

**CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SCIENCE,
LOWESTOFT LABORATORY, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK NR33 0HT**

CRUISE REPORT: CHARTER PROGRAMME, PRINCE MADOG 3 / 2002

STAFF:

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DURATION: 13 – 16 March 2002

LOCATION: eastern Irish Sea

AIMS:

Third in a series of 5 to,

1. Carry out a plankton survey in the Eastern Irish Sea to determine plaice egg spawning.
2. Collect zooplankton samples for copepod production and fish larval feeding studies.

NARRATIVE:

Staff embarked on the morning of 13 March to install and check sampling equipment. RV Prince Madog sailed at midday and proceeded into the eastern Irish Sea. 21 plankton stations near to the coast were completed in just over 24 hours in increasing winds. At 1500 on 14 March the decision was taken to lay at anchor close to the Cumbrian coast to allow gale force winds to pass through. Sampling recommenced at 1500 on 15 March. All remaining stations were completed successfully and RV Prince Madog returned to port at 2230 on 16 March.

RESULTS:

Aims 1 and 2. All 49 plankton stations were completed despite bad weather. Sampling was carried out using a Gulf VII plankton sampler, fitted with a 270µm mesh net and an auxiliary, fine mesh (64µm) 'pup' net. Two plankton samples were collected on each sampling position and preserved for analysis at Lowestoft laboratory. Flowmeter readings were obtained via a connecting self-logging readout unit, and temperature and salinity profiles by an FSI self-logging mini-CTD. Most equipment functioned satisfactorily. Minor problems were incurred with the towed depth transducer for receiving Scanmar signals – because of the rough sea state it tended to flip upside down at the surface. However, this was easily corrected.

N Bunn
28 May 2002

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