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In confidence: Not to be quoted without reference to the Laboratory.

CRUISE REPORT

F.R.V. "M A R A"

March 18-23, 1968

Objectives

Further fish capture experiments with a detachable codend.

Narrative

Gale force winds on the 18th prevented "Mara" from putting to sea until the next morning. Various trawling positions near the south shore of the Moray Firth were tried on the 19th and 20th but catches were not good enough to make the experimental work worthwhile.

On the morning of the 21st "Mara" set sail with the intention of working along with the commercial fleet and of remaining at sea overnight if necessary. The first haul that morning yielded an adequate quantity of fish for experimental work. A second haul was made using the detachable codend. This was detached from the trawl, raised from the bottom (a depth of 18 fms.) to a depth of 70 ft. and allowed to hang suspended from a float so that it could drift freely. "Mara" stood by, with the object of raising the codend at intervals throughout the night. Unfortunately, early in the evening the wind started to freshen from the east, and in view of the fact that the forecast was of easterly winds, force 6-7, it was decided to take the codend on board and to return to Buckie. On the 23rd, insufficient time remained for worthwhile experimental work and the trip was terminated.

Results

A number of hauls were made with two designs of detachable codend and both proved satisfactory. As an aid to recovering the codend dhan line two further pieces of equipment were tried out. These were a combined light and radio transmitter designed by Mr. Whyte and also a self-inflating float. Both pieces of equipment worked very satisfactorily and, through their use, all remaining difficulties associated with the operation of the detachable codend were eliminated.

During the week 10 codling and about 50 0-group haddock and whiting were captured alive. These were safely transported to the aquarium in the laboratory on the 23rd.

R. JONES
8th April, 1968