



West Greenland Commission

WGC(19)06

***Statement of Cooperation on the West Greenland
Fishery Sampling Program for 2019***

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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 members of the West Greenland Commission have worked cooperatively over the past five 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 Seas (ICES) North Atlantic Salmon Working Group annually.

The objectives of the sampling program in 2019 are to:

- Continue the time series of data (1969-2018) on continent of origin and biological characteristics of the Atlantic salmon in the West Greenland fishery;
- Provide data on mean weight, length, age, and continent of origin for use in the North American and European Atlantic salmon run-reconstruction models;
- Collect information on the recovery of internal and external tags.

To this end, members participating in the sampling program in 2019 plan to 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;
- Other biological data requested by the ICES scientists and NASCO cooperators.

Members of the West Greenland Commission plan to provide the following staff inputs to the cooperative sampling program at West Greenland during the 2019 fishing season:

- The European Union¹: provide a minimum of 8-person weeks² to sample Atlantic salmon at West Greenland during the 2019 fishing season;
- Canada: provide a minimum of 2-person weeks² to sample Atlantic salmon at West Greenland during the 2019 fishing season;
- The United States: provide a minimum of 2-person weeks² to sample Atlantic salmon at West Greenland during the 2019 fishing season;
- Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), in cooperation with the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources: sample Atlantic salmon from the city of Nuuk on a weekly basis during the 2019 fishing season;
- The United States: provide a Sampling Program Coordinator to coordinate the sampling program for 2019; and
- Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), in cooperation with the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources and the Sampling Program Coordinator: provide support for the sampling program by facilitating the sampling of Atlantic salmon by the samplers identified above.

¹ Ireland (2 samplers) and the United Kingdom (2 samplers).

² For the purposes of this statement of cooperation, 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.

Members of the West Greenland Commission plan to provide the following technical support for sample analysis and data collected at West Greenland during the 2019 fishing season:

- Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), in cooperation with the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources and the Sampling Program Coordinator: work with any factories receiving harvested salmon (if factory landings are allowed) to collect biological characteristics data and samples from a proportion of the landed fish via factory staff;
- The United States: provide oversight for the processing of all collected biological samples;
- The United States: report the sampling program results to the ICES North Atlantic Salmon Working Group in support of the stock assessment completed by this group;
- The United States: coordinate the publishing of a report that details the results of the sampling program in cooperation with institutes participating in the sampling program via a participating institution's official report series;
- Canada: provide single-nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) analysis of tissue samples collected from Atlantic salmon harvested at West Greenland;
- Canada provide ageing of scale samples collected from Atlantic salmon harvested at West Greenland;
- Canada: maintain the historical West Greenland sampling database; and
- The European Union (UK (England & Wales)): act as a clearing house for coded wire tags recovered from the fishery.

Members of the West Greenland Commission plan to provide the following coordination activities in support of the cooperative sampling program at West Greenland during the 2019 fishing season:

- Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland): 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 as needed;
- Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland): inform persons designated by cooperating members of the West Greenland Commission 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 United States: the Sampling Program Coordinator is expected to determine the allocation of available scientific sampling personnel to ensure spatial and temporal coverage to characterize both the fishery and the Atlantic salmon populations along the West Greenland coast; and
- All members of the West Greenland Commission participating in the sampling program are expected to share access to resulting data and work cooperatively in the publication of information.

Performance of activities set forth in this Statement of Cooperation are subject to the availability of appropriated funds under domestic law. Each member should make reasonable and good faith efforts to secure the necessary funds to implement fully its intended activities identified in this Statement of Cooperation. If compliance with domestic law and/or the lack of sufficient funds impairs a participating member's ability to implement this Statement of Cooperation, the participating member should notify the other members as soon as possible.