	Council <i>Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery</i>	CNL(21)21 Agenda item 5(h)
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Management and Sampling of the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery



Direction des Territoires,
de l'Alimentation et de la Mer

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To: Monsieur le directeur des pêches maritimes et de l'aquaculture

Annual Report on the Atlantic Salmon Fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon 2020 Season

Introduction

The archipelago of St Pierre and Miquelon (France) is one of the territories in North America which still authorises an interceptory mixed-stock sea fishery using gill nets to target Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*).

Only one river in the archipelago (the Belle Rivière) has a resident salmon population which is not subject to fishing restrictions. The latest genetic analyses carried out in 2017 shows that almost 90% of the catch taken in the archipelago's waters originates from the Gaspé Peninsula, the southern part of the Gulf of St Lawrence and Newfoundland (Bradbury *et al.* 2016).

Substantial work has been undertaken to increase awareness among fishers in order to improve the quality of the available data. The legislation that applies to this fishery is subject to dedicated inspection programmes. Catches have been decreasing since 2014 as the number of licenses issued has remained stable.

1. Legislation

Salmon fishing at Saint Pierre and Miquelon is regulated by the Rural and Maritime Fishery Code (CRPM), in particular Book IX, the Order of 20 March 1987 and the Order of 24 March 2015.

This legislation establishes the following:

- the fishery is subject to authorisation and an Annual Fishery Plan;

- the minimum capture size is 48 cm;
- nets must be declared and marked;
- the minimum mesh size is 125 mm;
- the fishery season is restricted to 21 May – 21 July;
- fishing gear must not be placed within 300m of a river mouth;
- restricted fishing effort:
 - 3 x 360 m nets for professional fishermen
 - 1 x 180 m net for recreational fishermen
- all catch must be declared (through annual declarations and a fishing log).

2. Permit Allocation

Fishing permits are allocated to professional fishers (who may sell their catch) and recreational fishers (who are not authorised to sell their catch).

The allocation procedure is based on fishery precedence and on the applicant's compliance with catch declaration obligations throughout the previous year.

The Maritime and Port Affairs Service deals with permit requests and allocates each permit holder with a specific site to fish for the season. The overall fishery site plan is mapped and published annually by Order of the Prefect.

In 2020, 5 professional and 81 recreational permits were issued.

3. Salmon catch

The 2020 catch is as follows:

Professional catch: 90.52 kg (compared to 72.25 kg in 2019 and 155.5 kg in 2018). 42 salmon were harvested by 5 vessels.

Recreational catch: 1,648.35 kg in 2020 (compared to 1214.12 kg in 2019 and 1,130.7 kg in 2018). 554 salmon were caught.

The number of salmon caught per vessel varies greatly. The highest catch reported by a single vessel was 38 salmon, and the second highest catch by a single vessel was 27 salmon. However, 16 vessels reported harvesting less than 5 salmon. It should also be noted that many people only fish for a very short period and bring their nets in well before the end of the season. 20 permit holders did not catch any salmon.

The total weight of the 2020 catch was 1,738.87 kg, compared to 1,286.37 kg in 2019 and 1286.2 kg in 2018. There is, therefore, a slight increase in catch when compared to the previous year. The increase is present in both the professional and recreational fisheries.

Table 1. Salmon catch at St Pierre and Miquelon from 2002 to 2020

Season	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Professional																			
No. Of Licenses	12	12	13	14	13	13	9	8	9	9	9	9	12	8	8	8	9	7	5
Volume (kg)	1223	1620	1499	2243	1730	970	1604	1864	1002	1764	278	2291	2250	1213	978	593	155.5	72.25	90.52
Recreational																			
No. Of Licenses	42	42	42	52	52	53	55	50	57	58	60	64	70	70	70	80	80	80	81
Volume (kg)	729	1272	1285	1044	1825	1062	1846	1600	1780	1992	1168	3011	1561	2300	3749	2223	1130.7	1214.1 2	1648.35
Total	1952	2892	2784	3287	3855	2032	3450	3464	2782	3756	1446	5302	3811	3513	4727	2816	1286	1286	1739

There is no export of salmon and all salmon caught are consumed by the local market. Most are retained for personal consumption, with only a few salmon caught by professional fishers being sold to restaurants or individuals through a local fishmonger, or directly by the fisher to individuals. While the number of licenses is stable, there has been a 33% increase from 2019 to 2020. This is the first reported increase since 2017.

4. Fishing Effort

Fishing effort is mainly concentrated around the East and South-East of St Pierre. Other fishing sites are located around Miquelon and Langlade.

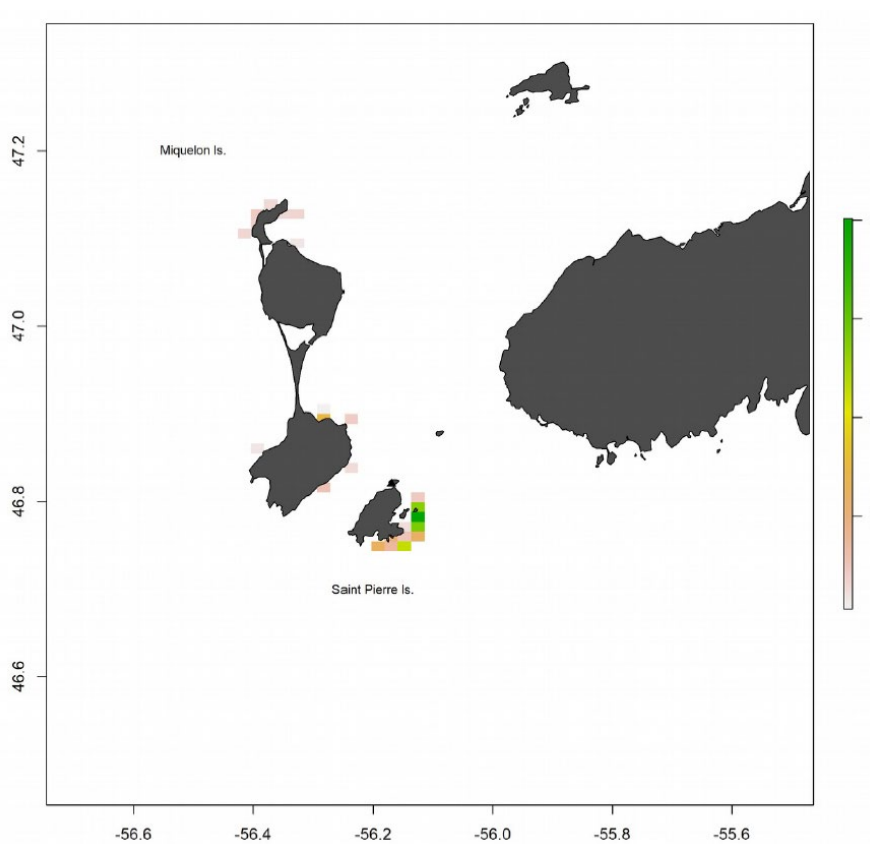


Figure 1. Fishing effort (in metres of net) per geographic unit

5. Length Analysis

The distribution of the length measurements of salmon caught at St Pierre and Miquelon shows two clearly distinct cohorts. In 2020 60.7% of salmon caught were one-sea-winter fish (grilse – total length <63 cm). Similar observations have been made for several years. In 1975, B. Patrel reported that 58% were grilse, confirming the general downward trend in the number of multi-sea-winter fish in North American Atlantic salmon stocks (ICES. 2018).

6. 2020 Report

In total, 195 inspections were carried out by Maritime Affairs Service staff in 2020, during the period 20 May – 8 July. 190 inspections took place in the recreational fishery, while 5 took place in the professional fishery. The inspections were carried out at random in the mornings and / or the evenings.

The fishers comply very well with the regulations. In 2021 the inspection team will have their own patrol boat.

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Glossary

Grilse Atlantic salmon that spend one winter at sea and return to their river of origin to spawn. Salmon populations in some rivers and some groups of rivers are mainly composed of grilses.

Two-Sea-Winter Salmon (2SW) Atlantic salmon that spend two winters at sea before returning to spawn. The majority of salmon harvested at Greenland are 2SW salmon.

Multi-Sea-Winter Salmon (MSW) Atlantic salmon, including 2SW salmon, which spend more than one winter at sea. Some spend three or more winters at sea and return to spawn several times. The majority of salmon in some rivers are Multi-Sea-Winter salmon.

Mixed-Stock Fishery Atlantic salmon from many different rivers are found in the ocean, coastal areas and in some estuaries. Some of these are from at-risk populations and are harvested along with salmon from healthy populations. This kind of fishery operates in Greenland, on the Labrador coast and at St Pierre and Miquelon.

Conservation limits A conservation limit is the minimum number of spawners necessary to maintain a population and prevent its decline.

