

**The Coastal Fisheries of
South Eastern Scotland**
A Regional Review

Seafish Report No. 410

August 1992

SEA FISH INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

Seafish Technology

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**H McDiarmid
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SUMMARY

This is one of the smaller regional fisheries in the British Isles, but nevertheless one of extreme importance to many of the people who live there.

Trawling is the main activity on this stretch of coast with the fleet being dependent on white fish and nephrops. Most of the smaller vessels in the fleet direct their activity at nephrops whilst the larger vessels of over 15m length mainly concentrate on the white fish principally cod and haddock.

The coast between Eyemouth in Berwickshire and Gourdon in Grampian Region has a number of discrete fishery harbours many of which were built in the nineteenth century to provide shelter and fish landing places for the many hundreds of sailing drifters and line fishing boats of the period. Today the main fishing harbours are at Eyemouth, Pittenweem and Arbroath.

The rivers Eye, the Forth, the Tay and the Esk all provide estuaries with their own fisheries and harbours, but a feature of the East Coast is the number of man made harbours built on inhospitable rocky shorelines. These include St. Abbs, Johnshaven and Gourdon all of which are still active in the 1990's.

The total fish landings in the Region in 1990 were 9,629 tonnes valued at £13.5 million. This represents a sharp decline from the mid 1980's when landings were more than double the weight, even though prices were much less. Haddock and cod are under severe pressure and quota restrictions in Area IV have reduced opportunity. Moreover many of the larger vessels owned in the Region now landed elsewhere with Aberdeen being a preferred port. Nevertheless white fish is still the main source of income. The fleet consists of some 346 vessels.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report continues the series of regional studies of the UK fisheries by Seafish Technology, which is aimed at updating current knowledge about problems and opportunities affecting the coastal fishing industry in each area. The south eastern Scottish region under study extends from the border with Northumberland in the south to Bervie Bay, in south eastern Grampian Region, in the north and includes the Scottish Agriculture and Fisheries Department (SOAFD formerly DAFS) Eyemouth, Pittenweem and Arbroath fisheries districts.

2. THE FISHERY

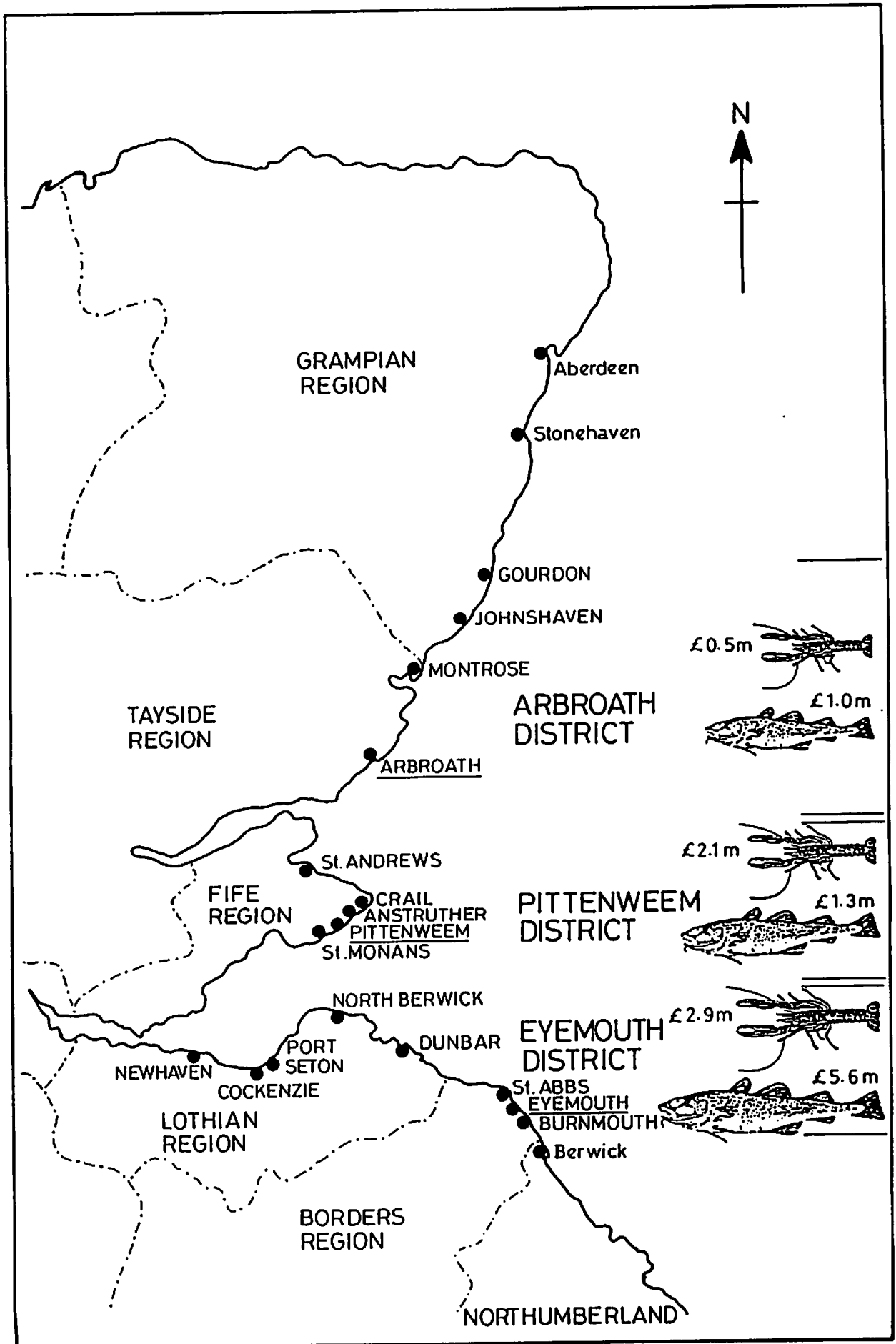
The three main centres of fisheries activity in the region are the harbours at Eyemouth, Pittenweem and Arbroath, with total recorded landings in 1990 worth £8.5 million, £3.4m and £1.6m respectively. However, as is also shown in Table 1, each district includes a number of lesser fish landing harbours of which Port Seton with landings valued at £0.77m and Dunbar, £0.58m, are the most significant. Of the other 14 harbours only Anstruther in Pittenweem District and Montrose and Gourdon in Arbroath District recorded landings valued in excess of £0.2m during 1990, the most recent year for which published, full fish catch and effort data is available.

Catch composition during 1990, as in previous years, differs between the three districts quite markedly. Demersal fish comprised 80% and shellfish 20% of Arbroath District's 1,107 mt total catch. In Pittenweem District the total catch was 2,328 mt of which only 46% comprised demersal fish and 53% shellfish (mainly nephrops), whereas in Eyemouth District the demersal catch totalled 4,627 mt, or 75% of the overall total, and shellfish 1,560 mt or nearly 25%. Landings of pelagic fish were less than 0.3% of the Eyemouth and Pittenweem catches and virtually zero in Arbroath. This is in marked contrast to earlier years up to 1981/82, as shown in Table 2, when there were important seasonal fisheries for herring and sprat especially in Eyemouth and Arbroath districts.

Overall landings into the three districts during 1990 totalled 9629 mt valued at £13.5m, comprising 6578 mt(64.6%) demersal fish, 12 mt(0.2%) pelagic fish and 3038 mt(35.2%) of shellfish. In addition to these home district landings, larger vessels based in the three districts also landed fish worth £1.2m into Scottish west coast ports and a further £11m into Aberdeen, Peterhead and other east coast ports. Table 2 also demonstrates that from 1980 to 1990, demersal catches peaked in quantity around 1984/85 but have since declined by some 60% under the progressive impact of more severe quota restrictions. Despite the fall in catch volume, increased fish prices ensured that fleet earnings continued to rise until 1987/88, but they seem to have fallen back since then.

The topography of the area changes, from rocky shores and steep cliffs in the section from the English/Scottish border to St. Abbs Head, to gently shelving sand and mud beaches around the Forth, Tay and Esk estuaries, rocky outcrops along the Fife coast and higher cliffs again from Montrose northwards towards Stonehaven and Aberdeen. These changes in topography have a profound effect on the fish stocks and production of the areas concerned.

The nephrops fisheries generally occur on firm muddy sea bed areas in the estuaries and offshore. They are thus of particular importance to prawn trawlers from the Dunbar, Port Seton, Anstruther and Pittenweem fleets. Crab and lobster are found along rocky shorelines under steep cliffs accessible mainly to smaller creel boats. There is a surprisingly important, hand-gathered, periwinkle fishery especially in Eyemouth District, where recorded production during 1990 totalled 200 mt worth £98,000. The fishery for white fish, mainly haddock with some codling, whiting and flatfish, occurs on offshore banks. Danish seine nets were the most popular white fish gear in the past, but are now being progressively replaced by single and pair demersal trawls.



East coast fishery districts with value of landings of demersal fish and shellfish 1990

Fig. 1

TABLE 1
Landings in Scotland by United Kingdom Vessels Weight and Value by creek

District and Creek	WT Tonnes				Value '000			
	Dem	Pel	Shellfish	All Fish	Dem	Pel	Shellfish	All Fish
All Districts	178,528	239,290	40,560	456,378	178,237.5	28,390.7	61,011.1	267,639.3
Eyemouth District	4627	7	1560	6194	5625.5	1.7	2915.1	8542.4
Burnmouth	14	-	36	36	22.8	-	70.3	93.2
Eyemouth	4311	7	535	4853	5221.0	1.7	933.0	6155.7
St Abbs	15	-	65	80	15.9	-	134	150.1
Cove	-	-	16	16	-	-	34.9	34.9
Dunbar	39	-	381	420	37.4	-	552.3	589.7
North Berwick	-	-	8	8	-	-	32.5	32.5
Port Seton	3	-	447	450	3.5	-	1040.4	1043.9
Granton	246	-	85	331	324.8	-	117.6	442.4
Pittenweem District	1066	5	1257	2328	1315.9	1.5	2113.1	3430.5
Burntisland	+		1	1	+		3.5	3.6
Methil & Leven	10		85	94	11.0		141	152
St Monans	22		8	30	18.8		19.6	38.4
Pittenweem	1037	7	849	1893	945.8	1.7	1088.4	2035.8
Anstruther	27		169	196	25.8		193.5	219.3
Brail			85	85			81.6	81.6
St Andrews	1		64	65	0.7		95.2	95.9
Arbroath District	885	+	222	1107	1054.3	0.1	533.8	1588.2
Arbroath	836	+	241	1077	689.7	0.7	472.5	1162.9
Montrose	211		50	261	185.6		42.7	228.3
Johnshaven	14		8	22	13.2		35.2	48.4
Gourdon	191		14	205	189.4		35.2	224.6

Source: Scottish Office; Sea Fisheries Statistical Tables, 1990

Summary

9629 tonnes All Fish at £13.5m
6578 tonnes Demersal at £ 7.95m
12 tonnes Pelagic at £3300
3039 tonnes Shellfish at £5.5m

TABLE 2
Fish landings 1980 to 1990, South Eastern Scottish districts; wt/tonnes, value (v) £'000

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	
	wt v	wt v	wt v	wt v	wt v	wt v	wt v	wt v	wt v	wt v	wt v	
Eyemouth and Leith *	5952 2930	6244 3110	8521 4816	8076 5129	8271 5196	8453 5108	6101 4692	6694 5776	5526 4645	3935 3690	4627 5625	Demersal
	2 1217	177 13	135 7.3	137 9.1			23 2.1	10 2.3		16 2	7 1.7	Pelagic
	1512 1148	1295 960	1295 960	1890 1928	2445 2567	1753 2204	1892 2379	1806 2520	2107 3061	1851 2538	1560 2915	Shellfish
Pittenweem	4964 2251	5111 2337	4170 2142	3602 1980	3511 2024	3332 1645	2688 1800	2791 2251	1588 1324	1096 1002	1066 1316	Demersal
	17.9 4645	3 1609	2.1 87	14 1.1	2 2.6	1 0.3	27 4.7	68 11.5	15 3.6	7 1.7	5 1.5	Pelagic
	1000 730	853 645	974 818	1215 1191	1318 1308	1479 1621	1647 2056	1185 1595	1637 2118	1261 1623	1257 2113	Shellfish
Arbroath	4521 1846	4044 1585	3986 1681	4874 2227	3987 2059	4820 2429	4701 2393	3443 2560	2770 2103	1252 1078	885 1054	Demersal
	295 33	469 74	24 5	1 0.2	1 0.6			190 35.8	0.2	0.7	+ 0.1	Pelagic
	289 137	281 208	343 328	370 378.4	347 426	295 490	331 509	398 662.6	403 666	312 586	222 533.8	Shellfish

Source: Scottish Office, Sea Fisheries Statistical Tables, 1980 to 1990 inclusive

note: Eyemouth and Leith districts were reported separately until and including 1983 statistics. Thereafter Eyemouth incorporated Leith district with the exception of Burntisland, Methil and Leven which transferred to Pittenweem district. Kincardine and Kircaldy, previously recorded under Leith are no longer recorded.

3. THE FLEET

The size categories of fishing vessels and changes in fleet composition since 1980, by base district, are indicated in Tables 3 and 4. As of 1990 the total regional fleet numbered 345 boats, of which there were 134 boats less than 30ft (9m) in length, 99 boats of 30/40ft (9/12m) and 71 vessels of 40/60ft (12/18m) and 41 over 60ft mainly between 60ft and 80ft. Over the period since 1980 there has been a modest 8% decline in total fleet size, from 377 to 345 vessels but there has been a much more significant shift in fleet composition. In percentage terms the under 30ft class has reduced very slightly, from 40% to 38%. The 30/40ft class has increased in numbers and proportionally from 15% to 27%, whilst the craft larger than 40ft have declined from 44% to 35% of the total fleet numbers, see also Figure 2.

Many of the boats of less than 30ft in length operate only seasonally. The remainder and most of the 30/40ft class operate all year round from local harbours, whereas the 40/60ft class of prawn trawlers migrate seasonally to grounds off the Northumberland coast and to the Scottish west coast, landings at those times into Blyth and North Shields and west coast ports such as Ayr, Oban, Mallaig and Lochinver. Although officially based at Eyemouth, Pittenweem or Arbroath, most of the 70/110ft length class trawlers are too large for these harbours and therefore land mostly into Aberdeen or Peterhead and occasionally into North Shields. It was noted that one locally based fleet of Anstruther owned, Kircaldy registered, 60/80ft seine-netters, land almost exclusively into Aberdeen, as did the earlier fleet of Fife owned great-liners which were a significant part of the Aberdeen scene until about the mid-1970s. These vessels worked Rockall, the Faroes and even Icelandic waters.

The domicile of the skippers and crews of both fleets was, and still is the East Neuk of Fife. Similarly, some of the larger Eyemouth based vessels, mainly landing into Buchan or North Shields nowadays, are still owned and crewed exclusively from Fisherrow and Port Seton near Edinburgh.

One of the last centres of traditional line fishing, using "sma" or small lines, was at Gourdon near Stonehaven where, as recently as the late seventies, there was a fleet of some 18 inshore line boats. Only one of these craft still survives at Gourdon and the decline was said to be due, partly to the better returns from trawling and partly because of alternative, more attractive employment opportunities now for the female family members who used to be responsible for preparing the lines each early morning prior to sailing.

TABLE 3
1190: Eastern Scotland active fishing fleet by district, by length group, by fishing method; number of boats

Base District	Length Group															creel	hand
		Dem Sin Trl	Dem Pr Trl	Ind Trl	Seine Net	Lines	Bm Trl	Gill Net	Other	Purse	Pel Trl	Neps Trl	Shr Trl	Qun Trl	Drg		
Eyemouth	0-29.9		-		-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4	-	-	-	27	-
	30-39.9	6	-		1	-	-	-	-	-	37	-	-	-	9	-	
	40-49.9	1	1		2	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	
	50-59.9	5	1		2	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	
	60-69.9	1	6		4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	70-79.9	-	6		2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	80-109.9	-	1		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		13	15		9	2	-	-	1	-	59	-	-	-	36	-	
Pittenweem	0-29.9	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	54	1	
	30-39.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	6	-	
	40-49.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	
	50-59.9	-	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	
	60-69.9	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	70-79.9	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Total	1	6	-	13	2	-	-	-	-	46	-	-	-	60	1	
Arbroath	0-29.9	1	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	1	
	30-39.9	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	36	-	
	40-49.9	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	8	-	
	50-59.9	2	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	1	-	
	60-69.9	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	
	70-79.9	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	80-109.9	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Total	4	5	-	5	4	-	1	-	-	19	-	-	-	45	1	

Source: Scottish Office, Scottish Fishing Fleet at December 31, 1990

TABLE 4
Fishing Fleet Composition, Southeast Scottish Fishery Districts, 1980 to 1990

Year	Eyemouth & Leith					Pittenweem					Arbroath				
	up to 30ft	30 to 39.9	40ft to 60ft	Over 60ft	Total	up to 30ft	30 to 39.9	40ft - 60ft	Over 60ft	Total	up to 30ft	30 to 39.9	40ft - 60ft	Over 60ft	Total
1990	32	53	28	20	133	61	34	19	15	129	41	12	24	6	83
1989	29	51	29	20	129	60	33	21	16	130	42	10	29	5	86
1988	50	49	31	21	151	54	22	23	18	117	43	10	30	4	87
1987	48	41	35	23	147	68	18	26	20	132	39	8	27	5	79
1986	47	40	33	24	144	64	17	28	19	128	40	9	32	4	85
1985	46	42	40	23	151	62	18	27	21	128	40	10	33	2	85
1984	48	39	45	23	155	56	12	30	21	119	38	13	31	2	84
1983	48	28	46	24	146	56	13	36	20	125	36	14	31	2	83
1982	48	31	51	23	153	55	15	38	19	127	36	16	30	3	85
1981	46	34	54	33	156	50	15	39	18	122	35	125	30	3	83
1980	52	33	59	20	164	51	12	38	18	119	49	13	29	3	94

Source: Scottish Office, Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistical Tables, 1980 to 1990 inclusive.

note: Burntisland, Methil and Leven harbours were transferred from Leith to Pittenweem fishery district in 1983, whilst Kincardine and Kirkcaldy, previously reported under Leith are no longer recorded.

4. EMPLOYMENT IN FISHING

Scottish Office fisheries manpower statistics (See Table 5), show that 890 fishermen were in full-time employment in the Eyemouth, Pittenweem and Arbroath districts during 1990. This is 387 fewer than in 1980 and probably reflects the proportional increase in numbers of 30/40ft craft in place of larger vessels. The Sea Fisheries Statistical Tables have also recorded part time/seasonal fishermen, but only since 1984, with as yet no discernible trend. Currently, 50 of the 101 recorded part-timers work in Arbroath fishery district, reflecting the relatively large number of small boats under 30ft in that district.

Nearly 50% of Pittenweem's fleet are boats which are also under 30ft in length, but the district appears to employ significantly fewer seasonal/part time fishermen. The figures suggest that most of the small boats in Arbroath district operate only on a seasonal basis, whereas more than half of the similar sized Pittenweem craft are used throughout the year. Eyemouth district has smaller numbers of both small boats and part time fishermen, most of which do not operate during the winter season.

There were no figures readily available concerning secondary employment effects, although there are boat building and repair yards at a number of locations within the three districts. These staffs, together with chandlers, harbour and fish market staff and fish merchants' employees must add up to a significant number of people whose livelihoods depend on the continued existence of an active fishing fleet.

TABLE 5
Numbers of fishermen employed, S.E. Scottish Fishery Districts 1980 to 1990

Year	Eyemouth & Leith			Pittenweem			Arbroath		
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total
1990	441	9	450	286	42	328	163	50	213
1989	445	23	468	318	34	352	174	60	234
1988	460	33	493	331	23	354	199	368	267
1987	472	31	503	374	37	411	211	368	279
1986	485	27	512	355	49	404	226	370	296
1985	507	35	542	382	32	414	184	52	252
1984	526	41	567	369	36	405	197	na	249
1983	na	na	-	na	na	-	na	na	-
1982	565	na	-	397	na	-	212	na	-
1981	583	na	-	413	na	-	255	na	-
1980	591	na	-	413	na	-	273	na	-

Source: Scottish Office: Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistical Tables, 1980 to 1990 inclusive

note: Part-time/Seasonal fishermen were not identified prior to 1984.

5. FISH MARKETING AND PROCESSING

There are recognised first sale auction fish market halls on the quaysides at Eyemouth, Pittenweem and Arbroath, from which local merchants and smaller scale processors draw their supplies. A similar market at Newhaven (Edinburgh) functions nowadays more as a city wholesale facility because a large part of the old harbour has been reclaimed and only one boat now lands directly into the market. Some fish come from nearby centres, such as Port Seton and from Eyemouth, but because of a decline in demersal catch quantities in recent years Newhaven market has become largely dependent on supplies from Aberdeen to meet demand.

As already noted, there has been a general decline in demersal fish landings since 1985 of some 50-60% in volume, offset until recently by a steep increase in fish prices, particularly for the larger size grades. One effect of this change has been a reduction in the onshore fish-handling labour force, especially in the numbers of expert hand filleters. Since November 1991, fishermen have been encouraged, by a negative effect of the quota system to increase catches at the "turn of the year" but in the process have landed greatly increased quantities of small haddock and whiting which exceed the hand filleting capacity now available. As a result, first sale prices have collapsed and a great deal of this fish has had to be withdrawn. The situation has been exacerbated by the prolonged spell of fine weather throughout January 1992 which has allowed continuous unchecked fishing operations and oversupply of fish and also of nephrops.

The main local centres of demersal fish processing are at Arbroath and Eyemouth. It was observed that Arbroath fish landings, which average around 40 to 100 boxes per day, were insufficient to meet the needs of all the merchants and processors. A considerable amount of fish, particularly the size grades of haddock needed for the "smokie" trade, was purchased from Aberdeen and Peterhead. The two major processors, R.R. Spinks and Swankies Food Products Ltd., both obtained most of their fish supplies from Aberdeen and elsewhere.

Eyemouth has one major processor, Scot-Supreme Ltd., but it buys very little local fish now because of the inadequate and irregular supply of the preferred sizes of locally caught haddock and cod. The company now relies on Canadian cod imported via Spain and Portugal. There are a number of smaller processors who do utilise local fish, but whereas in the past, Eyemouth was also a feeder port for the major markets at Aberdeen, Newhaven and Grimsby, virtually all the catch is now sold locally and in Edinburgh. The small size range available is a major factor here.

As has become the case in the fisheries of most parts of northern Britain, the nephrops industry has become crucially important to fishermen and processors. Table 4 shows that 36% of the regional fleet are primarily prawn trawlers (43% in the case of Eyemouth district boats). Home port and west coast landings of nephrops are mainly sold on contract rather than auctioned, and are consigned to processors in Berwick, Duns and as far afield as Annan, Motherwell and Ayr, West Highlands centres, Cumbria and Northern Ireland.

6. INDIVIDUAL CENTRES

6.1 Eyemouth

Eyemouth is the largest fishing port, in terms of catch volume and value, along the Scottish east coast south of Aberdeen. The harbour has developed over several centuries and the most recent improvement work was in the 1960's. Proposals were mooted for further harbour developments between 1973 and 1985, consequent on fleet growth, harbour congestion and the need to improve the harbour entrance and approaches. SFIA participated in these proposals, Technical Report No 275, dated September 1985, but funding difficulties since then have prevented any of the work from being implemented. There is still urgent need for this work to be done, and especially for measures to provide better shelter to vessels approaching the harbour entrance and to increase water depths in the approach channel in order to ease the present tidal restrictions on vessels drawing more than 8ft.

The harbour and immediate quayside area, including the market building, is owned and administered by the Eyemouth Harbour Trust, which also employs the harbour master and provides communication and navigational facilities to serve the fishing fleet. There are well established commercial boat building and repair facilities and a cooperatively owned quayside 2mt/hr ice plant. Fish selling and vessel agency services are arranged mainly by the Fishermen's Mutual Association (Eyemouth) Ltd and a private company. Eyemouth fishermen are represented in the Scottish Fishermen's Association. About 75-80 fishing boats operate from the harbour for all or part of the year and their catches of fin-fish are sold to local merchants/processors or consigned to Newhaven market for sale in Edinburgh. Catches of nephrops are mostly sold on contract to scampi processors in various parts of the UK, or as whole "live" prawn to continental buyers.

6.2 Dunbar

Another ancient but much smaller fishing harbour about halfway between Eyemouth and Edinburgh. It is mainly a shellfish landing centre and produced 464 mt of shellfish and 58 mt of demersal fish during 1990, to a total value of £582,000. The harbour is inaccessible to vessels larger than about 45ft and there was little sign of activity at the time of the visit, suggesting that fishing is mostly seasonal. The very narrow entrance to the harbour must be quite difficult to navigate in any weather. It was noted that considerable redevelopment of the harbour area was in progress, indicating that the commercial fishery was being squeezed by tourist interests.

6.3 Cockenzie & Port Seton

Port Seton is situated on the southern shore of the Firth of Forth, about 8 miles from Edinburgh. It has a relatively modern and spacious fishing harbour used by

about 25 boats more or less throughout the year and by a number of additional smaller craft on a seasonal basis. It was reported that a number of Port Seton owned 60ft vessels which were once used to catch white fish, have been replaced during recent years by 40ft nephrops trawlers. Landings at Port Seton are now almost exclusively nephrops (472 mt in 1990, plus only 12 mt of demersal fish, to a total value of £761,000). Most of the nephrops were sold on contract to Ireland, Inlaks (Inverbervie), Glen Isla (Berwick) and to Border Lairds (Amble).

The harbour is owned and administered by the local Harbour Commission and is used mainly by fishermen. A second harbour at nearby Cockenzie is also used by some boats, but serves mainly to shelter the slipways and repair workshops serving the joint fleet. Fishermen are organised through the Cockenzie and Port Seton Fishermen's Association, which appears to function effectively. One problem is the lack of any quayside ice supply thus far, which could make it difficult to comply with forthcoming hygiene requirements. Both harbours dry out completely across low water.

6.4 Newhaven

Newhaven fish market continues to function despite the reclamation and redevelopment of much of the surrounding former harbour area. Only one fishing boat still lands regularly in the remaining harbour section, most of which is occupied by private yachts. Nevertheless, Newhaven is still the principal wholesale fish market serving Edinburgh and the Lothians. There are 9 members of the Fish Merchants' Association, and throughput varies between 300 to 1000 boxes per day, most of which is trucked from Eyemouth, Aberdeen and Kinlochbervie. The fish is mostly hand-filleted and despatched to fryers and fishmongers in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Merchants were experiencing marketing problems at the time of the visit, consequent on the oversupply of small haddock and whiting already referred to.

Their main worry lay in the poor state of the market building, which was more than 100 years old and in urgent need of roof repairs and replacement of many of the roller door shutters. Problems were also looming as regards adapting the market floor and walls to meet forthcoming new hygiene standards. The availability of finance for the necessary work was also an issue, involving the Forth Ports Authority councils and the possibility of FEOGA grant aid. SFIA advice and support would probably be welcome.

It is understood that F.P.A. have agreed the repair and refurbish the main structure of the building but that interior surfaces refurbishment will fall to the users' to finance.

6.5 Anstruther

Anstruther and Pittenweem are located in Fife, on the north shore of the Firth of Forth, and although barely 2 miles apart, the two fishing communities have developed separately in a highly charged competitive atmosphere. Anstruther is probably the older of the two harbours, but most of the Anstruther owned fleet of 60/80ft seine-netters nowadays operate from and land into Aberdeen, leaving only a few small and mostly seasonal craft as the regular users of this excellent harbour. In consequence the fishing harbour at Anstruther is substantially underutilised.

6.6 Pittenweem

Pittenweem harbour close by, is larger and of more recent origin. It serves a substantial fleet (about 20?) nephrops trawlers in the 30/40ft class, as well as a number of smaller, mainly creel fishing boats. Unfortunately Pittenweem harbour suffers from an exposed and, at times, hazardous approach and entrance. There have been a number of unsuccessful attempts at gaining financial support from various authorities for the necessary harbour development work.¹ The general reaction has been that so long as the nearby, safe harbour at Anstruther remains underutilised, there cannot be a good case for further capital investment at Pittenweem, particularly as there are seasonal slack periods when most of the fleet is fishing elsewhere. Despite this, the Pittenweem fishermen have been reluctant to even consider moving their boats because of the entrenched, traditional antagonism between the two communities.

6.7 St. Monans

Some two miles West of Pittenweem is dominated by Millers boatbuilding and repair yard (see 8.8).

6.8 Arbroath

The number of fishing boats recorded as being based in Arbroath District, currently totals 42 boats under 30ft and 44 over 30ft. Most of the larger vessels operate semi-permanently from Buchan ports and the rest of the fleet are distributed between Arbroath, Montrose, Gourdon and other lesser centres. It was understood that only about 6 fulltime vessels regularly land into Arbroath harbour, but some of the dozen or so smaller craft also seen will operate seasonally and possibly take advantage of fair weather periods at other times of the year.

The Arbroath Fishermen's Association advised that landed prices were badly affected by the glut of small fish in Aberdeen and had fallen to as little as £20 per box compared to around £70 last year. As a result fishermen were having to maximise catches in order to cover costs. However, the Fish Merchants' Association noted that local landings were less than the normal daily average of 40 boxes, whereas the trade required up to 200 boxes. Unfortunately the small fish now being landed was too small for the traditional "Arbroath Smokie" trade. The shortfall in supplies had to be purchased from Aberdeen. There are 25 regular resident fish buyers in Arbroath, many of whom distribute by van to customers in Dundee, Perth and surrounding areas. Two major processors, R.R.

¹Since this report was prepared it is understood that the Regional Council have indicated that necessary works will go ahead and that improvements to the market will receive EC funding support.

Spinks and Swankie Foods, stated that nearly all their supplies had to be obtained from Aberdeen.

There appear to be no particular problems in Arbroath as regards the fishing harbour. all the necessary services such as the market, boat repair facilities, fuel and ice supplies, etc., are all operational. The main difficulty in future is seen as the enforcement of EEC hygiene rules for all fish processing premises. There is much uncertainty and the local environmental health officials have not yet produced any guidelines or instructions. Everyone is worried but nobody dares risk jumping the gun and the problem affects a large number of people because it seems that almost every other house operates a back-yard smoker. A problem with ice bunker storage is presently being addressed.

6.9 Gourdon

Some 14 fishing boats were observed in Gourdon harbour, of which only 4 were larger than 30ft. It was stated that 7 boats landed regularly plus a number of seasonal craft. Gear used includes soft-ground trawls, rock-hoppers, creels, gill-nets and one vessel which still uses lines. Landings average about 12 boxes per day, which is not enough to satisfy demand so that additional supplies have to be obtained from Aberdeen. There are 5 merchants who operate 9 vans, selling inland and to other outlets in Aberdeen.

The then current oversupply of small haddock and whiting and its effect on prices was an issue in Gourdon as elsewhere. Fears were expressed that it could result in short supplies later in the year because of reduced stocks of larger fish and an early halt to fishing when quotas became exhausted.

Considerable storm protection works, comprising the extension of the breakwater, were carried out in the 70's.

6.10 Aberdeen Fish Market

During a visit to Aberdeen Fish Market on Friday, 24th January, it was observed that there were direct landings from about 10 vessels and several truck loads of overland fish from Macduff and Fraserburgh amongst which were fish from several Arbroath owned vessels. The bulk of fish on sale were small haddock and whiting but it was understood that virtually all were sold. Buyers included several merchants and processors from Arbroath and at least three merchants from Gourdon.

7. CONCLUSION

In the limited time available, it was not possible to visit a number of lesser centres, such as St Abbs, Cove, Methil, St Andrews, Montrose and Johnshaven, but it seems unlikely that they would have presented any significant differences. The frequently referred to problem of excessive landings of very small haddock and whiting has almost certainly eased since the onset of February gales, which will have reduced fishing effort.

Nonetheless the fluctuations in quantities landed, particularly at these smaller ports, whether due to quota restrictions or weather has encouraged buyers to purchase fillets from larger distant sources rather than to rely on local fish for filleting. This situation presents problems of marketing when supplies are available locally as well as labour problems if filleters are no longer available in sufficient numbers. The number of buyers attending daily sales has decreased markedly over the last few years.

There was anxiety and uncertainty at several locations concerning the likely impact of EEC requirements of fish markets and processing premises. SFIA expertise in this field could prove helpful in some if not most of these cases.

8. HARBOUR DETAILS AND FACILITIES

8.1 Eyemouth (Photograph One)

Eyemouth is a Trust port. The harbour is approached from seaward through Eyemouth bay. The bay is open to the North with Fort Point to the North West and Gunsreen Point to the South East. The centre of the bay is dominated by the Hukers, a cluster of rocks which dry from 3 to 3.7m and which divide the entrance into two channels, the West and the East Yetts. The bay is relatively shallow, shelving from 9 to 12m in the Yetts to 2m above datum at the harbour entrance. The bottom consists of sand over rock. The East yett channel bed is rocky.

Leading lights align vessels from the West Yetts with the narrow entrance channel known as the "canyon".

Though the harbour basin is well sheltered, the bay is not an all weather haven and in Northerlies can become a mass of broken water near the Hukers.

The "canyon" is 50m in length. The width is 18m at high water level and 15m at low water level. The East wall is extended some 50m seawards of the canyon forming a breakwater. Sand has accumulated over the rock bed and the depth is only 1m at LWST and about 3.3m at half tide.

Some motion can be experienced within the harbour towards the North end of the west quay.

The main basin is some 200m x 30m. There is some 400m of quayside berthage.

A fishmarket open to the quayside but with doors to the roadway side is situated on the West quay.

Up to 65 vessels have been known to lay inside this basin and congestion is always a problem at weekends.

The basin is dredged to provide 1.8m at LW.

Facilities

A plate ice plant supplies ice to delivery vehicles. These are ex cement mixer trucks which in turn deliver by chute to boats.

The production capacity of the plant is normally 48 TPD and storage capacity is 100T.

The former Eyemouth Boatbuilding Co yard is now owned by Coastal Marine Ltd.

Fuel is obtained locally by road tanker. There is no co-operative arrangement.

8.2 Burnmouth, Cove and St Abbs

Three small shellfish harbours. Cove and Burnmouth are noted for their very difficult road access as they lie under steep cliffs.

8.3 Dunbar (Photograph Two)

A Lothian Region harbour. Consists of two basins the Cromwell harbour or old harbour and the Victoria or new harbour. These basins originally had separate entrances but a wall was built between the two docks effectively making both basins accessible only from the main entrance. The depth on the bar can be as little as one foot at LWS. The sea wall was designed to reduce surge effect in the inner dock, the Cromwell harbour. The latter is used nowadays mainly as small recreational craft moorings though occasionally as a haven of refuge in severe storms by fishing vessels. There are small boat launching ramps in both harbours but fishery vessels normally dry out on a shelving beach in the Victoria harbour for bottom inspection etc. These vessels land fish and normally berth in Victoria harbour. Catches are mainly nephrops or scallops which are trucked, mainly to Eyemouth. There are no diesel tanks or ice supply. The harbour dries out alongside the quays and entry is restricted at spring tides to one and half hours before HW. A crab and lobster merchants premises are located within the Cromwell harbour adjacent to substantial recreational development.

Charges for fishing vessels proposed as from 1.4.92 are for use of berthage, £4.16/ft/year or 35p/ft/week subject to a minimum of £7.70, or 19p/ft/day subject to a minimum of £3.85.

8.4 North Berwick

A small harbour caters for a few shellfish boats but predominantly for leisure craft. The harbour is owned by the Local District Council. Charges for the small fleet of shellfish boats are £2.46/ft/year and £4.90 per visit for "stranger" boats.

There is one small basin suitable for fishing vessels of less than 40ft and used by a handful of potters.

8.5 Port Seton - (Photograph Three)

Owned and operated by local harbour commissioners Port Seton supports an active fleet of prawn (*nephrops*) trawlers. The statute establishing the fishery harbour is dated 1876 and was provided by by the Earl of Wemyss. There is a local fishermen's association which sells boats catches mainly on a contractual basis and provides transport for finfish daily to Newhaven market. The association also operates a chandlery. There is no local ice supply. Fuel is supplied from the association's tanks and fresh water is available free of charge. The nearest boatyard is only a mile or so away in Cockenzie harbour though there is a drying out grid in Port Seton. The harbour dries out across L.W. Charges levied by Port Seton Harbour Commissioners are £10/week and 2% of the value of catches if these are of over £500 in value.

Cockenzie has only a couple of shellfish boats but the harbour is dominated by the long established boatyard. The harbour dries out. This harbour is owned and operated by the District Council. There are two slips at the boatyard for boats up to 54' and one for boats up to 100'. Also three covered building berths. (See Photograph Four).

8.6 Pittenweem

The harbour is owned and operated by Fife Regional Council.

It comprises some 2800m² with a depth of 2m above C.D at MLWS.

The entrance lies NE/SW, i.e. open to the SW. It has been cut through rocks and is hazardous in bad weather when boats have to run to Anstruther, 2 miles East. There is a covered auction hall 36m x 14m. There are doors to landward but only tarpaulin screens on the quay side. Three vessels can unload simultaneously. The capacity of the market is 1200 to 1500 boxes, it stands at road level. A fork lift truck is available.

The flake ice plant is owned by an industry owned company with nominal production capacity of 50TPD and storage for 30T. The Fishermens Mutual Association operates the auction and also a chandlery. It also dispenses fuel from tanks on the quay with a capacity of 15000 gals. Two vessels can fuel simultaneously. A private company also delivers fuel direct to boats by tanker vehicles.

A full range of repair facilities including slipway for vessels up to 80 feet in length are available at St. Monans, 2 miles West of Pittenweem.

There are long standing plans for harbour development. Recent approval has been obtained for a market hall improvement grant from EC funds. However, there is still no sign of approval for a breakwater construction grant sought from Scottish Office. This latter is seen as a number one priority by local industry in view of the hazardous harbour entrance.

Charges for fishing vessels include a 2.5% ad valorem on fish landed plus compound dues of £32.00, £53.00, £69.00 and £84.00 for vessels of less than 40' length, 40' to 65', 65' to 80' and 80' to 100' respectively.

8.7 Anstruther with Cellardyke

With a water area of seven times that of Pittenweem, Anstruther suffered from the post war decline of the herring drifter fishery. Subsequently the owning families resident there invested in great line boats and subsequently seine net boats in the seventy to eighty foot length range. These boats now operate out of Aberdeen.

The separate fishing community of Pittenweem, moved during the period from line boats to small seine net boats and latterly trawlers all built within the length range to allow them to fish within the Firth of Forth and resolutely refused to move to nearby Anstruther. The latter is used by pleasure craft, as a haven in bad weather by Pittenweem boats and as a layby harbour by larger seiners.

8.8 St Monans two miles West of Pittenweem is dominated by Millers yard which is now building fishery vessels of up to about 100ft in length as well as other commercial vessels. (Since this report was completed this yard has closed).

Fishing vessels normally based at Pittenveem may also use Canstrather or St. Monans by paying Pittenweem compound dues x 1.5.

8.9 Crail and St Andrews in the East Neuk of Fife are small harbours supporting a few shellfish boats and a substantial number of yachts.

8.10 Arbroath (Photograph Six)

Is situated on the Angus coast half way between Dundee and Montrose. It is owned and operated by Tayside Regional Council.

It consists of the original inner basin built as long ago as the 14th century and an outer basin built last century. The inner basin can be closed by lock gates but these are not generally used except when boats require to carry out engine trials over an extended period. This basin dries out across low water. The inner basin extends over 2.5 acres with 1300 feet of quayside and the outer basin is 3.75 acres in area with 1430 feet of quayside.

The harbour entrance faces Westward but is restricted by a sand bar and hazardous in onshore winds.

The harbour can accommodate around thirty trawlers of between 50 and 65 feet in length and about 25 small vessels.

There is a public slipway capable of taking boats of up to 75 feet in length.

The fishmarket 160ft x 30ft is situated on the quay which separates the inner and outer basins. Several auctions are held if there are heavy landings and therefore space is quite adequate.

There is one remaining active boatyard capable of building wooden boats of up to 80ft in length. There are also repair facilities for marine engines and electrics/electronics.

A feature of Arbroath is an internationally recognised firm of naval architects specialising in fishing vessel design.

Arbroath Fishermens Mutual Association conducts sales of fish, ice, chandlery and fuel.

The flake ice plant has a production capacity of 20 TPD and storage capacity for the same amount.

Charges for fishing vessels include a 3% ad valorem on fish, landed and annual compounded charges of £120 per vessel or £16/week or part thereof. Merchants pay 5p per box purchased.

8.11 Montrose

Principally a commercial harbour, nonetheless Montrose landings, valued at just over £0.25m in 1990 exceeded those of the traditional landing place of Gourdon. Most of the fish is immediately trucked to Aberdeen. Three trawlers are permanently based at Montrose. Depth alongside the River Esk berths is maintained at about 5.5 metres above datum at LWS and is therefore adequate for all but the largest stern trawlers at all states of the tide. The entrance channel is dredged to a minimum depth of 5.4 metres MLWS. There are some 500 metres of quays on both North and South banks East of the road bridge.

Stocks of up to 3600 tonnes of marine gas oil are always available. There are eleven fresh water points on the North Quay and four on the South Quay. There is a small boatbuilding firm based at the harbour capable of undertaking small repairs.

Montrose is an ancient landing place and is presently under the jurisdiction of Trustees under a Trust set up in 1837. The Board of Trustees are made up of members appointed by the Secretary for State for Transport and members representing the Regional and District Councils and representatives of port users.

Charges for fishing vessels are £14.00/trip for vessels up to 15m registered length and 40p/grt/trip for larger vessels. Fish landings are charged at 20p box.

8.12 Johnshaven

Southernmost of Grampian Region's harbours, just under 30 miles South of Aberdeen.

Consists of two basins, an outer basin with access to the sea and open to the South and an inner basin accessed through the former.

The inner harbour is sheltered but dries out across low water nevertheless offers berthage for up to twenty small shellfish boats. There is 3 to 6m at HW. The total area extends to 5800m² with 330m of quayside the greatest proportion being the outer basin.

The entrance is narrow between rock ledges running NW and SE.

There are shellfish holding tanks situated near the harbour for lobster storage.

Charges:

A composition rate is charged to regular fishing port users. The minimum charge is £8 per quarter plus for each metre registered length in excess of 9 metres, £0.80. An ad valorem of 2.5% is charged on fish landed.

8.13 Gourdon (Photograph Seven)

Near the town of Inverbervie and just over 20 miles South of Aberdeen, Gourdon is also owned by the Regional Council.

There are two basins enclosed by the Western Pier and the breakwater respectively. The harbour is open to the South and like Johnshaven has rock ledges running parallel with the entrance channel which is some 40 metres in width.

The total area of the harbour is 7200m² and there are 330m of quayage.

The Easterly or Gutty Harbour is part rock bottom and exposed to Southerlies. It is mainly used by pleasure craft. Both harbours dry out. The main harbour is protected by storm gates. There are fuel services and water and electricity is available.

A fish market operates daily during the week. The last main Scottish line fishery existed until the eighties but only one line boat was operating recently.

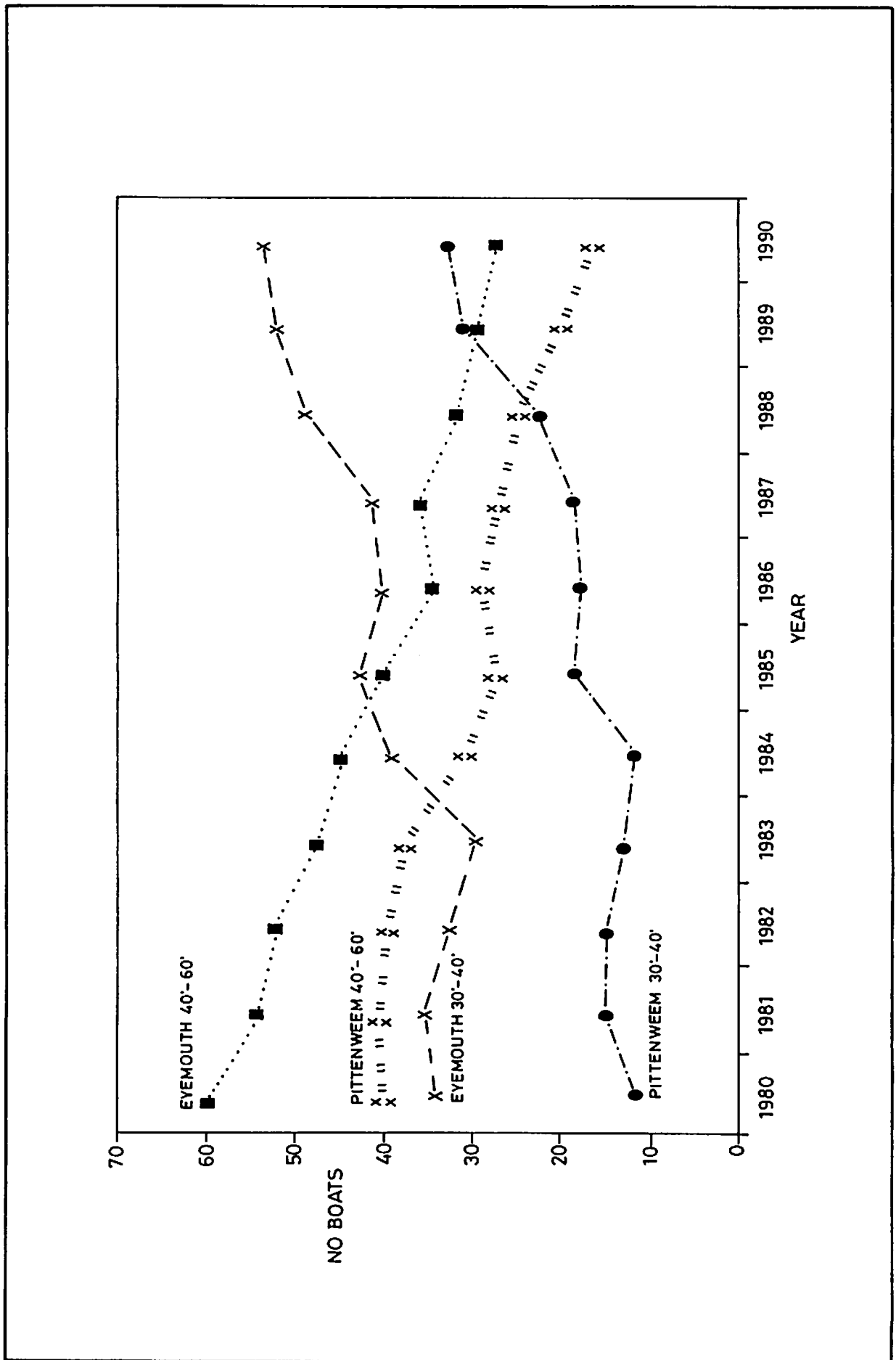
Charges:

A composition rate is charged to regular fishing port users. The minimum charge is £8 per quarter plus for each metre registered length in excess of 9 metres, £0.80. An ad valorem of 2.5% is charged on fish landed.

N.B.

A regular user fishing vessel is one which makes a minimum of 7 landings per quarter.

For vessels charged on a per visit basis the minimum dues are £8.50 per entry, plus £0.85 per metre in excess of 9 metres registered length.



Fishing fleet composition 1980-1990 East Scotland districts.

Fig.2

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph One - Eyemouth



Photograph Two - Dunbar



Photograph Three - Port Seton



Photograph Four - Cockenzie



Photograph Five - Newhaven Market



Photograph Six - Arbroath



Photograph Seven - Gourdon