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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD
 FISHERIES LABORATORY, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK, ENGLAND

1985 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV CLIONE: CRUISE 11
 (PROVISIONAL: Not to be quoted without prior reference to the author)

STAFF

D J Symonds
 G Howlett
 Mrs M J Boon
 D W Palmer
 J M Elson
 P Wallace

DURATION

Left Lowestoft 1030 h, 6 September
 Arrived Lowestoft 0635 h 26 September
 All times are Greenwich Mean Time

LOCALITY

Irish Sea, Celtic Deeps, English Channel

AIMS

1. To carry out the annual survey of 0- and 1- group gadoids in the Irish Sea.
2. To repeat the standard trawl hauls on the Celtic Deeps Nephrops grounds.
3. To sample plaice and whiting from selected stations recording external disease conditions and preserving liver samples for subsequent pathological studies.
4. To bring back live mature female plaice and berried Nephrops.
5. To retrieve a current meter rig from Start Bay.

NARRATIVE

CLIONE made a good passage to the west coast and the first station of the Celtic Deeps survey commenced in fine weather at 0633 h on 8 September. The six stations of the survey were completed the same day and trawling in the Irish Sea started in Cardigan Bay the following morning. The good weather held and the southern half of the Irish Sea survey was finished before CLIONE put in to Douglas, Isle of Man, at 0645 h on 13 September to effect repairs to a faulty galley refrigerator and to take on stores and water. Departure from Douglas was delayed by SW gale force winds until 0800 h on the 15th when the ship proceeded to the Irish coast to continue trawling in the lee of the land. All survey stations were completed by 1930 h on 22 September with one day (21st) being spent at anchor in Red Wharf Bay sheltering from force 8 to 9 S to SW gales.

Two hauls were made for live berried Nephrops SW of the chickens on the morning of 23 September before CLIONE set sail for Lowestoft retrieving the current meter rig from Start Bay en route.

RESULTS

1. The 32 1-hour trawl stations of the routine pre-recruit gadoid survey were completed. In addition 18 Granton trawls and 10 tows with the 3m beam trawl were made in the northern Irish Sea and Cardigan Bay to augment the results on the distribution of small fish. In general the catches were the poorest seen for several years, particularly in the southeastern sector of the Irish Sea where for example 1 tow in Cardigan Bay (Stn 7) took a total of just 5 fish. Horse mackerel dominated the catches (7 baskets at Stn 22 and 11 baskets at Stn 23 off Arklow) with poor cod and whiting more common in the northern Irish Sea.

Provisional mean numbers of 0- and 1- group cod and whiting per 1-hour's fishing are given in the following table:

Depth Zone	Sector	Cod		Whiting	
		0-group	1-group	0-group	1-group
0-50	NW	0.0	0.0	21.2	32.0
	NE	0.0	10.8	3.2	127.1
	SW	0.0	0.2	36.0	8.5
	SE	0.0	0.2	0.5	16.5
	All	0.0	2.8	15.2	46.0
50+	NW	0.0	0.0	55.2	345.4
	NE	0.0	10.2	236.3	86.2
	SW	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0
	SE	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2
	All	0.0	0.2	72.9	108.0
Total Irish Sea		0.0	1.5	44.1	77.0

No 0-group cod were taken on the standard survey tows (although 8 were caught in one 15-minute haul with the beam trawl off Rockabill) and 1-groups were uncommon. Catches of 0-group whiting were also below average while the catches of 1-group whiting confirmed the results of last year's survey that the 1984 year class is good.

1028 otoliths from 11 species were taken for pre-recruit and biological studies and to augment the market sampling programme. Samples of cod, whiting, plaice and dab were deep frozen for AEP2 (Burnham), small fish collected for the Fish Identification Courses and hake ovaries preserved for fecundity studies.

The shipboard computer, apart from some minor problems, worked well and, for the first time, a full set of output documents were available before the ship docked.

2. The six hauls in the Celtic Deeps survey were completed. Catches were again low and mainly of blue whiting and Norway pout; catches of Nephrops were negligible. Stomach contents of 85 fish from 7 species were recorded and 200 otoliths from 7 species were collected.
3. Totals of 325 whiting and 155 plaice from six selected sites were examined for external disease conditions and parasites. Little evidence of disease was found at any site. Liver samples from the same fish were preserved for pathological studies.
4. 21 large female plaice and about 50 berried Nephrops were brought back live to the laboratory.

5. The current meter rig in Start Bay was successfully retrieved.

D J Symonds
3 October 1985

SEEN IN DRAFT: Captain French (Master)
R Graham (Fishing Skipper)

INITIALLED: DJG

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List
D J Symonds (3)
P D Wallace
G J Howlett
Mrs M J Boon
D W Palmer
J M Elson
Lancs and Western SFJC

