

Identification of polychaetes used as bait

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Polychaetes are a popular form of bait collected by subsistence and recreational fishermen alike. However, very little is known about the sustainability of their stocks. But to manage the stocks effectively, we need to know which worms are used most frequently. There is, however, much confusion around their identities; common names often refer to groups of similar species, or a single name may refer to several unrelated species. Furthermore, the identity of the *Diopatra* spp in the Knysna estuary need to be clarified. This frequently used worm may be one of two species, both of which may be alien, or incorrectly identified. Clarification of the identities of the bait worms is therefore the first step towards improved management of this resource.

The aims of this study are therefore to 1) identify worms used by fishermen to species level, 2) determine whether there is consensus among fishermen around the identities of these species, 3) develop a sequence library and photographic guide of bait species and 4) clarify the identification of the *Diopatra* spp in the Knysna Estuary. Information generated by this study will serve as a foundation for further population dynamics and structure studies of key bait species.