Age estimation of the lemon sole from the southern North Sea

Centre Manche-Mer du Nord - Département Halleutique
Laboratoire Ressources Halleutiques de Boulogne sur mer

Its geographical distribution is North-east Atlantic, from northern Norway and Iceland to the Bay of Biscay.

This benthic fish lives on hard substrata (rock shelf), gravels or shelly sand between 40 and 200 m in depth. The species is mainly found in temperate marine waters.

Lemon sole acquires its sexual maturity between 2 and 6 years old and its longevity is estimated at 23 years.

Preparation and observation:
Otolith is directly read (in toto) without any preliminary preparation. Its observation is realized under a binocular after immersing the whole on its convex side in an water solution.

Growth increments:
Age estimation is obtained by counting translucent increments (= winter rings).

Age estimation:
If the otolith displays a translucent increment at the ventral margin during the first half-year, this one is counted. During the second half-year, the translucent increment at the margin is not counted.