

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (Northern Ireland)
Agriculture and Environmental Science Division

Cruise Report: LF 2603

Vessel: RV *Lough Foyle*

Date: 23rd – 27th June 2003

Area: ICES areas VIIa & VIa

Survey Type: N Ireland Multibeam and Minch Survey Part 1

Personnel:

M Service (SIC)	DARDNI
W Clarke	DARDNI
C Brown	SAMS
C Harper	Fathoms
J Hancock	SIMRAD
C Turnbull	JNCC

Objectives:

- i. To assess the utility of the RV *Lough Foyle* as a platform for multi beam sonar.
- ii. To carry out multibeam survey of key features in the N Channel and around Rathlin Island.
- iii. To survey Stanton and Blackstone Banks.
- iv. To survey Mingulay, west of Skye and Rum/Eigg sites in the Minch for the presence of deepwater coral, *Lophelia pertussa*.

Cruise Narrative:

Sunday 23 June 2003

All personnel were aboard by 21:00 h and the vessel left its berth but remained within Belfast Harbour while the multi-beam navigation system stabilised. Following this the vessel moved to the mouth of Belfast Lough to calibrate the system and preliminary survey work was done during the night. The vessel moved to two stations in the North Channel to begin detailed survey work.

Monday 24 June 2003

Two survey grids were successfully completed before the vessel returned to Belfast to disembark Mr Clarke and Heyn personnel before moving to a station North of the Maidens.

Tuesday 25 June 2003

Survey of peaks North of the Maidens started at 14:30h following completion of CTD cast to calculate velocity of sound. Survey grid was completed about 07:00h and passage was made to East side of Rathlin Island. Survey of the East Side of the island was completed by 13:00h. Work on the North of Rathlin Island started but had to be suspended to allow Portrush Lifeboat to evacuate Mr Hancock who was feeling unwell. Survey work was resumed and completed at 17:30. The vessel moved to Lacunia Bank and carried out further work until approximately 21:00h. Passage was made overnight to Stanton Banks.

Wednesday 25 June 2003

Following a CTD cast survey work got underway at 08:00h and continued until 14:00h. 7 stations were selected for Grab and video ground truthing. Only one site was amenable to grab sampling as the others apparently consisting of hard ground or cobble. This view was confirmed by the video drops. A second site on Stanton Banks was then surveyed from 20:00h until midnight.

Thursday 26 June 2003

Ground truth sites selected from the second grid on the previous night, were video surveyed and it was concluded that they would not be suitable for grab sampling. A side sonar tow was aborted when the instrument came in contact with the sea bed. The vessel then steamed for 4 hours to Blackstone Banks and after the routine CTD profile commenced a survey grid. Weather conditions prevented deployment of the video sledge for ground truthing.

Friday 27 June 2003

The vessel docked in Dunstaffanage 0930 hrs to facilitate changes in scientific crew.

Dr. M Service

7 July 2003