

WGC(13)4

The 2012 Fishery at West Greenland Tabled by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

At the Annual Meeting of NASCO in June 2012, the West Greenland Commission agreed to restrict the catch of Atlantic salmon at West Greenland to that amount used for internal subsistence consumption in Greenland. Furthermore, no commercial export of salmon was allowed.

In accordance with the Regulatory Measure adopted by the West Greenland Commission, the Government of Greenland decided to set the national quota for commercial landings of Atlantic salmon for export to zero tonnes. No export of salmon from Greenland was allowed in 2012. However in 2012, the Government of Greenland also decided to set a 35 ton national quota for landing at fishing plants. Even though up to 35 tonnes of the salmon catches could be landed at fishing plants, only a subsistence fishery was allowed, i.e. fishery for private consumption, and fishery with the aim of supplying supermarkets, local open air markets, hotels and institutions etc. The latter activity is only allowed for professional fishermen holding licences.

In 2012, the fishery opened 1 August and closed at the end of October. During this period a total catch of 34 tonnes of salmon was reported to the Greenland Fishery Licence Control (GFLK). Of this, 15 tonnes were reported by licensed fishermen as landed to production plants, 5 tonnes were reported by licensed fishermen as sold at open air markets etc, and the remaining 14 tonnes were reported as used for private consumption. However, 9, 9 tonnes of the private consumption was reported by licensed fishermen. Compared to the previous year the total catch increased by 6,5 tonnes corresponding to 23 %. The increase mainly occurred in NAFO area 1C where the reported catches increased from 5.3 tonnes to 15 tonnes while catches in all other areas were relatively stable. For the fourth year in a row, catches were reported from East Greenland in the amount of 550 kilos as compared to 117 kilos in 2011.

The fishery is regulated in the Government of Greenland Executive Order No 12 of 1st August 2012 on Salmon Fishery. The executive order distinguishes between 1) commercial fishery for Atlantic salmon to be landed at fish plants for export, 2) subsistence fishery by residents of Greenland, and 3) rod fishery by tourists/non-residents.

All fishermen who wish to sell Atlantic Salmon must hold a licence as well as report the catches to the GFLK. In 2012, the Ministry of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture issued 279 licences, as opposed to 2011 where the number was 234. According to the reports received, only 122 of the licenses were utilized for selling. In 2011 this number was 117. There has not been any significant change in the number of issued licenses or the number of utilized licences during the past several years. The catches were either sold at fishing plants, local open air markets or to local institutions, hotels etc, or kept for private consumption. The number of salmon caught in 2012 is reported to 9.646.

The wildlife and fisheries officers of GFLK make random checks at local markets in towns and settlements along the west coast of Greenland, and in hotels, restaurants, shops etc. in order to compare purchase of salmon with reported catches. In 2012, the wildlife and fisheries officers once

again have put a lot of effort into handing out reporting forms to all fishermen whom they have observed fishing for salmon, and informing them that all catches must be reported to GFLK.

As mentioned earlier, The Ministry of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture have implemented amendments to the current regulation in form of the new executive order on salmon fishery. This includes improvement of catch reporting in order to establish a more comprehensive picture of the fishery as such. In this process scientists need much more detailed information and biological data. The Ministry will also continue its information services in terms of reminding fishermen to report their salmon catches. This furthermore includes information regarding which gear is allowed to be used etc. This information will mainly be disseminated by transmitting TV spots during the salmon fishing season.