

Learning from 'apparent consensus' in TAC disputes: Exploring knowledge overlaps in LEK and genetic categorization of Atlantic cod - DTU Orbit (09/11/2017)

Learning from 'apparent consensus' in TAC disputes: Exploring knowledge overlaps in LEK and genetic categorization of Atlantic cod

The rapid development of genetic science has improved the methods for fisheries stock assessments with increasing implications for management. One key accomplishment has been the identification of different sub-populations of Atlantic cod. Recognizing that local coastal fishers in the North Atlantic have often held a local knowledge about local cod populations, this study examines the extent to which genetic analysis corroborates this local knowledge and vice versa. In Nuuk, capital of Greenland situated by the Nuuk fiord system, local fishers say that they and generations before them have been observing both inshore and offshore cod in the Nuuk fiord system. Fisher interviews were conducted in order to understand the construction as well as the content of this specific local ecological knowledge. Furthermore, fishers were invited to assign cod from their catches into categories based on their knowledge of inshore and offshore cod. These cod were subsequently analyzed and assigned to population using genetic methodologies. The comparison between visual and genetic assignment was not able to confirm any convincing consensus between fishers' understanding of offshore and inshore cod and the corresponding genetic categories. However, an examination of existing inshore and off-shore catch surveys confirmed the relevance of the morphological characteristics (liver condition and shape) of ecologically defined inshore and off-shore cod that provided the basis for fishers' categorizations. This opens a discussion of the fishers' way of knowing about inshore and offshore cod respectively and if and how the content of their knowledge could be made relevant in relation to scientific advice procedures

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