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FISHERIES LABORATORY, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK, ENGLAND

1975 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV CIROLANA: CRUISE 11b

(PROVISIONAL: Not to be quoted without prior reference to the author)

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DURATION

Left Great Yarmouth 1000h, 10 December

Arrived Grimsby 0243h, 16 December

All times are Greenwich Mean Time.

LOCALITY

North Sea

AIMS

1. To continue studies on plaice migration, by collecting data on the relation between the catch of plaice taken by a midwater trawl and tidal direction; and to determine areas where the midwater catches of plaice are greatest on a south-going tide.
2. To service the three current meter stations JONSIS 1, JONSIS 2, and TYNE.

NARRATIVE

The scientific staff joined CIROLANA on the night of 9 December at Great Yarmouth and the ship sailed at 1000h the following morning. Working with RV CORELLA, midwater trawling started to the south east of Smiths Knoll on the first suitable tide at 1800h the same afternoon. Work continued until 0230h, 14 December, the final pair of tows being completed to the northeast of the Indefatigable Bank. The weather was good and work went smoothly until the evening of 12 December when a northerly tow with the 1200 Engel midwater trawl had to be abandoned in freshening northerly winds which had reached force 8-9 when the gear was aboard. The depth of water was relatively shallow - 31m - and there was a danger of the net being damaged on the bottom. The weather improved and the midwater trawling programme completed on 13/14 December.

CIROLANA steamed overnight to JONSIS 2. The surface buoy was not visible and an acoustic and a grappnel search failed to locate the rig. A new rig was laid and CIROLANA left JONSIS 2 at 1818h to steam overnight to TYNE which was recovered and replaced in daylight on 15 December; a T/S station was worked close to the rig. CIROLANA left station TYNE at 1239h

and steamed south to reach JONSIS 1 at 1722h. Work at this station was completed at 1744h.

As the aims of the cruise were completed, CIROLANA returned to Grimsby, docking at 0243h, 16 December.

## RESULTS

1. Five pairs of Engel trawl hauls were completed, and in 4 of these the catch of plaice was greatest on the southerly tide. 24 plaice were caught of which 21 (88%) were taken on 'southerly' hauls. The highest catch was made on a southerly tow in the line of the Knoll stream; some plaice were taken on the line of the 02°40' meridian both to the north and south of the gas production platforms.

Substantial catches of sprat were made north of the gas production platforms (53°28' to 53°42'N, 02°40'E). Other fish taken in midwater included whiting (often), cod (rarely), dabs, anchovies, occasional herring and mackerel, and scad. Two sea trout, one silver eel and three juvenile lumps (*Cyclopterus lumpus*) were also caught; spurdogs were not abundant.

2. No trace could be found of the current meter rig on JONSIS 2 and a new system was deployed 1n mile to the NW of the previous position. JONSIS 1, which had been recently laid, was checked and found to be in good order.

The rig at TYNE station had been damaged and one current meter was missing. The rig was serviced and the station re-established.

F R Harden Jones  
18 December 1975

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