

## Assessment of the pelagic fish populations using CEN multi-mesh gillnets: consequences for the characterization of the fish communities

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The contribution of CEN standard pelagic nets to the assessment of fish communities is tested by comparing three metrics (species composition, species abundance, and size structures) measured in accordance with the standard (i.e. using benthic nets only) to those calculated from the total effort (i.e. including pelagic nets). Hydroacoustic surveys were used simultaneously to assess fish densities in the pelagic habitat. The results show that in most cases the pelagic nets did not provide any extra information about these three metrics. However, their inclusion in the calculation of CPUE and size structures may affect the picture of the fish communities, especially in lakes containing salmonid populations. This study highlights the need to sample pelagic fish when assessing fish communities in order to determine lake quality.

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**Obtenir le document :** EDP Sciences

**Mots clés :** lake, pelagic zone, fish metric, CEN multi-mesh gillnets, Water Framework Directive, lac, zone pélagique, métrique piscicole, filets multi-mailles CEN, Directive cadre européenne sur l'eau

**Thème (issu du Text Mining) :** FAUNE, MILIEU NATUREL

**Date :** 2009-1-10

**Format :** text/xml

**Source :** <https://doi.org/10.1051/kmae:2008005>

**Langue :** Anglais

**Télécharger les documents :** <https://www.kmae-journal.org/10.1051/kmae:2008005/pdf>

**Permalien :** <https://www.documentation.eauetbiodiversite.fr/notice/assessment-of-the-pelagic-fish-populations-using-cen-multi-mesh-gillnets-consequences-for-the-charac0>

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