Age estimation of the saithe from the North Sea

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Saithe is found in the North East Atlantic, from Greenland to the Celtic Sea.

This demersal fish lives from the coast to 200 m in depth.

Saithe acquires its sexual maturity between 5 and 10 years old and its longevity is estimated at 25 years at least.

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**Otoliths embedded in polyester resin**

- **Dorso-ventral cut**
- **High speed diamond saw**
- **Reading otolith transversal thin section**

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**Preparation and observation technique:**

Individual otoliths are embedded in resin, then cutted with an high speed diamond saw. Otolith thin section are examined under a microscope with transmitted light for age estimate.

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**Age estimation:**

Age is estimated by counting the number of translucent increments, while taking into consideration the unknown date of birth and the date of capture.

By convention in the north-east Atlantic, birth date is fixed at the first January. If the capture date is contained between the 1st January and June 30, marginal translucent increment is counted as an annual increment.

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- **3 years old**
- **4 years old**
- **5 years old**
- **6 years old**
- **8 years old**

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**Principal reading axis**

**Secondary reading axis**

**Date of capture for all otoliths is the first quarter.**