

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

**REPORT: PRINCE MADOG CRUISE 2 / 2001**

**STAFF:**

Miss N Bunn (SIC)  
Mr P Davison  
Miss H Rossetti (PEML)  
Mr L Adlam (PEML)

**DURATION:** 26 February – 2 March, 2001

**LOCATION:** Eastern Irish Sea

**AIMS:**

1. To carry out a plankton survey in the eastern Irish Sea to estimate the location, magnitude and timing of plaice spawning (project M0423).
2. To collect zooplankton samples for copepod biomass studies (project M0423).

**NARRATIVE:**

Staff travelled to Menai Bridge by road and embarked on 26 February. Sampling equipment, including a towed transducer for receiving Scanmar signals, was installed and RV Prince Madog sailed at 11:30. The vessel proceeded through the Menai Straits into the eastern Irish Sea where nine plankton stations were completed off the North Wales coast. The vessel then returned to port in response to forecasts of strong gales (Force 8/9) approaching the area, docking at 00:30 on 27 February. The survey was unable to recommence until the following day due to continuing bad weather. After sailing at 17:30, a further thirty-two stations were sampled over the next two days.

Sampling was completed at 11:15 on 2 March and the vessel returned to Menai Bridge. Sea state varied between calm to moderate during the survey. A large swell (9ft) was present throughout the night of the 28th. Because of the poor weather conditions it was impossible to sample all of the planned stations within the period of charter. As a result, two stations north-east of the Isle of Man were omitted. A further six stations to the east of the Isle of Man were sampled by staff from the Port Erin Marine Laboratory on the RV Roagan.

**RESULTS:**

Aims 1 and 2. RV Prince Madog successfully completed 41 of 49 stations. RV Roagan completed a further 6 to the east of the Isle of Man, and 2 stations were omitted due to bad weather. The Gulf VII plankton sampler used was fitted with a 270  $\mu\text{m}$  mesh net and an auxiliary, fine mesh (80  $\mu\text{m}$ ) 'pup' net. Two plankton samples were collected on each sampling position and preserved for analysis on shore later in the year. At each station temperature and salinity profiles were recorded using an FSI self-logging CTD.

Most equipment functioned satisfactorily but a fault was experienced with one of two hired height sensors during use. The problem was remedied when the unit was replaced.

N Bunn  
7 March 2001

**INITIALLED:**

**DISTRIBUTION:**

Basic list +  
Staff on cruise

C. Fox

R. Nash (PEML)

S. Milligan

Sea Fisheries Committees: North Western and North Wales & Cumbria