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Preliminary analysis of the Spanish longline fishery operating in SIOFA

(Abstract of restricted document)

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Abstract	
<p>This document analyses the Spanish longline fishery in SIOFA from 2015 to 2022 from two different sources of information, logbook data and observer data.</p> <p>A total of 20 fishing trips were conducted during this period, corresponding to 2715 fishing sets. Observer data included information on the fishery and biological sampling for 10 of these 20 trips. The longline fishery caught a wide range of species but eleven accounted for 99% of the catch in weight. These 11 species included six species or group of species of sharks, four species or group of species of fish and one skate. Portuguese dogfish (<i>C. coelolepis</i>) was the most abundant species by-caught, consisting of more than 50% of the total catches, followed by Patagonian toothfish (<i>D. eleginoides</i>).</p> <p>The spatial distribution varied among species, with sharks by-caught mostly in Areas 2 and 3. Conversely, fish species seemed to have a wider spatial distribution. A shift was observed with regard to the dominant species caught, as sharks were more frequently by-caught at the beginning of the timeseries while fish were more abundant towards the end; <i>C. coelolepis</i> was, however, a constant by-catch throughout the timeseries analysed. Fishing sets with higher by-catch of sharks had, on average, a higher number of hooks deployed compared to those catching more fish species. Biological sampling of the most abundant by-caught sharks showed a higher proportion of females for most species. In addition, caught females showed a higher mean size compared to males.</p>	

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