

1 **Otolith shape differences between ecotypes of Icelandic cod (*Gadus morhua*) with**  
2 **known migratory behaviour inferred from Data Storage Tags.**

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## 16 **1 Introduction**

17 Knowledge of structure and dynamics of populations is essential for successful  
18 management of harvested stocks. Mismatches between simple management units  
19 (e.g. assuming panmixia) and the actual ecological complexity including population  
20 richness's of harvested stocks can have serious consequences and lead to unequal  
21 exploitation of stock sub-units as well as erroneous estimations of stock sizes  
22 (Stephenson, 1999; Sterner, 2007; Marteinsdóttir and Pardoe, 2008; Reiss *et al.*, 2009).  
23 Indeed, many commercially harvested fish stocks consist of smaller sub-units, with  
24 more complex, and diverse life history strategies than their management scheme  
25 implies (Begg and Marteinsdottir, 2000; Smedbol and Stephenson, 2001; Wright *et al.*,  
26 2006; Kell *et al.*, 2009). Important life history parameters that may differ between sub-  
27 units include properties such as age-at-maturation, growth rate, condition, survival,  
28 abundance and distribution. All of which are important for accurate stock  
29 assessment and successful management (Begg *et al.*, 1999).  
30 Otolith shape has proven to be an efficacious discrimination tool between stock  
31 units. Fish otoliths are species-specific in shape and their metabolically inert nature  
32 makes them robust to short-term changes, thus especially useful in morphometric  
33 analyses (Campana and Casselman, 1993; Begg *et al.*, 2005). Both genetic and

34 environmental factors affect otolith shape, but the latter is thought to have more  
35 effects (Campana and Casselman, 1993; Lombarte and Lleonart, 1993). That both  
36 genes and the environment act on otolith shape has been confirmed on Atlantic cod  
37 in the Faroes where otolith shape has been used to separate cods at the Faroe Bank  
38 from cod on the Faroe Plateau (Cardinale *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, otolith shape  
39 differs between dispersed and resident components of winter-spawning Celtic stock  
40 of Atlantic herring (*Clupea harengus*) (Burke *et al.*, 2008), between stock components  
41 of the Horse mackerel (*Trachurus trachurus L.*) in the North-East Atlantic and  
42 Mediterranean (Stransky *et al.*, 2008b), and between spawning populations of the  
43 Atlantic cod in the North-Sea, and West of Scotland (Galley *et al.*, 2006) as well as  
44 between the Northeast Arctic cod and Norwegian Coastal cod in Norway (Stransky  
45 *et al.*, 2008a).

46 Atlantic cod is characterized by a great population richness, with distinct sub-stocks  
47 exhibiting varying degrees of migratory behavior (Robichaud and Rose, 2004, and  
48 references therein). Evidence of different migratory behaviors among the Icelandic  
49 cod population were first revealed by conventional tagging (Jónsson, 1996), and later  
50 confirmed by Data Storage Tags (DSTs) which record the ambient temperature and  
51 depth (pressure) history of the fish (Pálsson and Thorsteinsson, 2003; Thorsteinsson

52 and Saemundsson, 2006). The results from the DSTs revealed that the Icelandic cod  
53 stock consists of two ecotypes including individuals that stay at shallow depths all  
54 year round, identified as coastal cod, and also fish that migrate during winter  
55 feeding season towards deeper areas of the continental shelf. The thermal profiles  
56 from the DSTs showed that these latter individuals migrate towards areas  
57 characterized by temperature fronts where mixing of the cold Arctic and warmer  
58 Atlantic water masses occurs (Malmberg and Kristmannsson, 1992; Valdimarsson  
59 and Malmberg, 1999). The deep migrating type has been named frontal cod due to  
60 this behavior.

61 The main objective of this study was to relate otolith shape to the variation in the  
62 migrating behavior of cod in Iceland. Some success of using otolith shape as a  
63 discriminator between spawning groups of cod in Iceland has already been shown  
64 (Jonsdottir *et al.*, 2006; Petursdottir *et al.*, 2006). Genetic differences at the  
65 pantophysin I locus (*Pan I*) have also been revealed with individuals carrying the  
66 *Pan I<sup>AA</sup>* genotype being more often shallow and fish carrying the *Pan I<sup>BB</sup>* genotype  
67 being mostly of the deep migratory type (Pampoulie *et al.*, 2006; Pampoulie *et al.*,  
68 2008; Arnason *et al.*, 2009; Grabowski *et al.*, 2011). The genetic difference was  
69 revealed by analysis on the same DSTs cod as is used in this study and here the

70 otoliths will be used for shape analysis, applying two-dimensional shape  
71 characteristics as well as Fast Fourier Transforms of the otolith outline. The  
72 differentiating power of the otolith shape for the behavior types will be examined  
73 with a discriminant analysis applying Generalized Linear Models (GLM).

## 74 **2 Materials and methods**

### 75 **2.1 Data Storage Tags**

76 The electronic data storage tags (DSTs) used in the present analysis come from  
77 annual spring tagging experiments, conducted in Icelandic coastal waters from 2002  
78 to 2005 by the Marine Research Institute (MRI) of Iceland, with tags manufactured  
79 by Star-Oddi, Reykjavík, Iceland (Pálsson and Thorsteinsson, 2003; Thorsteinsson  
80 and Saemundsson, 2006). Two different types of tags, differing mainly in their  
81 storage capacity, were employed. DST-Milli had a capacity of 10,000 to 21,000  
82 records of depth and temperature and DST-Centi 130,000 records. The tags were  
83 13mm x 39.4mm and weigh 9.2g (5g in water). All DST-Centi were programmed to  
84 measure depth and temperature every 10 min while the DST-Milli were set to record  
85 either at 10 min or 6 hour interval with the aim of extending the time at liberty. The  
86 DSTs were surgically attached in the peritoneal cavity (for information on method

87 see Website: [http://www.hafro.is/catag/b-fish\\_tags\\_tagging/b13-](http://www.hafro.is/catag/b-fish_tags_tagging/b13-)  
88 [methods\\_section/b1302-conv-double-cod.html](http://www.hafro.is/catag/b-fish_tags_tagging/b13-methods_section/b1302-conv-double-cod.html)). V. Thorsteinsson with license No.  
89 0304-1901, issued by the Icelandic Committee for Welfare of Experimental Animals  
90 from the Chief Veterinary Office at Ministry of Agriculture, Reykjavík, Iceland,  
91 carried out all surgical operations required for tagging.

## 92 **2.2 Behavior assignment**

93 Of all recaptured DSTs, 423 tags included successfully recorded profiles containing  
94 recordings of three parameters: temperature (°C), depth (meters), and time (date and  
95 time of day). From these we calculated three values that were used to classify the  
96 cod according to behavior. These were daily range of temperature, daily range of  
97 depth, and daily mean depth. Temperature daily means were not exploited as that  
98 might produce undesired separation of fish that resided in the northern cold versus  
99 southern warm waters rather than by behavior. According to prior analysis of the  
100 DST profiles, the main difference in behavior found within the cod stock in Iceland  
101 takes place during the feeding season (June-January) (Pálsson and Thorsteinsson,  
102 2003; Thorsteinsson and Saemundsson, 2006). Fish with DST profiles that lasted at  
103 least from June to September (203 out of the initial 423) were used in the analyses.  
104 This was done to ensure that the migrating behavior would be captured in the DST

105 data assuming that all migration towards feeding areas is finished before the end of  
106 this time frame. To simplify the large datasets, twelve 5.0m bins for range in daily  
107 depth (<1m, 1-5m, 5-10m, ... 45-50m, >50m), nine 0.5°C bins for the range in daily  
108 temperature (<0.5°C, 0.5-1.0°C ... 3.5-4.0°C, >4.0°C), and twelve mean depth bins  
109 (<20m, 20-40m, 40-80m, ... 360-400m, >400m), were assigned. Each bin is given a  
110 number from 1-12 for the depth bins, and 1-9 for the temperature bins. Based on  
111 these the proportion of days spent at each bin was calculated. As a result, each  
112 individual gets assigned three numbers, one for temperature and two for depth; e.g.  
113 if the daily temperature range of an individual is 30% at <0.5°C, 30% at 0.5-1.0°C and  
114 40% >4.0°C then the temperature number is calculated as:  $0.3 \times 1 + 0.3 \times 2 + 0.4 \times 9 = 4.5$ .  
115 Calculation of these numbers was carried out for each month, yielding a total of 33  
116 estimates per year (12+12+9). The values were there after used in a Cluster Analysis  
117 (CA) with Euclidian distance measures and the Ward clustering method (Legendre  
118 and Legendre, 2012). The choice of bins for the data follows the one applied by  
119 Grabowski et al (2011), however, here all visual, *a priori* assignment of behavior was  
120 avoided, therefore removing all subjectivity in the approach. The difference between  
121 groups based on the CA was tested with ANOVA, with groups as the categorical  
122 variable, and absolute depth, and depth and temperature range as the response

123 variable. Tukey HSD test was then applied to get *a posteriori* comparison between the  
124 groups, as the resulting groups from the CA were more than two.

### 125 **2.3 Otolith morphology**

126 High contrast, calibrated otolith images were captured with a microscope at 0.63x  
127 magnification linked to an 8 bit MediaCybernetics® PL-A662 digital camera  
128 powered by PixeLINK™ resulting in a dark two-dimensional otolith shape on a  
129 bright background. The right otolith was chosen and placed with the rostrum in the  
130 lower left corner. When only the left otolith was available, its image was flipped and  
131 transformed using standard image editing tools. Out of the 203 individuals that were  
132 at liberty long enough for their behavior to be analyzed, only 56 individuals had  
133 whole otoliths fit for the analysis. In an effort to increase the sample size, a method  
134 was developed by the authors, which involved gluing otoliths that had been broken  
135 by hand for aging (Bardarson *et al.*, 2014). Using this method the sample size was  
136 increased to 86 individuals. Four measurements were taken on each otolith from the  
137 two-dimensional photos using ImageJ™ software: length, width, area, and  
138 perimeter. From these measurements additional four shape variables (roundness,  
139 aspect ratio, circularity and rectangularity) were calculated using previously  
140 described methods (Russ, 1990; Tuset *et al.*, 2003, Table I). Finally, the outline of each



141 otolith was automatically traced by ImageJ™ software using pixel gradient of the  
142 otolith silhouette. Two hundred and fifty six equidistant points, given as (x,y)  
143 coordinates, were extracted from the outline of each otolith using the tip of the  
144 rostrum as a common starting point. These were treated as complex numbers  $x+iy$   
145 and subjected to a Cartesian fast Fourier Transformation to obtain 256 Fourier  
146 Descriptors (FDs) (Lestrel, 2008). The FDs were standardized for rotation and size of  
147 the otolith by setting the 0th FD to zero and by dividing all the FDs with the first FD,  
148 respectively. The FDs were then transformed by converting the complex numbers  
149 into absolute values (modulus of the complex numbers), resulting in 256 harmonic  
150 numbers (Smith *et al.*, 2002). The FDs have the quality that the more descriptors used  
151 to describe the shape, the more closely it resembles the original shape. However, in a  
152 discriminant analysis it is appropriate to reduce the total number of FDs to an  
153 adequate amount that can explain enough of the variation. The minimum number of  
154 FDs needed to capture at least 90% of the shape variation in our study was  
155 calculated with the same procedure as described in Smith *et al.* (2002)

## 156 **2.4 Discriminant analyses**

157 All otolith parameters were tested for normality before included in the analyses.

158 Since not all fish were recorded for length, and in some cases length measurements

159 by fishermen could be contested, all variables were tested for otolith length  
160 correlation instead of the more commonly applied fish length correlation. Using  
161 otolith length might even be more appropriate given the fact that otolith length is  
162 unaffected by inter-sample differences in preservation, shrinkage and distortion  
163 (Campana and Casselman, 1993). Normalization was conducted with a procedure  
164 that uses a theoretically derived method based on the equations of allometric growth  
165 described by Lleonart *et al.* (2000). The method is based on the allometric power  
166 equation:  $Y = aX^b$ , where  $a$  and  $b$  are both constants, and  $X$  is the size measure (here  
167 otolith length). The important difference between using this equation and the widely  
168 used approach of linear equation,  $Y = A + BX$ , is that in the latter case the  
169 independent term  $A$  has no sense in morphometrics where at  $X = 0$ ,  $Y$  must be 0  
170 (Lleonart *et al.*, 2000). Since otolith length is used here as a normalizing agent it will  
171 not be used in the discriminant analysis. The effect of age on the shape parameters  
172 was also analyzed using ANCOVA. Generalized Linear models (GLMs) were used  
173 to explore the difference between the two extreme groups from the behavior  
174 assignment results (Cluster Analyses) with binomial errors and a logit link function  
175 where behavior was treated as a binary response variable i.e. either coastal or frontal  
176 (Quinn and Keough., 2002). The significance of variables was evaluated by

177 comparing all subsets of models and the best fitting one chosen with the Akaike  
178 Information Criterion (AIC). The best fitting GLM was then used to predict the  
179 behavior of all individuals based on their otolith shape, and the success estimated  
180 with correct classifications.

## 181 **3 Results**

### 182 **3.1 Assignment of Ecotypes**

183 Two main groups of behavior were identified with the CA (Figure 1). The main  
184 difference between these groups is linked to the depth measurements (depth range  
185 and mean depth) with one group being in shallow inshore waters, the other in deep  
186 offshore waters (Figure 2). Both of these groups could also be further divided into  
187 two intermediate subgroups (Figure 1). These groups will be identified hereafter as  
188 coastal, intermediate coastal, intermediate frontal, and frontal, respectively based on  
189 their placement along a depth gradient from the shallowest to the deepest depth  
190 occupied, as well as to keep up with the nomenclature of former analysis of these  
191 DST data (Figure 2). The inshore group was divided into subgroups that differed  
192 mainly in the depth they resided, but not the temperature range (Figure 2). The  
193 coastal type rarely migrated deeper than 100m while the intermediate coastal

194 occupied depths between 100 and 150m. The temperature profiles of both inshore  
195 types display a graduate rise in temperature reaching a maximum in late summer  
196 before cooling off again reaching a minimum late winter (Figure 3, red lines). The  
197 frontal group differed from the others by both temperature and depth. The  
198 intermediate frontal type stayed between 150 and 200m, while the frontal type spent  
199 most of the time below 200m (Figure 2). The temperature profile of the frontal type  
200 contained a high fluctuation in daily range of temperature during most of the  
201 feeding season, while the intermediate frontal type had slightly less fluctuation. This  
202 is presented by a large standard deviation (Figure 3, blue vertical lines). The depth at  
203 spawning did also differ between the ecotypes where the deep migrating individuals  
204 spawn deeper in the water column (Figure 3).

### 205 **3.2 Discriminant Analyses**

206 The outcome of the Fourier reconstruction indicated that more than 95% of the  
207 original shape could be described by the eight largest Fourier Descriptors. As a  
208 result, of all the 256 Fourier descriptors, only these eight were used in the  
209 discriminant analysis. Otolith area, perimeter and minimum length were all  
210 significantly correlated with otolith size and were consequently rescaled before  
211 further analysis. The same three parameters tested significantly as covariates with

212 age (ANCOVA,  $p < 0.05$ ). However, after standardizing the otoliths for length, the  
213 effect of age was no longer significant. Therefore, all of the eight shape parameters  
214 and the first eight Fourier Descriptors were used in the complete GLM. The best  
215 model (AIC = 37.696) consisted of two Fourier Descriptors, FD3 and FD8, along with  
216 three shape variables, Roundness, Aspect Ratio and Circularity (Table II).

217 The GLM was very good at predicting the ecotypes of the coastal and frontal cod  
218 (91% and 90% correct respectively, Table III). The four individuals that were  
219 wrongly classified, (two frontal and two coastal) were not obviously different from  
220 the rest, e.g. they were not older or younger, not exclusively from one part of  
221 Iceland, and represented both sexes. The intermediate behaving cod, according to  
222 the CA of the DST, were classified by otolith morphology to either of the main  
223 behavior types with a success of only 64% (Table III). Correct classification of  
224 intermediate behavior types was defined such that all intermediate frontal with a  
225 predicted value below 0.5 were considered correctly classified while the rest as  
226 incorrectly classified, and vice versa for the intermediate coastal. The overall success  
227 rate for all four behavior types is, therefore, 77%. However, since the behavior of the  
228 intermediate groups is, as the name implies, intermediate compared to the frontal

229 and coastal groups it might be incorrect or at least inaccurate to use the 0.5  
230 prediction value to estimate correct assignments for these individuals.

231 The otolith shape was reconstructed using the inverse value of the Fourier  
232 Descriptors (Figure 4). The average shape of the otoliths from deep migrating cod  
233 (frontal and intermediate frontal) was more elongated or flatter. In contrast, the  
234 otoliths of the shallow individuals (coastal and intermediate coastal) were more  
235 round (Figure 4). There is an apparent gradient in the otolith shape with the  
236 intermediate types having a shape that is on average in-between the shape observed  
237 by the two extreme ecotypes, with the intermediate frontal closer to the frontal shape  
238 and the intermediate coastal closer to coastal in shape (Figure 4).

## 239 **4 Discussion**

### 240 **4.1 Successful Discriminant Analysis**

241 In this study we demonstrated how the different ecotypes of cod in Iceland can be  
242 distinguished by otolith shape. The success rate of correctly classified individuals of  
243 the two extreme behavior types, coastal and frontal was 90% and 77% when the  
244 intermediate types were also included. This is the first time that a method has been  
245 developed that can be used to discriminate between ecotypes of Icelandic cod for all

246 individuals (Pampoulie *et al.*, 2008). Until now the Pantophysin I locus could be  
247 applied but only for homozygotes leaving almost half of the population, the  
248 heterozygotes, unidentified. It must be pointed out that the current results are based  
249 on a small sample size and the success of the discriminant function is based on the  
250 testing it on the same sample that was used to develop it. This is not ideal and there  
251 is a need to re-validate the function with a new, independent sample. The best  
252 option would be to get a new sample of DST tagged cod with known migratory  
253 behavior. Unfortunately such sample is currently not available. The second best  
254 option is to analyze the correlation between the two markers of ecotypes that has  
255 now been established, that is the otolith shape and the *Pan I* locus (Pampoulie *et al.*,  
256 2008).

257 This is also the first time that full attention has been placed on the individuals  
258 displaying intermediate behavior. The assignment of individuals into ecotypes has  
259 been based on duration of time spent below the 200m depth level, and it has not  
260 been consistent how long the duration needed to last. Pálsson and Thorsteinsson  
261 (2003) based their categorization on describing shallow-water cod as individuals that  
262 spent most of their time, >90%, at depth less than 200m. In a study looking at the  
263 relationship between migration behavior and the Pantophysin locus, Pampoulie *et al.*

264 (2008), classified the shallow water coastal as an individual spending >70% of the  
265 time at depths less than 200m. In another study describing vertical separation of  
266 ecotypes during spawning, Grabowski et al (2011), used the >90% time limit  
267 criterion. Finally in Thorsteinsson et al (2012) the definition of a coastal behavior was  
268 based on criterion where the cod spent at least 70% of their time in shallow waters  
269 while the cod displaying frontal behavior were those that had migrated during  
270 feeding season to depths between 250 – 600m. In that study 12% (5 out of 41) of  
271 individuals were classified as coastal but were recorded at depth > 200m and  
272 therefore termed intermediate but still it was stated that real intermediate characters  
273 were not found (Thorsteinsson *et al.*, 2012). In the current study, we used Cluster  
274 Analysis based on pair-wise comparisons to avoid the application of-a-priori cut-off  
275 values. Better resolution of the overall behavior of cod was accomplished by  
276 comparing the individual behavior to all other individuals. This method revealed  
277 the relative placement of each individual on the gradient seen in the behavior  
278 pattern (Figure 2). This approach established the existence of the two corresponding  
279 ecotypes of cod, coastal and frontal, having intermediately behaving subgroups.

## 280 **4.2 Environmental effect**



281 The purpose of this study was not to analyze the underlying factors that affect  
282 otolith shape. However, it is interesting to see that the otolith shape seems to follow  
283 a gradient that is somewhat similar to body morphology. In the study on body shape  
284 *Pan* I<sup>BB</sup> cod were more streamlined in shape, and with lower aspect ratio, while *Pan*  
285 I<sup>AA</sup> cod had deeper bodies and higher aspect ratio (McAdam *et al.*, 2012). The *Pan* I<sup>AB</sup>  
286 individuals expressed an intermediate body shape. Here the otoliths of the Frontal  
287 type, which is more commonly *Pan* I<sup>BB</sup> are also more streamlined than the more  
288 round otoliths of the coastal ecotypes (Figure 4). As already mentioned the *Pan* I<sup>BB</sup>  
289 types have been shown to be associated with the deep migration behavior, while *Pan*  
290 I<sup>AA</sup> types are coastal (Pampoulie *et al.*, 2008). The slim body shape of *Pan* I<sup>BB</sup> might  
291 indicate that some factor is acting on the deep migrating cod that makes it an  
292 advantage to be streamlined. The oceanography of Iceland is influenced by cold  
293 Arctic water flowing from the north and warmer waters transported with strong  
294 currents from the south, and the thermal fronts that form where these two water  
295 masses meet. The velocity of the currents in the deep ocean, especially in the frontal  
296 zone formed north-west of Iceland in the Denmark strait where many of the frontal  
297 types migrate, can be high (Aagaard and Malmberg, 1977; Våge *et al.*, 2013). This  
298 environment in the deep sea might be acting as a shaping force on the cod in such a

299 way that they need to be streamlined to overcome these currents. Shape differences  
300 linked to slow and rapid water currents was found in Atlantic salmon which made  
301 Pez *et al.* (2008) conclude that streamlined and robust shapes might be important for  
302 individuals exploiting resources within rapid water current conditions. Another  
303 possibility is that the shallow coastal types are more sedentary than the deep  
304 migrating types and that longer distance and more active swimming behavior might  
305 be acting as a shaping force (Webb, 1982; Boily and Magnan, 2002). This difference in  
306 activity of migration cannot, however, be verified with the raw data from the DST  
307 profiles alone, since the tags only record temperature and depth, not actual location.  
308 We have an example from a DST tagged cod that exhibited a coastal behavior in the  
309 DST profiles, but the tagging location was in the south while the recaptured location  
310 was considerable distance away north of Iceland. This indicates that coastal cod may  
311 undertake long distance migrations, in a similar manner to the frontal types. The  
312 DST data can, however, be analyzed in relation to tidal wave patterns to try to locate  
313 the swimming path of the fish and therefore estimate the distance of the migrations.  
314 This has been done successfully for DST tagged cod in the North Sea (Wright *et al.*,  
315 2006; Pedersen *et al.*, 2008), as well as in the Gulf of Maine (Gröger *et al.*, 2007). This  
316 has also been applied to DST tagged cod in Iceland with results that seem to indicate

317 that most of the coastal cods are sedentary in nature, but also that some indications  
318 of considerable travel range along the coast were observed among coastal cod  
319 (Thorsteinsson *et al.*, 2012). It might also explain why some of the otoliths are  
320 wrongly classified, i.e. as mentioned before it might be that the otoliths from the  
321 coastal cod that were identified as frontal originate from cod traveling long  
322 distances, and vice versa.

### 323 **4.3 Studies using otolith shape**

324 The application of otolith shape in stock discrimination has been demonstrated  
325 successfully in many other cases, although it hasn't been widely used as a routine  
326 part of stock assessments. For the purpose of stock assessment, the Norwegian  
327 Coastal Cod (NCC) and Northeast Arctic cod (NEAC) are identified visually by the  
328 shape of the first two annuli. This difference was first discovered by Rollefson (1933)  
329 and is routinely applied by otolith age-readers to discriminate between the NEAC  
330 and the NCC (Berg *et al.*, 2005). Stransky *et al* (2008a) recently compared the  
331 identification of stock components by the age-readers using the method described  
332 above with the outer shape of the otoliths, and found a good consensus between the  
333 two methods. Other species, stock components have also been identified by otolith  
334 shape. The resident and migration component of the Celtic Sea herring was

335 distinguished based on otolith shape with a high level of classification success (97%)  
336 (Burke *et al.*, 2008). European and North American stocks of Atlantic salmon were  
337 discriminated with a 88% success, while stocks within these two were classified with  
338 less success (Friedland and Reddin, 1994). Stransky *et al.* (2008b) applied elliptical  
339 Fourier Transforms on otolith shape of horse mackerel and found a good separation  
340 between stocks in the Northeast Atlantic and Mediterranean.

341 Furthermore this is not the first time that otolith shape has been used to discriminate  
342 among groups of cod in Iceland. Jonsdottir *et al.* (2006) looked at the differences in  
343 otolith shape between spawning groups of cod in Iceland. The highest reported  
344 success rate was 44%. However, they rightly pointed out that most of the cod that  
345 was wrongly identified were mostly classified to a nearby spawning location,  
346 meaning that otoliths could be used to identify between cod from different  
347 spawning regions such as north and south of Iceland or between areas of different  
348 depths such as the shallow and deep water spawning sites at the SW coast of  
349 Iceland. The major part of the discrimination between the north and the south  
350 spawning cod was explained by otolith size parameters, i.e. weight, area and length,  
351 while shape parameters contributed little to the separation (Jonsdottir *et al.*, 2006).  
352 This is contrary to our results where most of the variation is explained by Fourier

353 Descriptors and shape parameters, i.e. Aspect ratio, Roundness and Circularity  
354 (Table II). What needs to be understood is that Jonsdottir et al (2006) did not have  
355 access to the DST tags used in this study or any other information on the behavior of  
356 the cod outside the spawning areas. Therefore, it is quite likely that their  
357 observations were based on groups of mixed ecotypes as it appears that both  
358 shallow and the deep water ecotypes home into similar spawning locations even  
359 though they spawn at different depths in the water column (Grabowski *et al.*, 2011;  
360 Thorsteinsson *et al.*, 2012). The only exception to this may be the cod that spawn at  
361 the deepest areas along the slopes, i.e. the cod that were discriminated from the  
362 shallow spawning cod in Jónsdottir et al (2006). These cod do likely represent the  
363 frontal ecotype as most of those have been shown to be *Pan* I<sup>BB</sup> (Pampoulie et al,  
364 2008). Similarly, Petursdottir *et al.* (2006) did also separate these deep water  
365 spawning cod from those in more shallow waters, using similar techniques in otolith  
366 shape analysis as used in this paper.

#### 367 **4.4 Conclusion**

368 The present study reveals that otolith shape can be successfully used to distinguish  
369 between different ecotypes of cod. Otolith shape analysis is a straight forward  
370 method that can be applied to samples form the harvested stock either in the

371 laboratory or onboard research vessels. As different ecotypes of cod do clearly utilize  
372 the ecosystem in a different way and may represent sub-populations that vary in  
373 size and abundance independently of each other, this discrimination technique may  
374 assist in further exploration in to the nature and origin of the different ecotypes.

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389 on cod behavior. For this and many other reasons, Thorsteinsson will not be  
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391

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526



527 **Tables**

528 **Table I.** The eight shape variables extracted from the otoliths, as defined by ImageJ

529 software.

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<b>Shape variables</b>	<b>Definition (from ImageJ)</b>
Area	Area of otolith, counted in pixels.
Perimeter	The length of the outside boundary of the otolith.
Feret (length)	The longest distance between any two points along the otolith boundary.
Minimum Feret (width)	The minimum caliper diameter.
Aspect Ratio	Feret / Minimum Feret
Circularity	Calculated with the formula: $4\pi \cdot \text{Area} / \text{Perimeter}^2$ .
Roundness	Calculated with the formula: $4 \cdot \text{Area} / (\pi \cdot \text{Feret}^2)$ .
Rectangularity	The Area of the smallest rectangle enclosing the otolith / Otolith Area.

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530

531 **Table II.** Model comparison results for the different otolith shape variables,  
 532 evaluated with the significance of parameter addition (p-values) and by fit  
 533 estimations with the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC).

Model	df	Deviance	<i>P</i>	AIC
*4: Behavior = FD3 + FD8 + Circ + AR + Round	36	4.0908	0.129	37.69
3: Behavior = FD3 + FD8 + Circ	38	4.4143	0.036	37.78
2: Behavior = FD3 + FD8	39	11.256	7.94 e-4	40.20
1: Behavior = FD3 + FD8	40	12.386	4.33 e-4	49.56

534 \* No parameter addition to the third model measured significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ),  
 535 however out of all possible combinations, model four had the lowest AIC.

536

537 Table III. Classification **success (%)** of the GLM predicted ecotypes for the 86  
 538 individuals based on otolith shape.

<b>Predicted ecotypes</b>	<b>Ecotypes based on DST profiles</b>			
	frontal	int. frontal	int. coastal	coastal
<b>(GLM results)</b>	(n=19)	(n=23)	(n=21)	(n=23)
frontal	<b>90</b>	<b>57</b>	48	9
coastal	10	43	<b>52</b>	<b>91</b>

539

540

541 **Figure Captions**

542 **Figure 1.** Dendrogram of the Cluster Analysis results depicting pair-wise  
543 dissimilarity (y-axis) between individuals. The results indicate that cod in Iceland  
544 could be described as having a gradient in behavior according to the depth and  
545 temperature profiles of the DST tagged recaptures. There can be identified two main  
546 groups which differ mainly in the depth regime they reside in during feeding  
547 season, with one group (1 and 2) staying at shallow inshore areas, while the other (3  
548 and 4) migrates offshore to deeper areas. The results also show a gradient to this  
549 behavior, represented by the secondary division in the dendrogram which separates  
550 the main inshore and offshore groups into four subgroups. These groups are named  
551 coastal, intermediate coastal, intermediate frontal, and frontal, to maintain  
552 consistency in naming of the first analyses of the DST recaptured cod (Pálsson &  
553 Thorsteinsson, 2003; Thorsteinsson & Saemundsson, 2006). For more details of the  
554 difference between the groups see Figure 2.

555

556 **Figure 2.** The difference of variance in daily temperature (A), and depth (B) range,  
557 and mean daily depth (C), between the four groups which were formed in the  
558 Cluster Analysis in Figure 1. ANOVA and a Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference  
559 test was used to test for difference between the four groups. There is a significant  
560 difference ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $df = 3, 198$ ) in all pairwise comparisons, except in temperature  
561 range per day, where only the frontal behavior measures different from the rest.  
562

563 **Figure 3.** The annual, weekly mean depth (left panel) and temperature (right panel)  
564 profiles of the four groups identified by the Cluster Analysis in Figure 1. The dots  
565 are the mean values for each week and the vertical lines indicate the Standard  
566 Deviation (SD). The four groups are plotted with a slight shift so that they do not  
567 overlap, therefore it might seem that the lines start and end at different weeks,  
568 which is not the case. Spawning season is between week 10 and 20 the rest is  
569 considered as feeding season. Frontal cods (dark blue lines) undertake deep  
570 migration during feeding season and are well below 200m on average, while the  
571 intermediate frontal cod (light blue lines) can be found at around 200m on average.  
572 Coastal cod and intermediate coastal cod do not show vertical migration during  
573 feeding season and can both be found below or at around 100m depth. The  
574 temperature profiles of the frontal cods have larger SD and also stay more level on  
575 average than for the other types. Although not used in the Cluster Analysis, the four  
576 types due experience different mean temperature during feeding season.

577

578 **Figure 4.** The inverse Fast Fourier Transformation reconstruction of the otolith  
579 shape, averaged over each of the four behavior groups. In the upper-left panel, all  
580 four groups are compared and it can be seen that there is gradient from being more  
581 round (coastal) to flatter and more elongated shape (frontal). On average the frontal  
582 otoliths have smaller values when calculated for Roundness than the coastal. The  
583 other three panels are plotted to ease the visual comparison between the groups.