

Fact sheet: Shrimp trawl

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Principle

Fishing with a shrimp trawl is an active fishing method, whereby the shrimps are startled from the seabed by rolling bobbins and end up in the nets.

Target Species

The Dutch shrimp (*Crangon crangon*).

Description

Shrimps are caught with a special type of beam trawl. The gear that is used is a lot lighter in weight than those of a traditional beam trawl. Shrimp gear does not have tickler chains, but groundrope with bobbins that roll over the seabed; they are often enough to startle the shrimp. Just as with a traditional beam trawl, a net is dragged just above or over the seabed on either side of the cutter. Each net is tied to a boom that is horizontal in relation to the ship during dragging. The net is held open by a beam, which is nearly always a long steel pipe these days. The minimum mesh width of a shrimp net is 20mm (of 22mm with knots) stretched mesh. The caught shrimps are rinsed and sorted onboard, and any undersized fish and shrimps that are not large enough for the market are returned to sea immediately.

The mature shrimps are boiled on deck.



Where

The Dutch shrimp occurs along the coast of the whole of Western Europe and in the Mediterranean. However, the largest concentrations are found in shallow coastal waters. The Wadden Sea is a good example of such shallow waters, but the sand banks of the Voordelta are also a good place for shrimp fishery.

When

Shrimp fishery is carried out all year round; shrimp are particularly easy to catch in the spring and the autumn.



Fleet

Shrimp-trawl fishery is carried out with relatively small vessels of 18-24m, which have a statutory maximum engine capacity of 300hp. In 2009, shrimp fishery accounted for 22% of the revenue of the entire cutter fishery.

Management

There are no stock estimates for the Dutch shrimp and the EU does not set any TACs, which means that shrimp fishermen do not have restrictive quota for their catch. Fishery researchers have never expressed concern about the size of the stocks or a fishing effort that is too high. In the Netherlands you need a licence to be able to fish for shrimp, and currently there are more than 200 licences in use. Of those, some 60 vessels only fish for shrimps, whilst the other fishermen also carry out other fishery. The type of licence, GK (shrimp fishery coastal waters) or GV (shrimp-fishery fishery zone) determines where you may fish (Wadden Sea/North Sea or the waters around Zeeland). In order to grant a licence, the government ascertains that the shrimp cutter has adequate catch-sorting equipment onboard.



Social Debate

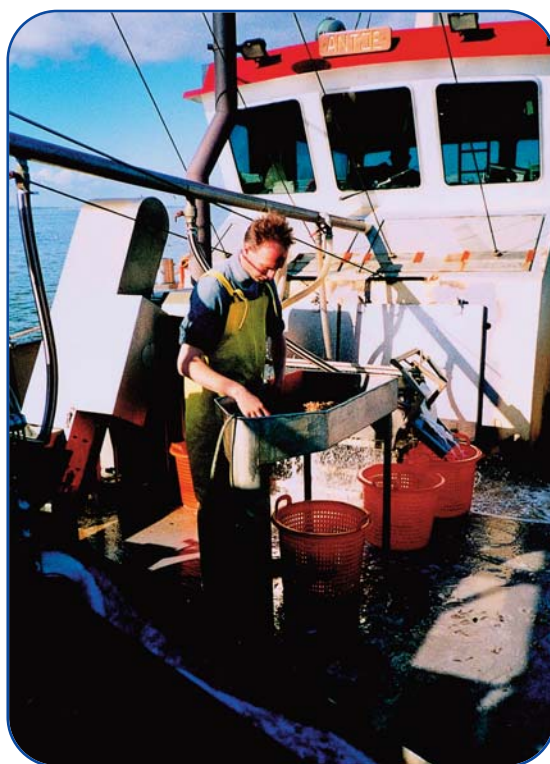
There is a social debate on the bycatch of shrimp fishery. A bycatch can be divided into a desired and an undesired bycatch. A desired bycatch consists of commercially interesting species that may be landed; species that are subject to quota require a quota of course. An undesired bycatch consists of commercial species for which the fisherman does not have a quota, undersized fish, or species that are not commercially interesting. This bycatch is put overboard (discards). Although it is known that shrimp fishery has significant discards from time to time, there are insufficient data to quantify the discard. Measures are being taken to reduce the existing discards, such as technical modifications and management measures. An example of a technical modification is the separator trawl, which

serves to reduce the undesired bycatch.

Pilot tests with a pulse trawl are also planned. A research agenda is being drawn up, which will tackle a number of questions about discards, seabed disturbance and fishing gear over the coming years.

MSC

The entire shrimp sector is working on gaining the MSC Certificate. Carrying an MSC Certificate means that the fishery is (1) carried out on healthy stocks, (2) has a minimum effect on the ecosystem, and (3) is carried out as part of a good management plan. Certification is issued by an independent third party.



References

1. Fact sheet shrimps www.pvis.nl
2. Management plan shrimp fishery March 2009
3. Fishery in figures 2010 - LEI
4. Knowledge Network Sustainable Shrimp Fishery
5. www.crangon.nl
6. www.vissersbond.nl

For more information about the fish species, see the fish facts on www.pvis.nl

**Dutch Fish
Product Board**

