

LIVE OR LET DIE

Survival of discarded plaice

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INTRO

The reformed Common Fisheries Policy includes a landing obligation, also called discard ban. To avoid killing species that could have survived their catch and release, an exemption to the landing obligation may be granted by the European Commission on the basis of 'high survival'. A commonly discarded and relatively robust species is plaice.

METHOD

The fate of commercially-caught plaice, will be assessed by (i) determining the ratio of dead and live fish immediately after coming off the sorting conveyor onboard Belgian beam trawlers, and by (ii) monitoring some of the live fish in tanks for >3 days at sea and in the lab.

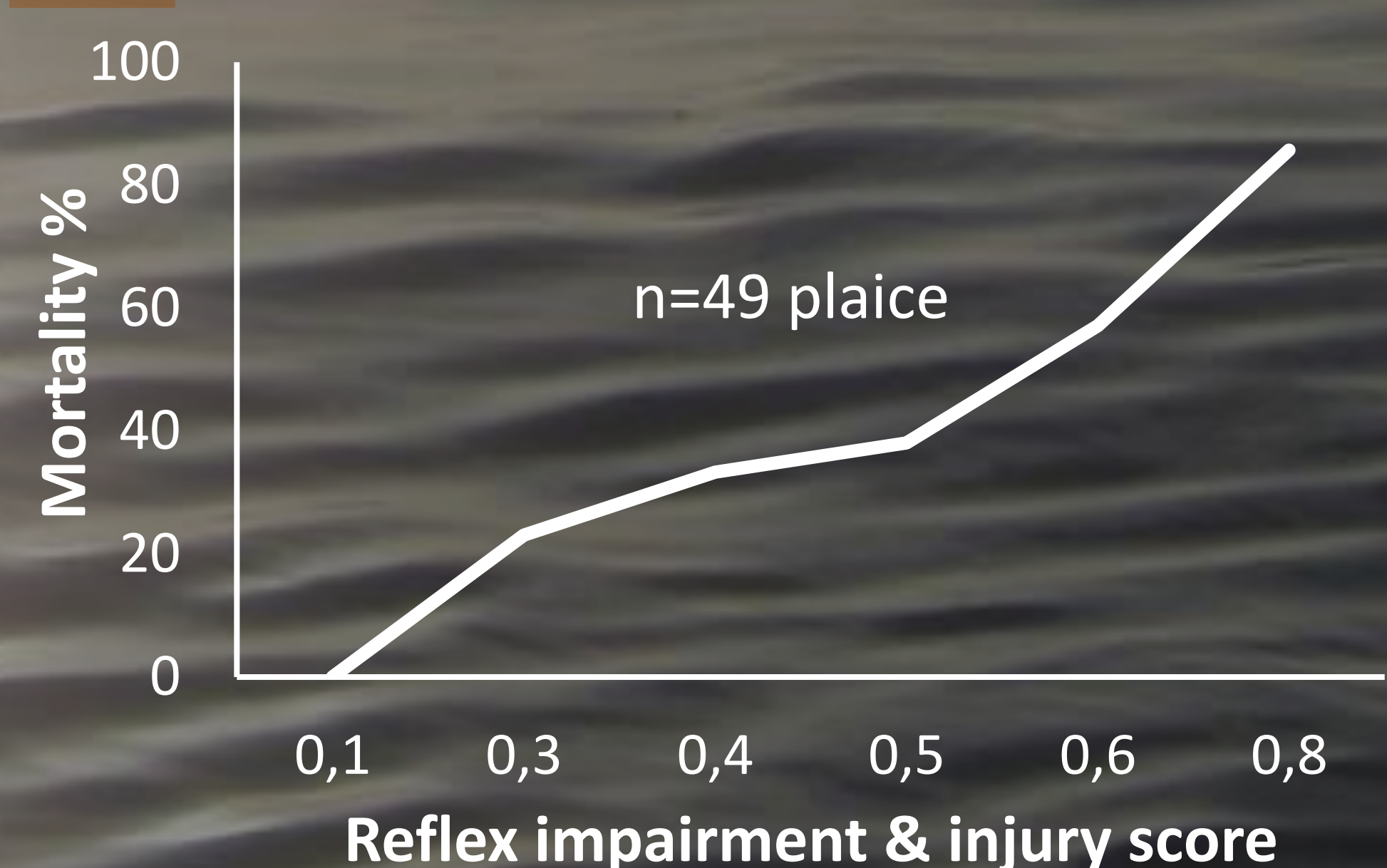


ANALYSIS

The probability to survive the capture-and-discarding process will be analysed as a function of several key parameters: trawl duration, catch volume, temperature and salinity differentials, air exposure time onboard, body length and vitality.

RESULTS

Vitality of plaice discards will be assessed by scoring presence of neuromuscular impairment towards several reflex stimuli and body injury types. Less vital animals may be less likely to survive.



March '14:
Developing tank units
& protocol

November '14:
Seatrips to test
protocol

February '15:
Seatrips to
collect data

November '15:
Data analysis
and reporting



Flanders

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