

## Radioactive materials in fish studied

A group of Japanese researchers are studying fish organs to estimate how long radioactive materials will remain in fish caught in waters off the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

The researchers belong to the National Research Institute of Fisheries Science in Yokohama, near Tokyo.

They collected organs called ear stones from 30 rock trout and black porgy caught off Fukushima and Miyagi prefectures since last August.

Fish ear stones grow in layers. The researchers say it is possible to pinpoint the approximate time when fish absorbed radioactive materials if the layer containing the elements is identified.

They say they want to determine if the substances are residue from the nuclear accident in March 2011.

The head of the institute's Center for Fisheries Oceanography and Marine Ecosystem, Tomoo Watanabe, says radioactivity levels in fish are expected to decrease if they were caused by the accident.

High levels of radioactive materials continue to be detected in some fish caught off Fukushima Prefecture since the accident in March 2011.

Watanabe says his institute's data could help to decide when full-scale fishing in the area can be resumed.

Jan. 6, 2013 - Updated 16:21 UTC (01:21 JST)

