

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

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CRUISE REPORT

FRV "EXPLORER"/FRV "CLUPEA"

15 APRIL -5 MAY 1977

Objectives

- (1) Comparative fishing to assess the catch differential and the composition of a high opening, four panel trawl and a standard commercial trawl.
- (2) To examine whether or not the trawl catch is proportional in size and composition between two ships of different HP's fishing gear of the same design but of a size to suit the towing vessel.

Narrative

"Explorer" sailed from Aberdeen on 15 April and proceeded to the fishing grounds off Balta Sound, Shetland. Early hauls indicated that there were insufficient fish on the grounds during daylight for comparative fishing purposes and fishing was confined to the hours of darkness. "Clupea" joined "Explorer" in the Balta area at midday on Wednesday, 20 April and both ships continued to fish together till 30 April when "Explorer" had to break off and return to Aberdeen. High winds persisted over most of the period curtailing work, particularly for "Clupea" which was less able to withstand the prevailing conditions.

At the conclusion of the comparative fishing "Clupea" went to the test ground off Spey Bay in the Moray Firth where underwater observations by divers and instrumentation of the 600 HP four panel trawl was carried out. "Clupea" docked in Aberdeen on Thursday, 5 June.

Results

From all the hauls made by the two ships, "Explorer" had 20 hauls with gear A (four panel) and 10 hauls with gear B (Bolt rope), which are valid and suitable for comparative purposes. Similarly "Clupea" had 6 valid hauls with gear A and 2 with gear B. Catches were mixed, the bulk consisting of haddock with a representation of whiting, cod and a variety of flat fish.

The data is meantime in the process of being analysed by the Statistics Section.

A Corrigan
27 July 1977

Seen in draft W P Watt