGET SPECIES

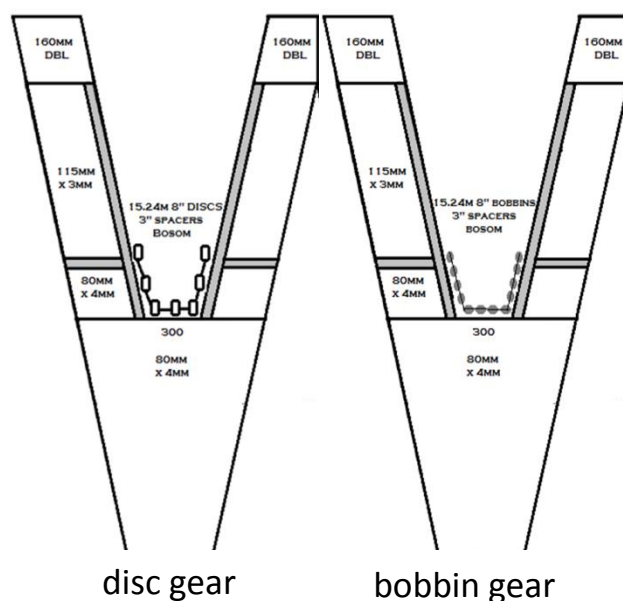
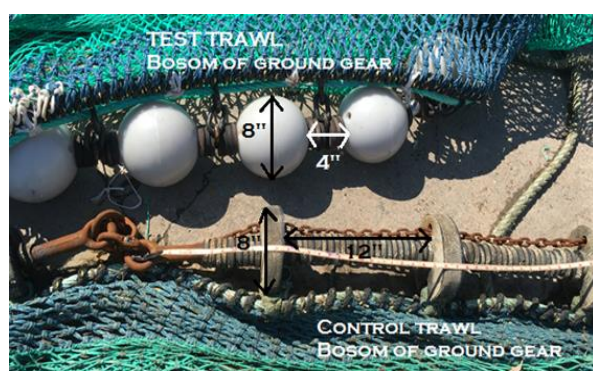
*Nephrops* and mixed round and flatfish

## AREA, VESSEL

24 twin trawl catch comparison hauls were carried out in the North Sea on board the Zenith BF106 (671 HP)

## GEAR MODIFICATION

The catching performance of a low headline 'Letterbox' trawl with 200mm spherical bobbins in the 15m centre section of the groundgear is compared with a similar gear with 200mm rockhopper discs in the centre section.



	discs	bobbin s	
	Total Weight (kg)		% diff
Lemon Sole	144	148	2.9
Plaice	261	257	-1.4
Witch	108	96	-11
Megrim	173	132	-24
Comon dab	59	50	-16
Long rough dab	178	81	-54

## RESULTS

Using the spherical bobbins reduced the catches of flatfish species.

This was length dependent and smaller flatfish were less likely to be retained than larger ones.

For plaice and lemon sole there were greater catches of the larger individuals.

