
Fishing technology associated to a data buoy moored in the Western Equatorial Atlantic: impacts and benefits

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Résumé

Due to the collapse of the lobster fishery, the fleet based in Areia Branca, RN, Northeast Brazil, is developing a fishing technology associated with a data buoy of PIRATA program (Pilot Moored Array in the Tropical Atlantic), which is anchored in the Western Equatorial Atlantic, and has acted as a fish aggregating device (FAD). Thus, the present study aims to describe the fishing technology by fleet, fishing gears and baits employed, as well as identify the possible impacts and benefits. Data were obtained on board through three cruises in February, April and July 2011. The fleet actually consists of seven wooden boats with an average length of 13 meters and power engines of about 110 HP. Are employed miscellaneous fishing gears, all with nylon monofilament, and natural or artificial baits like: bamboo poles with silicone lure; hand lines at different depths with silicone lure, strips or live small tunas; trolling with silicone, rubber or fiberglass lures; dip net to catch live bait such as flying fish or squids. As the main impact, were recorded some boats tied on the buoy structure. On the other hand, some masterfishermen developed a technique to aggregate the schools under the boat and work drifting until complete the fish hold, and thus, transferring them to other boat. As benefits, we can point the reduction of fishing effort in the coastal areas, the generation of jobs, increased income, especially due to the high market price of target species. This fishery plays an important role as alternative to the fishing sector in the Northeast Brazil. Education and outreach programs should be conducted to raise fishermen's awareness about the importance of data buoys, as well as the development of FAD program in Brazilian waters to reduce the fishing activity on PIRATA buoys.

Mots-Clés: FAD, fishermen, awareness

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