

West Greenland Commission

WGC(09)6

The 2008 Fishery at West Greenland

(tabled by Denmark (on behalf of Faroe Islands and Greenland))

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At the Annual Meeting of NASCO in June 2008, 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 Greenland Home Rule Government decided to set the national quota for commercial landings of Atlantic Salmon to fishing plants to zero tonnes, and prohibited any export of salmon from Greenland in 2008. Only a subsistence fishery was allowed, i.e. fishery for private consumption, and fishery with the aim of supplying local open air markets. And this is only allowed for professional fishermen with licences.

In 2008, the fishery was opened at the beginning of August and closed at the end of October. During this period a total catch of 25.2 tonnes of salmon was reported to the Greenland Fishery Licence Control (GFLK). Of this, 11.03 tonnes were reported by licensed fishermen as sold at open air markets etc, and 11.38 tonnes were reported as used for private consumption.

The fishery is regulated in the Greenland Home Rule Executive Order No 21 of August 10 2002 on Salmon Fishery. The executive order distinguishes between 1) commercial fishery for Atlantic salmon to be landed at fish plants, 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 issued by GFLK. In 2008, 260 licences were issued, but only 55 of these were utilized for selling according to the reports to GFLK.

All catches of Atlantic Salmon must be reported to GFLK. The catches were either sold at local open air markets or to local institutions, hotels etc, or kept for private consumption.

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 2008, 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.

The Greenland Home Rule is considering ways of improving the catch reports and also considers changing the report to make it more useful according to collecting biologic data. The Department of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture will continue the work reminding fishermen to report salmon catches. This will be done transmitting TV spots during the salmon season to remind the fishermen about the gear allowed and to report catches.