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CRUISE REPORT

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

28th August-22nd September, 1961

<u>Personnel:</u>	M.J.D. Mowat	E.O. (in charge)	
	J. Main	Sen. Sci. Asst.	
	J. Garner	" " "	(30th August-1st September - replacement for Mowat)

Objectives:

To compare the otter trawl with the large lightly constructed wing trawl when both are rigged with rubber ground rope bobbins.

After spending Monday, 28th in Aberdeen getting the gear aboard and getting it fully rigged for sea, "Mara" sailed on the morning of the 29th and commenced trawling immediately. The first week was spent searching for fish which were generally scarce in the area. At the beginning of the following week the comparison work began and was continued until the end of the cruise.

A modest fishing was found on the Benachie Bank about five miles due east of Girdleness light. The ground here is generally fair but with catchy spots and although the workable area is somewhat small there was room enough to work a 1 hour tow.

The "Mara" was in port on the 15th of September on the occasion of a visit to the vessel by the Secretary of State for Scotland. No time was lost as a result of bad weather and only a short delay was caused by shortage of ready-made wing trawls and spare parts. The rigging staff ashore, however, were kept extremely busy with repairs. After consultation with those concerned, the cruise was terminated in Aberdeen (not in Fraserburgh as planned) on the 22nd September.

It had been hoped, that by working near Aberdeen, some material would be landed for the aquarium. No specimens in good enough condition for landing alive were, however, procured. Samples of cod were boxed and sent to the laboratory for worm infestation studies.

The wing trawls even in nylon were rather too fragile for the working conditions and, on five occasions, the nets had to be put ashore for repair. The otter trawl on the other hand sustained virtually no damage. It would appear, however, without detailed analysis of the catches, that the wing trawl was catching much more than the otter trawl. Since the nylon otter trawl received so little damage, it seems likely that for this ground, a net in size and twine strength somewhere between the two used would have been more suitable.

M. J. D. MOWAT
11th October, 1961.