

Research on the Herring on the Bløden Fishery

1. In its report to NEAFC in May, 1967 the Liaison Committee referred to the small scale of the 1957/1958 International Tagging Experiment on the Bløden Fishery and, in order to provide up-to-date estimates of fishing mortalities in the various months and sub-areas of that fishery, proposed that the experiment should be repeated, at the level of 100,000 taggings (i.e. about ten times the earlier annual scale), with associated research.
2. In their conclusions the Commission endorsed this proposal and urged member countries concerned to cooperate in the experiment to the maximum extent.
3. Accordingly, the Liaison Committee requested the Pelagic Fish (Northern) Committee to consider the proposal further and indicate what would be the minimal requirements and what costs would be involved. The Committee appointed an ad hoc Group to advise on this. Its proposals were considered in great detail by the Consultative Committee, which recognised that while the most detailed scheme might well prove desirable, at the same time any proposal must be as economical as possible. On the other hand, the committee had also to take into consideration that certain reductions in expense could only be made at the cost of efficiency and reliability in the scientific results.
4. Accordingly, the Consultative Committee recommends that in the first place an experiment operating over 8 months during one year should be undertaken, if the interested countries should approve, at an overall cost of 1,116,000 D.Kr. (ship hire 900,000, personnel 126,000, miscellaneous 140,000). It has to be recognised that, in the light of the results of the first 8 months, it may be necessary to repeat the experiment in a subsequent year for 8 or even 12 months at a similar cost. For comparison the 1957/1958 experiment, operating for only two months in the first year, but repeated for a second year, cost in all between 250,000 and 300,000 D.Kr.

5. Allowing for the considerable increase in costs during the last 10 years, and the agreed need to increase the tagging rate 10-fold, the estimates seem to the Consultative Committee to be reasonable.
6. If, as the Commission would seem to wish, it is desired that this experiment be begun in 1968 (say, in August), then it will be essential to begin making arrangements soon, by authorising the Chairman of the Liaison Committee, in conjunction with the President and the General Secretary to establish an organising group, under a named convener. This group would need to meet not later than in January 1968 at national expenses to make arrangements for operations to begin in August 1968.
7. Accordingly, the Consultative Committee requested the Bureau to ascertain the views of delegations in this matter and, if these are favourable, to seek a suitable financial arrangement, so that the programme can proceed as requested by the Commission and as proposed by the Consultative Committee. It is suggested that the possible need for, and arrangements for, a second year's experiment might be considered at a later ICES Meeting.
8. Lastly, the Committee requests that all the countries concerned be strongly urged to supply as quickly as possible complete data on catch, effort and stock analysis data, broken down by the smallest possible units of area and time. It must be stressed that this information is absolutely essential. If it is not collected nationally on a routine basis, it must in any case be provided for the duration of the experiments.

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The Bureau has considered this document, and recommends, that the proposals be forwarded to the Council, with its support, indicating that the estimate should include a sum for contingencies (unforeseen) of D.Kr. 84,000, rounding the sum up to D.Kr. 1,250,000.