SEAMAP 2007 Spring Plankton Survey Cruise Report

Introduction

USM/GCRL participated in the Spring SEAMAP plankton survey (CR. 0701) in June 2007. The cruise was postponed until June due to inclement weather throughout May. The cruise was also held in conjunction with our Dolphin/Amberjack/Bluefin Tuna project. All data collected utilizing other than standard SEAMAP protocols and gear will be available to NMFS upon request. Three standard grid stations were occupied.

Objectives

1. To provide information on the distribution and abundance of critical life stages of major Gulf species and associated environmental parameters in waters nearshore and offshore Mississippi and eastern Louisiana.

2. USM/GCRL will collect plankton specimens to determine species composition, distribution and abundance with 60-cm bongo nets (333-μm mesh), to depths of 50 fm, at fixed-grid stations to be determined by NMFS personnel prior to the summer and fall shrimp/groundfish surveys and for the fall mackerel survey, as feasible. Plankton nets will be deployed to the bottom and retrieved in an oblique manner. A 1 X 2m neuston net with .947-μm mesh is also pulled at the surface for 10 minutes at each station. Total stations to be sampled will be determined by NMFS personnel prior to each survey, with additional stations to be added as feasible. Plankton samples will be fixed in formalin and transshipped to the Polish Sorting Center (PSC), with duplicate samples being maintained at the SEAMAP Invertebrate Plankton Archiving Center at USM/GCRL for use by researchers. All station information will be recorded on SEAMAP plankton data sheets and will be sent to the SEAMAP-NMFS Data Manager. Surveys will be made from a chartered USM/GCRL vessel.

USM/GCRL will collect information on environmental parameters (salinity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, water transparency, wind speed and direction, wave height, cloud cover) through hydrographic measurements taken in conjunction with shrimp/groundfish and plankton sampling (total stations to be determined by NMFS personnel prior to the surveys). All information will be recorded on SEAMAP environmental data sheets and sent to the SEAMAP Data Manager.

Results

USM/GCRL conducted the spring plankton cruise (CR.0701) 6/5 – 6/07 and 6/9/07. Three stations were sampled in depths ranging from 27 to 44 fms. All sampling was conducted using SEAMAP protocols and standard gear. Samples collected were given to NMFS for shipment to the polish sorting center. No deviations from standard methods were noted.

STATION DATA

Stations	Date	Time	Lat.	Long.	Depth
B176	6/5/07	0630	2930.06	8800.05	44
B174	6/6/07	0630	2930.10	8729.56	38
B179	6/9/07	1330	2930.00	8830.09	27