

using a large square mesh panel (90 mm mesh size) in the last tapered section of a trawl to improve trawl selectivity

AIM

To use a large square mesh panel in the tapered section of a demersal trawl to reduce catches of mackerel, horse mackerel and undersized whiting and haddock.

TARGET SPECIES

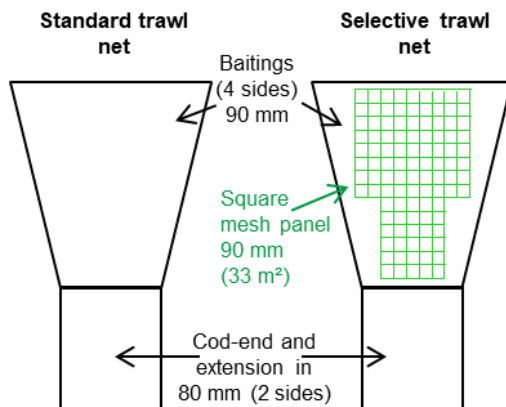
whiting, haddock, monkfish, squid, cuttlefish and red mullet

AREA, VESSEL

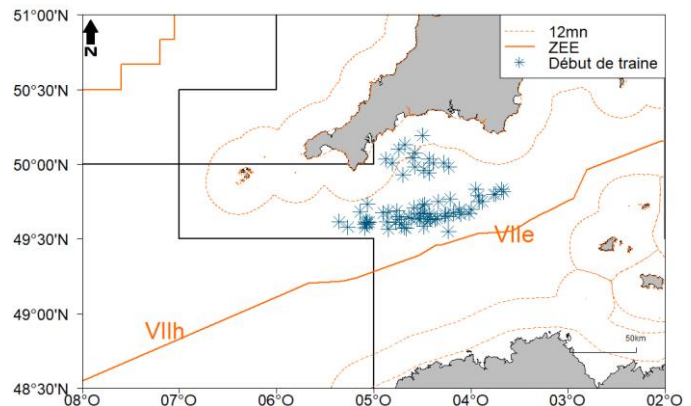
39 pairs of alternate hauls were carried out from December 2016 to February 2017 on board 20-24 m bottom trawlers fishing in the Western Channel.

GEAR MODIFICATION

A four panel trawl with an 80 mm codend was fitted with a large 90 mm square mesh panel in its last tapered section.



90 mm square mesh panel on the baitings of the AZUR (ashore on the left, at sea on the right) - © Ifremer



Species	Variation in weight caught by commercial grade between selective and standard gears				
	Undersized	40	30	20	10
Monkfish			=		
Horse mackerel			=		
Haddock			?		
Squids			=		
Mackerel	= (but observations + trend in data suggest escaping)				
Whiting	<27 cm	27-32 cm	33-36 cm	37-40 cm	> 40 cm
	?	-40%	=	=	=
Red mullet			=		
Cuttlefish			=		

RESULTS

The device has been effective in selecting whiting of above the target size (32 cm), although the 90 mm may be slightly too large in view of tests carried out on the ground by passing fish through square meshes. Overall, the large vertical opening of the four-sided trawl at the level of the device limited the escapement, leading to differences in catch between the two gears. Nevertheless, pelagic fish such as mackerel which are capable of swimming rapidly in the upper part of the baitings, seem to have escaped better. Finally, no commercial losses were observed.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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