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Brief Report of the Activities of Spanish Trawlers in the ICNAF Area
in 1963

by J. L. Arambarri

Subarea 1

Spanish trawlers did not conduct commercial fishing in the subarea in 1963. A few trials were made in late summer by two vessels but the amount of cod caught was negligible. The explorations were made mainly on the Lille and Store Hellefiske Banks and due to the poor results the ships returned to Subarea 2. During the voyage towards Subarea 2 all the banks between Lille Hellefiske Bank and the southern tip of Greenland were explored with fish-finders without success. According to the records of the shipmasters, the weather was fairly good and temperatures were much the same as in previous years when the fisheries were successful.

Captains were advised to keep statistics of places and number of salmon caught but none was taken. This may be due to the fact that they did not fish close enough to coastal waters. Searches were made in the central and western edges of the banks.

In mid-November some trawlers steamed towards Greenland but, when fishing was called off, they changed course for their home base.

Subarea 2

As in past seasons, this subarea was one of those most actively fished by large Spanish trawlers in spring and summer and part of the autumn.

Catch statistics show that the fishery was more successful in the first half than in the second half of the time spent in this subarea.

Commercially, no difference was apparent in the size of cod in the 1962 and 1963 catches. Cod was the only species sought by trawlers, but as in previous years redfish was caught frequently either with or without cod.

Although meteorological conditions were average and did not interfere much with fishing operations, ice interrupted fishing on several occasions until the end of May.

The subarea was fished periodically until the end of November.

Subarea 3

Large side trawlers resumed fishing in the subarea in early spring. Pair trawlers started some time earlier. Fishing continued most of the year by pair trawlers with few interruptions and by side trawlers periodically.

In summer on the western edges of the Grand Bank and Flemish Cap, redfish were taken with cod in varying amounts from a few individuals to 100% of the catches. Redfish were smaller and clogged the nets more than in the past. They were all discarded.

Compared with previous years, large cod were more abundant in the catches in 3L and 3N. Cod from 3K were also larger, on the average, than in 1962.

In this subarea there appears to be a return to the commercial fishing conditions that were common over ten years ago. Areas that, in past years, were unproductive, showed that they were coming back in the 1963 season.

Subarea 4

Fishing was carried out from early February by Spanish trawlers in 4V with fairly good success around the month of March. The majority of trawlers left the subarea and during the rest of the year only pair trawlers fished it. No difference from last year was apparent in the size of cod.

Tags

A large number of tags was recovered and sent as soon as possible to the stations from the taggings originated. A remarkable number of tags belonged to the Biological Station at St. John's, Newfoundland.

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