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IN CONFIDENCE: Not to be quoted without reference  
to the laboratory.

## CRUISE REPORT

FRV "MARA"

22 February--26 March 1971

## OBJECTIVE

The aim of this seine net experiment was to obtain data on the effect on selection of using a large mesh Ulstron cover over a Courlene codend.

## NARRATIVE

Trial hauls were made near Buckie on the 23 February to search for suitable fish concentrations and to test the proper operation of the gear. Catches were very poor and the conventional seine net was altered to a 520 trawl rigged for seining. This improved catches and this rig was used for the remainder of the cruise.

Suitable fishing was found in South Deeps and, apart from two days lost due to engine trouble, seining continued in this area until 5 March. Catches consisted mainly of small whiting (modal length 17 cm) and haddock (modal length 19 cm).

On 8 March the fishing grounds were changed to a position at 57°49'N 2°57'W. Good catches especially of cod (modal length 18 cm) were made at this position and seining continued here until the end of the cruise.

## RESULTS

Throughout the cruise reasonable catches of small cod, haddock and whiting were taken. Two codends were used, one of mean mesh size 61.4 and the other of mean mesh size 72.9. Selection results were obtained for whiting using the smaller codend and for cod and haddock using the larger codend. During the cruise the same outer 120 mm Ulstron cover was used.

Further statistical analysis of the data is in progress.

W B Hall  
3 May 1971