

North American Commission

NAC(03)3

The St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fisheries

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1. At its Seventh Annual Meeting the Commission requested the Secretary to pursue efforts to obtain information about the salmon fisheries on St Pierre and Miquelon. In accordance with this request we have contacted the Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation, de la Pêche et des Affaires Rurales in Paris on an annual basis.
2. We have now received provisional catch data for 2002 (Annex 1). The official time series of information as provided by the Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche is as follows:

Year	Number of Salmon	Weight (Tonnes)
1987	442	0.984
1988	813	2.084
1989	971	2.590
1990	884	1.889
1991	573	1.132
1992	1049	2.319
1993	1439	2.943
1994	1656	3.423
1995	364	0.837
1996	670	1.568
1997	644	1.491
1998	-	2.307
1999	-	2.322
2000	-	2.267
2001	-	2.155
2002	-	1.952

3. The catch in 2002 is approximately 9% lower than the catch in 2001 and is slightly below the sixteen-year mean catch of 2.016t. There is, however, a difference of 1.648 tonnes in the above catch reported to NASCO of 1.952t and the catch of 3.6t reported to ICES. We will explore the reasons for this discrepancy in the catch with the French authorities and with ICES. The breakdown of the catch in 2002 was 1,223kg by "commercial" fishermen and 729kg by recreational fishermen. The Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation, de la Pêche et des Affaires Rurales has previously 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.
4. In 2002 the number of licences issued increased by two (to 54) compared to the previous year. The number of licences issued in 2001 and 2002 reversed the trend of annual reductions in the number of licences issued since 1998. The ACFM has noted that, due to a sharp decline in other fish resources (lumpfish, snow crab and cod) exploited by the professional fishermen at St Pierre and Miquelon, more of them have expressed interest in having salmon licences and that this increase in professional licences might be

compensated for by a reduction in the number of recreational licences. It should be noted that in 2002, although professional licences accounted for only 22% of all licences issued, they accounted for 63% of the harvest.

5. It is clear from the scientific advice from ICES that there is still considerable concern about the status of North American origin salmon. ICES has recommended that there be no exploitation of the 2002 smolt cohort as non-maturing 1SW fish in North America or West Greenland in 2003 or as mature 2SW salmon in North America in 2004, the exceptions being on individual rivers where spawning requirements are being achieved.
6. In 2000, the Commission adopted a Resolution Concerning the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fisheries, which was subsequently adopted by the Council. In 2001 the Commission proposed to the Council that, in an effort to improve cooperation with St Pierre and Miquelon and in order to gather much needed scientific information on the fishery, a sampling programme be undertaken at St Pierre and Miquelon in 2002. The Council supported this proposal. The President and Secretary visited the islands in October 2001 to promote the proposed sampling programme but it did not take place in 2002. Last year the Council, on the recommendation of the Commission, adopted a further Resolution calling on the Contracting Parties to encourage France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to cooperate with NASCO in instituting a scientific sampling programme for the fishery beginning in 2003. A proposal outlining the data sought from a sampling programme has been provided by ICES (see CNL(03)8). The Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation, de la Pêche et des Affaires Rurales has now indicated that it wishes to increase its cooperation with NASCO and will implement a scientific sampling programme, undertaken by IFREMER scientists, during the 2003 fishery season in order to collect biometric data. Furthermore, it is hoped that a genetic study will be undertaken in 2004 in cooperation with Canadian scientists, and consideration will be given to a disease-sampling programme in the future. The French authorities have also indicated a willingness to cooperate with NASCO Parties in future, with regard to an exchange of information in relation to the management of "traditional fisheries".
7. France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) was invited to attend the Twentieth Annual Meeting but was unable to be represented. However, we have been advised informally that it is the intention to be represented at the Twenty-first Annual Meeting.
8. This agreement to cooperate on a sampling programme is a positive outcome. In the light of this information the Commission is asked to consider whether it wishes to take any additional actions or to make any further proposals to the Council in relation to the St Pierre and Miquelon salmon fisheries.

Secretary
Edinburgh
30 May, 2003

(TRANSLATION)

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE,
FOOD, FISHING AND RURAL AFFAIRS

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Subject: NASCO Annual meeting
Ref.: 1144

29 May, 2003

To: NASCO
For the attention of: Monsieur Robichaud, President

Mr. President,

Thank you for your kind invitation to take part, as an observer, in NASCO Annual meeting. I will unfortunately not be able to attend.

I wish nonetheless to make the following points concerning the fishing activity in the community of Saint Pierre et Miquelon, first of all in relation to the catch statistics and secondly in relation to the prospects concerning this species.

- Catch statistics:

As every year, please find enclosed the salmon catch statistical data for Saint Pierre et Miquelon, gathered in the context of the cooperation existing between NASCO and the local community. It must be remembered, however, that this activity is a tradition in Saint Pierre et Miquelon and that it is indeed part of the local culture. Further, the quantities harvested, which are low, remain stable around 2 tons. There is, of course, no export. The catch statistics for 2002 are comparable to those of the previous years and the management method (licences) remains unchanged.

- Prospects concerning salmon and a greater cooperation with NASCO:

France (in respect of Saint Pierre et Miquelon) wishes to increase its cooperation with NASCO to better participate in the process of understanding, conservation and management of this species. This cooperation should also reinforce the natural links which exist between Saint Pierre et Miquelon and some of NASCO's Parties. Further, this initiative is in line with the audit of the Saint Pierre et Miquelon Maritime fishing activities which took place in April 2003, as a result of the problems currently encountered in this sector (salmon are an integral part of this review).

In this context, it was decided to improve the knowledge gained on the Atlantic salmon demographic structure and on the fishing activity from the following perspectives:

- 1 - the implementation of a scientific programme by IFREMER. This programme, inspired from a project devised by NASCO, will be based on the following constituents:
 - a biometric study, commencing in the 2003 season, to better define the characteristics of the salmon population;
 - a genetic study to gain a better understanding of the origin of the salmon captured in the fishery. It is hoped that this study will be implemented in cooperation with Canada during the 2004 campaign;
 - a pathological study : such a study could be considered at a later date;
- 2 - a willingness to exchange information with some of the NASCO's Parties who manage traditional fisheries.
- 3 - an audit of the current activity management method.

This initiative as a whole should contribute to NASCO's commitment towards the understanding, conservation and management of the Atlantic salmon. I will be sure to keep you informed of the outcomes of these studies and debates.

I thank you for the attention you will give to these new developments.

Yours faithfully,

Christian Ligeard
Maritime Fisheries Assistant Manager

SAINT-PIERRE ET MIQUELON
SALMON STATISTICS

CATCHES
(in kilograms per live weight)

Years	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

LICENCES GRANTED

Years	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

N.B.: The expression “leisure fishing” corresponds to sport and recreational fishing activities whereas the phrase “professional fishing” is an incorrect expression. It refers in fact to the traditional subsistence fishing for the local community highly dependent on fishing.