

West Greenland Commission

2025 Report on the Salmon Fishery in Greenland (Submitted by Greenland to the 2026 Inter-Sessional Meeting of the West Greenland Commission of NASCO)

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Ministry of Fisheries, Hunting, Agriculture and Self-sufficiency

NAALAKKERSUISUT
GOVERNMENT OF GREENLAND



2025 REPORT ON THE SALMON FISHERY IN GREENLAND

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MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, HUNTING, AGRICULTURE AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY



1. Introduction

According to the Multi-Annual Regulatory Measure for fishing for salmon at West Greenland (WGC(22)10) Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) agrees to, in a timely manner, inform NASCO and, as appropriate, ICES, of any significant changes in the monitoring, management, control and surveillance of the West Greenland Atlantic salmon fishery and to provide an annual report on the implementation of this measure and the outcome of the fishery.

This report outlines the outcome of the 2025 salmon fishery in Greenland, including East Greenland and, if any, the alterations that the Government of Greenland has made to the management and monitoring, control, and surveillance.

1.1 Subsistence Fishery

It is vital to Naalakkersuisut, the Government of Greenland, that all people have the right to provide for themselves and their families. This is an essential part of the life and culture in Greenland – and the Fisheries Act. Salmon fishing in Greenland is a subsistence/internal-use fishery and not a commercial fishery.

2. Implementation of the Regulatory Measure WGC(22)10

(1) For the 2025 salmon season, Greenland has maintained the management plan for Atlantic Salmon, as well as the already existing measures for monitoring, management, control and surveillance.

(a) According to the management plan, the fishing season is as follows:

- Southwest: 1/8 – 30/9
- Northwest: 1/9 – 31/10
- East: 15/8 – 15/10

According to the regulatory measure, the 2025 fishing season was kept within the period between August and November.

(b) Legal requirement in the Executive Order to report every time the net is tended. Legal requirement to report 0-catch. An online reporting option was introduced in 2020 and has been used since then. Contact with the municipalities before and during the fishing season in relation to the importance of effective disclosure of salmon reports. Data collected in GFJKs¹ database for monitoring of quota-uptake. Continued radio campaign about reporting and text messages have again been sent to license holders. The Government of Greenland collaborates with NASF and ASF to enhance catch reporting. As part of this initiative, fishers who submit their reports during the season have the chance to win prizes.

¹ GFJK: Greenland's Fisheries and Hunting Control Authority.



(c) Since 2018 it has been a legal requirement to have a license to participate in the salmon fishery.

(d) Since 2018 it has been illegal to fish without a license.

(e) According to the 2024 Fisheries Act, only professional fishermen are allowed to sell their catch. The executive order only allows them to sell their catch at local markets and to institutions.

(2) Since 2015, it has been a condition of the license to allow samplers to sample their catch. This is also stated on the license.

(3) (a) Since 1998, there has been an export ban on salmon in Greenland. (b) Since 2015, it has been prohibited to land salmon to the fish processing factories.

(4) The TAC for West Greenland was set at 27 tons in 2025. According to the management plan the 27 tonnes were divided into quota for the two management areas in West Greenland.

(5) Since 2022, Greenland has agreed to close the fishery at West Greenland, when the registered catch has reached no more than 49% of the overall TAC. Since 2022, closing the fishery when the registered catch reaches no more than 49% of the overall TAC has been the guiding principle. GFJK registers and collects data daily, and, based on numerous variables, decides when to close the fishery in the different management areas. These include previous years' uptake, the weather, days of delay in reporting, the oral reports from the local fisheries inspectors about the number of salmon they see coming in.

(6) GFJK collects and registers catch data daily. The quota uptake is published on GFJK's website every week. As mentioned above, there is continuous contact with the municipalities before and during the fishing season in relation to the importance of effective disclosure of salmon reports.

(7) If fishers do not report to GFJK, they will not be issued a license for the following year's fishery. This is automatically ensured via the GFJK database. It is a legal requirement to report 0-catch within 14 days of closing the fishery.

(8) Greenland has continued to use initiatives to increase reporting of license holders.

(a) To have the newest contact information, license holders are permitted to state their phone number and/or email when applying for a salmon license.

(b) During the salmon season, radio campaigns were transmitted daily, reminding people to report their catches. An ad was made for both national newspapers with a link to the online reporting website and a continuous ad on their website with direct links to the reporting site was shown throughout the season. However, due to budget cuts, text messages were not sent to license-holders as in previous years.

(d) To provide information about reporting during the fishing season, a national radio speak was aired daily to remind license holders to report. Ads on the national newspaper *Sermitsiaq*.AG's online website, with a link to the reporting website continued in 2025. The



online ads were supplemented by ads in both national weekly papers, Sermitsiaq, AG and their MOTOORI magazine. MOTOORI is focusing on motorized transport and outdoor life in Greenland. It features articles, guides, and reports on boats, cars, ATVs, snowmobiles, equipment, and adventure activities, and appears in both print and digital formats.

When an area is closed, a press release is issued on the government's official and the Greenland Fisheries and Hunting Control Authorities website and social media. The press releases also contain information about the reporting deadline.

(e) A post-season information campaign of the 2025 fishing season has not yet been carried out.

(f) Phone interviews with non-reporters were conducted in January 2026, to review the reasons for non-reporting. *Results from these interviews are mentioned in section 3.3.*

(9) The changes implemented in 2023 and 2024 continued in 2025 with inclusion of report date and not only a date for when reports are entered into the system (loading date).



3. The 2025 Fishing Season

An overview of opening and closure of the salmon fishery, the quota and quota uptake per management area and segment is summarized in table 1 and 2.

Table 1. Opening, closure, quota and quota uptake per management area and segment 2025. Source: GFJK								
Management Area	Opening	Closure pr. Segment		Quota per segment (tonnes)		Catch per segment (tonnes)		Total quota uptake (tonnes)
Northwest	1/9	Professional	31/10	Professional	7.56	Professional	9.21	10.33
		Recreational	16/11	Recreational	3.24	Recreational	1.12	
Southwest	1/8	Professional	31/10	Professional	11.34	Professional	13.2	18.29
		Recreational	20/9	Recreational	4.86	Recreational	5.08	
East	1/9	Professional	31/10	Professional	1.5	Professional	0.13	0.99
		Recreational	16/11	Recreational	1.5	Recreational	0.86	

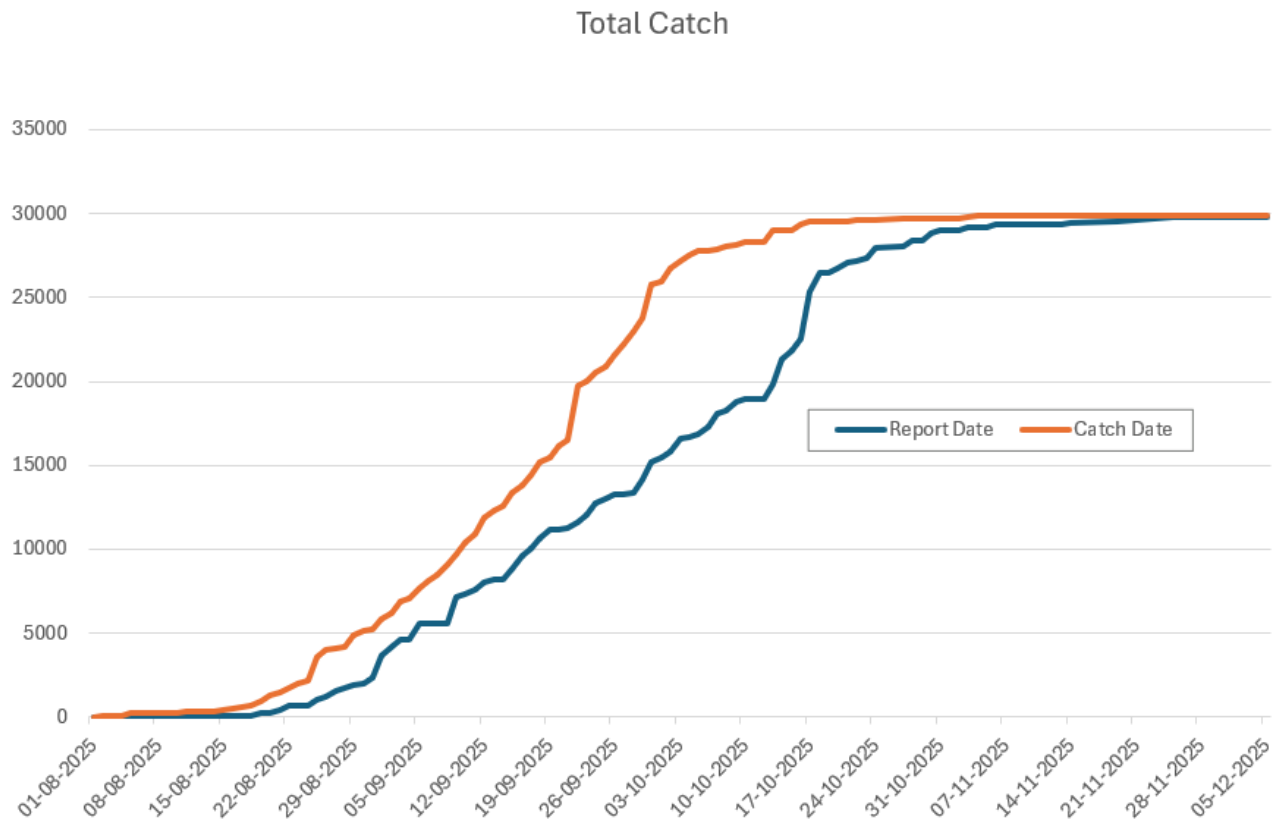
Table 2. Total quota uptake West Greenland 2025.	
Management Area	Quota Uptake (tonnes)
Northwest	10.3
Southwest	18.29
Total quota uptake	28.62

3.1 Catch reports during the fishing season.

In 2020, GFJK introduced an online reporting system through the public citizen website; www.Sullissivik.gl, to improve reporting access for fishermen. As in 2024, the reports were all manually loaded from different sources into the database (including www.Sullissivik.gl).



Figure 1 illustrates the quota uptake of salmon over time, after the opening of the fishery on August 1st.



Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Delay in reporting (days)	8	12	11,5 ²	14	5	10

Average delay in reporting 2020-2025. Data: GFJK

The table above shows the average number of days between the license holder catching the fish and GFJK receiving the catch report. GFJK have been trying to finish loading all the salmon reports daily within the salmon season (except weekends). It can also result from updating the Sullissivik.gl user interface with clearer instructions and several more obligatory fields. We are still of the opinion that Sullissivik.gl is a more efficient way of reporting than other more manual methods. Fishermen can access it on their mobile phones and other web devices.

² Outliers were sorted out since they skewed the results. With outliers the number is 16 days. Reports received in 2023 were deemed to distort the overall picture, since the number is meant to help decide when to close the fishery during the season.



3.2 Licenses and catch reports.

In the following paragraph, a description of the reporting behavior of license holders and catch reports will be provided. To have an overview of the catch reports, the results in table 3 are divided into three groups; (1) catch reports received within season, (2) catch reports received between time of closure and last date of reporting, and (3) catch reports received after last date of reporting. The same grouping is used in table 4, which describes the results on the level of license holders rather than catch reports.

The tables represent the 6 different sub-groups; professional and private in Northwest (NAFO sub-area 1ABC), Southwest (NAFO sub-area 1DEF) and East with the individual fishing seasons, all calculated respectively and summarized. The percentage (%) in sub-groups is compared to the total number of license holders reporting within each section, unless specified otherwise

Highlights from table 3

A total of 1,065 catch reports has been received by the GFJK in 2025 compared to 1.477 received in 2024. The number of reports received within the season is 68,0% compared to 82% in 2024. For reports received within season with >0 catches this number is 73,6% compared to 87,8% in 2024. As we can see, after a higher percentage of reports delivered within the season in 2024, the percentage decreased slightly. In 2025, 56,4% of 0-catch reports were received within the season, while 73,6% of >0-catch reports were received within the season.



<i>Table 3. Catch reports</i>	Count	Percentage	1ABC Private	1ABC Professional	1DEF Private	1DEF Professional	East Private	East Professional
Overview								
<i>Catch reports received within the season</i>	724	68.0%	25%	27.2%	26%	18.8%	2.8%	0.3%
<i>Catch reports received between time of closure and last date of reporting</i>	225	21.1%	4.4%	34.2%	40.4%	20.4%	0%	0.4%
<i>Catch reports received after last date of reporting</i>	116	10.9%	2.6%	9.5%	51.7%	36.2%	0%	0.0%
<i>Total number of catch reports received (incl. 0-catch reports)</i>	1065	100%	18.2%	26.8%	31.8%	21%	1.9%	0.3%
Catch reports with > 0 catches								
<i>Catch reports received within the season</i>	527	73.6%	12.7%	34%	26.6%	23.1%	3.4%	0.2%
<i>Catch reports received between time of closure and last date of reporting</i>	144	20.1%	2.1%	39.6%	30.6%	27.1%	0.0%	0.7%
<i>Catch reports received after last date of reporting</i>	45	6.3%	2.2%	11.1%	17.8%	68.9%	0.0%	0.0%
<i>Total number of catch reports</i>	716	67.2% ¹	6.7% ¹	22.6% ¹	18% ¹	18% ¹	1.7% ¹	0.2% ¹
Catch reports with 0-catches								
<i>Catch reports received within the season</i>	197	56.4%	57.9%	9.1%	24.4%	7.1%	1%	0.5%
<i>Catch reports received between time of closure and last date of reporting</i>	81	23.2%	8.6%	24.7%	58%	8.6%	0%	0.0%
<i>Catch reports received after last date of reporting</i>	71	20.3%	2.8%	8.5%	73.2%	15.5%	0%	0%
<i>Total of number of 0-catch reports</i>	349	32.8 % ¹	11.5% ¹	4.1% ¹	13.8% ¹	3% ¹	0.2% ¹	0.1% ¹

¹ percent of the total number of catch reports of 1.065

Highlights from table 4

The number of license holders has increased by 6,8% compared to 2024, and the distribution between professional and recreational license holders is almost the same compared to 2024. The number of license holders reporting maintains its high level this year, with 70,9% of license holders reporting compared to 79% in 2024, and 82% in 2023.



If one license holder reports both within the fishing season and for example, between time of closure and last date of reporting, then the license holder falls in both groups (and possibly 3 groups if one reports in 3 time periods), this applies both for >0 catch and 0 catch. The number of license holders reporting >0 catch and 0 catch during the fishing season has fallen. The reason for this could be that no text messages were sent to license holders as the Greenland Fisheries and Hunting Control Authority, like the rest of the Government of Greenland, was asked to make budget cuts in its administration.

Table 4. Overview of licenses in the salmon fishery in 2025			1ABC Private	1ABC Professional	1DEF Private	1DEF Professional	East Private	East Professional
	Count	Percentage						
Number of licenses issued in total								
- Professional	293	38.9%		59%		38.2%		2.7%
- Private	460	61.1%	32.4%		65.4%		2.2%	
- Total	753	100%	18%	21%	37%	14%	0.01%	0.01%
Overview:								
Number of license holders reporting in total	534	70.9%	19.1%	24.7%	39.1%	15.4%	1.1%	0.6%
License holders not reporting	219	29.1%	21.5%	18.7%	42%	13.7%	1.8%	2.3%
License holders only reporting 0-catches	206	38.6%	25.7%	14.1%	49%	9.7%	1%	0.5%
License holders reporting catches > 0 kg	328	61.4%	14.9%	31.4%	32.9%	18.9%	1.2%	0.6%
License holders reporting within season ²								
Reports with catch > 0 kg	230	43.1%	20%	27.4%	32.6%	17.8%	1.7%	0.4%
Reports with 0-catch	169	31.6%	23.3%	4.7%	32.8%	10.8%	0.9%	0.4%
License holders reporting between time of closure and last date of reporting ²								
Reports with catch > 0 kg	74	13.9%	2.7%	47.3%	33.8%	16.2%	0.0%	1.7%
Reports with 0-catch	152	28.5%	3.9%	12.5%	55.9%	27.6%	0.0%	0.0%
License holders reporting after last date of reporting ²								
Reports with catch > 0 kg	23	4.3%	4.3%	21.7%	34.8%	39.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Reports with 0-catch	78	14.6%	2.6%	7.7%	34.6%	55.1%	0.0%	0.0%

² Percentage is compared to total number of reporting license holders (534). Please note, that a license holder can send multiple catch reports. The same license holder can therefore be included in multiple buckets.



3.3 Regulatory measure 8 (f) – interviews with non-reporters

According to current regulations, interviews are conducted with individuals who have not submitted their reports at the end of the season. In January 2026, 30 individuals were interviewed. The results showed that 10% of respondents were unaware that failing to report would prevent them from obtaining a new license the following year. Additionally, 50% stated that they had simply forgotten to submit their reports, while 10% cited a lack of time as the reason. The remaining 30% provided other explanations.

Furthermore, 80% of respondents reported that they had not caught any salmon, which is common among those who do not submit reports. Additionally, 43% had seen or heard media announcements regarding the closure of the fishing season.

Overall, most participants were satisfied with the current system of reminding them to report catches. Reintroducing text messages directly to license holders could be advantageous to improve reporting percentage.

4. Evaluation of regulatory measure (5)

As in the first year of this regulatory measure, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) agrees to close the fishery at West Greenland when the registered catch has reached no more than 49% of the overall TAC in 2023.

We used mostly the knowledge gained from the statistics of the fishery in Greenland for 2022-2024 season to regulate the salmon fishery in 2025.

In 2024, we regulated NW-P, SW-P fishery well based on % quota uptake and reporting lag monitoring. We continued the action in 2025. As we mentioned last year the tasks are arduous as the monitoring ran continuously until the closure decision and it includes many telephone calls to the fishermen. Those efforts are done upon our daily operation as usual which includes finishing reports loading every workday. Furthermore, factors like the weather were also taken into account, where a week of sun and low winds can be enough time for the quota to be fished. We unfortunately did not have the capacity to send out SMS this year due to budget limitations. We still made telephone calls to fisherman when we received unsatisfied or suspicious reports but had no capacity to call those 'biggest fishermen' due to understaffing during the season. Those two can be big factors explaining why we experienced larger reporting lag this year than 2024.

Figure 2 and 3 illustrate the flow and management of the NW-P fishery in 2024 and 2025.

In 2024 the reporting lag was around 15% across the season (figure 2). In 2025 NW-P reporting lag is around 15-25%, however, we can see in the figure 3 the reporting lag is 25-40%, larger than the number we got during the season (15-20%). This is largely because some reports (especially with big catches) are reported too late and we have no chance to acknowledge them. According to our monitoring, we closed the NW-P fishery when the quota uptake % reached around 80%, however, due to the unpredicted reporting delay, the overfishing is around 20%. We used the similar method to SW-P and SW-R and it worked pretty well.



From our statistics, we can still see very large numbers reported within one single report, which we assume some of them contain several catches from several gears, probably from several days. This is of course contrary to what the executive orders demand: one needs to report one's catch every time one tends gear. However, such requirements is not easy to carry out in reality and many times fishermen continue to report as they were used to.

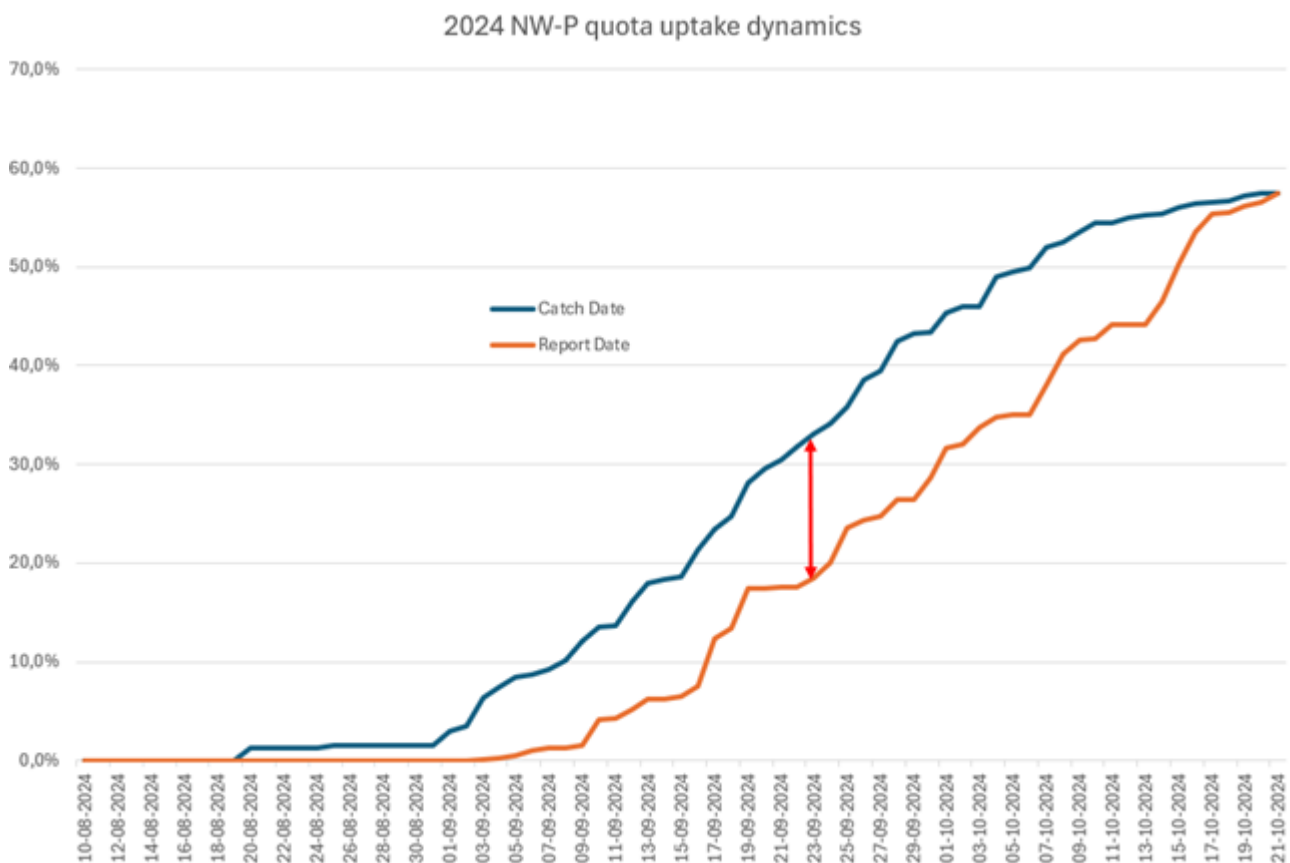


Figure 2 illustrates the quota uptake of NW-P salmon fishery over time in 2024



2025 NW-P quato uptake dynamics

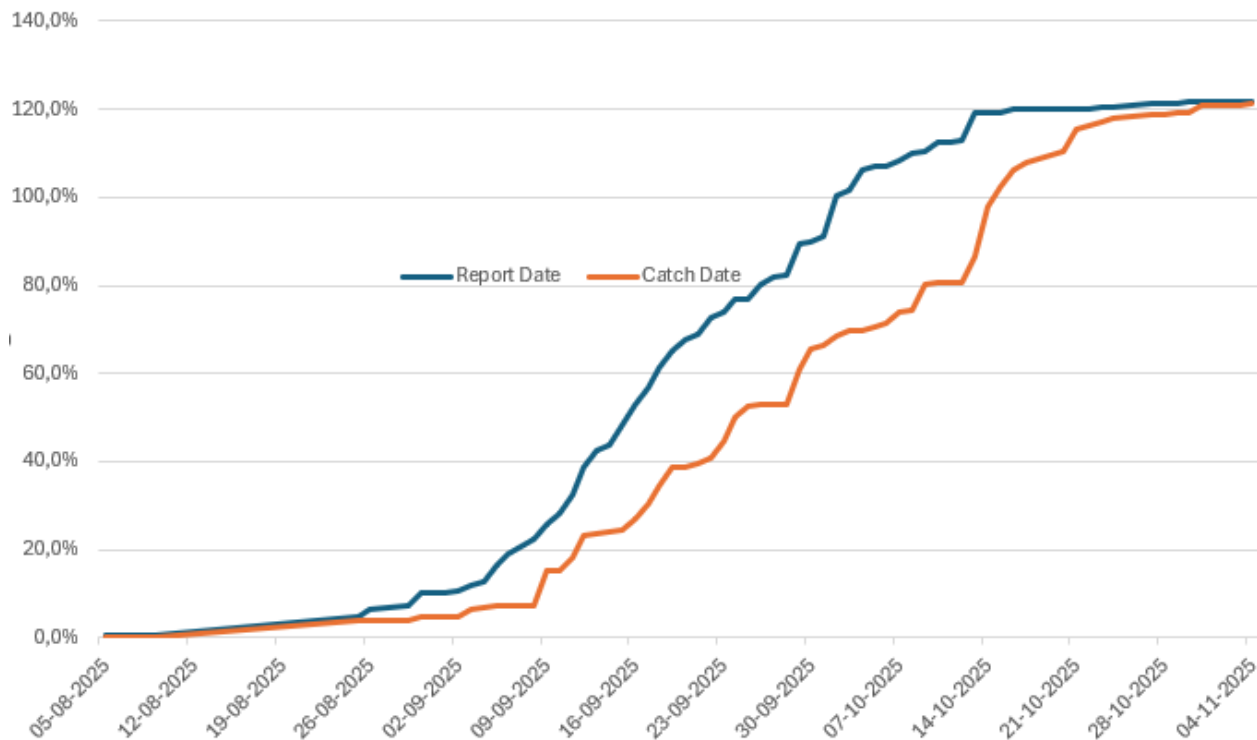


Figure 3 illustrates the quota uptake of NW-P salmon fishery over time in 2025

In conclusion, in 2025 there was minor overfishing in NW-P while the NW-R was not exhausted. The other quotas have been consumed as much as possible with reasonable regulatory methods. We have continued large parts of our technical and administrative measures before and during the fishery season, except for sending text messages. We might consider automatic loading again in 2026 fishery, that saved time and energy can be used to, among others, the further communication with the fishermen. However, we should also be aware of the cost of such IT development.

5. Summary of 2025 season

The 2025 salmon fishery in Greenland was conducted in accordance with the Multi-Annual Regulatory Measure WGC(22)10 and continued to operate exclusively as a subsistence and internal-use fishery. The Government of Greenland maintained the established management framework, including licensing requirements, monitoring procedures, and quota-based regulation across the three management areas.

A total of 753 licenses were issued in 2025, representing a 6.8% increase compared to the previous year. Of these, 70.9% of license holders submitted reports, indicating a slight decline from the reporting level observed in 2024. In total, 1,065 catch reports were received compared to 1.477 catch reports the previous season. The proportion of reports received within the fishing season decreased to 68%, compared to 82% in 2024. The average reporting delay increased to 10 days, a change attributed partly to the discontinuation of text-message reminders owing to administrative constraints.



Interviews conducted with non-reporting license holders in January 2026 revealed that the majority had not caught any salmon, while others cited forgetfulness and lack of time for failing to report.

The total quota uptake for West Greenland reached 28.62 tonnes, slightly exceeding the established Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 27 tonnes. This overrun was primarily the result of late reporting in the Northwest professional segment, where a number of catches were submitted after the fishery had been closed. Despite this, the Northwest recreational segment remained well below its allocated quota, partially offsetting the overharvest. Management actions in the Southwest segments were implemented effectively, with uptake remaining within acceptable bounds.

Throughout the season, the Greenland Fisheries and Hunting Control Authority (GFJK) continued daily monitoring of reporting data, maintained contact with municipalities, and applied the regulatory principle of closing fisheries when registered catches approached 49% of the TAC. Operational challenges persisted due to the continued prevalence of combined or “batch” reports that encompass multiple fishing events, despite legal requirements to report each tending of gear individually.

In summary, the 2025 season was characterized by reduced reporting performance, increased reporting delays, and limited administrative capacity for outreach and follow-up due to understaffing during the season. These factors contributed to reduced predictability in quota uptake, particularly in the Northwest professional fishery. The effect of the text messages showed clearly in the 2025 fishing season and therefore, it will be reinstated in 2026. Consideration may also be given to invest in improving automated reporting tools to support timely reporting and strengthening quota management in future seasons.

Table 5. Summary of the fishery in West Greenland 2019-2025							
Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Reporting percentage	81.6%	81.4%	69.5%	68%	82,3%	79,0%	70,9%
Quota uptake (tons)	28.8	30.7	39.97	28.88	32.58	20.79	28,62