



International

NORTH SEA FISHING RESEARCH PLANNED BY INTERNATIONAL BOARD: Next year Great Britain, The Netherlands, and Germany will carry out joint hydrographic research into North Sea plaice fishing, according to an announcement made at The Hague on October 10. This was decided at the 39th annual meeting of the Permanent International Board for Maritime Research, held in Amsterdam from October 1-9.

The Board, comprising about one hundred representatives of all countries with fishing interests in the North Sea, studied reports which include some on overfishing, the Canadian Foreign Trade of November 10 points out. Statistics submitted by the member countries showed that the volume of sea fish, which had greatly increased during World War II, has declined to the prewar level, not only in the North Sea but also in other waters. The decline has been more rapid than after World War I. The communique added that special attention was paid to the effects of hydrographical conditions on fish. The Norwegians had collected data about temperature, salt content, and currents of water and were now able to forecast the arrival of cod in their coastal areas, their delegates reported to the meeting.

In Great Britain an investigation was being made of the connection between wind strength and direction in the spawning season and the survival of the young fry, which would soon make it possible to forecast what each brood year will yield for a fishery, the communique stated. The Norwegians had further gained a better insight into the migration of herring types from a study of the movement of herring schools to and from the coast with the aid of echo soundings.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

WORLD FISH PRODUCTION: The herring family, which makes up the largest proportion of fish caught in the sea, is being given a close run by fish caught in fresh and brackish waters, according to a study of world fish production by the Food and Agriculture Organization's Fisheries Division.

Of an estimated 25,000,000 tons of fish produced annually by the world's fisheries, herring and similar species make up 21 percent of the total, while fresh and brackish-water fish are a close second with 19 percent, the study reveals. Cod, hake, and similar species comprise 14 percent of the total, and crustaceans and mollusks 8 percent. Salmon, tuna, and flat fishes are represented by lesser percentages.

If the total annual world catch were divided among the world population, the FAO study estimates that the availability of fish per person would be about 27 pounds a year. But this figure does not indicate how much is actually consumed.



because a considerable part of the total weight is cut away during cleaning, and a certain quantity is converted into oil and meal which is not for human consumption. Actually only about 20 percent of the world catch reaches the table.

Asia, excluding Russia, is the leading fish-producing region of the world, yielding 48 percent of the total. Europe follows with 24 percent, and North America and South America combined, with 17 percent.

The outlook for increased fish production appears to be promising, for the FAO study reports that many countries are adding, or planning to add, mechanized craft to the fishing fleets to fish in areas farther from port and save on travel time. Moreover, the report adds, improvements in fishing gear and equipment are being made in many underdeveloped as well as developed countries.

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FISHERIES STATISTICS INTERNATIONAL MEETING: An International Meeting on Fisheries Statistics had been scheduled by FAO in Rome, October 29-November 3, 1951. The FAO Conference has consistently recognized fisheries statistics as a prerequisite for policy making in the fields of fisheries production and trade. The task of compiling, collating, and publishing fisheries statistics was among the first projects undertaken by the FAO Fisheries Division.

According to FAO, the stage has now been reached where further progress will be impeded unless representatives of member countries discover the means of obtaining more comparable and up-to-date national statistics.

The meeting was to consider the need for statistics from several angles--trade, research, government regulations--as well as the most effective ways in which to meet the need.

Included in the agenda was a general statement characterizing fisheries statistics now available; the present and future role of fisheries statistics as experienced by individual countries; and problems involved in statistics on fishing equipment and personnel, fish catches and landings, domestic and external trade in fisheries products, processing industries, prices, fish consumption, investment, cost and efficiency; possibilities for measurement of contribution to national income; problems related to conversion factors and terminology; and the use of estimates and sample surveys in fisheries matters.

The meeting was not held as scheduled due to a delay in receiving notices of participation from interested nations. Plans are being made, however, to take up the same agenda in regional meetings.

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GENERAL FISHERIES COUNCIL FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN ACCEPTED BY EGYPT: The Government of Egypt has accepted the Agreement drafted in Rome, Italy, on September 24, 1949, for the formation of a General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean. Notification was received by the Food and Agriculture Organization on February 19, 1951.

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THIRD MEETING OF THE INDO-PACIFIC FISHERIES COUNCIL: The Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council (IPFC) held the third of its regular annual meetings at Madras, February 1-16, 1951, according to the May/June 1951 FAO Fisheries Bulletin. This Council, established under the auspices of FAO and financially and otherwise as-

sisted by FAO, is an advisory and consultative body consisting of sixteen member nations interested in the development of the fisheries in the Indo-Pacific region.

At the Madras meeting, the Council dealt with an agenda which was composed of several essential procedural items, and which surveyed the whole field of fisheries work in this region. Technical papers on almost every aspect of the fisheries were presented.

In certain fields, the Council proposed the continuation of a program of survey to be conducted by its Subcommittee of Fisheries Phenomena. In the field of gear survey, the Council was presented with a logical system of classification of fishing gear and methods, constructed on sound taxonomic principles. A group of workers were appointed to prepare a catalog of fishing gears and methods, employing whatever system of classification the workers might regard as best. Also, plans for catalogs of fishing craft and of processing methods have also been developed.

Primarily the Council has drawn the attention of the member governments to the fact that, in order to enable it to discharge its function of co-ordinating programs of research and development, it must be kept informed of these programs, and in several fields it has specifically asked member governments to provide the information. Among these are planktology, algology, and general fisheries biology.

A United States delegate and an assistant were present at the meeting.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled to be held in Manila, October 1952, at the invitation of the Government of the Philippines Republic.



Canada

LOBSTER LENGTH LIMITS: Over the past year, the Canadian Department of Fisheries has been following very closely the developments resulting from the passage by the State of Massachusetts of legislation increasing from 3-1/8 inches to 3-3/16 inches the minimum size at which lobsters might be caught or found in anyone's possession in that State.



Close studies by scientists of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada indicated that a certain amount of extra protection would be provided by the increased length, the October 1951 Trade News of the Canadian Department of Fisheries reports; also, that after the first year the total poundage caught should be about the same or slightly larger than at present.

It was evident, however, that because a large part of the Maritime lobster production is sold in Massachusetts, a serious marketing problem would result. Markets, other than Massachusetts, would have to be found for lobster 3-1/8 inches and 3-3/16 inches.

The Canadian Department is recommending regulations (to be effective as soon as possible) to raise the present minimum length, to 3-3/16 inches in those areas where the present minimum length is 3-1/8 inches.

Developments will be closely watched by the Canadian Department throughout the ensuing year to determine whether conditions will warrant a further increase to bring the minimum length to 3-1/4 inches as proposed by the State of Massachusetts, effective December 1, 1952.

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RECORD SWORDFISH SEASON REPORTED BY NOVA SCOTIA: Nova Scotia fishermen reported a record 1951 swordfish season in offshore waters, while inshore catches were the leanest in years. Total money earned by the fishermen topped the million-dollar (Canadian) mark as compared with last year's C\$663,354.



Swordfish followed the herring and mackerel seaward, and the small inshore craft were left with catches of only one or two of the giants each trip, if any at all. As a result of the seaward movement of the swordfish, the offshore craft enjoyed an exceedingly heavy harvest. Records show particularly good catches in the Sable Island area, with some five-day trips netting a catch of over 90 fish per craft, states an October 31 American consular report from Halifax.

Tuna, which have developed in recent years as another main source of summer income for many fishermen, did not come inshore either and a poor catch was reported.

NOVA SCOTIA EXPERIENCES ICE SHORTAGE: Nova Scotia experienced an ice shortage that seriously crippled the fishing and fish-processing industry this summer. A series of ice-making plants have been, or are being opened, which will insure self-sufficiency next year, regardless of what the winter weather may bring. Ice for use during the present summer months has had to be hauled from New Brunswick and other distant points, and there have even been imports of crushed ice from Gloucester, Massachusetts.

STEEL TRAWLER FLEET FOR NOVA SCOTIAN FISHERY FIRM: The first steel trawler ever built especially for the Canadian fishing industry was scheduled to arrive in Halifax at the end of October to join the fishing fleet operated by a large fishery firm. The ship, the Cape Beaver, will be the first of five built along similar lines which the company will receive over the next seven months. The five-trawler addition, it is said, will give the firm the most modern and up-to-date fishing facilities in the North Atlantic, as well as the largest fleet. The approximate cost of these vessels, delivered at Halifax, will be over C\$300,000. The fleet is being built in England, and it is expected that they will be based at Halifax and Lunenburg.

The trawler Cape Beaver is 152½ feet over-all, with a breadth of 26½ feet and a depth of 13¾ feet, a gross tonnage of 396 tons, and a fish hold capacity of 8,500 cubic feet. This will permit her to carry approximately 340,000 pounds of iced fish. The vessel is powered with oil-fired super-heated steam, including ice-cutting lances on deck for winter operations. The new trawlers are designed to operate with a crew of 19 men.



German Federal Republic

FISH MEAL PRODUCTION UP IN 1951: West German fish-meal factories expect to produce this year 53,000 to 55,000 metric tons against 46,000 tons in 1950, points out the November 10 issue of The Fishing News, a British fishery periodical. In addition, at the time of this report, about 20,700 metric tons of fish meal were imported by Western Germany.

As the supply of fish meal, particularly of cod meal, has tightened considerably of late, 3,000 tons of cod and fish meal stored during the summer have been released for distribution.

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DENMARK PROPOSES GERMANY ENTER NORTH SEA FISHING CONVENTION: A proposal that Germany be invited to accede to the North Sea Fishing Convention was made by the Danish Minister of Fishing during a recent visit to Kiel, reports the American Consulate at Hamburg in its November 8 dispatch. The Convention was concluded at London in 1946 but is not yet effective because it has not been ratified by Spain and the Netherlands.



Greenland

NEW FISH PLANTS: A new fish freezing and cold-storage plant is being built in Sukkertoppen, Greenland, according to an October 20 American consular dispatch from Godthaab. Plans call for the production of frozen halibut, cod, and catfish fillets. A German-built fillet machine for the processing of cod is already in operation. Halibut, which previously could not be prepared for export and therefore were not profitable to catch, are now being purchased for freezing and export to the United States.

The most significant development in Egedesminde this year has been the building of a new freezing and fish-cleaning plant, which is now in operation. Two large, wooden sheds have been provided: one for the cleaning, salting, and packaging of fish, and the other for freezing and cold storage. A roller conveyor runs between the two buildings to a small dock. The cleaning house is divided into sections which provide storage for salt and packaging materials, and work areas for fish preparation. A large contact freezer is situated in the center of the cold-storage shed, which also has space for 500 metric tons of frozen fish. The plant produces frozen halibut, cod, and catfish fillets, and salt cod. A maximum of 10 Greenlanders are employed in the operations.



Iceland

HALIBUT STEAKS BEING PACKED FOR SALE IN U. S.: Icelandic quick-frozen halibut is now being packed in steaks for sale in the United States through an American sales agent, an October 30 American consular dispatch from Reykjavik points out. This is a two-fold innovation in the marketing of Icelandic fish in the U. S.: it is the first time that halibut is being shipped in the form of steaks, and it is the first time that Icelandic fish is being marketed through an American sales agent.

The potentialities of the sale of Icelandic halibut in the U. S. were neglected until 1950. Early in 1950, development of the halibut fishery for the U. S. market was recommended by an ECA-sponsored survey of the Icelandic fishing industry.

During the first nine months of 1951, the total Icelandic halibut catch (gutted weight) was 1,365 metric tons, against 603 tons for the same period of 1950. Much of the halibut catch was frozen whole, in accordance with the survey's recommendation. However, local producers were discouraged by the low prices prevailing in the U. S. for this product, and most of the year's production remained unsold through the summer.

A private Icelandic fish producer and broker found that the halibut would sell much more easily in the U. S. if cut and shipped in the form of steaks. He thereupon concluded a contract with an American selling agent in New York, and is now packing halibut steaks for shipment. Although not a member of the Icelandic Freezing Plants Corporation (FPC), an organization controlling the great bulk of Iceland's quick-frozen fish industry, the Icelandic broker has obtained its approval for packing and marketing halibut held by its member plants. This is in itself a radical development, since heretofore the FPC has adamantly refused to market fish in the U. S. except through its New York subsidiary. The Icelandic broker is expected to pack and ship 500-600 metric tons of halibut steaks.

The halibut is being cut into steaks which range from 8 to 14 ounces each in weight. Each steak is wrapped in an individual, moisture-proof, cellophane wrapper. They are then packed in 5-pound paper boxes which are packed in cardboard shipping cases, 10 boxes to a case. The fish is being sold under a trade name.

Virtually all Icelandic frozen fish sold thus far in the U. S. has been marketed by New York subsidiaries of the Icelandic producers. Production of the Icelandic FPC, which controls the bulk of Iceland's output, has been sold through the firm's New York office. Most remaining Icelandic production is controlled by the Federation of Iceland Cooperative Societies (FIS), which has marketed in the U. S. through its New York branch office. These New York offices have received Icelandic frozen fish on consignment, for subsequent sale in the U. S. Since the fish has not been sold when it left Iceland, individual local producers have not been able to count on a definite price for their products. Under this system, final payment by the FPC and the FIS is made to their member plants after final sale of the fish in the U. S., which is sometimes a number of months after the fish has been shipped. Changes in marketing methods, to improve over-all sales as well as payment methods, have been frequently discussed in Iceland. The ECA-sponsored survey recommended that American sales offices of Icelandic producers be staffed by Americans with long training and experience in the food and fishing industries. These offices are now managed by Icelanders. The sale of its fish under American brand names through American agents has been opposed by the FPC, and also by the FIS, as inimical to the long-range development of Icelandic fish sales, since it might obscure the high quality of the Icelandic product. Member plants of both the FPC and the FIS are obliged to market their production through the central offices of the two organizations except by special permission.



Japan

STRONGER CONTROL OVER FISHING BY JAPANESE PROPOSED: New regulations to strengthen Government supervision and control over indiscriminate fishing by Japanese fishing firms were proposed by the Fisheries Agency of the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. These proposed regulations are intended to enhance the international reputation of the Japanese fishing industry through cooperation with the international policy of protecting natural resources, an October 24 American consular dispatch from Tokyo reports.

The new regulations would provide for a patrol section in the Fisheries Agency as well as in the major prefectural governments. A liaison council would be organized between the central Fisheries Agency and the Maritime Safety Bureau. Stationed in four major bays in Japan to patrol coastal fishing would be 15 patrol speed boats, and about 10 larger boats would be constructed to patrol offshore fishing fields.

The Ministry decided also to present a bill for the partial amendment of the present Fisheries Law to the extra session of the Japanese Diet that was convened in October. The bill calls for a reduction in the number of boats in the coastal fishing fleet and requires prefectural government permission prior to construction of new fishing boats.

JAPANESE GOVERNMENT



Mexico

SHRIMP FISHING IN GULF OF CALIFORNIA IN FULL SWING: Commercial fishing in the Gulf of California got into full swing during October and the catch of shrimp and fish has been excellent so far, a November 6 American Consular dispatch from Mexicali points out. A good season is looked for in the northern part of the Gulf and numerous fishing boats from the Guaymas (Sonora) area are basing on San Felipe, Baja California. At present, about 150 commercial craft are working out of the port, compared with some 80 boats last season.

Most of the shrimp is destined for the U. S. market, and packing and freezing plants are pleased with current wholesale prices reported in Los Angeles. Fishermen are getting up to 7.00 pesos per kilo (about 37 U. S. cents per pound) for the 15-20 count size, and better returns are looked for when the jumbo shrimp appears in quantity.

Shrimp exports to the United States from the Mazatlan (Sinaloa) area during October totaled 18 carloads (670,575 pounds), a November 7 American consulate dispatch from that area reports. These are the first exports of the new season from that area. During the same month in 1950, only 4 carloads (136,000) pounds were exported.

Freezing plants at Mazatlan are paying 7.80 pesos a kilo (41 U. S. cents per pound) for shrimp.

The plant owners are looking forward to a more abundant supply of shrimp when the weather gets cooler. They claim that due to the number of freezing plants in the Mazatlan area and the large number of fishing boats operating, at least 1,250,000 pounds should be exported monthly to make the industry profitable.



Netherlands

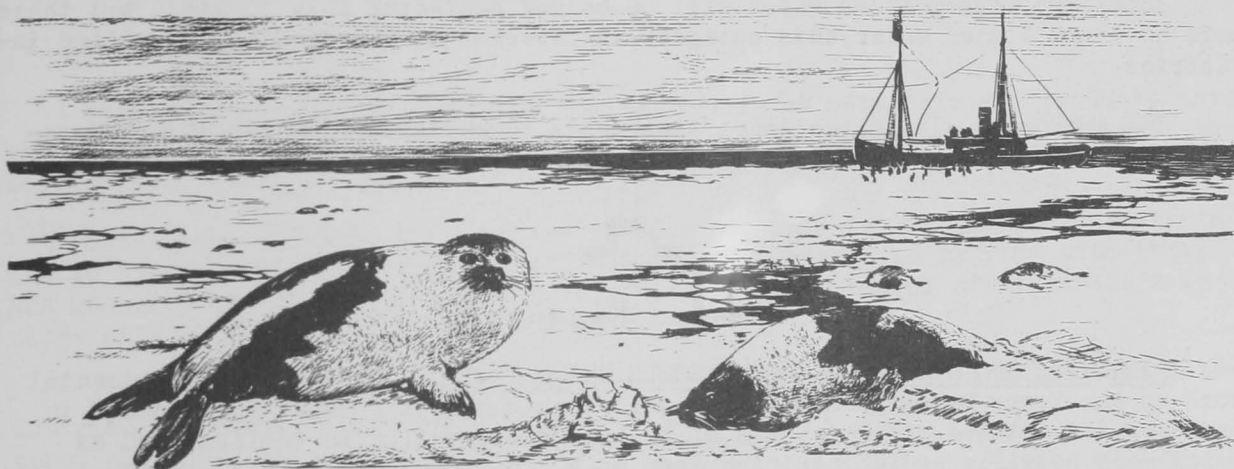
WHALING FLEET EXPANSION: A factory ship and several hunting boats will be added to the Netherlands whaling fleet. The total new investment will amount to fl.47 million (about US\$17,883,500). Money is being raised by an issue of fl.7.5 million (about US\$2,853,750) common stock. In addition the Government has agreed to buy the whale oil produced by the company in future years at a price which will be sufficient to cover all expenses, depreciation, and interest, and the payment of a dividend of six percent maximum.

The year 1950/51 was a very good one for the whaling company in Netherlands. Dividends were increased from six to eight percent, a November 15 American consular dispatch from The Hague points out.



Norway

SEAL FISHERY, 1951: This year's Norwegian seal catch yielded 369,700 animals as compared with 255,000 in 1950 and 185,600 in 1949, states an October 23 American Embassy dispatch from Oslo.



The amount of blubber produced was 8,787 metric tons as compared to 5,293 tons in 1950, and 3,371 tons in 1949. Of the total catch, 223,400 animals were Greenland seal and 146,300 were bladder-nose seal.

Since the value of last year's catch was approximately 11,500,000 kroner (US\$1,608,390), it is believed that this year's catch can be estimated at somewhere between 16,000,000-19,000,000 kroner (US\$2,237,760-2,657,340). It is stated that the market demand is good.

The principal seal fishing area was at Vestisen, ice barrier between Greenland and Spitsbergen, where approximately 60 vessels with 1,000 men participated, while 11 vessels with 300 men were engaged on the Newfoundland banks.



Republic of the Philippines

IMPORT CONTROL LAW AMENDMENT AFFECTS FISHERY PRODUCTS IMPORTS: An amendment to the Philippine Import Control Law (Republic Act 650) was issued by the President of the Philippines on August 24, 1951 (Executive Order No. 471). Imports of certain fishery and related products are affected by this action. The amendment revised Appendix "A" of Republic Act 650, the Import Control Law which became effective July 1, 1951; banned the importation of certain commodities; and provided the procedure for importing goods under ECA authorizations.

A new Annex "A" listed items completely decontrolled, together with essential items of import. Fishery products listed as completely decontrolled were canned salmon and sardines. Listed as essential items of import under this same list were canned mackerel, herring, and squid; cod liver oil; hydrogenated animal products and fish oils; fish meal; and fishery gear: specifically fish hooks and fishing rods and tackles.

Annex "B" indicates items the importation of which was immediately banned. Included among the items listed are all fresh fish, canned anchovies, mother-of-pearl, canned moss and seaweeds, and dried moss and seaweeds.

Annex "C" listed items which will be banned beginning July 1, 1952, but there were no items listed under this category of interest to the fishing and allied industries.

The amendment also establishes that goods to be imported under ECA procurement authorizations shall not be licensed by the Import Control Commission.



United Kingdom

FISH-HANDLING METHODS ABOARD VESSELS BEING TESTED: Survey and experimental work by the Torry Research Station at sea under commercial conditions is now in progress to test the effectiveness of the present practice in cooling fish as quickly as possible and maintaining them at 32° F. from catching to landing. A small observation cabin has been fitted on a commercial trawler, according to an article which appeared in the November 1951 issue of The Food Trade Review. This article summarizes the work carried out by the Research Station on fish under the Government's Food Investigation Organization.

"A study of the influence of exposure of the fish on deck showed that ungutted fish, if left on the deck...in warm weather, could reach temperatures which accelerate action by enzymes and bacteria so much that the fish deteriorated badly before landing even though chilling and storage in ice had been efficient.

"An analysis of the figures for fish condemned at one of the Humber ports during the year suggests that handling and stowage on many of the distant-water fishing vessels could be improved a good deal even with present equipment," according to a November 9 American Embassy dispatch which quoted parts of the article.

