

**West Greenland Commission**

**WGC(08)6**

***West Greenland Fishery Sampling Agreement, 2008***



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The West Greenland Commission recognizes the important contribution of sound biological data to science-based management decisions for fisheries prosecuted in the West Greenland Commission area. The Parties in the West Greenland Commission have worked cooperatively over the past three decades to collect biological data on Atlantic salmon harvested at West Greenland. These data provide critical inputs to the stock assessment completed by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) North Atlantic Salmon Working Group annually.

ICES, the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and its Scientific Advisory Group, and NASCO all endorse taking additional samples from fish captured in the internal use only fishery in Greenland. This expanded sampling program, SALSEA West Greenland, requires whole fresh fish and is recognized as complementary to SALSEA Merge and SALSEA North America, which collectively hold promise in providing insights into the critical marine portion of the salmon's life cycle. The intention is that the whole fresh fish required for scientific analysis (e.g. stomach content, isotope analysis) would be fish that are part of the existing internal use fishery. Strong coordination and cooperation with the Greenland Home Rule Government and Kalallit Nunaanni Aalisartut Piniartullu Kattuffiat (KNAPK) in carrying out this scientific research program is required to fully integrate the sampling program into the internal use fishery.

The objectives of the sampling programme in 2008 are to:

- Continue the time series of data (1969-2007) on continent of origin and biological characteristics of the salmon in the West Greenland Fishery
- Provide data on mean weight, length, age and continent of origin for input into the North American and European run-reconstruction models
- Collect information on the recovery of internal and external tags
- Collect additional biological samples from fresh whole fish in support of SALSEA West Greenland or other special samples as requested

To this end, the sampling programme in 2008 will collect:

- Biological characteristics data including lengths and weights of landed fish
- Information on tags, fin clips, and other marks
- Scale samples to be used for age and growth analyses
- Tissue samples to be used for genetic analyses
- Various other biological samples (e.g. stomach content, isotope analysis) in support of SALSEA West Greenland
- Other biological data requested by the ICES scientists and NASCO cooperators

External Staffing Inputs:

Parties external to Greenland with interests in the mixed stock fishery at West Greenland, including Canada, the European Union, and the United States, have historically provided personnel and analytical inputs into the cooperative sampling programmes. The NASCO Parties agree to provide the following inputs to the cooperative sampling programme at West Greenland during the 2008 fishing season:

- The European Union<sup>1</sup> agrees to provide a minimum of 6 person weeks<sup>2</sup> to sample Atlantic salmon at West Greenland during the 2008 fishing season
- Canada agrees to provide a minimum of 4 person weeks<sup>2</sup> to sample Atlantic salmon at West Greenland during the 2008 fishing season
- The United States agrees to provide a minimum of 4 person weeks<sup>2</sup> to sample Atlantic salmon at West Greenland during the 2008 fishing season
- The United States agrees to co-ordinate the sampling programme for 2008
- The United States agrees to provide funding for Greenland Institute of Natural Resources staff to provide in-country support of the sampling program
- The Home Rule Government of Greenland, in cooperation with the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources, agrees to provide support for the sampling program by facilitating the sampling of Atlantic salmon by samplers from other NASCO Parties

In addition, NASCO Parties agree to provide the following technical analysis inputs to analyze samples and data collected at West Greenland:

- The United States agrees to provide microsatellite DNA analysis of tissue samples collected from Atlantic salmon harvested at West Greenland
- The United States agrees to provide oversight for the processing of all collected biological samples
- The United States agrees to report the sampling program results to the ICES North Atlantic Salmon Working Group in support of the stock assessment completed by the ICES North Atlantic Salmon Working Group
- The United States agrees to report the sampling program results to all SALSEA partners
- Canada agrees to provide ageing of scale samples collected from Atlantic salmon harvested at West Greenland
- Canada agrees to maintain the historical West Greenland sampling database
- The European Union (UK (England & Wales)) agrees to act as a clearing house for coded wire tags recovered from the fishery

#### Greenland Home Rule Government Coordination Efforts:

The Home Rule Government of Greenland agrees to identify a mechanism to provide sampling access to landed Atlantic salmon before grading/culling and before fish are subject to health regulations that would restrict or prohibit activities associated with sampling.

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<sup>1</sup> The Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this agreement, a person week of sampling is defined as a trained individual who works on site in West Greenland to collect samples of Atlantic salmon for a period of 7 days.

The Home Rule Government of Greenland agrees to inform persons designated by cooperating NASCO Parties of important developments in the management of the West Greenland fishery including planned openings and closures of the Atlantic salmon fishery at West Greenland.

The Home Rule Government of Greenland agrees to provide necessary waivers to the regulation that Atlantic salmon must be landed in a gutted condition to allow for the collection of biological samples in support of SALSEA West Greenland. To facilitate land-based collection of these biological samples, the Home Rule Government of Greenland agrees to provide the necessary permits to allow for landing whole fresh salmon.

The allocation of available scientific sampling personnel will be determined annually by ICES scientists to provide spatial and temporal coverage to characterize both the fishery and the Atlantic salmon populations along the West Greenland coast. Parties participating in the cooperative sampling programme will share access to resulting data and work cooperatively in the publication of information.