

Testing mesh sizes in gillnets to reduce catches of small European hake

AIM

To reduce the capture of small European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) of less than 60 cm in gillnet fisheries.

TARGET SPECIES

European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*).

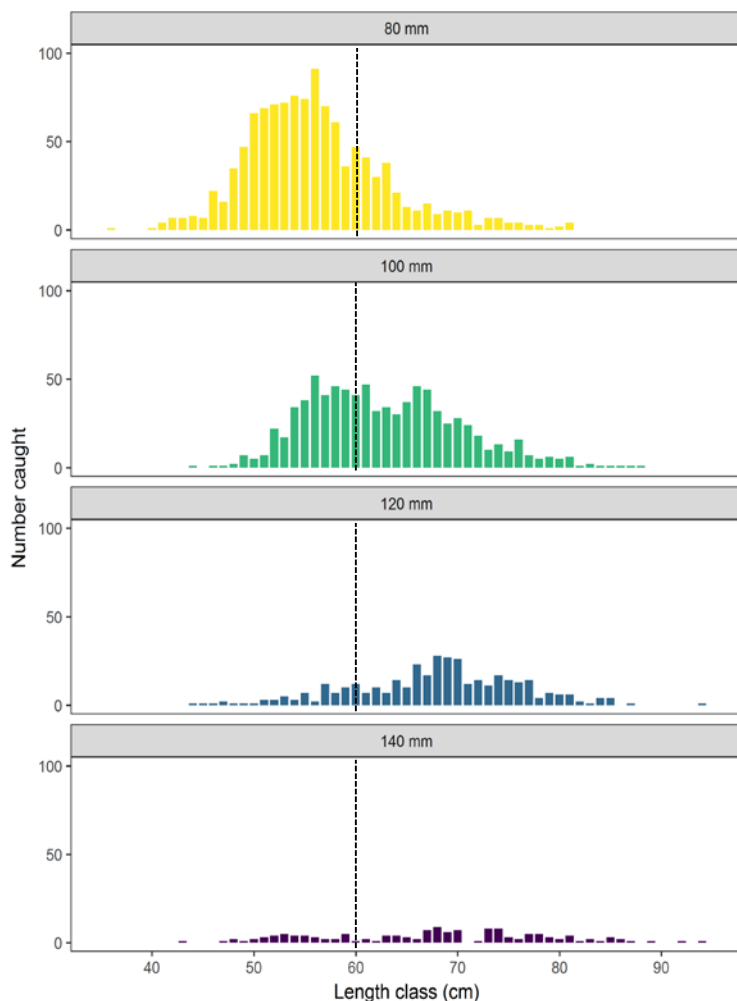
AREA, VESSEL

The trial took place to the South and West of Ireland (ICES VII b, g & j) on board Atlantic Fisher fishing vessel (22 m, 310 kW).



GEAR MODIFICATION

Gillnets with four different mesh sizes were tested: 80, 100, 120, 140 mm.



(%)	100 mm	120 mm	140 mm
small hake	- 62	- 93	- 95
large hake	+ 77	+ 6	- 66

% change in comparison to 80mm mesh size gillnet

RESULTS

In relation to the 80 mm gillnet, the 100 mm caught 62% less of small hake, the 120 mm caught 93% less, and the 140 mm caught 95% less.

Meanwhile, in relation to the 80 mm, the 100 mm caught 77% more of large hake, the 120 mm caught 6% more, and the 140 mm caught 66% less.