

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

1991 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT PROGRAMME: RV CORYSTES: CRUISE 3B/91

STAFF:

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DURATION:

28 March - 5 April 1991

LOCALITY:

North Sea

AIMS:

On selected NSTF stations:

1. to investigate diseases of dab;
2. to investigate diseases of other commercial fish, including microbiological sampling;
3. to sample dab livers for EROD activity testing;
4. to collect samples of dab and other fish for contaminant analysis.
5. to collect stomachs of cod and whiting.

NARRATIVE:

CORYSTES sailed from Lowestoft at 20 00 h on 28 March. On 29 March a series of 5 valid tows was made with the Granton Trawl, on or near the first of selected NSTF Stations (Smiths Knoll). Catches were poor, and examination for diseases of dab were not possible, however, sufficient samples were collected for EROD activity testing, and other species were available for contaminant analysis and stomach contents examination.

On 30 March, the second of the NSTF Stations, which was one of the two joint UK/Dutch Station (Oystergrounds). 5 valid tows were made, each providing good catches of dab for diseases examination. Samples were also collected for other aims, although cod were absent in this area. Corystes moved on to the third of the selected NSTF Stations (joint UK/Dutch) on Easter Sunday, 31 March (Doggerbank). Excellent catches of dab were landed on each of the 5 tows, for disease examination. Fish samples were also collected for other aims. The fourth selected NSTF Station (Dogger North Ground) was worked on 1 April, with 5 tows averaging 10 baskets each, dab being the predominant species. All aims were completed.

As there was no suitable tows for the fifth selected NSTF Station (off Humber), an adjacent station was worked

(Flamborough Off Ground), where the first 2 tows resulted in 61 baskets of fish, mainly dab and small whiting, unfortunately, boulders caused a badly torn net, which meant that the next two tows had to be made on a known mark just to the North. These tows resulted in 13 baskets of mainly dab and whiting, and a few cod. Corystes worked on the sixth selected NSTF Station on 3 April (Outer Silver Pit). Again 5 valid tows were made, each averaging 6 baskets of fish, with dab the predominant species. Sufficient fish were available to fulfil all aims.

For the final days fishing, Corystes worked on the seventh selected NSTF Station (Wash) on 4 April. In deteriorating weather a total of 4 hauls were made. Dab were not present, with the catches comprising mainly of crabs, a few lobsters, benthos, juveniles of whiting and cod, plus a few rays and Dover sole. However, these catches fulfilled aims 2 and 5.

Having completed the planned programme, Corystes docked at Lowestoft at 01 20 h on 5 April.

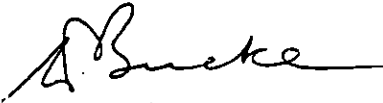
#### RESULTS:

1. Aim 1. This aim was completed on all but 2 of the 7 selected NSTF Stations, with 33 tows made. Included with the disease examination dab were measured for stratified length distribution, and otoliths were sampled for aging profiles. A total of 4500 dab were examined for diseases. A photographic record of all prominent diseases was made.
2. Aim 2. This aim was completed, including samples taken for microbiological examination.
3. Aim 3. Samples were taken for EROD analysis on all but one NSTF Stations.
4. Aim 4. Samples of whiting, plaice and dab were collected on most of the selected NSTF Stations. Cod samples were unavailable.
5. Aim 5. All cod stomachs were sampled, (121) and a full requirement of whiting (approx 700) were preserved, whole frozen, for stomach analysis. Additionally a basket of crab was taken for B. Thompson.

Note. It was not possible to locate satisfactory tows exactly on the identified NSTF Stations, and to safeguard the gear, known nearby tows were sought.



Seen in Draft:



Signed SIC

INITIALED: C.E.P.

*Hydrocode MASTER*  
*R. GRAHAM S.F.M.*

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List +  
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