

**SUBMISSION TO THE**  
**NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**  
**FOR**

**Information: X**

**Decision:**

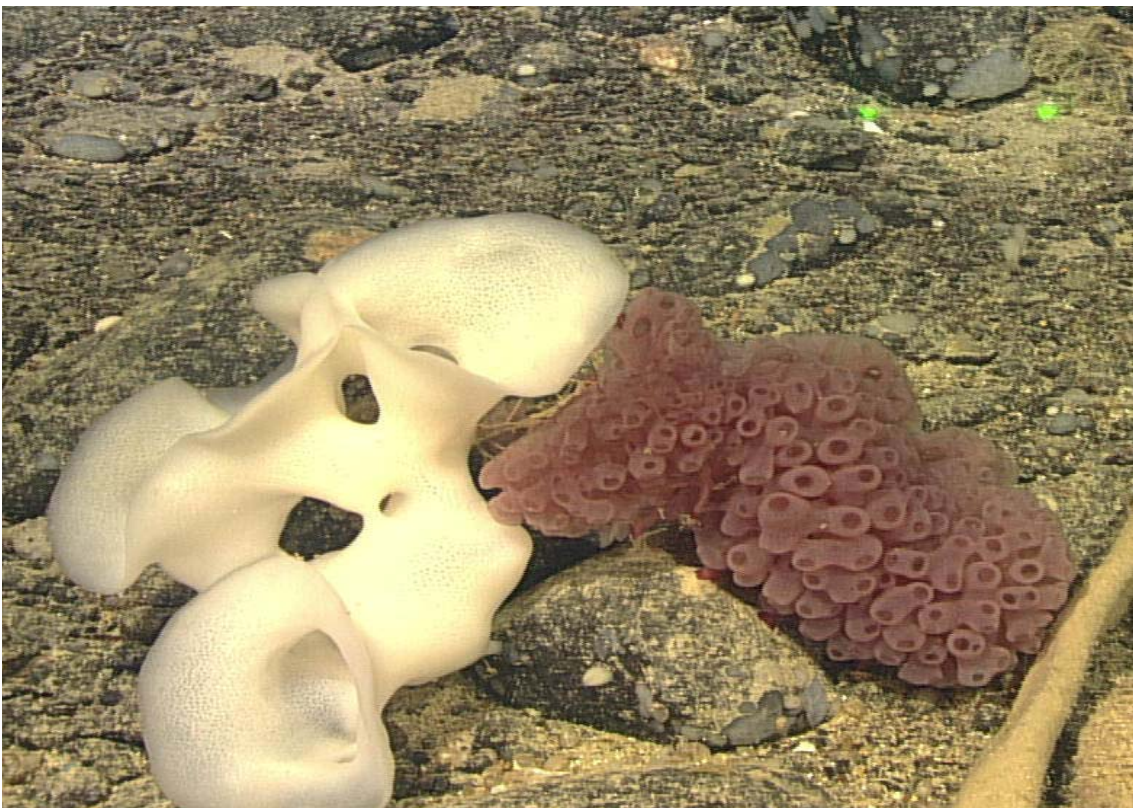
**Issue: Development of a Coral and Sponge Conservations Strategy for  
Newfoundland, Labrador and Eastern Arctic Waters**

**Background:** Corals and sponges form complex habitats which support many species of fish and invertebrates and in great number too (Figure 1). They are slow growing, long lived organisms that are susceptible to human activities, including bottom fishing and climate change. Corals and sponges live in the deep, cold waters of the Northwest Atlantic Ocean. To date in the Arctic, corals and sponges have been found primarily along the slopes of the Baffin Island and Greenland Continental Shelves between 500 -1500 m (Figure 2). Canada is committed both domestically and internationally to conserving and managing these sensitive benthic areas. DFO Central & Arctic Region and Newfoundland and Labrador Region are working together to develop a coral and sponge conservation strategy for Newfoundland, Labrador and Eastern Arctic waters. The Strategy will describe impacts to, state of knowledge of, and conservation efforts for corals and sponges. It will also identify conservation, management & research objectives and outline actions to achieve these objectives. As a first step, DFO is planning a series of information sessions this fall and winter with key government, aboriginal, stakeholder and environmental organizations to provide information on the strategy and identify initial concerns.

**Consultations:** Margaret Treble (Science) and Steve Newton (Oceans), DFO, Winnipeg; Jason Simms (Oceans), DFO, St. John's.

**Prepared by:** Beth Hiltz, Resource Management, DFO, Winnipeg

**Date:** October 29, 2010



**Figure 1. Corals found in the deep, cold water of the Northwest Atlantic Ocean.**

