

OBSERVING RESPONSE OF HALIBUT TO FISHING GEAR

Session: A, Breakout Room #18

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Underwater video observation has much potential to study and manage marine species populations, but is a relatively new strategy that does need to improve in certain aspects. The purpose of my internship is to develop a video analysis approach to evaluate how marine species behave relative to the fishing gear (bottom trawl) being used in the California Halibut (CAHB) bottom trawl fishery. Collaborating with commercial fishermen, cameras were attached to their fishing nets while I was assigned to analyze the hours of footage that the cameras produced. My main responsibility involved inputting data on observations of marine species from the video and helping develop the framework for how to specifically record those behavioral observations in a data spreadsheet. The results demonstrate how an underwater video-based approach is no novice task. There are many variables you must take into consideration to acquire accurate and consistent data, so it's expected to face many challenges when starting to develop this type of program and to further carry it out. The outcome of these results holds importance because it shows that obtaining significant data is possible, but takes more time and data collection than the length of my internship (10 weeks). This plethora of information on marine species can also help solve other fishery management questions other than the one I focused on.