

WGC(15)21

Multi-Annual Regulatory Measure for Fishing for Salmon at West Greenland for 2015, 2016 and 2017

RECOGNISING that in exercising its functions the West Greenland Commission shall take into account the factors detailed in Article 9 of the Convention;

NOTING that at its 2006, 2009 and 2012 Annual Meetings, the West Greenland Commission adopted multi-annual regulatory measures that provided for a fishery that was “restricted to that amount used for internal consumption in Greenland, which in the past has been estimated at 20t annually,” and applied for three year periods, subject to the result of application of the Framework of Indicators;

FURTHER NOTING that the reported catches in the West Greenland fishery since implementation of the restriction to internal consumption only may provide an indication of the subsistence needs of Greenland;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the comprehensive information presented to the inter-sessional meetings of the Commission in 2014 and 2015 concerning the critical status of many of the Multi-Sea-Winter salmon stocks contributing to the West Greenland fishery and the conservation initiatives taken by both Greenland and States of origin;

NOTING that some stocks harvested at West Greenland are endangered and at risk of extinction in some States of origin;

CONSIDERING that ICES has assessed the stocks from the seven regions contributing to the fishery at West Greenland to be below conservation limits and thus suffering reduced reproductive capacity and has advised that there are no catch options for the mixed-stock fishery at West Greenland that would satisfy the NASCO management objectives in 2015, 2016 or 2017;

FURTHER CONSIDERING that an updated Framework of Indicators has been provided by ICES and will be applied in 2016 and 2017 to evaluate if a significant change is signalled by the indicators and, therefore, a reassessment of the ICES advice is warranted;

RECOGNISING the work that Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) has done to obtain additional information on fishing effort in the salmon fishery and their commitment to further improve the monitoring, control and catch reporting for the fishery;

COMMITTING to continue to cooperate in the design and implementation of a sampling programme for the salmon fishery at West Greenland;

NOTING that at the 2015 Annual Meeting, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) proposed a total catch limit of 45t to which not all members of the Commission could agree. Nevertheless, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) unilaterally committed to limit the total annual catch for all components of its fishery to take no more than 45t in 2015, 2016 and 2017;

Thus, the Members of the Commission agree as follows:

- (1) There will be no export of wild Atlantic salmon or its products from Greenland;
- (2) The fishery will open no earlier than 1 August and close no later than 31 October each year;
- (3) For the unilateral catch limit to be established by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), any overharvest in a particular year will result in an equal reduction in the catch limit in the following year; there will be no carry forward into a future year of any under-harvest;
- (4) Efforts will be made to identify and implement temporal or spatial harvest restrictions that would provide increased protection for weaker stocks taking into account information provided by ICES;
- (5) Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) will further improve the monitoring, management control and surveillance of its salmon fishery during the period covered by this measure, at a minimum, in accordance with the Plan for Implementation of Monitoring and Control Measures in the Salmon Fishery at West Greenland, WGC(15)20 with the objective of achieving full catch accountability;
- (6) All Members of the Commission will implement the six tenets in accordance with WGC(15)23;
- (7) Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) will inform NASCO and, as appropriate, ICES in a timely manner of any modifications to the management of the West Greenland salmon fishery, of the outcome of the 2015, 2016 and 2017 fisheries and of progress with the implementation and effectiveness of its Plan for Implementation of Monitoring and Control Measures in the Salmon Fishery at West Greenland, WGC(15)20 , for annual review by the Commission;
- (8) States of origin will explore opportunities to share experiences with Greenland on monitoring, management control and surveillance in the salmon fishery, including on carcass tagging, through knowledge-sharing exchange programmes;
- (9) This regulatory measure will apply to the fishery at West Greenland in 2015. This measure will also apply in 2016 and 2017 unless any Member of the Commission requests review.