

West Greenland Commission

WGC(08)3

Report on the Use of the Framework of Indicators in 2008

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1. At its 2006 Annual Meeting, the West Greenland Commission adapted a regulatory measure (WGC(06)6) for the fishing of salmon at West Greenland in 2006, with possible application in 2007 and 2008. Under this measure the catch at West Greenland in 2006 was restricted to the amount used for internal consumption in Greenland, which in the past has been estimated to be 20 tonnes annually. There would be no commercial export of salmon. The regulatory measure would also apply in 2007 and 2008 if a framework of indicators (FWI) was developed by ICES and the Commission accepted this FWI for use in the interim years to identify any significant change in the previously provided multi-annual advice.
2. Last year the Commission accepted the use of FWI so the 2006 regulatory measure will continue to apply to the 2008 fishery at West Greenland unless the FWI indicated that there had been a significant change in the previously provided multi-annual advice. The Commission had agreed that it should be NASCO's responsibility to collect the data from the Parties and apply the FWI and to this end a group comprising one representative from each party was proposed. This group would coordinate the collection of data and application of the FWI and advise the Secretariat of the outcome so that by the end of January 2008 ICES could be advised if both the North American and West Greenland Commissions needed advice on stock status and catch options.
3. In accordance with this decision each WGC Party on was asked to nominate a representative to serve on the FWI Working Group. The representatives appointed were Gerald Chaput (Canada), Torsteen Overgaard (Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland)), Ted Potter (European Union) and Rory Saunders (USA). Gerald Chaput served as the coordinator. The Group's conclusions were that the FWI indicated that no change to the management advice previously provided by ICES is required for the 2008 fishery at West Greenland. This means that the multi-annual regulatory measure agreed in 2006 will continue to apply for the 2008 fishery and there will not, therefore, be a need for negotiations on a new measure at the Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting. It also means that in accordance with the request for scientific advice adopted by the Council last year that ICES would not be required to provide advice on stock status or management options for either the NAC or WGC areas.
4. This is the first time that a limited scientific assessment has been undertaken by NASCO scientists in support of a multi-annual measure and follows the progress made by ICES in developing multi-annual catch advice and the FWI. This approach no doubt gives some reassurance to the Greenland authorities that their continuing commitment to salmon conservation through restricting the harvest at West Greenland through allowing only a subsistence fishery is justified in the absence of a full scientific assessment by ICES. The arrangement appeared to work well and within the timescale proposed by the Commission.

Secretary
Edinburgh
12 May 2008