

THE EFFECT OF TRAWLING INTENSITY ON THE BOZDY CONDITION OF FLATFISH

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Bottom trawling affects the biomass and species composition of the benthic ecosystem and consequently affect the growth of benthivorous fish species. Previous studies have reported both positive and negative effects of bottom trawling on the growth. In this study, we analysed the condition factor of individual fish recorded during routine research vessel surveys in the south-eastern North Sea in late summer. Condition factor was analysed in relation a suite of environmental variables including the primary and secondary production estimated with a regional ecosystem model (ERSEM), depth, geographic location and trawling intensity. The results will be discussed against the back ground of the observed impacts of trawling on the benthic ecosystem .