

Survey objectives

Primary

The IGFS provides ICES assessment and science groups with consistent and standardised data for examining spatial and temporal changes in (a) the relative abundance and distribution of fish and fish assemblages; and (b) the biological parameters of commercial fish species, for stock assessment purposes.

The main objectives of the IGFS, as coordinated by the international bottom trawl surveys (IBTS), are:

- a. To determine the relative abundance and distribution of pre-recruits for the main commercial species and provide recruitment indices;
- b. To monitor changes in the stocks of commercial fish species independently of commercial fisheries data;
- c. To monitor the distribution and relative abundance of all fish species and selected invertebrates;
- d. To collect data for the determination of biological parameters for selected species.

Ancillary

To maximise the utility of work aboard a national marine research platform such as the *RV Explorer* however, a number of ancillary objectives are also undertaken:

- a. To collect hydrographical information on the water column and the seafloor;
- b. To collect information on the composition and quantities of litter items on the sea floor, as caught in the fish trawl;
- c. To collect data on fish biology, invertebrates and or/the environment as specified by additional requests from international institutions and universities and as regarded practicable during the course of the survey.