

Agenda item 8  
For decision

**Council**

**CNL(04)26**

*The St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fishery*

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**Background**

1. In recent years the North American Commission and the Council have become increasingly concerned about catches of salmon at St Pierre and Miquelon which, although low, have increased at a time when abundance of North American stocks has declined to alarming levels and when severe restrictions on harvest have been introduced in other fisheries harvesting these stocks. There have also been concerns about the lack of engagement from France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) in cooperating on a sampling programme for the St Pierre and Miquelon salmon fishery. Last year, the President announced that he had received, on 29 May, just before the Twentieth Annual Meeting, a letter from France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) indicating that it was France's intention to implement a sampling programme for the salmon fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon in 2003. The Council welcomed this development and asked that the President and Secretary respond, welcoming the sampling programme and, building on France's spirit of cooperation, offering to cooperate through the involvement of NASCO scientific representatives.

**Sampling**

2. In accordance with this request, letters were sent by the President and Secretary to the Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation, de la Pêche et des Affaires rurales on 12 June 2003. English translations of these letters are contained in Annex 1. As previously requested by the Council, we have invited France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to attend NASCO's Annual Meetings, and to seek catch statistics for the fishery and information on its management. We are aware that the US has made efforts since the last Annual Meeting to enquire as to the status of the sampling programme but has, to date, received no response from the French authorities (see CNL(04)14). However, on 28 May 2004 a response was received from the Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation de la Pêche et des Affaires rurales confirming that during the 2003 salmon fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon, a sample of 340 salmon was weighed and measured and water temperature data was collected (Annex 2). The sampling undertaken in 2003 is as outlined in the letter from the French authorities of 29 May 2003. However, it falls short of the sampling programme requested by NASCO and envisaged by ICES in order to gain a better understanding of the composition of the salmon catch at St Pierre and Miquelon, and to determine the effect of the fishery on North American salmon stocks. There was no genetic or pathological sampling. Furthermore, no observations of tags and marks has been obtained and no scale samples have been collected. However, the Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation de la Pêche et des Affaires rurales, has indicated that the biometric sampling will be continued in 2004-2005 and that a genetic study will be undertaken in 2004 (and completed in 2005) provided that Canada is able to cooperate on this sampling programme. The pathological study will be considered at a later stage.

### **Regulation and Catch Statistics**

3. Catch statistics and information on the regulation of the fishery have also been provided by the Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation de la Pêche et des Affaires rurales. These indicate that in 2003 a total of 2.892 tonnes were harvested, 1.620 tonnes by "commercial" fishermen and 1.272 tonnes by recreational fishermen. The Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation, de la Pêche et des Affaires rurales has advised the Commission that the commercial fishing is conducted by fishermen from communities which are heavily dependent on fishing and that this fishery should more appropriately be described as a subsistence fishery. There is no export of the harvest. The total number of licences (54) issued in 2003 is the same as in 2002. The Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation de la Pêche et des Affaires rurales has also indicated that the aim is to stabilize, in time, the harvest of the resource and has reiterated that it would be interested in an exchange of information with NASCO Parties managing traditional fisheries for communities which are highly dependent on the fishery.
4. We have been advised that France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) will be represented at the Twenty-First Annual Meeting by Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation de la Pêche et des Affaires rurales in Paris. In the light of the information provided by France, the Council is asked to consider if it wishes to take any further action in relation to the St Pierre and Miquelon salmon fishery.

Secretary  
Edinburgh  
2 June, 2004

CNL39.032

12 June, 2003

Mr Christian Ligeard  
Maritime Fisheries Assistant Manager  
Ministry of Agriculture Food, Fishing and Rural Affairs  
3 Fontenoy Place  
75007 Paris  
FRANCE

Thank you for your letter of 29 May.

I very much appreciate the information you provided and the background you gave NASCO on the salmon fisheries surrounding the great historic islands of St Pierre and Miquelon.

I particularly welcome France's expression (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) of its willingness to engage in a salmon sampling program in 2003. It is very important for NASCO to have a better understanding of the migration patterns of salmon caught in St Pierre and Miquelon waters. As you know, salmon stocks are at very low levels and the sampling will contribute to enhanced management and conservation of the resource. We would like to express our desire to participate with your scientists in this very important project. In view of the great urgency to begin our scientific cooperation during the coming fishing season in July and August, Dr Malcolm Windsor will contact you to arrange details on this project.

Mr Ligeard, let me express to you the great amount of goodwill that your letter generated within NASCO during our Twentieth Annual Meeting in Edinburgh. This project will certainly benefit both the citizens of St Pierre and Miquelon and the NASCO Contracting Parties but, more importantly, will contribute greatly to safeguarding the Atlantic salmon. I look forward to a strong partnership between France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) and NASCO.

Yours sincerely

Jacque Robichaud  
President

CNL39.033

12 June, 2003

Mr Christian Ligeard  
Maritime Fisheries Assistant Manager  
Ministry of Agriculture Food, Fishing and Rural Affairs  
3 Fontenoy Place  
75007 Paris  
FRANCE

I want to echo the statement made by the NASCO President, Jacque Robichaud, and thank you for the information you provided in your recent letter regarding the salmon fishery at St Pierre and Miquelon.

We particularly welcome the expression by France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) of its willingness to increase its cooperation with NASCO. In that context you have agreed to improve our knowledge of the Atlantic salmon by a sampling programme.

I believe that this programme reflects broadly the request the President and I made when we visited the Islands in October 2001. I have a comment about the timing of the programme that you have outlined. The genetic study that you have proposed could be started in 2003 because the samples required for genetic analysis can readily be taken from the same fish used in the biometric study. We are, like you, eager to begin this sampling programme this fishing season, in July and August. Please let me know of your acceptance so that we can make the necessary arrangements with the appropriate NASCO scientific representatives to determine how they can assist with the sampling programme.

I look forward to working with France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) and NASCO Contracting Parties to foster the sharing of information on subsistence fishing in conjunction with the scientific cooperative program. In this way, both NASCO and France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) can gain from each other's experiences.

Yours sincerely

Dr Malcolm Windsor  
Secretary

*English Translation of Letter dated 28 May 2004 from Mr Christian Ligeard, French  
Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fishing and Rural Affairs  
to Mr J Robichaud, President of NASCO*

Mr. President,

It is with honour that I am forwarding, herewith, the contribution made by France to the NASCO Annual Meeting, on behalf of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon.

Please find attached, as every year, the salmon catch statistical data for Saint Pierre et Miquelon, gathered in the context of the cooperation existing between NASCO and the local community for whom, it must not be forgotten, this fishing activity is a tradition and indeed part of the local culture. The quantities harvested, which are low, remain stable.

As was already announced last year, France, on behalf of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, wishes to increase its cooperation with NASCO so as to better participate in the process of understanding, conservation and management of this particular species. This cooperation should also increase the links which exist naturally between Saint-Pierre et Miquelon and some of the Parties of NASCO, encouraging therefore an exchange of information with those Parties who have to manage traditional fisheries.

In this context, and thanks to the implementation of a scientific programme by IFREMER, it had been decided to find out more about the salmon harvested at Saint-Pierre et Miquelon. This programme, inspired by a project developed by NASCO, was launched in 2003. A biometric study was thus undertaken during the 2003 campaign so as to better determine the characteristics of the salmon population. This study's statistical data are herewith enclosed. It is still too early to draw some conclusions and, so, this assessment will be continued in 2004. The second constituent of the scientific program will be a genetic analysis, initiated in 2004, aiming to improve the knowledge of the origin of the salmon caught. It is hoped that this analysis would take place in cooperation with Canada during the 2004 campaign. Some preliminary contacts have already been made with regards to this issue.

The data, which I would like to bring to the attention of NASCO and of its Parties, is to be found in the enclosed document. This includes statistical and management data together with the report from IFREMER on the biometric study implemented in 2003.

In addition, I would like to thank you for having kindly invited me to attend, as an observer, NASCO's Annual Meeting which will take place from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> June 2004 in Reykjavik. I will unfortunately not be in a position to participate in this meeting, but would like to propose for one of my colleagues, Mr. Yann Becouarn, representative, to take part in some of NASCO's work, as observer, for France on behalf of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon. With this in mind, M. Becouarn will contact NASCO as soon as possible.

I trust that the data provided will contribute positively to the effort made by France on behalf of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon towards a better understanding of the Atlantic salmon. I also hope it will help the work of NASCO.

I thank you for the attention you will give to the enclosed information.

Yours faithfully,

Christian Ligeard

**Salmon fishing at Saint-Pierre et Miquelon – Data addressed to the Parties of NASCO**  
**(Annual Meeting, 7 – 11 June 2004)**

The following information relates to the fishing activity in the French territorial community of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon. It concerns this traditional activity as such, but also a review of the prospects envisaged for this particular species of fish.

It is essential, first of all, not to forget that salmon fishing is a traditional activity in Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, that it forms part of the culture of the inhabitants and that the quantities harvested, which are low, remain at a stable level. There is, of course, no export. This fishing practice must also be examined in the broader context of the general maritime fishing situation at Saint-Pierre et Miquelon and particularly bearing in mind the recurring difficulties facing this sector and the strong concern felt by a community highly dependent on fishing.

Despite the symbolical and traditional importance that salmon fishing represents for the local inhabitants, and the low level of captures, Saint-Pierre et Miquelon fully participates in its management, thanks to a very strict regulatory framework.

**I – The regulation of salmon fishing at Saint-Pierre et Miquelon**

Salmon fishing, in the archipelago of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, takes place in accordance with the management and conservation measures set by the 20<sup>th</sup> March 1987 Ministerial Decree.

A fishing licence is required to fish the Atlantic salmon, *Salmo salar*. This type of fishing is forbidden in the waters of the archipelago of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, every year, from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 30<sup>th</sup> April and from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> December. The aforementioned Decree also sets the technical conditions for salmon fishing, particularly those concerning the characteristics of the nets and those concerning the installation of these nets.

Finally salmon fishermen must keep a logbook of all catches, as soon as they board a fishing vessel. The data collected is then sent to the Maritime Division for statistical, management and control ends.

**II – Data concerning the fishing statistics**

As every year, the salmon catch statistical data for Saint Pierre et Miquelon, collected in the context of the cooperation existing between NASCO and the local community are, herewith, addressed to NASCO. Catch statistics and the number of licences granted for 2003 and the previous years are as follows:

<b>CATCHES</b> (in kilogrammes per live weight)			
Year	Professional fishing	Leisure fishing	Total
1998	1,039	1,268	2,307
1999	1,182	1,140	2,322
2000	1,134	1,133	2,267
2001	1,544	611	2,155
2002	1,223	729	1,952
2003	1,620	1,272	2,892

<b>LICENCES GRANTED</b>			
Year	Professional fishing	Leisure fishing	Total
1998	9	42	51
1999	7	40	47
2000	8	35	43
2001	10	42	52
2002	12	42	54
2003	12	42	54

N.B.: The wording "Leisure fishing" refers to sport and recreational fishing whereas "Professional fishing" is a misnomer and represents, in fact, the traditional subsistence fishery for the local community highly dependant on fishing.

The data shows a low harvest despite an increase in the number of catches in 2003. However, the aim should be to stabilise, in time, the harvest of the resource.

### **III - Prospects concerning the salmon and the strengthening of the cooperation with NASCO**

France, on behalf of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, wishes to increase its cooperation with NASCO to better participate in the process of understanding, conservation and management of the salmon. This cooperation should also reinforce the links which exist naturally between Saint Pierre et Miquelon and some of the Parties of NASCO, particularly Canada.

In this context, it was decided to better understand the demographic structure of Atlantic salmon and the fishing activity from a number of viewpoints, such as the implementation of a scientific programme led by IFREMER. This programme, inspired from a project developed by NASCO, will include the following constituents:

**A** – A biometric study: aiming to better determine the characteristics of the salmon population. This study took place in 2003 (in June and July) in agreement with the commitments made: 340 salmon were gutted, measured to the caudal fork and weighed. The report from IFREMER, describing the results of this sampling, is attached to the present document. It would, however, be premature to reach a conclusion based on these data alone. This biometric study will, therefore, be repeated during the 2004-2005 campaign, the results of which will also be sent to NASCO.

**B** – A genetic study: France is prepared to complete this programme in 2005 by undertaking a genetic study which will enable better establishment of the origin of the salmon caught in the fishery, as long as this could be carried out with Canada's cooperation. Thus, France would forge closer links with this Party of NASCO so as to consider how to implement such an objective. Contacts have already been made during the annual meetings between France and Canada on management of fisheries of joint interest to both parties.

**C** – A pathological study: such a study could be considered at a later stage.

Further, and to conclude, France would be particularly interested in information exchanges with some of the Parties of NASCO who manage traditional fisheries and the specific



circumstances of communities highly dependent on fishing, given the constraints that these Parties may encounter in terms of salmon management.

**France is convinced that this operation as a whole will contribute to the effort made by France (on behalf of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon) towards a better understanding of the Atlantic salmon, and that it will help the work of NASCO.**

# **Report on the biological observations made on the catches of Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) during the 2003 campaign at Saint-Pierre et Miquelon**

*Daniel Briand, IFREMER  
October 2003*

## **1 – Fishing sites**

Cap Noir, Ile aux Chasseurs, Les Flacous, Cap à Gordon, Les Canailles, Cap Bleu, Ile Pelée, Anse à la Vierge, Anse de l'Ouest, Rochers de l'Est, Caillou aux Chats, Basse Gélin, Basse des Grappains, Ile aux Vainqueurs, Pointe Blanche, Enfant Perdu, Cap Percé, Pointe Anse à Pierre, Cap aux Morts, Ilot Noir, Mirande, Trou aux Renards, Cap à Dinan, Basse Tournioure.

## **2 – Fishing gear**

The fishing gear normally used consists of a tésure made of 3 or 4 nets stitched end to end. Made in Canada, these are constructed in 60/100mm diameter monofilament polyamide thread. Depending on the mesh size, the thread is either bottle green (for nets whose mesh measures 5 inches [125 mm]) or olive green for those whose mesh measures 6 inches (150 mm). These dimensions correspond to a stretched mesh. It is important to note that the nets used cannot all be completely identical.

## **3 – Sampling of 2003 landings**

In June, 9 samplings took place during which 219 gutted salmon were measured to the caudal fork and weighed.

In July, 3 samplings took place and 121 gutted salmon were measured to the caudal fork and weighed.

In total, therefore, 340 individual fishes were observed during the 2003 season.

The average size was 61.5 centimetres and the average weight, 2,565 grams. The smallest size was 49 centimetres long for a gutted weight of 1,230 grams, and the highest, 91 centimetres long for a gutted weight of 8,600 grams. It is worth noting that for the June landings, the average size was 64 centimetres whereas for those of July, it was 57 centimetres. Also worthy of note is the average weight for the June landings of 2,901 grams and of 1,955 grams for the July landings.

## **4 – The water temperature**

7 temperature checks were taken, 5 metres deep, over the period from the end of May to June and July at the exit of the Saint-Pierre harbour. The lowest temperature was recorded on the 20<sup>th</sup> May, at 1.80 °C. The highest was on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July and reached 9 °C.

Day	Month	Temperature °C
20	5	1.80
4	6	3.12
10	6	3.90
23	6	6.10
30	6	7.90
10	7	8.70
23	7	9.20

### List of diagrams

Fig 1 – Landings of Atlantic salmon during the 2003 season, at Saint-Pierre and Miquelon – Composition in size

Fig 2 – Landings of Atlantic salmon during the 2003 season, at Saint-Pierre and Miquelon – Composition in weight

Fig 3 – Landings of Atlantic salmon during the 2003 season, at Saint-Pierre and Miquelon – Ratio size/weight

Fig 4 – Landings of Atlantic salmon during the 2003 season, at Saint-Pierre and Miquelon – Variations in the average size

Fig 5 – Landings of Atlantic salmon during the 2003 season, at Saint-Pierre and Miquelon – Variations in the average weight

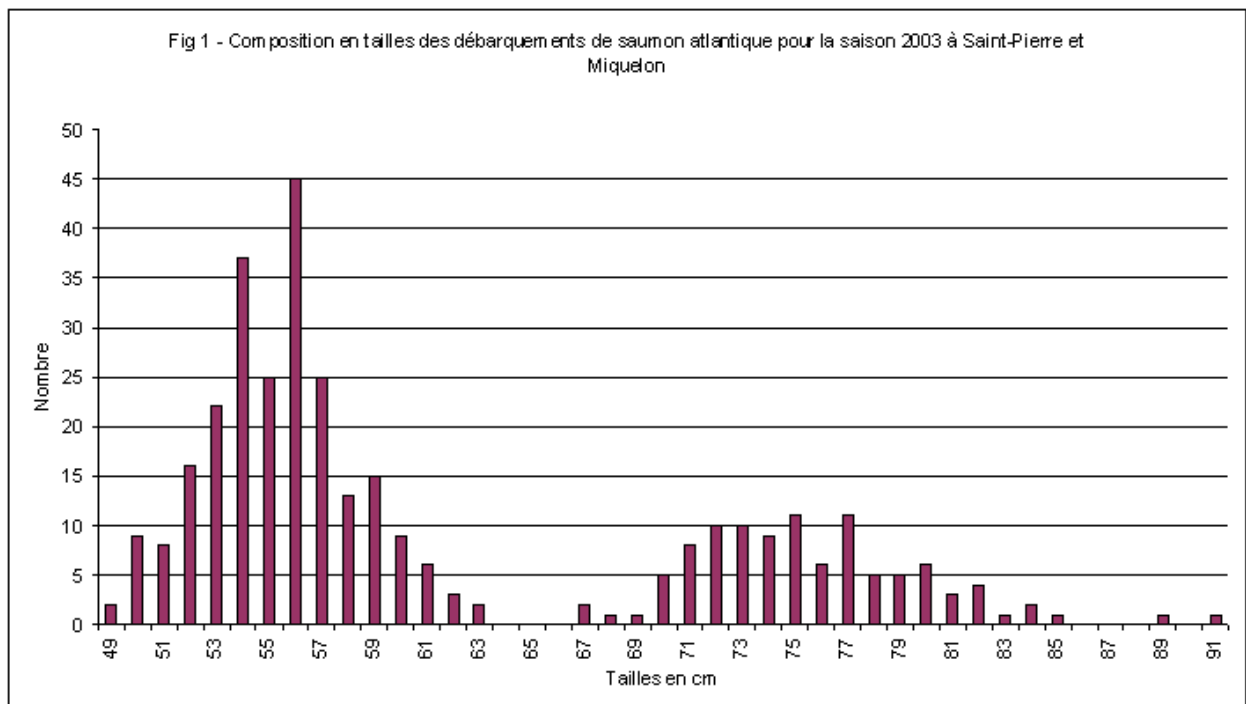


Fig 2 - Composition en poids des débarquements de saumon atlantique pour la saison 2003 à Saint-Pierre et Miquelon

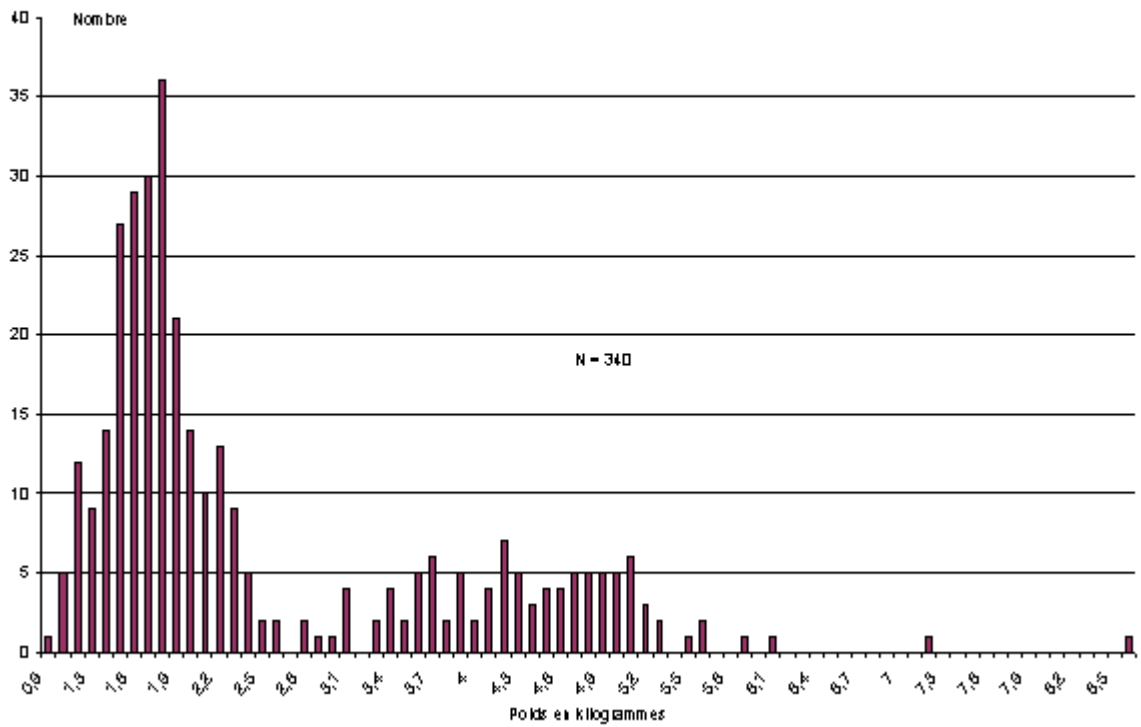


Fig 3 - Relation taille/poids établie pour le saumon atlantique débarqué en 2003 à Saint-Pierre et Miquelon

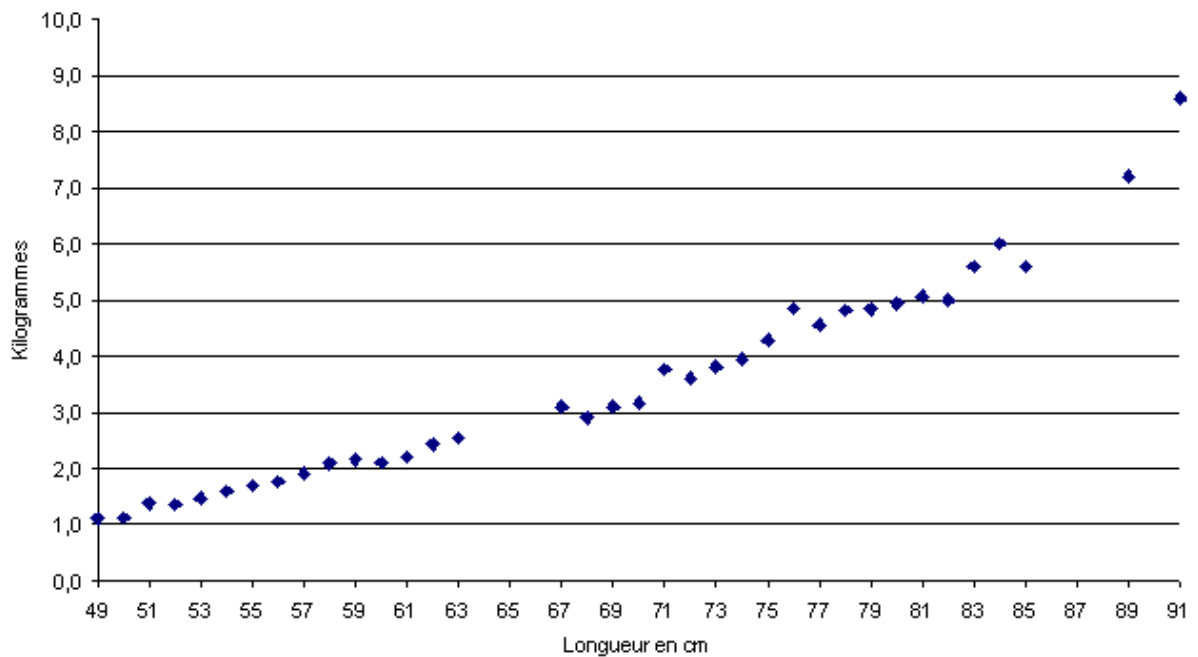


Fig. 4 Evolution des tailles moyennes lors des échantillonnages des débarquements de saumon atlantique en 2003 à Saint-Pierre et Miquelon

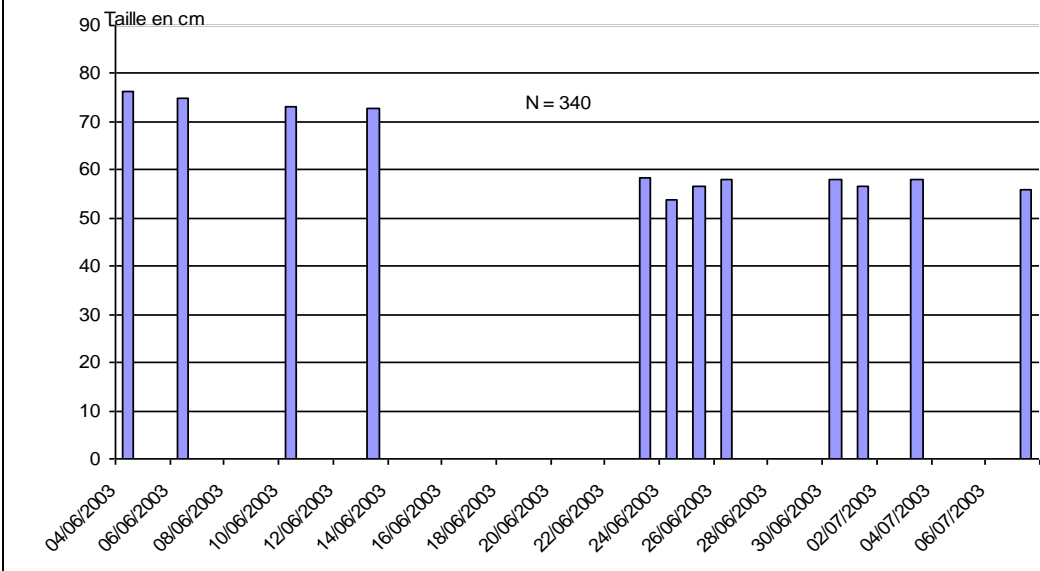


Fig 5 - Evolution des poids moyens lors des échantillonnages des débarquements de saumon atlantique en 2003 à Saint-Pierre et Miquelon

