



**West Greenland Commission**

**WGC(15)5**

***West Greenland Sampling Brochure***



## WGC(15)5

### *West Greenland Sampling Brochure*

#### **Why do we want to collect samples from your salmon?**

To learn more about North Atlantic salmon and gain a better understanding of their life at sea

Each year, Greenlandic fishermen harvest Atlantic salmon from their coastal waters. Historically, this fishery was quite large and involved vessels from numerous countries, but catches have since declined to very low levels (1). These salmon originate from different individual rivers in North America, continental Europe, Iceland, and Greenland (2). Many of the salmon populations from these rivers have experienced large declines and some are now facing extinction.

The North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) is an international treaty organization comprised of countries throughout the North Atlantic, including Greenland. NASCO's role is to contribute to the conservation, restoration and management of Atlantic salmon.

NASCO organizes an annual sampling program in which scientists from Europe, North America and Greenland measure and take samples from the salmon you harvest (3 and 4). Similar sampling of salmon fisheries also occurs in many other countries in North America and Europe.

These scientists take lengths, weights, and scale and tissue samples (smaller than a 1 DKK piece). Length/weight data tell us how healthy the salmon are. The scale samples tell us how old the salmon are ((5), 4 years old) and tissue samples can tell us where the salmon came from by using genetic analysis (6).

In addition, the scientists look for tags on the salmon which identify where the salmon came from. These tags can be pieces of plastic sticking out of the salmon's back (7), plastic or glass pieces inside the body cavity (7) or even paint along the eye or jaw (8).

Scientists also look for clipped fins, especially clipped adipose fins (9). These clipped fins may indicate the presence of a secondary tag. In some cases, a tiny piece of wire (10) may have been inserted into the salmon's nose. This piece of wire has numbers stamped on it, as do the external tags (7).

If you find any tags, please give them to one of the samplers or contact the Fish and Shellfish Department at the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources in Nuuk (phone: 36 12 00). You may be eligible for a lottery organised by NASCO with a prizes of up to 15,000 DKK.

NASCO and the scientists participating in the sampling effort greatly appreciate that you allow us to take samples from the salmon you harvest. We also appreciate your efforts to accurately report all your landings of salmon. We hope that this information will help all of us, fishermen, scientists and managers, to better understand the status of the salmon stocks and increase salmon abundance in the future.