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IN CONFIDENCE

NOT TO BE QUOTED WITHOUT REF TO LABORATORY

FRV 'EXPLORER'

CRUISE 5/79

REPORT

15.5.79 - 29.5.79

OBJECTIVES:

- (1) Survey of demersal fish stocks on Rockall Bank.
- (2) To work Hydrographic lines off the shelf of Rockall Bank.
- (3) Survey of pre-recruit commercial fish stocks on the continental shelf West of Scotland.

NARRATIVE:

Explorer was held up in Aberdeen because of crew shortages until 15 May 1979.

A passage was made direct to Rockall Bank and after a brief delay because of weather trawling commenced on the 18 May 1979.

After only five hauls the trawl was severely damaged by coral and the North & East lines of hydro. stations were commenced at 1900 hrs 20/5 and completed at 1330 hrs 21/5.

Trawling recommenced and 15 valid hauls were completed on Rockall Bank by the 24 May.

A passage was made for station 26 off the Outer Hebrides. Seven stations were completed before an engine defect, reducing the manoeuvrability, stopped any attempt to trawl on the North Coast. Explorer docked on the 29 May 1979.

RESULTS:(1) Trawling

On Rockall Bank 15 valid hauls of 1 hour's duration using a G.O.V. Trawl were made, all catches were worked up according to Standing Instructions.

Catches varied from 5 baskets - 151 baskets, averaging $33\frac{1}{2}$ baskets.

Main SpeciesAverage catch per hours fishing

Haddock	926
M.poutassou	5832
A.silus	372

Other species occasionally taken in large numbers

Gadiculus	1817 & 38,244 (41D5)
Scorpaena	305 & 222 44D6 & 41D5 respectively
Chimaera m.	116 & 97 46D6 & 41D5 "
Megrim	156 41D5

Outer Hebrides

7 hauls of 1 hour's duration were taken at the outer stations.

Catches varied from 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ baskets - 17 baskets average 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ baskets

<u>Main Species</u>	<u>No/1 hour's fishing</u>
Haddock	242
Whiting	172
M.poutassou	1021

Largest catches

M.poutassou	5340 (44E0)	795 (43E0)
Haddock	422 (45E2)	356 (44E2)
Whiting	425 (45E2)	284 (44E2)

Other species

Mackerel	85 (43E1)	Scyllium can	83 (43E0)
A.silus	157 (43E1)	T.minutus	157 (45E2)
Herring	76 (44E1), 31 (44E2) & 23 (45E2)	- only squares	

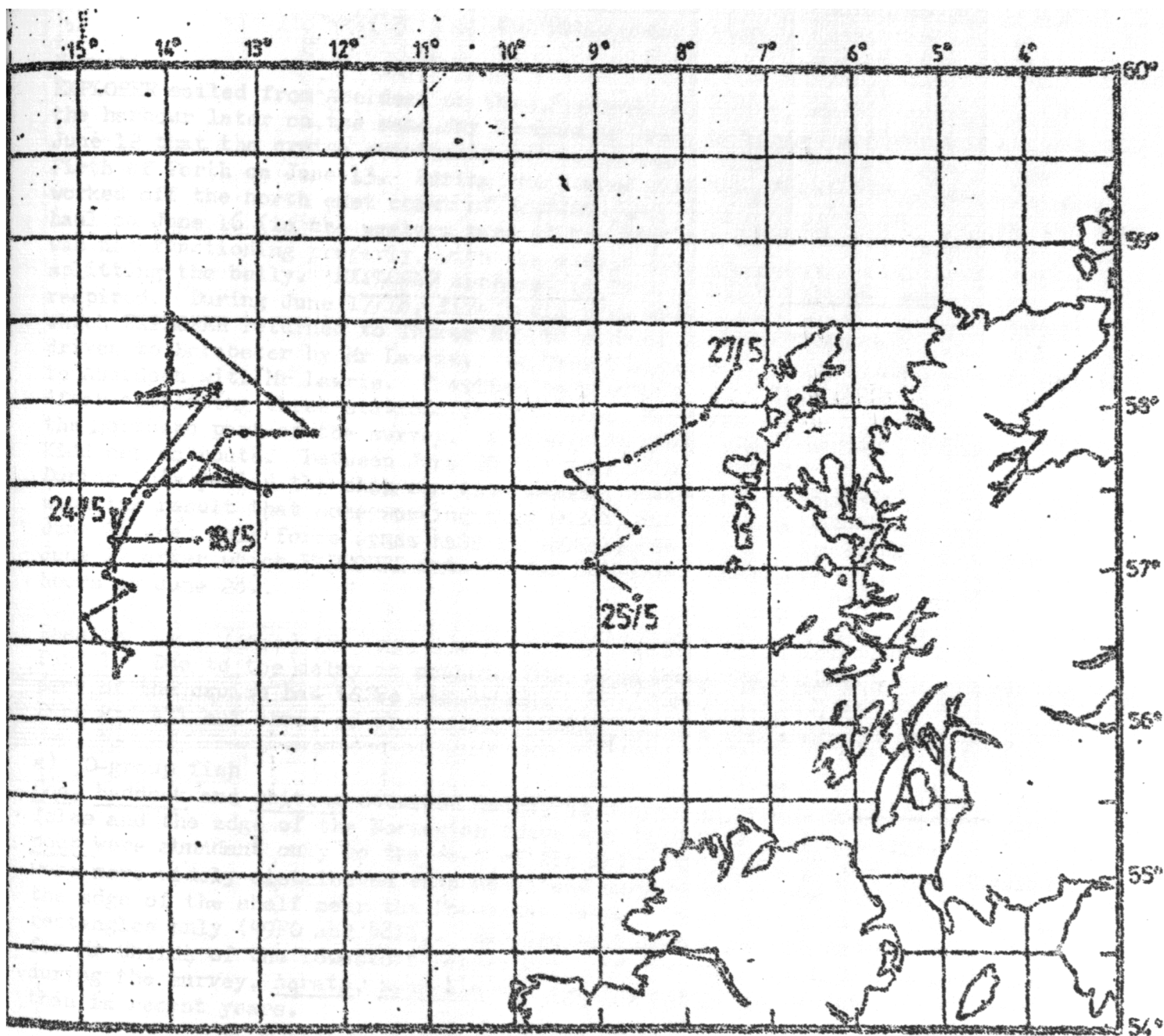
Samples were taken where possible according to programme.

(2) Hydrography

The North & East hydrographic lines were worked off the shelf at Rockall Bank.

S D E DEVLIN
4.4.80

Seen in draft
J. Ross O.I.C.



FRS. Explorer 18/5 — 29/5/79

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