

*North American Commission*

**NAC(01)7**

*Review Of Atlantic Salmon Management Measures For 2001*

*(Tabled by Canada)*

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#### **Introduction**

Atlantic salmon stock status continues to be generally poor throughout Atlantic Canada. There are few areas where returns and spawners are consistently above conservation requirements, other areas where returns are adequate (or close to being so) for conservation, and many areas where there are serious concerns for conservation of the stocks.

Management measures have been tailored to the needs of specific areas (rivers) while striving for an overall precautionary approach.

#### **Aboriginal Food Fishery**

Aboriginal food fisheries for Atlantic salmon take place throughout Atlantic Canada and Quebec. Aboriginal fisheries for food, social and ceremonial purposes are generally only permitted after conservation requirements have been addressed, and take precedence over recreational fishing.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans seeks to develop food fishery licences with Aboriginal groups that identify allocations, monitoring system requirements (guardians/logbooks, etc.) and scientific projects such as tagging or gear trials (such as the use of trapnets instead of gillnets), where practical.

The Aboriginal food fishery for Atlantic salmon for both the LIA and the Innu Nation in Labrador was approximately 12.1t. Neither aboriginal group reached their assigned quotas for the food fishery. Aboriginal fisheries were managed under a communal licence including a monitoring plan assisted by aboriginal guardians. Negotiations are ongoing with both aboriginal groups to finalize communal fisheries for the 2001 season.

A resident food fishery was implemented in Southern Labrador in 2000. Residents were permitted to retain four salmon as a by-catch in the trout net fishery. Preliminary estimates indicate approximately 5.6t was harvested. These estimates were based on log book returns submitted by resident fishers. A management plan for the 2001 resident fishery is currently under review, with minor changes (dates) being considered.

The aboriginal food fishery harvests accounted for a reported 50.3t of Canada's 2000 preliminary catch of 150t, an increase of 4.4t from 1999.

## **Commercial Fishery**

There are no longer any commercial fisheries for Atlantic salmon on Canada's east coast. The last commercial fishery concluded in 1999.

Commercial fisheries moratoria in Labrador and insular Newfoundland remain in place indefinitely.

## **Recreational Fishery**

### ***Newfoundland and Labrador***

2001 is the third and final year of the multi-year salmon management plan.

The plan features a river classification system for insular Newfoundland (includes SFA 14B) which allows different retention limits based on the health of the river in question. These limits range from retention of six grilse annually on a Class I river to catch and release only on a Class IV river. The retention of MSW salmon is not permitted.

For 2001, based on the improvement of individual salmon stocks in some rivers along the south coast and in Bay St. George, limited retention fisheries will be provided on the following rivers; Robinson's, Flat Bay and Fishell's (zone 13) and Conne River in (zone 11).

Other key management measures include the mandatory use of barbless hooks on all scheduled salmon rivers, closures based on environmental protocols (i.e. low water levels or high water temperatures), as well as selected river closures for the entire season for conservation reasons.

New conservation management measures will be implemented for the 2001 recreational salmon fishery for southern Labrador. These measures include the introduction of a river classification system for selected rivers. All rivers being impacted by the construction of the Trans-Labrador Highway will have a class three designation (2 grilse seasonal limit). No retention of large fish (greater than 63cm) is permitted on these rivers. For all other salmon rivers in zones 1 and 2 the seasonal bag limit of three grilse and one large will apply. DFO also is proceeding with a regulatory amendment to schedule eight major salmon rivers in Southern Labrador. These regulations are expected to be amended by early July.

Recreational catches totaled 29.8t in 2000 compared to 38.4t in 1999.

### ***Maritimes Region***

The Maritimes Region consists of five (5) Salmon Fishing Areas (19, 20, 21, 22 and 23). In 2000, with the exception of Salmon Fishing Area 19, which was open only to hook and release angling, all other areas were closed to salmon angling. There were no salmon rivers in the Maritimes Region that achieved spawning requirements in 2000.

Given the stock status and the forecast for similar returns in 2001, management options for 2001 will be limited to hook and release angling or closures.

A multi-year salmon management plan is being developed for the Maritimes for 2001-2005 with the expected launch of a pilot river classification system in 2001.

Rivers in the Inner Bay of Fundy portion of Salmon Fishing Area 22 and part of 23 have been closed to salmon fishing since 1990 and salmon stocks in this area have now been listed as “endangered” by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. A gene banking program for Inner Bay of Fundy salmon stocks was initiated in 1998 and work is ongoing with regard to developing a recovery plan for these stocks.

### ***Gulf Region***

The Gulf Region consists of four (4) Salmon Fishing Areas (15, 16, 17 and 18). Management measures in 2001 are similar to those that were in place for 2000. These range from a limit of 2 grilse per day, 8 tags per season, daily hook and release limit of 4, to river closures in some cases. The retention of MSW salmon is not permitted.

A multi-year management plan is being developed in conjunction with the Maritimes Region for 2002. This plan will feature a river classification system, consultations for which are currently being held with stakeholders.

Recreational catches in 2000 for the Maritime Provinces (Gulf and Maritimes) totaled 28.3t compared to 27.5t in 1999.

### ***Province of Quebec***

The Province of Quebec has developed a multi-year (2000-2005) salmon plan which establishes conservation limits and management targets for each river.

The fishing of MSW salmon is permitted, with restrictions, on 73 rivers; catch and release only is permitted on 35 rivers while 7 rivers are closed to fishing altogether.

Catches in the 2000 recreational fishery were 35.4t as compared to 36.3t in 1999.