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Tammaqtainahuarniriit anngutighat atuqhugit Inuit qaujimajatuqangillu ilihimaniillu ilitquhiannin
Conserving wildlife through the application of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific knowledge

ታሪክ 20, 2013

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Reasons for the NWMB's recommendations on the proposed total allowable catch levels

The Northwest Atlantic Fishing Organization Scientific Council Meeting report from June 2013 (SC 7-20) made the following recommendations:

1. Considering the increasing trends in biomass and catch per unit effort indices together with high catch per unit effort and promising incoming year classes, as well as the additional survey coverage that produced increased biomass and abundance estimates, the total allowable catch for Greenland halibut in Divisions 0A+1AB could be increased from 13,000 tonnes to 16,000 tonnes;
2. Given the relatively stable stock health indicators, the total allowable catch for Greenland halibut in Division 0B + 1C-F should remain unchanged and not exceed 14,000 tonnes (status quo).

The NWMB supports the Scientific Council assessment that stock health indicators suggest healthy, increasing stock in Division 0A+1AB, and thus an increase in total allowable catch is recommended. Furthermore, Nunavut stakeholders have been requesting an increase in Division 0A+1AB for a number of years, with the last increase in 2006. With respect to the total allowable catch increase proposed for 2014, the NWMB received letters of support from the Government of Nunavut, the Nunavut Offshore Allocations Holders Association, and Arctic Fishery Alliance. As with past practice, a 50/50 split of the increase for these areas between Canada and Greenland is reasonable. The NWMB also agrees that a more precautionary approach is reasonable in Divisions 0B + 1C-F given the stable biomass and catch per unit effort indices.

With regards to the allocation of the Canadian portion of an increase in Divisions 0A + 1AB, the NWMB feels strongly that the entire Canadian portion should be allocated exclusively to Nunavut. Nunavut has received the entire Canadian allocation since 2001, and for the reasons outlined below, the Board is of the view that this practice should continue. First and foremost, allocation of the quota exclusively to Nunavut would be fair and equitable. Currently Nunavut is only allocated approximately 42% of its adjacent resources, while other Atlantic jurisdictions typically enjoy a minimum of 80-90% of their adjacent fisheries resources. This discrepancy was highlighted in the 2002 *Independent Panel on Access Criteria's* (Panel) conclusion that Nunavut does not enjoy the same level of access to its adjacent fisheries as do the Atlantic provinces. The Panel emphasized that every effort must be made to remedy Nunavut's low level of access, and that "*no additional access shall be granted to non-Nunavut interests in waters adjacent to Nunavut until the territory has achieved access to the major share of these resources*". Awarding the entire Canadian portion of the Divisions 0A + 1AB increase to Nunavut will aid in bringing the territory closer to the status of other regions in terms of access to adjacent fisheries resources, while at the same time not taking any allocations from fishers in other Canadian jurisdictions.

As well, awarding the entire increase in Division 0A to Nunavut is aligned with Fisheries and Oceans Canada's (2002) *New Access Framework – Atlantic Commercial Fisheries* (Framework). The Framework is meant to guide decisions on new or additional access to Atlantic commercial fisheries which have undergone substantial increases in resource abundance or landed value. A 3,000 tonne increase qualifies as a substantial increase, and the three guiding principles of the Framework – *Conservation, Recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty [Land Claim] Rights and Equity* – should be applied. First, based on the Northwest Atlantic Fishery Organization's survey results, catch per unit effort indices and recruitment estimates, the allocation is within conservation limits; second, the recommendation is consistent with the terms of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* and will economically benefit the beneficiaries of that land claim; and third, the allocation will help alleviate the disparity between Nunavut and the Atlantic provinces in terms of access to adjacent fishery resources.

Moreover, the NWMB's recommendation is in line with all three access criteria used in that Framework: *adjacency, historic dependence and economic viability*. The adjacency criterion states that "*priority of access should be granted to those who are closest to the fishery resource in question*". Nunavut is the only jurisdiction adjacent to Division 0A and should gain the greatest benefit from an increase in Division 0A total allowable catch. The historic dependence criterion states "*priority of access should be granted to fishers who have historically participated in and relied upon a particular fishery, including those who developed the fishery*". Prior to 1990 and the establishment of the *Groundfish Development Program*, Inuit were the only Canadian fishers to harvest Greenland halibut in Subarea 0, and the territory is credited for the development of the Division 0A Greenland halibut fishery. The economic viability criterion states "*that decisions regarding access should contribute to the economic resiliency and stability of individual fishers and of the fishing industry as a whole*". Participants in the Division 0A fishing industry are economically viable, demonstrating positive fishing performance, increased revenues, increased numbers of Inuit crew and progress in obtaining 100% ownership of vessels. Furthermore, according to the *NWMB Allocation Policy for Commercial Marine Fisheries* all applicants for allocations in Nunavut are required to submit a Governance, Business, Benefits and Stewardship Plan with their applications, and successful applicants must provide annual reporting to the NWMB. Thus, Nunavut fishing enterprises are compelled to have clear and viable business plans that effectively manage the public resource and increase overall economic benefits to Nunavummiut, while at the same time meeting mandatory requirements for responsible stewardship.

In conclusion, the Board hopes that after considering recommendations and reasoning outlined in this letter, you will continue to allocate the entire Division 0A Greenland halibut total allowable catch to Nunavut. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB with respect to this recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Kusugak', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Peter Kusugak
A/Chairperson of the
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board



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OCT 31 2013

Mr. Ben Kovic
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit, Nunavut
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Dear Mr. Kovic:

The 2014 Canadian Total Allowable Catches for Greenland Halibut in NAFO Subarea 0

I am pleased to inform you the Canadian Total Allowable Catches for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) Subarea 0 Greenland Halibut (turbot) fishery have been set for 2014.

Applicable provisions in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the advice and recommendations of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and stakeholders, and other relevant considerations were taken into account in making these decisions. The Total Allowable Catch for NAFO Division 0B will remain the same at 7,000 tonnes. The Total Allowable Catch for NAFO Division 0A will increase from 6,500 tonnes to 8,000 tonnes. This 1,500 tonne increase will be allocated entirely to Nunavut. Nunavut's share in adjacent Greenland Halibut fisheries rises to 73% overall with this increase. An announcement will be made shortly to all industry stakeholders in the Subarea 0 Greenland Halibut fishery.

Thank you for providing the advice and recommendations of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board on this important matter. I look forward to further cooperation between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

Sincerely,

David Burden
A/Regional Director General
Central and Arctic Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

cc: Scott Gilbert, A/Regional Director, Fisheries Management
Larry Dow, Director, Northern Operations
Art Willett, Director, Pacific, Central and Arctic, Ecosystems and Fisheries Management
Wayne Lynch, Director Fisheries & Sealing, Department of Environment, Government of Nunavut