

**CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SCIENCE  
LOWESTOFT LABORATORY, SUFFOLK, NR33 0HT**

**2008 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME**

**PROGRAMME: RV CELTIC VOYAGER: CRUISE 3-08.**

**STAFF:**

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1 x MI staff

**DURATION:** 5 – 16 March 2008

**LOCATION:** Irish Sea

**AIMS:**

1. To conduct a plankton survey using a 76cm Gulf VII plankton sampler to determine the distribution and abundance of cod (*Gadus morhua*), haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) and plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*) eggs.
2. To remove fish eggs from fresh plankton samples at sea. To measure, stage and preserve these eggs individually, in ethanol prior to species identification using a DNA technique on return to the laboratory.
3. To collect surface nutrient and salinity samples at each of the sampling stations.
4. To collect surface chlorophyll samples every five sampling stations.
5. To collect supplementary sub-surface environmental data using a self-logging package carried on the Gulf VII plankton samplers.
6. To collect fine mesh (80 micron) PUP net samples for subsequent zooplankton analysis on every Gulf VII deployment.
7. To continuously log sub-surface (3m) salinity, temperature and fluorometry data using the ships pumped seawater supply and onboard CTD.

**PLAN:**

RV Celtic Voyager will sail from Belfast on 5 March and proceed to the Irish Sea to complete a grid of plankton stations as the third of a series of five ichthyoplankton surveys to estimate the spawning stock biomass (SSB) of Irish Sea cod, haddock and plaice. The plankton grid (figure 1) will comprise approximately 100 stations in the Irish Sea between 53°N and 55°N. RV Celtic Voyager will dock in Howth on 16 March to enable crew changes prior to the fourth survey. Ethanol and formalin preserved samples will be offloaded and returned to the Cefas Lowestoft laboratory.

**GEAR:**

List distributed separately and marked to relevant individuals for attention.

Stephen Milligan  
24 January 2008

**INITIALLED:**

**DISTRIBUTION:**

Basic List +

M. Armstrong

Pieter-Jan Schon (AFBINI, Belfast)

John Breslin (Marine Institute, Galway)

Clive Fox (SAMS, Dunstaffnage)

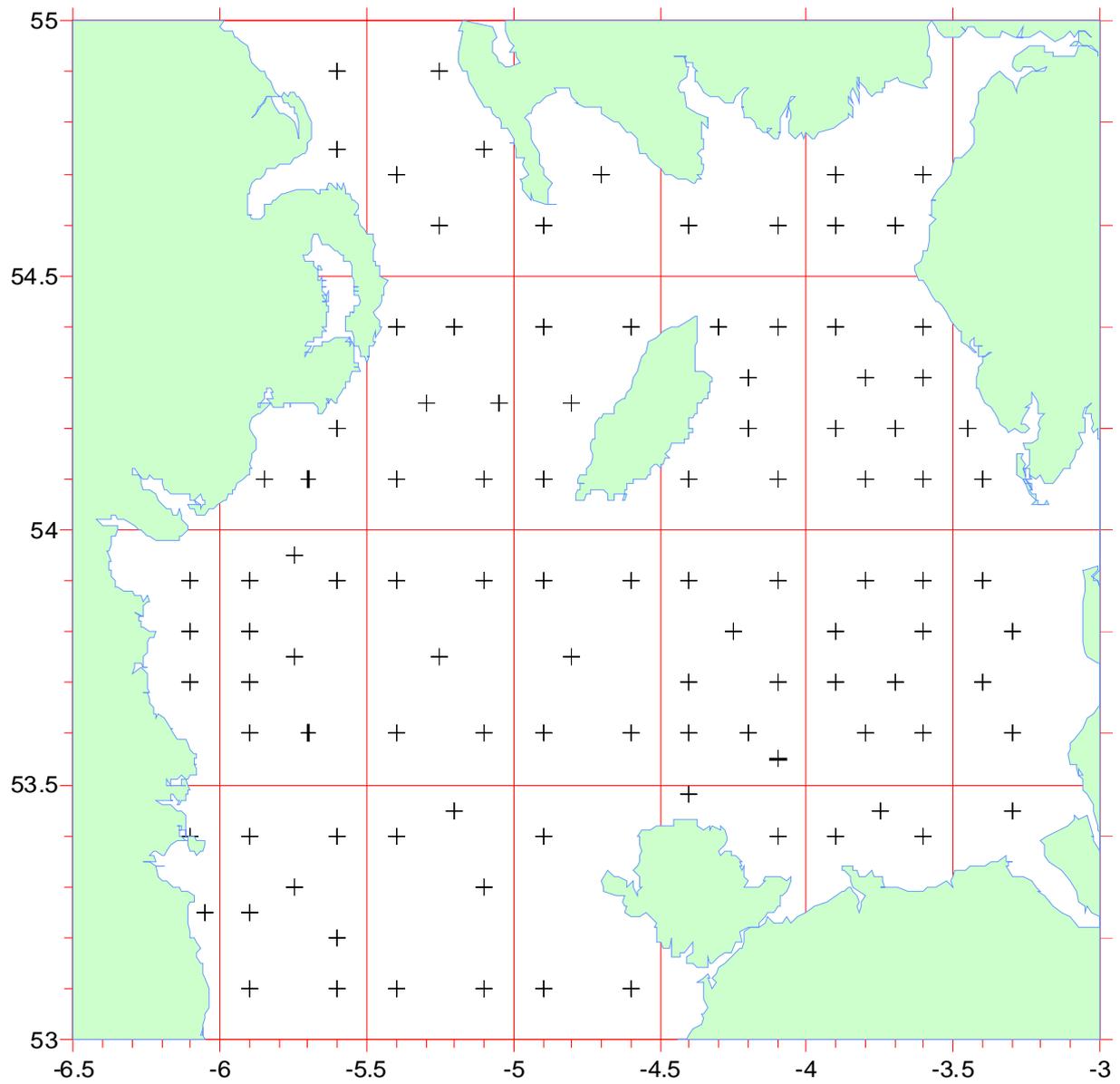
FCO (for Republic of Ireland)

Sea Fisheries Committees:

    Cumbria

    North Western and North Wales

    South Wales



Proposed ISEPS plankton sampling grid  
112 stns