

Meeting of the Newfoundland and Labrador Regional Advisory Process (RAP) on 3Ps Cod

**The Gazebo, Clovelly Golf Club
Stavanger Drive, St. John's NL
November 5-9, 2007**

Meeting Chairperson: Geoff Evans, Marine Systems Ecologist, Aquatic Resources Division, Science Branch, DFO, NL Region.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Context

The status of Subdivision 3Ps cod was last assessed in 2006. The current assessment is requested by Fisheries and Aquaculture Management to provide the Minister with detailed advice on the status of the stock and the implications of a possible cod fishery on this stock in 2007.

Objectives

- Assess the current status of the stock as a whole. In particular, assess current spawning biomass, total (age 3+) biomass, exploitation rate, natural mortality and biological characteristics (including age composition, size at age, age at maturity, and distribution). Describe these variables in relation to historic observations.
- Further to the previous assessment, analyze and assess the implications of the year classes subsequent to the relatively strong year classes of 1997 & 1998 as it relates to the level of recruitment. To the extent possible with available information, provide information on the strengths (or relative strengths) of year-classes expected to enter the exploitable populations in the next 1-3 years.
- Consistent with the precautionary approach, consider the risk that fishing could do serious harm to the stock, including but not limited to assessing the implications of fishing at the following catch options: zero, 11,000t, 13,000t, and 15,000 t.
- In the event that an analytical model is not available to underpin the advice, the prospects for changes in stock biomass over a range of catch options should be considered, based on analysis of recent trends in abundance indicators in relation to recent removals (tempered by productivity factors noted above).
- Highlight major sources of uncertainty in the assessment, and where appropriate, consider alternative analytical formulations of the assessment.
- Report on results of tagging and the distribution of this stock in other areas (eg. 3L/3Pn).

Products

A Science Advisory Report (SAR) and associated research document(s) will be produced as a result of this meeting. Also, a proceedings report will be generated summarizing the decisions, recommendations and major points of discussion at the meeting.

Participation

Participation will be solicited from the following:

- DFO Science, Oceans and Habitat Management, Fisheries and Aquaculture Management, and Policy & Economics (Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec Regions)
- Provincial Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Scientists from St. Pierre, France
- Fish Food and Allied Workers Union
- Academia
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Industry Groups