

SALSEA-West Greenland: 2011 Sampling



Photographs courtesy of Denis Fournier & Mark Ives



Tim Sheehan of the US NOAA Fisheries Service reports.



Tim.Sheehan@noaa.gov

In 2011, the sampling programme included sampling teams from Greenland, United States, Canada, Scotland, England and Wales, and Ireland. Teams were in place throughout the fishing season which started on 1 August and continued until 31 October. In total, 971 specimens were sampled for presence of tags, fork length, weight, scales, and tissue samples for DNA analysis in support of the Baseline Sampling Programme. Samples were obtained from four landing sites: Ilulissat (NAFO Division 1A), Sisimiut (1B), Nuuk (1D), and Qaqortoq (1F). The sampled salmon were measured, scales were removed for ageing, and gutted weight recorded. Scale samples will be aged by Canadian collaborators and tissue samples were preserved for DNA analysis with US collaborators.

On a daily basis, the samplers would attempt to locate any recently landed Atlantic salmon. When salmon were located, the sampler would request permission to sample the fish from the fishermen and if granted, each fish would be inspected for the presence of external tags and/or fin clips. The sampler would also obtain a length and weight and would collect a scale and tissue sample from as many fish as possible. The Baseline sampling is non-invasive. Once the sampling is completed, the individual fish are returned to the fishermen/owner and are either displayed for sale or prepared for storage.

In 2011, a total of 430 fresh whole fish were purchased directly from individual fishermen in support of SALSEA Greenland (Enhanced Sampling Programme). This was the third and final year of field sampling under SALSEA Greenland. In addition to the Baseline sampling outlined above, the full suite of Enhanced Sampling samples were also collected from these fish. The Enhanced Samples will be used to evaluate a wide variety of topics such as age and growth, diet, origin, lipid analysis, stable isotope analysis, parasites, diseases, sea age at maturity as well as genetic relations and SLICE resistance in sea lice. Samples collected in 2011

are either in the auditing or initial processing/analysis phase. The 2011 sampling effort was largely successful and the data collected will provide novel insights into the health and status of the West Greenland Stock complex. Once they are combined with the data collected under the SALSEA North America and SALSEA-Merge programs, these data will be valuable in furthering our understanding of marine-phase salmon.

