

REPORT OF THE ICES PLANNING GROUP ON A HERRING TAGGING EXPERIMENT

Copenhagen, 19 March 1983

1. Participation

The following persons attended the meeting as members of the group or as national representatives:

Mr N.A. Nielsen	Denmark
Mr K. Popp Madsen	Denmark
M A. Maucorps	France
M G. Biais	France
Prof. A. Schumacher	Federal Republic of Germany
Mr J. Molloy	Ireland
Mr A. Corten	Netherlands
Mr O.J. Østvedt	Norway
Mr Ø. Ulltang	Norway
Mr O. Hagström	Sweden
Mr A.C. Burd (Chairman)	United Kingdom (England)
Mr A. Saville	United Kingdom (Scotland)
Dr R.S. Bailey	United Kingdom (Scotland)

2. Financial Contributions

The Chairman reported that although financial support was available to cover the charter costs of a tagging programme in 1983, funding for the tag recovery programme in 1984 was still lacking. Even though Norway had offered a catching vessel, the required funding for detectors was not available. National members confirmed their inability to guarantee support for 1984.

3. Experimental Design

Because of uncertainties about the proportions of the 1980 and 1981 year classes which will recruit to the Orkney-Shetland stock in 1983 and 1984 estimating the increase in the number of fish which would have to be tagged in 1983 or the quantity of herring which would have to be monitored for tags in 1984, to achieve the objective of 100 tag recoveries is open to some uncertainties. The best estimate which can be made, however, is an increase in the range 1.5-2.0 times. Such an increase in the number of tagged fish to be released in 1983 and to be monitored for tags in 1984 would inevitably require some increase in charter time in either 1983 or 1984 or a smaller increase in both years. An increase proportionate to the increase in tag releases might be the safest assumption; but this would probably be a pessimistic estimate since the larger stock size would be likely to increase both the numbers which could be tagged and the weight which could be monitored per unit of time.

At the time of the meeting, the Group was unaware of the development of a detector system capable of handling bulk herring catches. This system was designed by Dr Jefferts for the Canadian Fisheries Service and offers

the possibility of tag recovery in commercial landings. Criticisms which had been made of the dependence of the recapture programme on research vessel charters are no longer supportable in view of this latest development. Dr Jefferts has discussed the logistics of the use of the detector and its costs on a recent visit to research laboratories.

4. Recommendations

The Group agreed that there were inadequate firm commitments of support for the tag recovery phase scheduled for 1984, for an internationally funded experiment, under ICES auspices, to go ahead in 1983, as originally proposed. The small number of countries offered support for the total project would be better to set up their own management group, and to seek any additional financial support required for the 1984 tag recovery part of the project elsewhere.

If this were also to prove impracticable, a trial of the technique proposed would be of value in smaller local stocks where the number of tags to be released, and the quantities to be subsequently screened, would be smaller. National cooperation should be encouraged in such a project as it could lead to developments of recovery techniques.

The Group considers that its work undertaken under Council Resolution 1978/2:15 is now terminated.