

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

1978 RESEARCH VESSEL PROGRAMME

REPORT: RV CORELLA: CRUISE 5
(PROVISIONAL: Not to be quoted without prior reference to the author)

STAFF

P O Johnson
J P Bridger
M W Easey
S Stevens
G Mummery (29 Mar-4 Apr)
R J Law (4 Apr-9 Apr)

DURATION

Left Lowestoft 1015 hrs on 29 March
Arrived Lowestoft 2145 hrs on 9 April
All Times are Greenwich Mean Time

LOCALITY

English Channel

AIMS

1. To determine the distribution of spawning sprat in the area between Portland Bill and the Scilly Isles and extending up to 50 miles from the coastline. This will involve the use of a high speed tannet and mid-water trawl.
2. To collect samples of spawning sprat for egg and larval development studies.
3. To make temperature and salinity observations over the survey area.
4. To carry out trawl hauls for dead mackerel on the bottom in the area west of Plymouth.

ADDITIONAL AIM (not on original programme)

5. To carry out a series of water sampling stations in the oil polluted area along the Brittany coast caused by the 'AMOCO CADIZ' wreck, and if possible obtain fish and bottom samples from this region.

NARRATIVE

CORELLA left Lowestoft on 29 March after sailing had been delayed one day due to crew shortage. Passage was then made to the western English Channel where the tannet survey commenced the following day. This then continued, except for a few hours interruption due to bad weather on 31 March, until early on 4 April when the vessel proceeded to and docked at Plymouth by 0800 hrs. Here an exchange of staff took place, with G Mummery returning by rail to Lowestoft, and Dr R J Law joining the ship with his water sampling equipment for the second part of the voyage. CORELLA then sailed from Plymouth at 0730 hrs 5 April and proceeded in deteriorating weather towards Guernsey. A severe north easterly gale then developed and this continued until the early hours of 7 April,

forcing the vessel to dodge in the lee of Guernsey until it moderated. The vessel then left for the Brittany coast but conditions were still difficult for working due to a persistent heavy swell. A series of water sampling stations were then made along the Brittany coast, but before these could be completed the wind strengthened again and the survey had to be broken off at 1700 h 7 April, after which a return passage was made towards the English coast in very rough conditions. The weather gradually moderated on 8 April and a series of water sampling stations were carried out along the English Channel on the homeward run, these being completed in the Thames Estuary on 9 April. CORELLA then returned to Lowestoft and with favourable tides and weather was able to dock at 2145 hrs that evening.

RESULTS

1. The area covered by the townet survey was somewhat less than that originally planned due to time restriction imposed by the revised programme. A total of 93 stations were successfully completed, and these covered an area extended from Portland Bill to the Scillies, up to 30-35 miles off the coast.
2. Temperature and salinity observations were made on each of these stations.
3. The echo-sounder was also run continuously over the survey grid, but no major fish concentrations were recorded.
4. Water samples to study oil residues were taken at 9 stations along the Brittany coast, but very little surface oil was evident offshore or even a few miles off the coast. This was probably due to the prolonged period of strong north easterly gales over the area which had effectively dispersed or driven the oil more completely onto the shoreline. Grab sampling or fishing were not possible due to the heavy swell. Other water samples were taken at regular intervals along the English Channel, and these extended into the Thames Estuary upriver to Canvey Island. Other aims were not accomplished due to either bad weather or lack of time. A station and track chart is attached.

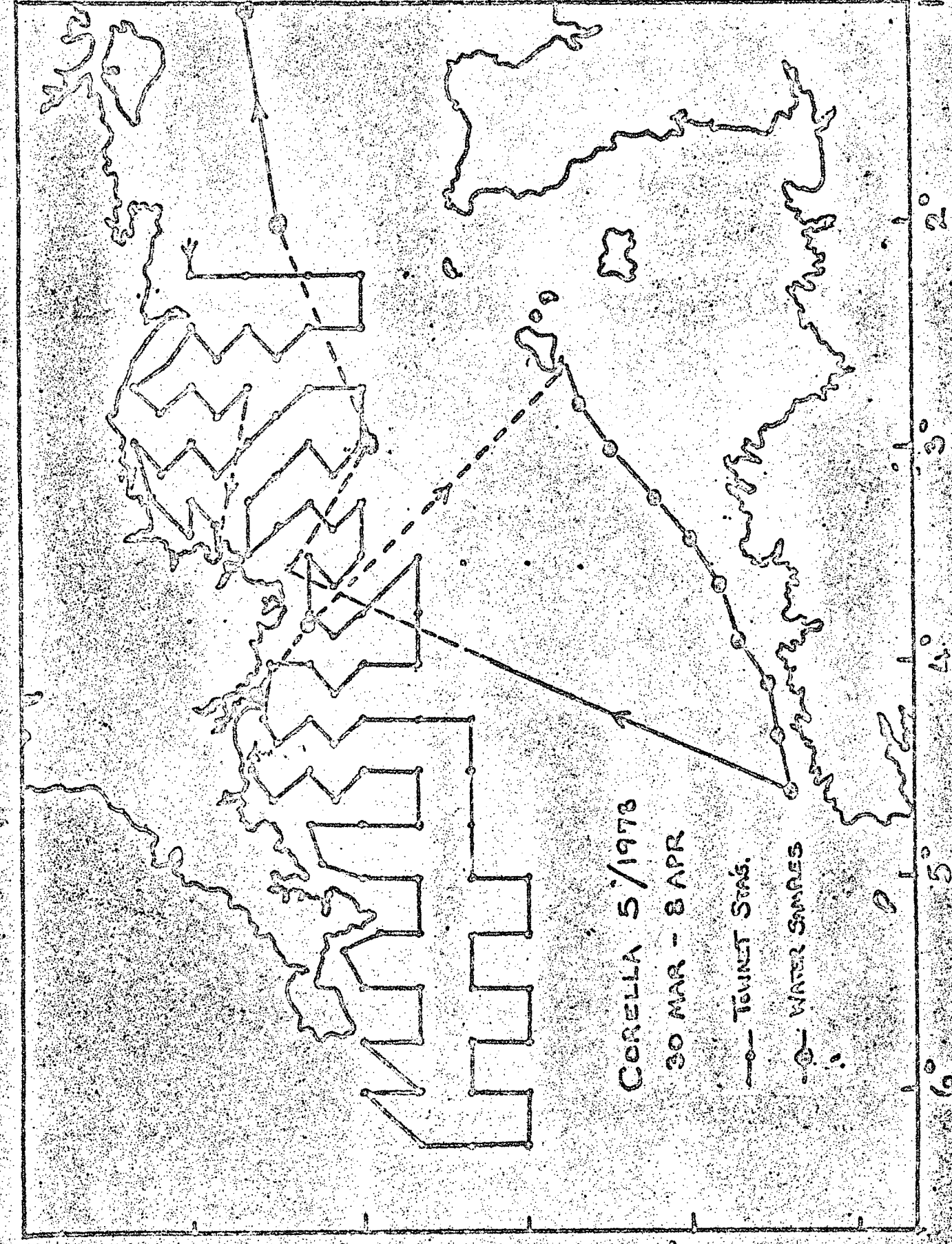
P O Johnson
12 April 1978

SEEN IN DRAFT: J E M Balfour - Master
V Holmes - Mate

INITIALED: AJL

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic List
P O Johnson
J P Bridger
M W Easey
S Stevens
G Mummery
R J Law



CORELLA 5/1978

30 MAR - 8 APR

--- TOWNET STAG.

—●— WATER SAMPLES

51°

50°

49°

165° W

162°

159°

156°

153°

150°