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Charter Fishing Vessel *Samantha Jane* (K94)

Cruise 2008H SISP Crab Tagging (Inshore)

REPORT

4-6 November 2008

Personnel

G Jones (In charge)
P Gibson

Objectives

1. To tag Brown Crab (*Cancer pagurus*), of a range of sizes, from the north of Scotland for investigations of their movements. Tagging will involve using both high visibility double t-bar tags that are retained on moulting and 'cable-tie' type tags which will be attached to the claws of some of the animals.
2. To biologically sample all tagged Brown Crab for carapace width, shell condition, sex and reproductive state (of females) along with date, time and latitude, longitude, and depth of the return location.

Narrative

Due to wind direction and tide, staff and equipment joined the vessel *Samantha Jane* at Burray Pier instead of Stromness as originally planned on the 4 November 2008. The vessel sailed during the morning of 4 November to fishing grounds around Hoy and the Pentland Firth. Once on station, fishing began immediately hauling 9 strings of 80 creels, on the first day, whilst working east along the Pentland Firth to the south/south west side of Hoy, and returning to Stromness harbour at night.

On the 5 November the vessel left Stromness and steamed to grounds around Sule Skerry where the day was spent hauling 12 strings around the inshore waters of Sule Skerry before steaming back to Stromness in the late evening.

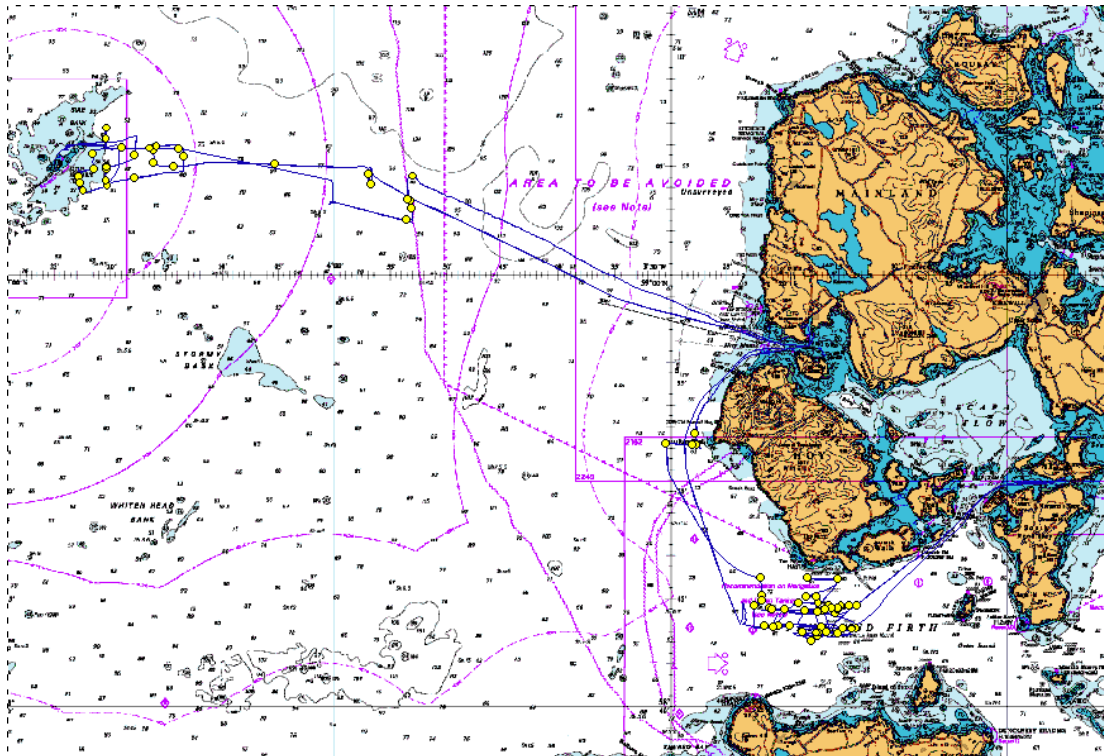
On the final day of the charter the vessel departed from Stromness and headed to grounds around the west side of Hoy, and began to work south into the Pentland Firth. In all 9 strings of 80 creels were hauled before heading back into Burray Pier in the evening.

FRS staff returned to Aberdeen on 7 November.

Results

The charter achieved the objectives set, covering two different statistical rectangles (46E6 47E5), and concentrated on the inshore grounds within these squares. Approximately 2400 creels were hauled (1440 from the Pentland Firth/Hoy area and 960 from Sule Skerry). 1634 crabs were tagged with high visibility T-Bar tags, comprising of 975 females, 578 male and 78 berried. Of these 203 were tagged with yellow cable ties on their claws as moult indicators.

Figure 1: Map showing track and tagged crab release points.



Fisherman will return information on tag no., location, sex, size for crabs that are recaptured. Releasing them back in order that they may be caught again and build up a track of movements for individuals over time.

A report is to be written in April 2009 for the Scottish Industry/Science Partnership, detailing the movements to date and any possible conclusions that can be drawn as to possible relationships between the offshore and inshore stocks.

Gareth Jones
12 November 2008