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12CR66
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In Confidence: Not to be quoted without
reference to the Laboratory.

CRUISE REPORT

F.R.S. "Clupea" / F.R.S. "Mara"

November 21st - December 24th 1966.

- Objectives:
- (1) To tag purse seine caught herring in the Minch and Moray Firth.
 - (2) Loch Eil survey.

The scientific staff joined "Mara" at Fort Augustus on 22nd November and both vessels proceeded to the North Minch. Weather conditions were very bad for the following twelve days and on the two occasions when the ships could get out of harbour the purse-seine could not be shot. "Clupea" and "Mara" made a passage to Fort William and arrived there on 6th December. The routine Loch Eil survey was carried out before the vessels proceeded via the Caledonian Canal to the Moray Firth.

On the last haul of the Loch Eil survey the main drive to the winch on "Mara" sheared. The delay caused by repairing this postponed the start of the Moray Firth purse-seining until the 19th December. On that day an echo-search was done in the western Moray Firth, and the net was shot, in the evening, off Culbin Sands. When hauling started it soon became clear that the net was entangled with the rudder-post of "Mara". Most of the net was flected aboard, giving a catch of a few sprats, and "Mara" was towed back to Buckie by "Clupea". On arrival there it was found that the net had washed clear of the rudder whilst under tow and the remainder of the net was hauled without damage.

Bad weather ruled out further work on the 20th and 21st. On the 22nd a slight lull in the weather made it possible to go out into 12 fathoms and test the submerged anchor float for current meters at depths of 5 and 10 fathoms. This showed no sign of pressure damage at these depths. The weather was still too bad for purse-seining and the ships returned to Buckie, where the cruise finished on the 23rd.

A. SAVILLE
G. McPHERSON
17th January, 1966