

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

1978 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV CLIONE: CRUISE 3

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

STAFF

Part A: J A Durance (NIC)
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Part B: T J Hulme (NIC)
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DURATION

Left Lowestoft 0930 h, 24 February

Arrived Lowestoft 0800 h, 10 March

LOCALITY

Eastern English Channel and North Sea

AIMS

1. To service JONSIS and SPURN current meter stations (Part A).
2. To collect 25 l seawater samples from each JONSIS station (Part A).
3. To tag spawning cod in the eastern English Channel, Southern Bight and Middle North Sea.
4. To collect samples of plaice and brill for FCG and return them to Lowestoft.

NARRATIVE

Part A:

CLIONE sailed from Lowestoft at 0930 h, 24 February and set course for the SPURN current meter station. The rig was found 2 miles south of its laid position at 1740 h. It was recovered with the loss of one weight and relayed in the correct position by 1918 h. One hundred sea-bed drifters were released before the vessel proceeded to the JONSIS 1 station. Despite varied reports of this station being out of position it was found near its correct position on the radar, but was not sighted as the buoy light was not working. No attempt was made to recover this rig and CLIONE

moved out to JONSIS 2. The rig was found on station and was recovered at first light on 25 February. After attempting to interrogate the acoustic release on the JONSIS 2 station, which had been missing on the previous service and collecting a 25 l water sample, the new rig was laid. At 1005 h, the vessel commenced an acoustic search for the missing rig on a circle of approximately 3 miles radius. No contact was made and at 1400 h, course was set for JONSIS 1. Servicing of JONSIS 1 and the collection of a 25 l water sample was completed by 1915 h. All parts of the old rig were recovered except for the top meter and subsurface buoy, which had already been brought ashore by a fishing vessel from North Shields. CLIONE then set course for Lowestoft docking at 1000 h, 26 February.

Part B:

CLIONE sailed from Lowestoft at 1100 h, 27 February and steamed to a trawling position in the eastern English Channel fished on Cruise 2/78. A total of 5 hauls were made there the next day before CLIONE steamed overnight into the Southern Bight. Apart from the few hours it took to land Capt. French at Lowestoft and pick up a new fishing skipper during the hours of darkness, 3/4 March, fishing continued without a hitch during the period 1-6 March and was concentrated in the area from approximately 25 miles south of the Brown Ridge, north eastwards, to the Placed gas field. After an overnight steam on 6 March fishing was continued on and around the White Bank during all of 7 and part of 8 March when, with increasing north-westerly winds, CLIONE steamed westwards to Tea Kettle Hole. Three hauls were made there for plaice on the morning of 9 March before CLIONE steamed south to the deep water just east of the Brown Ridge and a further 4 hauls were made. At 1920 h, CLIONE set a course for Lowestoft docking there at 0800 h, 10 March.

RESULTS

1. The current meter stations were successfully retrieved and re-laid.
2. 25 l sea water samples were collected from each JONSIS station.
3. A total of 586 cod were tagged and released from 56 trawl hauls made in the eastern English Channel (5 hauls), the Southern Bight (42 hauls) and the White Bank (9 hauls). Cod were not very abundant and very patchy in their distribution; the two biggest hauls being made in the Eastern English Channel (120 fish) and south of the Brown Ridge (84 fish). Of the 586 fish tagged, 176 fish were released in the eastern English Channel, 483 fish in the Southern Bight and 27 fish on the White Bank. Only 102 fish were larger than 60 cm, although some of the smaller male fish were observed to be in spawning condition.
4. Just over 100 live plaice and 1 brill were returned to Lowestoft.

MISCELLANEOUS

On selected stations in the eastern English Channel and Southern Bight, length and girth measurements were made on Whiting from both cod-end and cover catches. All tank reject and cover caught cod as well as all the haddock caught had length and girth measurements made on them at every station.

J A Durance
T J Hulme
10 March 1978

SEEN IN DRAFT: GFL, ASP, GS

INITIALLED: AJL

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic list +
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