ICES C.M. 1996

C.M.1996/S:27
POSTER

Distribution of Blue Whiting Larvae off the Portuguese Coast by Length and Age

Isabel Meneses

Instituto de Investigação das Pescas e do Mar, Av. Brasília, 1400 Lisboa, Portugal

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to contribute with some results on gowth and horizontal and vertical distribution of *Micromesistius poutassou* larvae off the portuguese coast. Samples were collected in March 1996 onboard of RV "Heincke", in the area between latitudes 38° 50´and 41° 26´ N, within the scope of Self Edge Fisheries and Oceanography Studies (SEFOS). One multiple opening-closing net was used. The hightest densities were present in the northernmost transect F (latitude 41° 26´N) and in transect C (latitude 39° 45´N). In transect F larvae were mostly concentrated offshore (>1000m bathimetry) but in shallower layers (between 25 and 50 meters depth) than in transect C (bathimetries 100-200m and >1000m depth). The bigest and oldest larvae were present inshore in northernmost transect and had mean standard lengths of about 7.0mm and mean ages of about 20 days old. In station 128 (transect F in the North) growth coefficient of blue whiting larvae was G=0.1302 (r^2= 0.91) and absolute growth rate g=0.67mm/day (r^2= 0.89) .In station 138 (transect C at latitude 39° 45´)) growth coefficient of blue whiting larvae was G=0.0928 (r^2= 0.92) and absolute growth rate g=0.60mm/day (r^2= 0.93). These results suggest that spawning started earlier, in the middle of February, and that larvae grew faster in the North than in the South. Growth parameters of blue whiting larvae estimated for the entire area were: G=0.090 (r^2= 0.88) and g=0.49mm/day (r^2= 0.85).