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**HAFRANNSÓKNASTOFNUN**  
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## A short report on the Research Survey A9-2021

### Pelagic fish off east Iceland and the western Norwegian Sea 06 – 25 May 2021

*Part of the joint Northeast Atlantic Pelagic Ecosystem Surveys (IESNS) in 2021  
(see ICES WGIPS report, January 2022)*

Vessel: R/V Árni Friðriksson, TFNA (Iceland)  
Captain: Kristján H. Kristinsson  
Cruise leader: Sigurvin Bjarnason

The survey began on the 6<sup>th</sup> 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 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). The final transect of the survey finished on 23<sup>rd</sup> May (Figure 1). From there, the vessel headed to Iceland and was in Hafnarfjörður harbour on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May. The total distance covered during these 20 days was around 3910 nautical miles, where around 2980 nautical miles were undertaken on the survey area.

**Table 1. Overview of number of the different stations in the different areas in the survey A9-2021 on RV Árni Friðriksson.**

| Station type     | Number           |                |                      |                  | Total‡ |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------|--------|
|                  | Icelandic waters | Faroese waters | International waters | Jan Mayen waters |        |
| Pelagic trawling | 12               | 2              | 8                    | 0                | 22     |
| CTD              | 14               | 1              | 18                   | 5                | 38     |
| WP-2             | 14               | 1              | 14                   | 5                | 34     |
| Krill trawl haul | 2                | 0              | 3                    | 2                | 7      |
| Total            | 42               | 4              | 43                   | 12               | 101    |

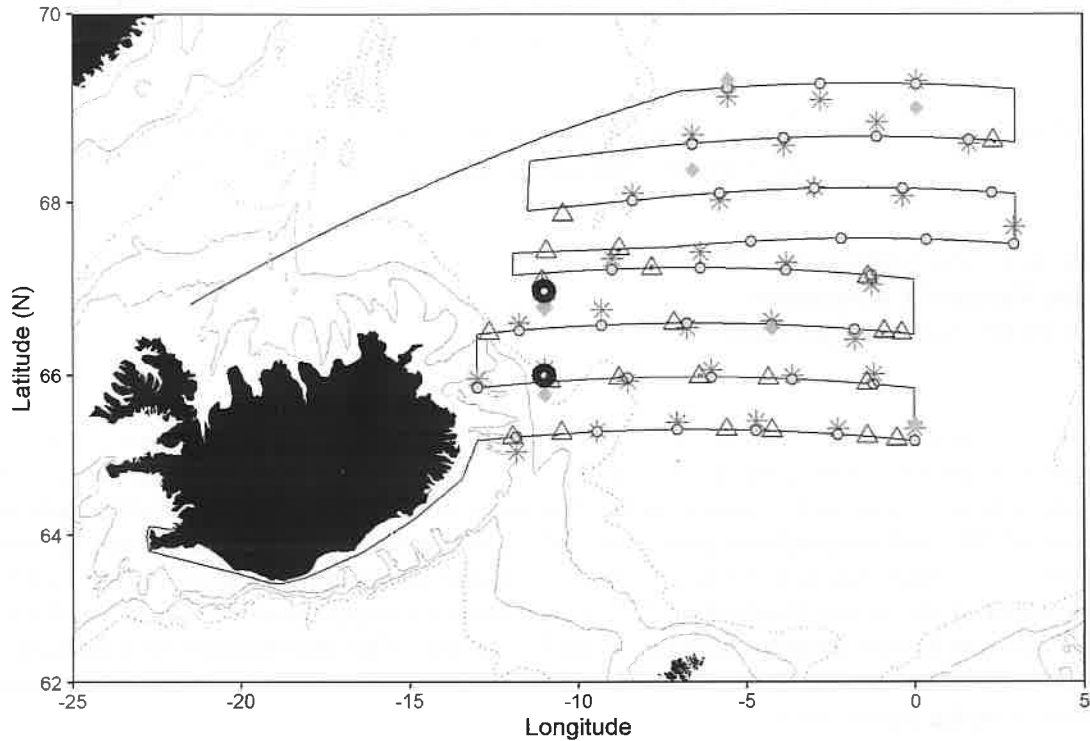
The main results of this survey on RV Árni Friðriksson was that Norwegian spring-spawning herring was found in similar abundance as in the previous years.

The herring was primarily distributed in the western area of the survey domain where the 2013- and 2005-2007 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 group report can be found here:

[https://heima.hafro.is/~sigurvin/IESNS\\_survey\\_report2021.pdf](https://heima.hafro.is/~sigurvin/IESNS_survey_report2021.pdf)

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 2021.



**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 2021 by RV Árne Friðriksson. In addition, two fixed hydrographic stations were taken (large black circles).