

Agenda item 6.5
For decision

Council

CNL(04)21

Unreported Catches – Returns by the Parties

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1. The Council has previously agreed that the Parties should be requested to provide, on an annual basis, information in relation to unreported catches, and has welcomed the progress made in transparent presentation of this information. For 2003, new information on the management control and reporting systems for the EU (Germany and Ireland) has been provided. No changes have been reported by the other Parties. In 2003, between 675-1,007 tonnes were estimated to be unreported compared to a provisional declared catch of 2,471 tonnes, i.e. the estimate of unreported catch is between 27-41% of the reported catch. The estimated unreported catch over the five years for which information is available is as follows:

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Estimate of unreported catch	917-1,160	1,065-1,445	962-1,374	838-1,158	675-1,007
% of reported catch	41-52%	37-51%	37-51%	32-44%	27-41%

2. More than 126,000 salmon were released following capture in recreational fisheries in 2003. This is an increase on the number caught and released in 2002 (118,000) and 2001 (112,000). Catch and release angling is not practised in all countries and in some countries no statistics are available on the extent of its use.
3. A number of new measures to minimise the level of unreported catch have been reported, including: efforts to improve the distribution of catch reporting forms in Greenland; more thorough targeting of fishery owners with catch return questionnaires in Finland; the introduction of incentives to provide catch reports and efforts to increase awareness of the importance of catch reporting in Norway; the re-opening of a commercial fishery on the Pechora River in Russia so as to reduce the illegal fishery; and the closure to all fishing of a section of the Narraguagus River in the US in response to reports of illegal fishing for salmon. A number of measures introduced in recent years have also been maintained in 2003. These include: the carcass tagging and logbook scheme and the use of on-the-spot fines for non-return of logbooks in Ireland; the carcass tagging and logbook scheme in Northern Ireland; the nationwide second-reminder system for catch returns in England and Wales; improved control of fisheries in river mouths in Sweden; and education efforts to improve identification of Atlantic salmon in US.
4. Last year the Council noted the continuing progress being made by the Parties in reducing the level of unreported catches and emphasised the need to take stronger measures to minimise the level of such catches. It appears that this progress in reducing the level of unreported catch is being maintained, and new measures to address this problem continue to be introduced. The Council is asked to consider what, if any, additional actions it wishes to take in relation to unreported catches. The Secretary will continue to request information on unreported catches from the Parties on an annual basis.
5. At the time of preparation of this paper, information had not been received from some EU Member States (France, Portugal and Spain) which have salmon stocks.

Secretary
Edinburgh
11 May, 2004

1. Description of management control and reporting systems by country

European Union

Germany

There has been a legal obligation since 1993 for all fishermen to report catches of salmon to the authorities but no management control system has been established.

Ireland

A national database of catch information has been established. The carcass tagging and logbook scheme introduced in 2001 has resulted in an increase in the reported catch for the period 2001-2003 over the previous 5 years and therefore a corresponding decrease in unreported catch. Prior to 2001 catch statistics had been derived primarily from recorded sales in licensed salmon dealers' registers, with estimates of private sales of legally caught salmon included in unreported catches. Preliminary analyses suggest that approximately 30% of salmon caught in 2002 and 2003 were not sold through licensed dealers but were either kept for domestic consumption or sold through retail outlets, hotels, etc. While there is still an element of illegal catch this is thought to be low at present.

Other Parties

No changes to the management control and reporting systems were reported by the other Parties or the other EU Member States. Descriptions of these systems were presented in documents CNL(00)19, CNL(02)19 and CNL(03)20.

2. Estimate of unreported catch by country, broken down by category and indicating whether the unreported catch is the result of legal or illegal activities

Party	Estimate (tonnes)	Breakdown
Canada	118	Illegal activities. Estimated by enforcement, management and biological staff. Labrador – 2.16 tonnes; Newfoundland – 41.92 tonnes; Quebec – 34.16 tonnes; New Brunswick – 38.85 tonnes; Nova Scotia – 1.21 tonnes (no report from 3 fishing areas); Prince Edward Island < 1 tonne.
Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)		
<i>Faroe Islands</i>	<1	The unreported catch is the result of legal activities. This estimate is based only on information from the Sports Fishermen's Association.
<i>Greenland</i>	Approx. 10	In 2003 Wildlife and Fisheries Officers reported one incident of illegal fishing for salmon (use of a trout net instead of a salmon net). A total of 146 licences were issued to professional fishermen in 2003, but reports indicated that only 20 of these were utilised. Some of the catches may be legal but have been reported after the close of the fishery. Some fishermen are said not to have received reporting forms from the local authorities. Due to the scattered nature of the fishery, effective control by the authorities is impossible within any reasonable level of effort. Presently there is no way of estimating the magnitude of the unreported fishery. However, as any change in the pattern of consumption is unlikely to have taken place in recent years, the unreported fishery is estimated to be at the same level as in the proceeding years.
European Union		
<i>Denmark</i>	-	There are no estimates of unreported catches but DIFRES considers the number to be insignificant.
<i>Finland</i>	17	Negligible illegal catch.
<i>Germany</i>	-	No estimate available. A significant part of the salmon run may be taken by anglers. The Atlantic salmon is protected in Northrhine-Westfalia.
<i>Ireland</i>	57	Mainly illegal catch.
<i>Sweden</i>	1.8	Approximately 10% of catch. Largely the result of legal activities in fisheries with no obligation to report catches (see CNL(01)19 for further details) but poaching probably contributes to a minor extent. It is believed that new fishery regulations in recent years have reduced the proportion of the catch that is not reported.
<i>UK – England and Wales</i>	24	Estimates are not made for separate categories of unreported catch. The total is calculated using the percentages in Table 3.
<i>UK – Northern Ireland</i>	0.3	Figure for commercial net fisheries in Northern Ireland. This figure has dropped significantly from earlier years largely as a result of the introduction of carcass tagging of salmon in both FCB and FCILC areas in 2001/2002.
<i>UK – Scotland</i>	25	Legal and illegal components.
Iceland	2.2	
Norway	460 (uncertainty ± 140 tonnes)	Illegal catch in the sea: 124 tonnes By-catch in commercial sea fishing: 18 tonnes Legal catch in sea by bag-net and bend net: 110 tonnes Legal catch in sea by angling: 97 tonnes Illegal catch in rivers: 14 tonnes Legal catch in rivers, mainly by angling: 97 tonnes
Russian Federation	99-152	Legal coastal fishery: 1-5 tonnes Illegal coastal fishery: 3-7 tonnes Legal in-river fishery: 15-20 tonnes Illegal in-river fishery: 80-120 tonnes
USA	0	There were no reports in the mandatory logbooks of fishermen of by-catch of Atlantic salmon, and no observers documented by-catch of Atlantic salmon in any fishery in 2003.
TOTAL	675-1,007	

3. Explanation of how the figure for unreported catch is arrived at

New information on how the figure for unreported catch is derived has been provided by EU (Finland and Ireland).

In Finland, there are licensed fisheries which are not required to report their catch, but the total catch is estimated by extrapolation from the reported catch. There is negligible illegal catch but suppression of information thought to be unfavourable might also lead to unreported catches. In Ireland, local sale or consumption was thought to have been a source of unreported catches in the past but since 2001, with the introduction of logbooks, it is obligatory to provide details of all disposals of salmon landed in Ireland.

No changes to the way the figure for unreported catch is derived have been reported by the other Parties or other EU Member States. For details of an explanation of how the figure for unreported catch is derived see documents CNL(01)19 and CNL(03)20.

4. *The extent of catch and release fishing*

Party	Estimated Number Released	Comment
Canada	51,442	Preliminary numbers: 28,503 small salmon; 22,939 large salmon.
Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)		
<i>Faroe Islands</i>	0	
<i>Greenland</i>	0	
European Union		
<i>Denmark</i>	No statistics available.	Catch and release is carried out in some rivers but the number of salmon involved is not known.
<i>Finland</i>	Negligible.	
<i>Germany</i>	No statistics available.	
<i>Ireland</i>	No statistics available.	Under current legislation if an angler catches his quota of salmon he may continue to fish but only on a catch and release basis. Catch and release is becoming more common in Ireland particularly during the latter part of the season and in some fisheries (Burrishoole and Delphi) anglers return well over 95% of all wild salmon caught.
<i>Sweden</i>	No statistics available.	Catch and release fishing is practised in a few rivers in order to improve the protection of females before and during the spawning period. The practice of catch and release fishing is likely to increase.
<i>UK - England and Wales</i>	5,981	Provisional estimate for 2003 is 55% of rod-caught fish released (including voluntary and compulsory catch and release). Agreements (both formal and voluntary) have been reached for some rivers in southern England for the release of all fish caught by anglers.
<i>UK - Northern Ireland</i>	No statistics available.	Current regulations in the FCB area require catch and release of spring fish (from start of season to 31 May). Many anglers practice voluntary catch and release thereafter.
<i>UK - Scotland</i>	30,156	55% of all salmon and grilse caught by rod and line were subsequently released.
Iceland	5,357	15.8% of all rod-caught salmon.
Norway	0	The extent of catch and release fishing is sporadic and accidental.
Russian Federation	33,862	81% of the total recreational catch. This information is based on catch reports sent to the relevant authorities.
USA	0	There is no directed catch and release fishing for sea-run Atlantic salmon in the US.
TOTAL	126,798	

5. Any measures taken to further minimise the level of unreported catches

Party	Measures taken
Canada	No new measures.
Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)	
<i>Faroe Islands</i>	No new measures.
<i>Greenland</i>	In 2003, the Wildlife and Fisheries Officers have put a lot of effort into handing out reporting forms to all fishermen whom they have observed fishing for salmon and advising them that all catches must be reported to the Greenland Fishery Licence Control.
European Union	
<i>Denmark</i>	No new measures.
<i>Finland</i>	Different groups of owners of fishing rights, especially some new ones, are now being contacted more effectively than previously with targeted questionnaires.
<i>Germany</i>	No new measures.
<i>Ireland</i>	No new measures. The return rate of anglers' logbooks to the Regional and Central Fisheries Boards was 43% in 2001, 52% in 2002 and is expected to be over 60% in 2003 but returns are not yet finalised. Regional authorities have issued on-the-spot fines for non-return of 2003 angling log-books.
<i>Sweden</i>	No new measures. As previously reported, recent fishery regulations have improved the possibilities to control fisheries in river mouths. Furthermore, investigations are underway of traditional traps and net fisheries in three rivers where there is no obligation to report catches.
<i>UK - England and Wales</i>	No new measures. In 2001, for the first time, a nation-wide second reminder was issued by the Environment Agency to anglers in England and Wales in an effort to reduce the level of unreported catch in the rod fishery. This resulted in a substantial improvement in the catch return rate in 2001 and 2002 (83% and 94% respectively for annual licence holders, compared with an average of 75% for the period 1998-2000). Provisional data for 2003 (86% return for annual licence holders to date) indicates that reporting improvements continue.
<i>UK - Northern Ireland</i>	No new measures. The salmon tagging and logbook scheme introduced in 2001 should provide accurate catch statistics of angling and commercial fishery exploitation.
<i>UK - Scotland</i>	No new measures.
Iceland	No new measures.
Norway	In recent years systems and routines for reporting catches have gradually improved in many salmon rivers, including many of the major sport-fishing rivers. The measures taken include introducing deposits in relation to catch reports, employing data technology to support the collection and compilation of catch reports and increasing general awareness of the importance of more accurate catch reporting among fishermen. These improvements have led to a considerable reduction in unreported catches from angling.

Party	Measures taken
Russian Federation	A commercial in-river fishery was re-opened on the Pechora River after a ban was implemented in 1989. This was done with the aim of reducing the pressure on the stock from illegal fishing.
USA*	Angling for Atlantic salmon is prohibited in Maine, but in 2003 illegal angling for salmon occurred on the Narraguagus River under the guise of shad angling. An emergency rule was adopted by the Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Agency which closed to all fishing the section of the Narraguagus River in which these activities were observed. Educational efforts are continuing to ensure that recreational anglers can identify Atlantic salmon and are aware of the fishing restrictions. Particular emphasis has been placed on distinguishing between trout and juvenile Atlantic salmon to reduce bycatch at the early life stages.

* Unreported catch estimated to be zero.