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IN CONFIDENCE: Not to be quoted without reference to the laboratory.

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CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. 'EXPLORER'

28 November 1974 -- 19 December 1974

OBJECTIVE

West coast of Scotland pre-recruit survey.

NARRATIVE

'Explorer' sailed at 1300 hours on 28 November 1974 and proceeded to work priority stations off the East coast and in the Moray Firth. On completion of these stations 'Explorer' proceeded to the North coast but severe westerly gales forced the ship to seek shelter in Loch Erribol. With a slight moderation in the weather 'Explorer' was able to work at stations in the North and South Minch. While working in the Tiree Passage one of the ship's generators failed and 'Explorer' had to proceed to Greenock for repairs, docking at 1600 hours on 6 December 1974. The ship sailed on 10 December 1974 and, after completing the Clyde stations, steamed to stations south of Barra Head. Severe south westerly gales forced these stations to be abandoned and 'Explorer' proceeded to the North coast where all available stations were completed. Continuing gales necessitated the ship seeking shelter in the lee of the Orkneys and the opportunity was taken to make some hauls for live fish. 'Explorer' docked at Aberdeen at 1330 on 18 December 1974.

TRAWLING

Despite the almost constant gales, 24 stations were completed. 0+ haddock and whiting were found mainly in the Moray Firth, East coast and North coast regions, while smaller numbers were found in the Clyde and Inner Hebrides. Adult haddock tended to be concentrated in the Moray Firth and the East and North coast regions. Adult whiting tended to be in the Moray Firth, East coast and South Minch.

Station 1 (Moray Firth region) yielded a haul of 37 baskets of cod.

Large numbers of dogfish were encountered in the North and South Minch.

A sample of M. poutassou was frozen and returned to the laboratory for examination.

Four hauls were made for live fish and approximately 60 haddock were delivered to the aquarium to augment the stock for spawning investigations.

PLANKTON

Dutch Gulf III samples were taken at all 24 stations. Time was also allocated to testing the Loch Ewe High Speed Sampler.

A W Newton
6 January 1974