Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries

Thünen-Institute of Sea Fisheries

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„SOLEA"

Cruise 868

REPORT

09.09. – 15.09.2026

Personnel

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Objectives

1. Participation in the ICES co-ordinated "International **B**eam **T**rawl **S**urvey" in the North Sea
2. Determination of temperature and salinity in the area of investigation

Narrative (Fig. 1)

Technical problems with one of the main engines, followed by a storm, meant that the vessel did not set sail from Cuxhaven until 06:00 on 9 September, twelve days behind schedule. This delay resulted in a significant reduction in the number of hauls in the rectangles. After 10 hours of steaming, two hauls were carried out in the late afternoon. Over the following two days, stations close to the coast were surveyed. Due to poor weather forecasts, research work could only be carried out on two further days. The survey concluded in Cuxhaven on the morning of 15th September. The scientific crew returned to Bremerhaven that afternoon.

Results (Fig. 2 – 9)

A total of 23 valid BTS hauls with a standard duration of 30 minutes were conducted with the 7m beam trawl. At 23 stations salinity and temperature were measured.
The distribution of species composition shows the usual geographic pattern with plaice as the most frequent fish species, followed by dab and lemon sole (offshore) or solenette (inshore).
Toward the north and the west soon the importance of long rough dab and starry ray in the biomass increases. Still, in the survey area some larger (up to 50 cm) plaice can be found, although quite sporadically.
The unusually high abundance of haddock and whiting in beam trawl catches across the entire study area, evident over the past two years, began to emerge this year. However, it was not particularly pronounced due to the low number of hauls.

K. Panten

Dipl.-Biol. K. Panten

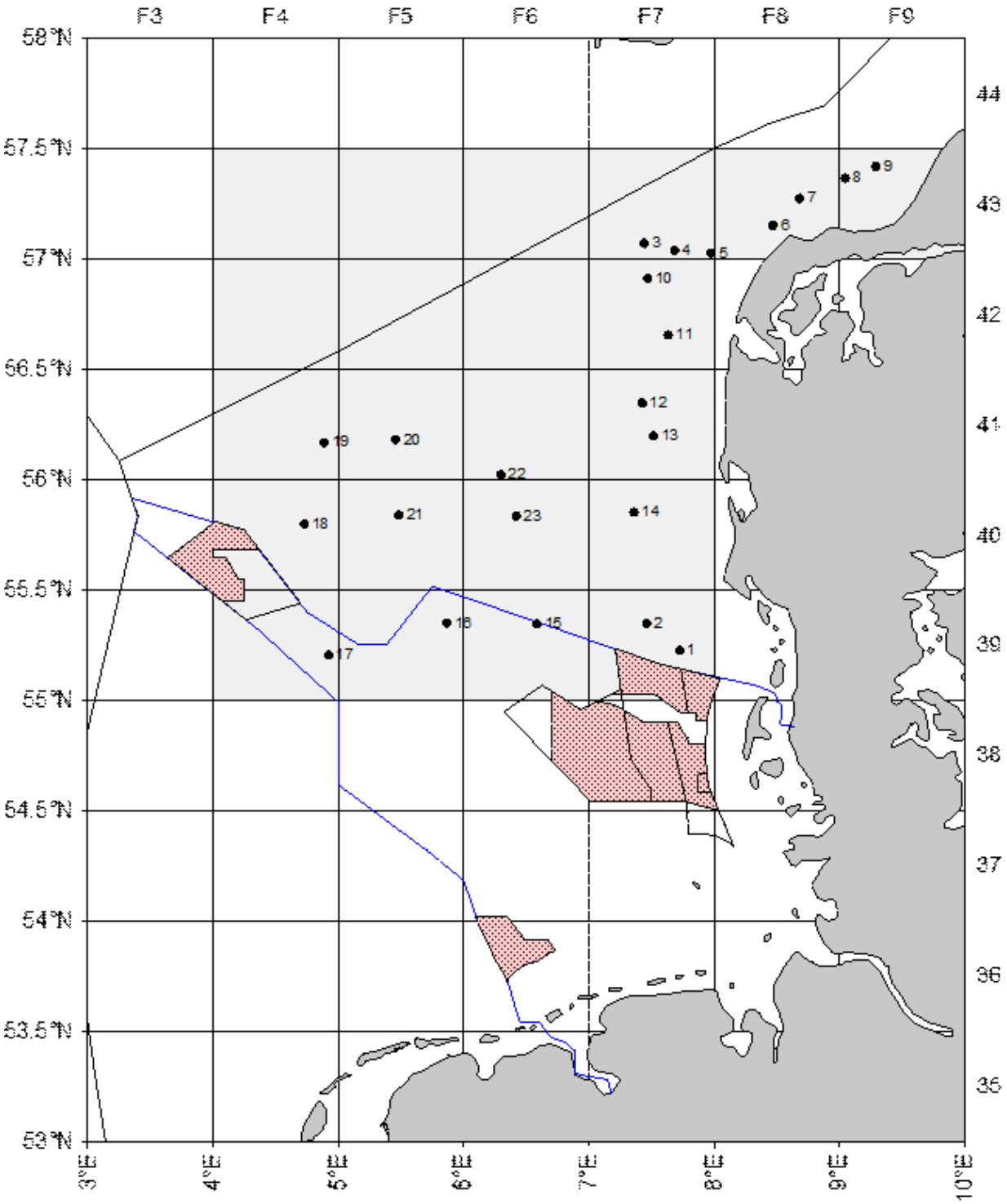


Fig. 1: "Solea", Cruise 868, Haul positions and area of investigation

Catch composition in kg and length distribution during Beam Trawl Survey

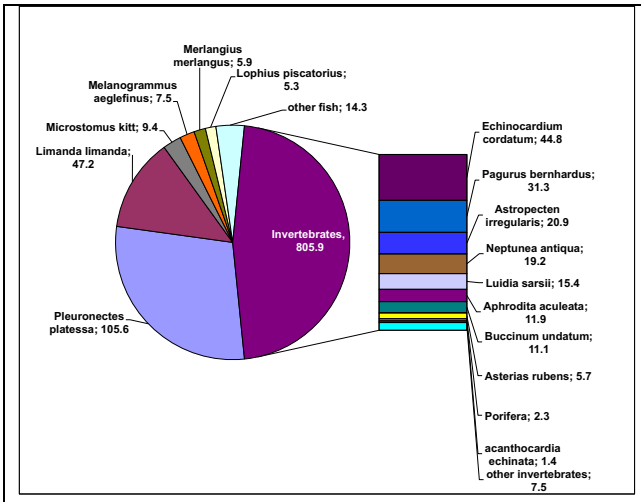


Fig. 2: Catch composition in 39-43F4&5 (offshore)

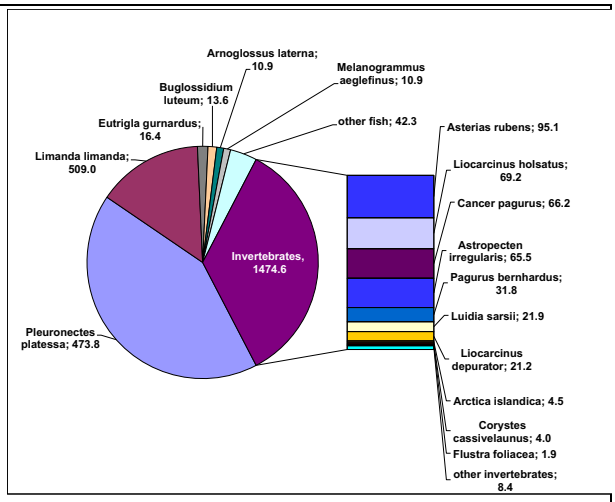


Fig. 3: Catch composition in 39-43F6&7, 43F8&9 (inshore)

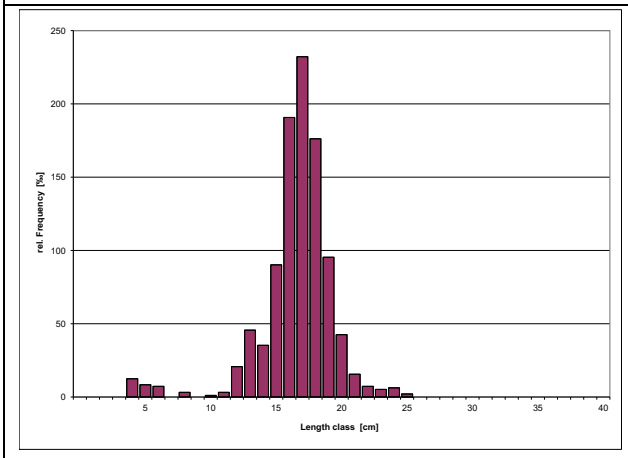


Fig. 4: Length distribution of Dab in 39-40F4&5

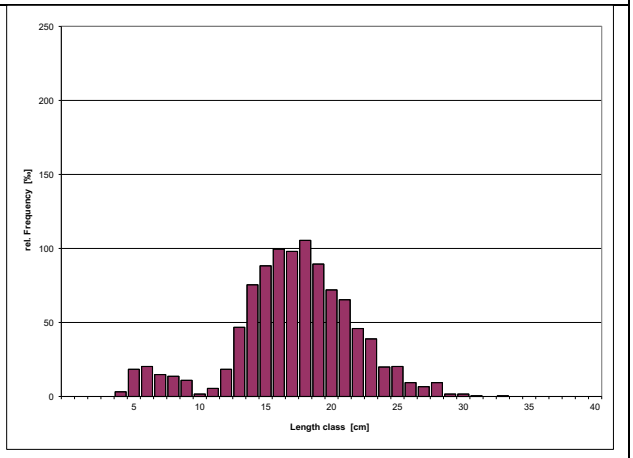


Fig. 5: Length distribution of Dab in 39-40F6&7, 43F8&9

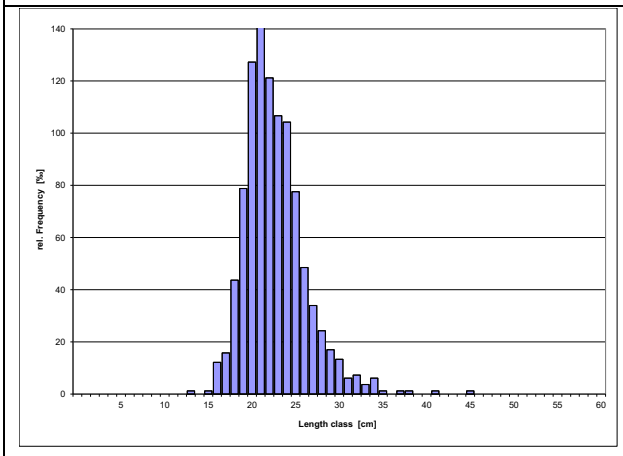


Fig. 6: Length distribution of Plaice in 39-40F4&5

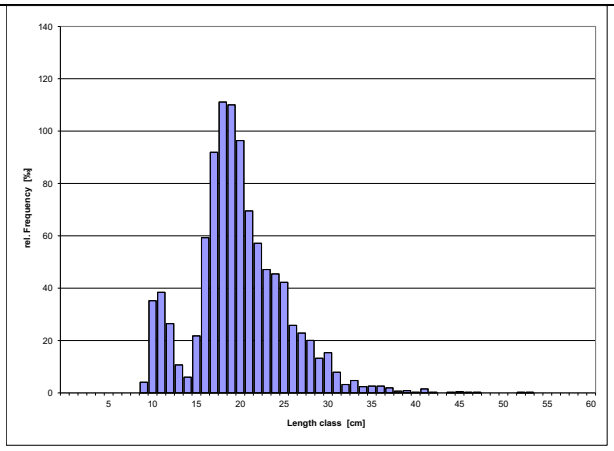


Fig. 7: Length distribution of Plaice in 39-40 F6&7, 43F8&9

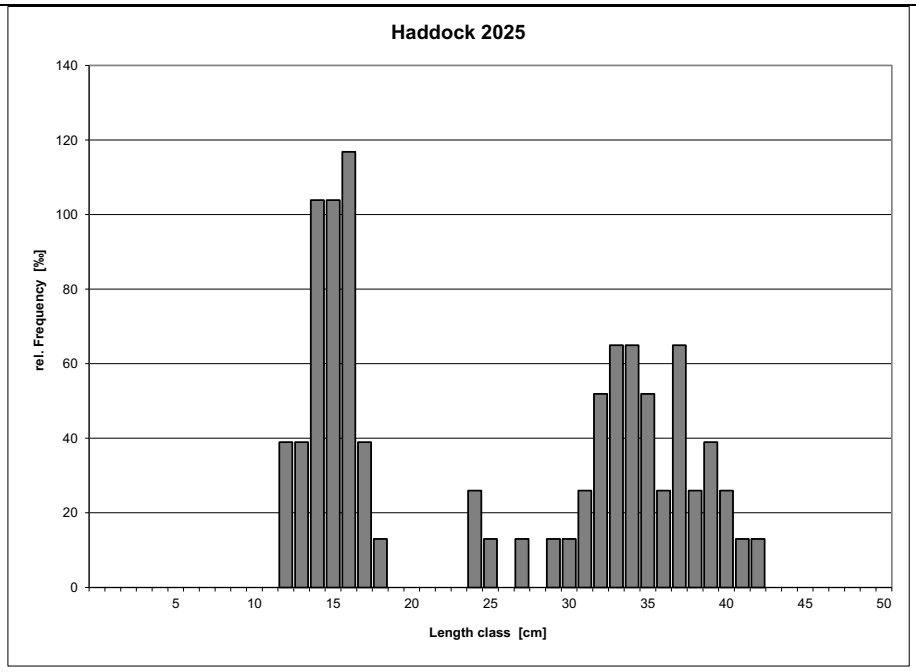


Fig. 8: Length distribution of Haddock in the whole study area

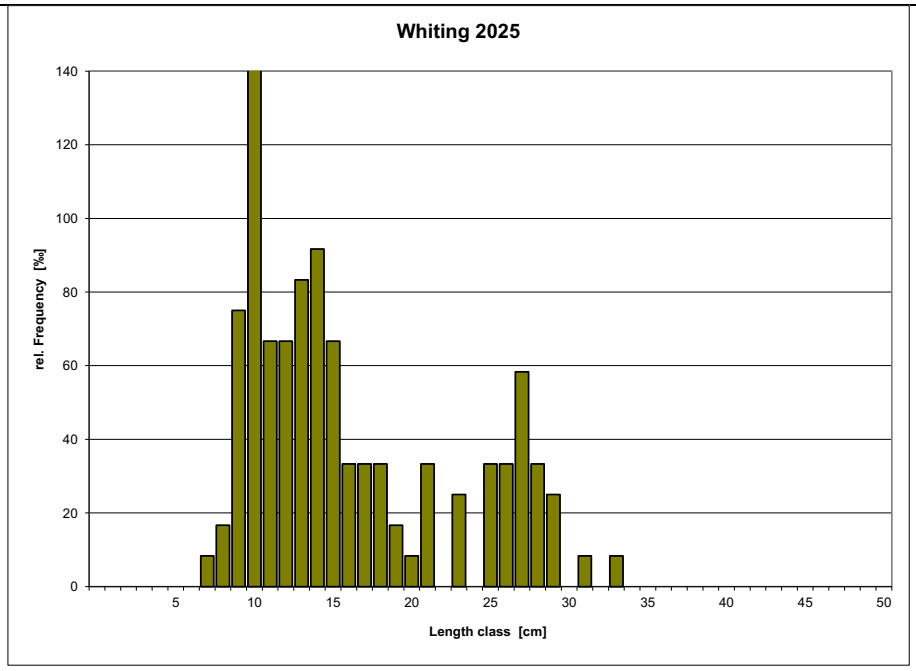


Fig. 9: Length distribution of Whiting in the whole study area