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In Confidence: Not to be quoted without
reference to the laboratory

Cruise Report

FRS "Explorer"

April 3-11 1973

Objective

To tag demersal fish in the northern North Sea

Narrative

"Explorer" sailed from Aberdeen at midnight on April 3. The next six days were spent trawling on offshore grounds (Bressay Bank, Old Viking Bank, Witch Ground and to the east of Turbot Bank). During this time, live fish codends of various designs and materials were tested.

Results

Both light-weight (nylon) and heavy-weight (terylene) materials stood up to the rigours of trawling but the light-weight nylon was easier to handle. Three designs of codend were compared:

- 1) an Aberdeen "canvas codend" without supporting rings.
- 2) an Aberdeen "canvas codend" with 2 supporting rings.
- 3) a French codend, with a nose cone and 1 supporting ring.

All methods provided cod and saithe in good condition, but when the Aberdeen codend was used without supporting rings, the condition of the haddock was poor. When the French codend was used, and the Aberdeen codend with supporting rings, haddock were obtained in excellent condition.

The following number of fish were tagged:

Cod	Haddock	Whiting	Saithe	<u>Squalus acanthias</u>
85	783	11	256	100

In addition, collections of stomachs and otoliths were made from a number of species and live fish were brought back for the aquarium.

J R G Hislop, J A Gauld
16 May 1973