



## Coverless Trawl with Square Mesh Panels

**Target Species:**

*Nephrops*

**Fishing Method:**

Prawn Scraper Net

**Area:**

North Sea ICES IV a/b

**Vessel:**

MV Aurelia

**Trial Objective:**

To reduce unwanted catches of haddock and whiting.



## Aim of the Trial:

To test a single rig scraper net in the North Sea principally to reduce the catches of haddock and whiting.

## Gear Modifications:

A 240 coverless prawn scraper with a 300mm panel behind the headline.

## Further Modifications:

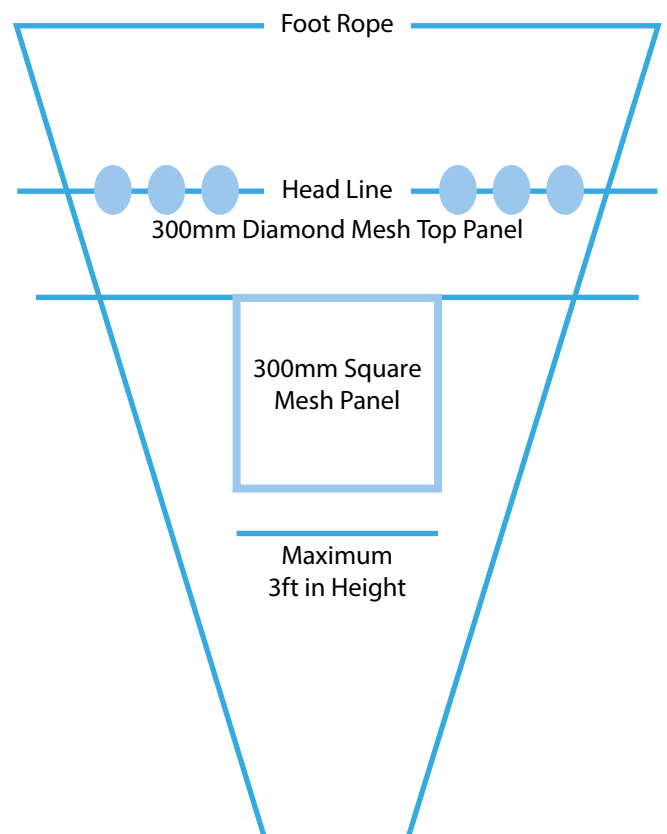
There were a number of changes made whilst the trial was underway with a 500mm square mesh panel replacing the 300mm.

The data and analysis is based on hauls following the further modifications.

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## Results

The outcome was assessed using only the data from hauls 9-14 when the 500 SMP was added. From the table, there is good selectivity for cod (70% reduction) and also approximately 50% reduction in haddock and whiting catches. It should be noted however, that the sample size for cod and haddock was small so there is a potential for odd large fish to influence the weight. The small sample size for cod and haddock leads to a promising but inconclusive result which could benefit from further assessment. As far as whiting is concerned, the results show a similar length distribution between the test and control net while the control net caught more whiting.



| Species    | Test | Control | %     |
|------------|------|---------|-------|
| Cod        | 8.25 | 37      | -77.7 |
| Haddock    | 5    | 11      | -54.5 |
| Whiting    | 119  | 240     | -50.4 |
| Plaice     | 84   | 70      | 20    |
| Anglerfish | 5    | 25      | -78   |
| Others     | 73   | 72.5    | 0.7   |
| NLO whole  | 99   | 79      | 25.3  |

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