

Distribution and Growth of Grey Triggerfish, *Balistes capriscus* (Family: Balistidae), in Western Gulf of Guinea

J. Aggrey-Fynn

Department of Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana

E-mail: jafynn@yahoo.com

Abstract

The grey triggerfish, *Balistes capriscus*, resource had declined for nearly two decades in West African waters; its distribution and growth remain to be reported after late 1980s. In order to fill this gap, specimens were collected during small pelagic fish stock assessment surveys in 2005 in coastal waters of Benin, Togo, Ghana and La Côte d'Ivoire (Western Gulf of Guinea) from 17 out of 165 swept-area hauls in depths range of 23–60 m. The modal size classes were 27.0–31.9 cm and 32.0–36.9 cm. The age classes were determined by interpreting growth rings on sections of first dorsal spines. Estimates of theoretical growth in length were obtained by fitting the observed length-at-age data to the standard form of von Bertalanffy growth equation. The estimated L_{∞} for *B. capriscus* was 45.1 ± 1.4 cm and the growth rate, K , was 0.21 yr^{-1} . The phi prime (Φ') growth performance obtained was 2.63, which is comparable to that obtained in the 1980s on the same fish species in waters of Senegal, La Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. The results suggest that the growth and distribution of grey triggerfish in the Western Gulf of Guinea had not changed, in spite of the apparent disappearance of the fish species in many areas of the West African coastal waters for nearly two decades.