FOREWORD (C.C.E. Hopkins)

A total of 15 member countries of a total of 16 participating in the Shellfish Committee Activities. Survey activities of both crustaceans and molluscs continue to play the dominant role in the activities of member countries. Interest in implementing relatively little used techniques has otherwise grown greatly, and this has manifested itself in the two successful workshops held under the auspices of the ICES Shellfish Committee: a) Multivariate Analysis of Shellfish Stocks, b) Spatial Statistical Techniques. Reports of these were presented at the 1989 Statutory Meeting and modified versions will be published in due course in the Cooperative Research Report series. Further attention has been devoted to developing production, productivity and energetics approaches, including modelling. These supplement analyses of life history trends. All these developments will naturally be focussed in the 1990 ICES "Symposium on Shellfish Life Histories and Shellfishery Models".

CRUSTACEA

Belgium - Belgique

(F. Redant)

Crangon crangon

The investigations on the brown shrimp included current analyses of landing statistics and CPUE data, and a study on the relationship between the winter sea-water temperatures and the shrimp landings during the following summer and autumn.

Nephrops norvegicus

The market sampling programme on the Norway lobster (Belgian landings from the Botney Gut - Silver Pit stock) was continued to evaluate the impact of fishing on population structure and composition, and to establish a data-base for future analytical assessment studies.

Population studies, together with investigations on the development of the abdominal eggs, provided conclusive information on the reproduction cycle and on the onset of biennial spawning in Central North Sea Nephrops.

Epibenthic biota

On request of the Benthos Ecology Working Group a bibliographic review was compiled on the productivity of epi- and hyperbenthic species, including Crustaceans (Cumaceans, Decapods, Isdopods. and Mysids), Echinoderms (Asteroids, Echinoids and Ophiuroids), Molluscs (Bivalves and Gastropods) and small bottom-dwelling fish (mainly Gobiids). The P/B ratios of epi- and hyperbenthos were found to range between 0.1 and 9.3 year-1, and compare with those reported for the macro-endofauna.