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German Fishery and Fishery Researches in W. Greenland Waters

By Dr J. Lundbeck

Institut für Seefischerei, Hamburg

(Translated from the German original)

The extent of the German fishery in the West Greenland waters up to the present time appears from the following table:

Catches in 1000's of Metric Tons

	1952		1953		1954		1955	
	Greenland Trips	Greenland Catch	Greenland Trips	Newfoundland Catch	Greenland Trips	Greenland Catch	Greenland Trips	Greenland Catch
Jan	-	-	6	1.2	-	-	-	1 0.2
Feb	-	-	1	0.1	1	0.2	-	1 0.3
Mar	-	-	-	-	2	0.5	-	1 0.3
Apr	-	-	-	-	2	0.5	-	-
May	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 0.3
Jun	-	-	1	0.3	-	-	1 0.3	-
Jul	4	1.0	1	0.3	-	-	1 0.3	-
Aug	1	0.2	1	0.3	-	-	1 0.2	-
Sep	-	-	1	0.2	-	-	-	-
Oct	1	0.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nov	2	0.4	-	-	-	-	1 0.1	-
Dec	3	0.7	-	-	-	-	1 0.2	-
Total	11	2.5	11	2.4	5	1.2	5	1.1

12 trawlers are now fishing.

The landings are made up as follows:

Cod 86%
 Redfish 10%
 Catfish, Halibut and others 4%

Of the cod the following percentages were landed in Germany as salted cod: 1953 - 29%, 1954 - 57%. They are converted to fresh, gutted fish by using conversion factor 2.0.

The fishing in the main season (late summer - autumn) is to some degree impeded by coinciding in time with the herring season in the North Sea. There is an increased tendency to land salted cod during the first half of the year. This makes it possible to make longer trips yielding better economic results.

The length of the trips vary between 22 and 35 days, of which 7 to 15 are fishing days. When large catches are made the number of hours fished is as a rule very small, 7 hours to a fishing day, 50 hours to a trip or even less. The average catch per fishing day for all trips (1952-54) was 24.4 ts. (19.7 ts. cod + 3.8 ts. redfish). The average daily catch per each month is shown in Figure 1.

The length and age distributions of the cod landed are similar to those found by the other countries fishing in these waters.

A marked difference is, however, found between the cod stocks off the central part of the west coast and those from the area round Kap Farvel and the southernmost part of the west coast. In the central part, the year class 1947 was, in all 3 years, very dominant. In 1952 it was - with an average length of only 51 cm. - not quite marketable; only 1/3 or less of the individuals caught were used. In the following years the marketable percentage increased considerably, and this year class entered fully in the fishery with a mean size of 58 cm. in May 1953, of 63 cm. in August 1954, and of 66 cm. in February 1955.

Around Kap Farvel and off the Southernmost part of the West Coast the cod stock has another composition, and it seems that this stock does not belong to the cod having its home in West Greenland waters, but that it is connected with the Icelandic stock.

During autumn and winter 1952-53 the 1945 year class was dominating in these waters, i.e. the same year class as was dominating in Icelandic waters. The rich Greenlandic 1947 year class did not appear at all in the catches. Thus the cod caught in this southern area was on an average older (around 7 years) and larger about 71 cm.; nearly all were of marketable size. However, these cod, then approaching maturity, left, and it seems that they are since spring 1953 mainly found on the Icelandic spawning grounds.

During 1953 only smaller catches of cod could be made from this southern area, obviously consisting of those of the 1945 year class which had not yet matured. However, with 60%, they dominated the landings.

Only during 1954 the 1947 year class appears to have migrated as far south as this area. The catches increased somewhat and showed 3 prevailing year classes: 1945, 1947 and the new 1949 year class. All three, and to a less degree the old 1942 year class appear with more or less pronounced peaks in the length curve. The 1949 year class known only in this southern area, appears to be richer than that of 1948. The 1950 year class which in other areas off West Greenland, has appeared as a rich year class, was still too small sized to be represented in larger quantities in the catches.

Figure 2 shows, mostly based on Dr. A. Meyers researches, length and age distribution of samples of cod. The figures are calculated per day's fishing to the effect that they show also increase and decrease of catch per day, thus illustrating the changes just mentioned.

Weighings have shown the Greenland cod to be meagre in spring. With increasing temperatures its condition of nourishment rapidly improves. In percentage amount of meat it surpasses the Lofoten, the Bear Island cod, and the migrating Icelandic cod. The liver content is normal.

Paying redfish catches were made in deeper water at various places off the west coast from Lille Hellefiske Banke to west of Kap Farvel. However, these stocks have only been little exploited, as good fishing grounds are found closer to the German home ports. The Greenlandic redfish appears not to be different from the Icelandic redfish.

The researches of 1954 centered, apart from their more general parts, on the investigation of the occurrence of cod and redfish between Iceland and Greenland.

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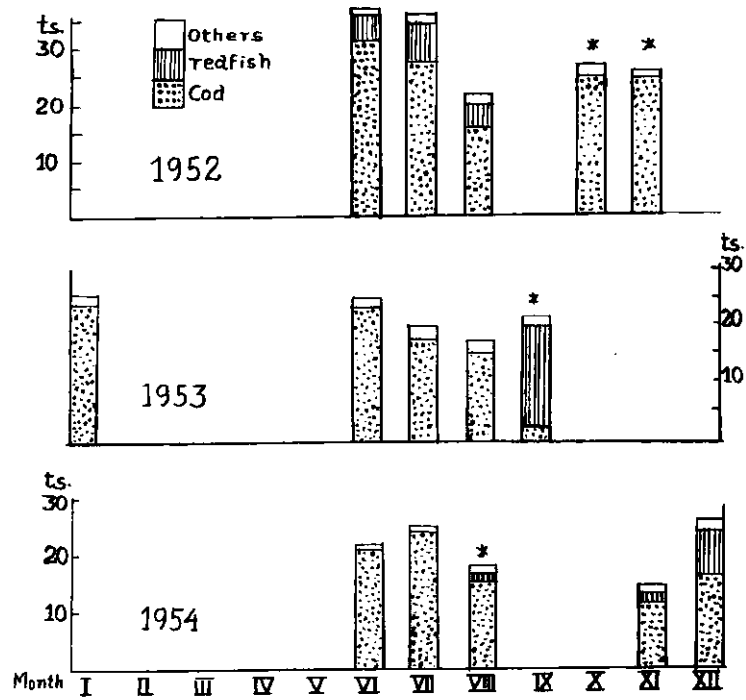


Figure 1. Monthly means of catch per fishing day off W. Greenland. Catches from S. Greenland are marked with an *.

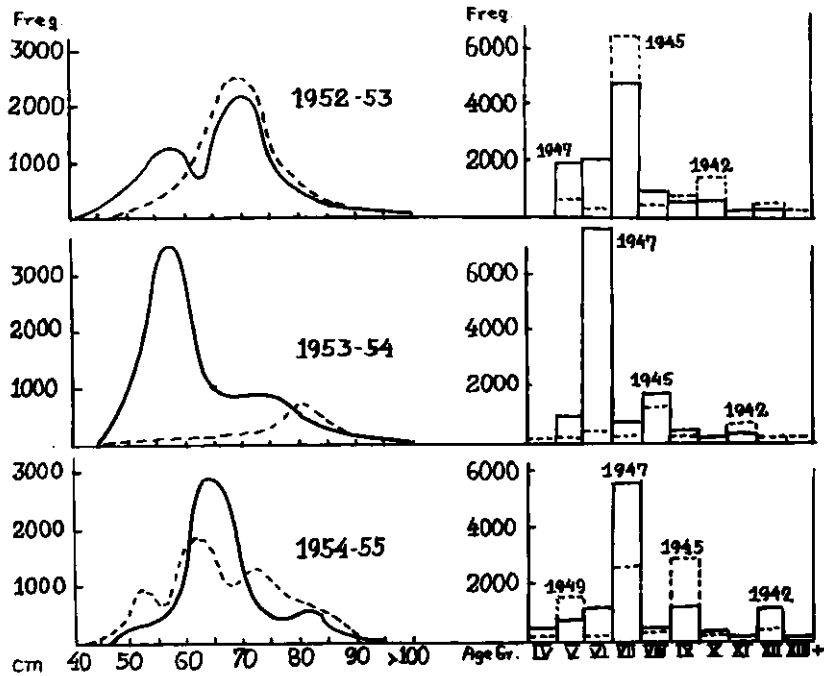


Figure 2. Cod, Greenland. Length distribution by 5 cm. groups; bold curves - W. Greenland banks, stipled curves - S. and S.W. coast. Calculated as catch per fishing day.

