

North American Commission

NAC(01)4

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 et de la Pêche in Paris annually with a view to obtaining information on the salmon fisheries according to the format agreed by the North Atlantic Salmon Working Group (CM1988/Assess:16 and CM1988/M:4).
2. We have now received provisional catch data for 2000. The official time series of information as provided by the Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche is therefore as follows:

	Number	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

3. The breakdown of the catch in 2000 was 1,134kg by "commercial" fishermen and 1,133kg by recreational fishermen. The Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche 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. The catch in 2000 showed a very slight reduction (55kg) from the catch in 1999, but is above the fourteen-year mean catch of approximately 2 tonnes. Over the last 3 years there has been a reduction in the total number of licences issued from 51 in 1998 to 47 in 1999 and 43 in 2000. This has mainly been due to a reduction in the number of recreational fishermen. The Commission has previously recognised discrepancies between the official statistics provided by the French Government to NASCO and those provided to ICES. However there was no discrepancy in the figures for 2000.

5. Last year, the Commission adopted a Resolution Concerning the St Pierre and Miquelon Salmon Fisheries, which was subsequently adopted by the Council. In accordance with the Resolution, the President communicated with the French authorities through diplomatic channels to convey NASCO's concerns over the level of salmon harvest in St Pierre and Miquelon in 1998 and 1999, to urge France (in respect of St Pierre and Miquelon) to immediately set harvest limits for the 2000 salmon fishery at the lowest possible level consistent with the advice provided by ICES and to request that information on measures taken be made available to NASCO at its 2001 Annual Meeting. A report on the consultations with France is presented in Council document CNL(01)30.
6. The statistics provided by the Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche indicate that there has been no significant reduction in the harvest at St Pierre and Miquelon over the last three years. The advice from ICES developed in 2000 and 2001 indicates that the North American stock complex is considered to be "outside safe biological limits" and that there should be no exploitation of the 1999 and 2000 smolt cohorts as 2SW salmon or 1SW salmon respectively in 2001, other than in-river harvests where biologically-based spawning escapements are being exceeded.
7. 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
18 May, 2001