

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

CRUISE REPORT: CHARTER PROGRAMME, PRINCE MADOG 4 / 2003

STAFF:

N Bunn (SIC)

P Davison

C Fox

M Doggett (Ocean Sciences, Bangor)

H Rossetti (PEML)

DURATION: 12 - 15 April 2003

LOCATION: eastern Irish Sea (VIIa)

AIMS:

Fourth in a series of five plankton surveys to:

1. Collect plankton samples to determine plaice egg spawning and production
2. Collect zooplankton samples for copepod production and fish larval feeding studies.

Additional aim;

To collect fish eggs at selected sites for pollutant analysis (M. Doggett).

NARRATIVE:

Staff travelled to Menai Bridge on 11 April. Survey equipment was installed the following morning and RV Prince Madog sailed at 10:30. Sampling began at 11:35 near the coast of Anglesey. 29 plankton tows were carried out during the 12 and 13 April. The vessel then returned to port, docking at 20:30, to facilitate a change of crew. RV Prince Madog sailed once more at 09:00 on 14 April. A further 24 plankton tows were completed, 4 of them repeat tows to collect eggs for pollutant analysis. Sampling finished at 08:26 on 15 April, and the ship docked back at Menai Bridge at 10:00 when equipment was unloaded. Staff returned to Lowestoft the same day.

RESULTS:

Aims 1 and 2. A standard grid of 49 plankton tows (see chart attached) was completed. At each site, two plankton samples were collected. A Gulf VII unencased sampler was fitted with a main 270 μ m mesh net, and an auxiliary fine mesh (80 μ m) 'pup' net. Both samples were preserved immediately in 4% formalin for later analysis ashore. Temperature and salinity profiles were provided by an FSI mini-CTD attached to the frame. Self-logging flowmeters recorded data to calculate the volume of water filtered by each net. All equipment functioned without fault.

Additional aim. Additional main net samples were collected at 4 selected stations. The nosecone was removed to increase the volume of water filtered.

N Bunn
8 May 2003

DISTRIBUTION:

Basic list +
Staff on cruise
C Fox
S Milligan

R Nash (PEML)
Sea Fisheries Committees:
North Western and North Wales
Cumbria

CEFAS charter programme, cruise Prince Madog 4 / 03: station track showing mid-point positions of 49 plankton tows (numbered consecutively) in the eastern Irish Sea 12 - 15 April 2003.

