

**North American Commission**

**NAC(08)7**

***Labrador Aboriginal Food Fisheries  
And Sampling Program***



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### *Labrador Aboriginal Food Fisheries And Sampling Program*

#### General Principles:

- Government of Canada has a legal obligation under various treaties and Constitution of Canada to provide aboriginal people access to salmon for food, social and ceremonial (FSC) purposes
- Conservation comes first under the Fisheries Act and aboriginal land claims agreement
- Salmon harvests in Labrador traditionally provides edible and non-edible products and plays a big part in aboriginal life
- Labrador has several aboriginal groups that participate in FSC fisheries
  - 20 communities in Labrador benefit from FSC programs
- Access is provided through Aboriginal Communal Licenses which are negotiated and issued to each of the groups
  - Individuals are then designated by each group to fish
- There is a tradition of community sharing of the catch

#### Harvesting Regime:

- Individual must be designated to fish by an aboriginal group
- Harvest controlled through a limited number of tags
- Limitations of the fishery are through
  - Seasons
  - Gear type and length
  - Mesh sizes
  - Number of nets is restricted (one per fisher)
  - Location restrictions
  - Weekend take ups required in some area
- Fishing takes place near communities mainly in estuaries

#### Conservation Monitoring:

- Catch reporting is required through a log system
  - Reporting rates high in Labrador, 75-90%
  - In-season biological sampling program
  - Landings include estimates for non-returned logs
- All fish must be tagged
- Monitoring is done through enforcement officers of Aboriginal groups and Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada
  - Past samples have shown there to be few or no US salmon caught in this fishery
- Counting fence returns from four rivers in Labrador used to provide advice related to conservation issues

Labrador Sampling Program:

NASCO endorses the sampling of individual salmon in all fisheries as part of good management practice. Consequently, Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada will undertake to have samples collected by enforcement officers and staff of the Nunatsiavut Government and Labrador Metis Nation. Data to be collected will be location of capture, date of capture, fork length, whole or gutted weight, and scales. This sampling program will be carried out utilizing salmon that have been caught as part of the food fishery program and will not increase the number of salmon killed in those fisheries.