Diet effects on chick development of Lesser Black-backed Gulls

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Meet Hans the Lesser Black-backed Gull
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New EU fisheries discard ban gets underway

By Jason Holland, Contributing Editor reporting from London
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European fishermen targeting certain demersal species such as haddock, sole and plaice must now land their entire catch following the introduction of the next phase of the wider EU landing obligation, or “discard ban,” whether or not it fits their allocated quota.

Implemented on 1 January, the demersal discard ban is the second such measure to be introduced by EU member states in a bid to end the wasteful practice of discarding non-quota catch at sea. A pelagic landing obligation was introduced a year ago for those fishermen targeting mid-water species such as blue whiting, herring and mackerel.

To support industry and to help fishermen adapt, the ban is being gradually introduced along with a number of flexibilities such as more freedom to bank
Alternatives to discarded fish?
2014: energy demand of a gull chick
2015: Are mixed or terrestrial diets possible?
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- 20 chicks Terrestrial food:
  - 10 ad libitum
  - 10 restricted (based on 2014 results)

- 10 chicks Mixed (terrestrial + fish)
  - All ad libitum

- 20 chicks Fish:
  - 10 ad libitum
  - 10 restricted
Terrestrial high and Mixed

Marine high and marine low

Terrestrial low
Bill length (mm) vs. age (days)

- Terrestrial high and Mixed
- Marine high and marine low
- Terrestrial low
AGE (days)

HEAD LENGTH (mm)

Terrestrial high and Mixed
Marine high and marine low
Terrestrial low
Terrestrial high and Mixed
Marine high and marine low
Terrestrial low
Are mixed or terrestrial diets possible?

• No: Terrestrial food is more energy rich than fish, but lacks nutrients.
Still plenty of data to analyze

- Behavioural experiments: development of nervous system
- Toxicology: mercury & POPs
- Nutrient profile of diets
- Digestibility of diets
Thank you

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