

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

## 1983 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV CLIONE: CRUISE 15

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

## STAFF

P O Johnson  
P D Wallace  
L Cox  
I L Davies  
A M Watson  
P A Large

## DURATION

Left Lowestoft 1100 h 7 December

Arrived Lowestoft 0830 h 19 December

## LOCALITY

Western Channel

## AIMS

1. To carry out an acoustic survey for pelagic species in the Western Channel using the Scottish towed body and QMII/QD Simrad integrator systems. This will concentrate on the Lyme Bay-Eddystone region and if time and weather permit extend offshore to the Hurd Deep area.
2. To identify and sample any major pelagic fish concentrations using a midwater trawl.
3. To obtain pelagic species for biological sampling and for the fish identification courses.
4. To deploy and retrieve a two current meter mooring at position  $50^{\circ}37'N$   $00^{\circ}45'W$  (about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Selsey Bill).

## NARRATIVE

CLIONE sailed from Lowestoft at 1100h on 7 December and made passage to the English Channel where an attempt was made to deploy the current meters on the morning of 8 December. This operation had to be postponed due to rapidly deteriorating weather and shelter sought in Sandown Bay, Isle of Wight, to await an improvement. The meters were eventually laid at 0930 h on 10 December in position  $50^{\circ}37'N$   $00^{\circ}45'W$ . The vessel then proceeded to Weymouth Bay where anchorage was made later that day to launch the towed body and carry out calibrations on the acoustic survey equipment. These were completed by 2100 h and the acoustic survey grid commenced at 2220 h on 10 December near Portland Bill. The survey then continued to cover the Lyme Bay area over the following two days, extending offshore to  $50^{\circ}10'N$ . Later on 12 December the grid extended further west along  $50^{\circ}N$  latitude between Start Point and the Manacles area ( $5^{\circ}W$ ). However, the weather again deteriorated with the development of a south westerly gale during the morning of 13 December and the survey had to be broken off with a return to Start Point

and anchorage in Torbay. CLIONE remained at anchor here throughout the 14 December, with a southerly gale with winds up to 50 knots. Anchor was raised at 0830 h on 15 December and the acoustic survey resumed. A return eastwards was then made since a severe south easterly gale was forecast. The survey covered the coastal waters between Weymouth and the Isle of Wight, including Poole Bay, and anchorage was made in the Solent off Yarmouth, I.O.W., at 2015 h that evening. The following day was spent at anchor awaiting improvement in the weather, and further calibration checks were then carried out on the acoustic equipment.

Anchor was raised at 0830 h on 17 December, and in view of the continuing bad weather forecast, passage was made around the south side of the Isle of Wight to the current meter station in order to raise it that day. An acoustic survey was carried out en route. The towed body was brought on board at 1445 h and the current meter rig retrieved between 1530-1600 h.

CLIONE then proceeded eastwards towards the Straits of Dover, and anchored in Margate Roads at 1045 h on 18 December when a southerly gale developed. This later became more easterly and forced abandonment of the anchorage and dodging for the remainder of that day. Overnight passage was made to Lowestoft where CLIONE docked at 0830 h on 19 December.

#### RESULTS

A total of 647 nautical miles were acoustically integrated mainly covering the Lyme Bay area between Start Point and Portland Bill, extending up to 30 miles off the coast, with a limited grid further west between Start Point and the Manacles area south of Falmouth. The coastal waters between Portland Bill and the Isle of Wight, including Poole Bay, were also covered.

Very little pelagic trace was recorded in the Lyme Bay region and the coastal area further east. The local vessels had mainly given up sprat fishing since it appeared that the dense shoals which had been exploited very close inshore some two weeks earlier had moved elsewhere and in spite of intensive searching by the local fleet they had failed to locate the shoals.

The most substantial traces found were very close to the sea bed between 6 and 12 miles south from Salcombe and contact with vessels who had been working in this area established they were probably horse mackerel.

The prevailing bad weather severely curtailed the survey and no fishing was carried out.

A current meter rig was deployed south of Selsey Bill and retrieved after being in position for just over 7 days.

P O Johnson  
23 December 1983

SEEN IN DRAFT: G Sinclair (Master)  
Peter Mackay (Fishing Skipper)

INITIALLED: DJG

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List +  
P O Johnson  
P D Wallace  
L Cox

I L Davies  
A M Watson  
P A Large

