

A short report on the Research Survey A5-2020
**Pelagic fish off east Iceland and the western Norwegian Sea
 10 – 28 May 2020**

*Part of the joint Northeast Atlantic Pelagic Ecosystem Surveys (IESNS) in 2020
 (see ICES WGIPS report, January 2021)*

Vessel: R/V Árni Friðriksson, TFNA (Iceland)
 Captain: Heimir Örn Hafsteinsson
 Cruise leader: Anna Heiða Ólafsdóttir

The survey began on the 10th of May as the vessel headed directly to the first transect southeast of Iceland (Figure 1). During the following days, the vessel continued northwards along E/W transects spaced at about fixed interval of around 35 nautical miles (nmi) intervals. Hydrographical research (CTD) and zooplankton collection (WP-2 net) were undertaken at around 60 nmi intervals, and pelagic trawling irregularly on fish registrations on the echogram (Table 1). In the morning of the 15th May, the vessel went into harbour (Neskaupsstaður) from the middle of transect two because of a seriously sick crew member. Apart from that there were no further delays. The final transect of the survey finished 26th May. From there, the vessel headed to Iceland and was in Hafnarfjörður harbour on 28th May. The total distance covered during these 19 days was around 3815 nautical miles, where around 3188 nautical miles were undertaken on the survey area.

Table 1. Overview of number of the different stations in the different areas in the survey A5-2020 on RV Árni Friðriksson.

Station type	Number				
	Icelandic waters	Faroese waters	International waters	Jan Mayen waters	Total
Pelagic trawling	6	0	7	1	14
CTD	14	2	13	5	34
WP-2	14	2	11	3	30
Krill trawl haul	1	0	3	1	5
Total	35	4	34	10	83

The main results of this survey on RV Árni Friðriksson was that Norwegian spring-spawning herring was found in similar abundance as in the previous year. The herring was primarily distributed in the south-western area of the survey domain where the 2013- and 2006 year-classes were most prominent, and in the eastern area where the 2016 year-

class dominated. It is a commonly observed pattern that the older fish are distributed in the southwest while the younger fish are found closer to the nursery areas in the Barents Sea. Blue whiting was only found in low density east of the cold East Iceland Current of the survey domain. The fish-, hydrographical- and ecological data from this survey have been combined with data from other nations that participate in this International survey for more thoroughly quantitative analyses. The preliminary report can be found here: [“IESNS-results 2020”](#) These combined results will be presented and used within International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) working group on stock assessment (Working Group on Widely Distributed Stock, WGWIDE) in the autumn 2020.

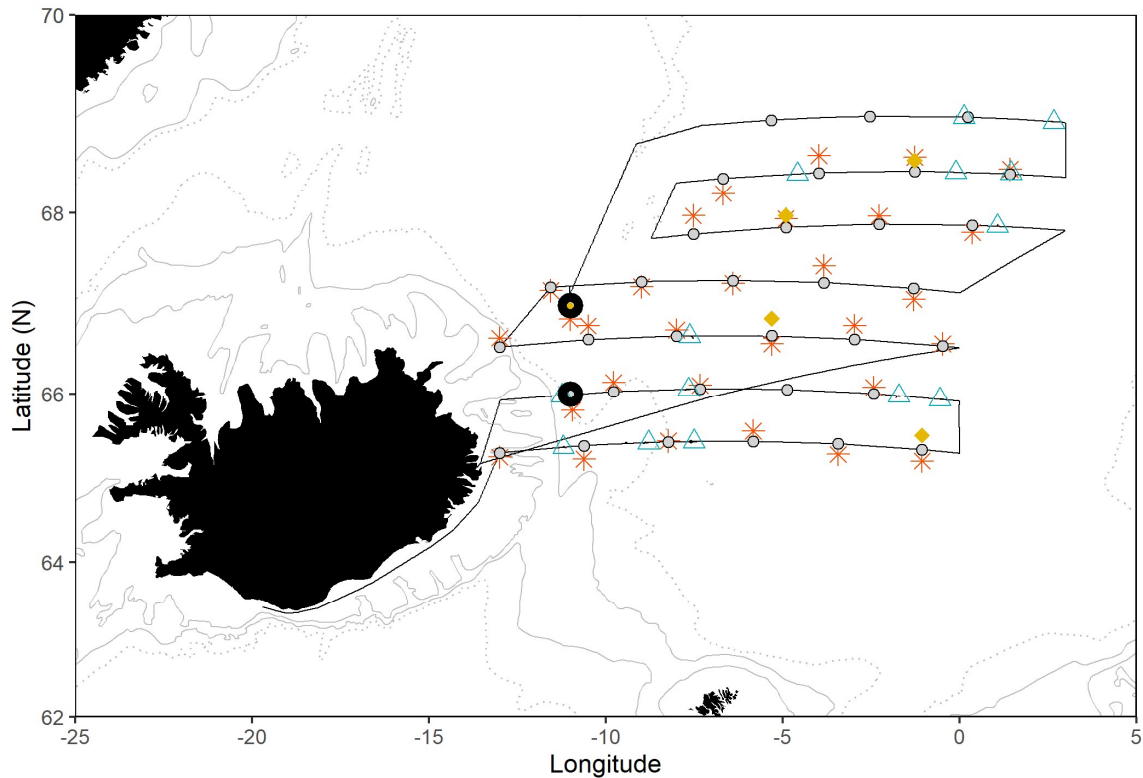


Figure 1. The survey track and locations of CTD (grey circles), WP2 (red stars), krill trawl hauls (yellow diamonds) and trawl stations (blue triangle) taken in the May survey 2020 by RV Árne Friðriksson. In addition, two fixed hydrographic stations were taken (large black circles).