

North American Commission

NAC(00)4

The St Pierre et 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 et 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 1999. 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

3. The breakdown of the catch in 1999 was 1,182kg by “commercial” fishermen and 1,140kg 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 1999 showed a very slight increase on the 1998 catch, was the highest catch since 1994, and was above the thirteen-year mean catch of 1.991 tonnes. 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 1999.
5. Last year the Commission requested that the Council write to the French authorities advising them of the Commission’s serious concerns caused by the continuing fishery at St Pierre et Miquelon and expressing concern about the increased catch in 1998. This letter and the response from the French authorities is contained in Council

document CNL(00)29. In summary, the information from the French authorities indicates that:

- the Atlantic salmon is an important resource because of the remoteness of the archipelago and the problems of its economic development;
- there is a “commercial fishery” and a recreational fishery (in 1999 the catch was divided equally between the two). The “commercial fishery” is a subsistence fishery;
- the fishery is controlled rigorously by restrictive measures limiting fishing effort and gear type;
- St Pierre et Miquelon have respected the principles set out in an exchange of correspondence between France and Canada on 2 December 1994 to the extent that:
 - since 1995 fishing effort has remained stable - the number of permits has remained less than the 54 permits issued in 1994; 47 permits were issued in 1999 compared to 51 in 1998;
 - the level of catches has remained stable compared to 1998 and is only about 67% of the catch in 1994 (the reference year under the exchange of correspondence between France and Canada);
 - no commercial development of the fishery has ever been contemplated;
- An awareness campaign aimed at encouraging recreational fishermen to declare their catch has led to increased reporting of catches since 1998.

6. The Commission is asked to consider whether it wishes to take any additional actions.

Secretary
Edinburgh
24 May, 2000