

In Confidence Not to be quoted without reference to the Laboratory

FRV 'Goldseeker'

Cruise 7/78

REPORT

1-24 August 1978

Objective

To tag mackerel in the Minch.

Narrative

'Goldseeker' sailed from Buckie on the Tuesday 1 August and reached Ullapool by the evening of Friday 4 August. The scientists joined the ship on Sunday 6 August.

Fishing and tagging were carried out during the following week in the vicinity of Greenstone Point. The weekend was spent in Ullapool.

During the following week fishing and tagging were carried out in three main areas: off Greenstone Point, off Melvaig and off Glasleac Beg Island. The commercial fishery began during this week and a number of catches were sampled in Ullapool. The weekend was also spent there. On Monday of the last week fishing and tagging were carried out off Greenstone Point and Glasleac Beg. Bad weather prevented fishing for the first time on Tuesday morning and the scientists left 'Goldseeker' at Gairloch that afternoon while she made a passage to Corpach for the long weekend.

Tagging and Fishing

A total of 1,925 mackerel were tagged during the course of the cruise, about half with internal tags and half with external tags.

Marks on the echosounder, attributable to mackerel, were located on most days both before and after the arrival of the commercial fleet but they appeared to be larger and more numerous during the second week. Gannets proved to be a problem only on one occasion, in the Melvaig-Rhu Re area and this was overcome as previously using a long weighted pipe.

Fish sampling

All mackerel caught, whether tagged or not, were measured and otoliths were taken from fish too badly damaged to tag to provide data for an age-length key. In addition 3 catches from the commercial fishery were sampled.

M Walsh
11 September 1978

Seen in draft: G Calder