

Project Progress Reports for NOAA Award Number: NA18NMF4540330

Date of report: 11-30-18

Title: Development of a histological protocol for the age determination of monkfish, *Lophius americanus*

Recipient Name: University of New England

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The objective of this study is to use a modified histological technique to: (1) visualize growth increments on the illicium and vertebrae of monkfish; (2) to compare precision of age estimates obtained between illicium and vertebrae; (3) to fit the obtained length-at-age data into growth curves using both structures; (4) to determine which structure is more appropriate for age estimates in monkfish, based on precision, accuracy, goodness of fit of the growth curves, and observed biological data; and 5) collect reproductive data in order to determine the age and size at sexual maturity.

Accomplishments to date.

This project was funded in June of 2018 and the current reporting period is 05/01/2018 - 10/31/2018. During this time we were able to:

- 1) Acquire all necessary permits to conduct the study
- 2) Conducted several meetings in order to finalize all logistics for the field work
- 3) Contacted fisherman concerning the opportunity to purchase RSA DAS

To date; we have no sold any RSA DAS. Pending the sale of RSA DAS, we plan to start collecting samples, and ordering supplies to conduct the research during the spring of 2019.