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A short preliminary report on the Research Survey A5-2013

**Pelagic fish off W- S- and SE-Iceland and the western Norwegian Sea
29 April - 20 May 2013**

*Part of the joint Northeast Atlantic Pelagic Ecosystem Surveys in 2013
(see ICES WGIPS report, December 2013)*

Vessel: R/V Arni Fridriksson, TFNA (Iceland)

Captain: Guðmundur Bjarnason

Cruise leaders: Sveinn Sveinbjörnsson (first part) and Guðmundur J. Óskarsson (latter part)

In order to assess blue whiting concentrations west and south of Iceland, the survey began on 29 April at the shelf edge west of Iceland and from there continued south at and on either side of the shelf break to the Reykjanes Ridge (Figure 1). South of the Reykjanes promontory (SW-Iceland) the general course was eastwards, running along and just off and in over the outer shelf. From SE-Iceland the southern part of the Iceland-Faroese ridge was covered south towards 62°25N. Then the vessel sailed east to Fuglefjord in the Faroese where a 7 hrs intermission was taken from the survey while taking on fuel. From Fuglefjord, the survey continued by taking the first E/W transect in the survey on 63°43N. During the following days, it was continued northwards, generally along E/W transects spaced at about 40-50 n.m. intervals. The western boundary was generally about 12°W, or the continental shelf of Iceland. The eastern limits increased gradually from 6°W to 1°E at 67°20N. On 18 May at 69°50N and 7°23W, the vessel headed towards Reykjavik, where it was on 20 May.

The main results of this survey were that one and two years old juvenile blue whiting were recorded in considerable amount along the continental shelf west, south and southeast off Iceland. Concentrations of juveniles were also along the southern part of the Iceland-Faroese ridge. The distribution of Norwegian spring-spawning herring was similar to the last two years' surveys with respect to the area south of 67°N. No herring was observed in the cold East Iceland Current, but south and east of it, and to a small degree west of it. In the area covered north of 67°N, the amount of herring was more than observed there in last year's survey and it was also constrained to the warm waters. The total amount of herring measured acoustically in the survey was 1.5 million tons. Around 510 thousands tons were within Icelandic waters, 650 thousands tons in international waters, 230 thousands tons in Jan Mayen waters, and 120 thousands tons in Faroese waters. The fish-, hydrographical- and ecological data from this survey will be combined with data from other nations that participate in this International survey for more thoroughly analyses and the results will be presented within ICES.

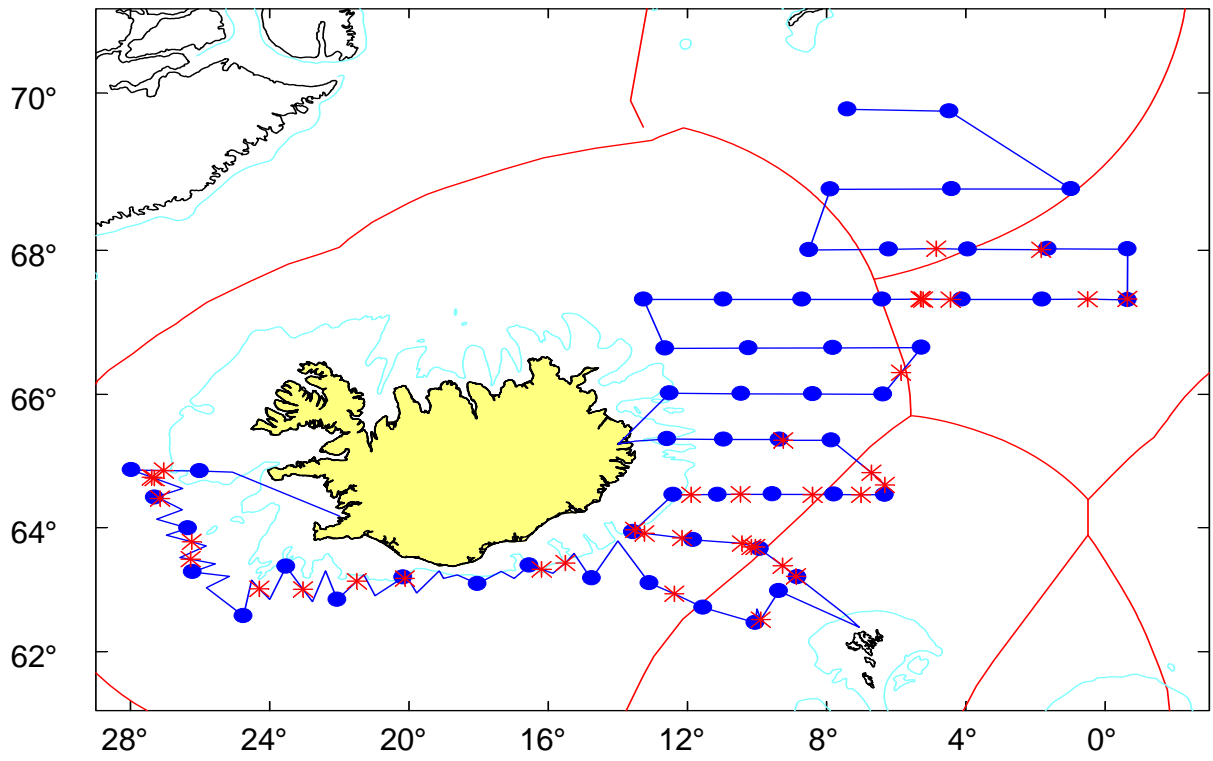


Figure 1. The survey track and locations of hydrographical and plankton stations (filled circles) and then trawl stations (stars) taken in the May survey 2013 by RV Árne Friðriksson.