NAFO actions grossly inadequate/Etchegary

Written by Gus E.
Monday, 26 September 2011 07:39 - Last Updated Tuesday, 27 September 2011 08:11

When will NAFO seriously take conservation and rebuilding measures and impose a moratorium on ALL NAFO fisheries operations on the Nose and Tail of the Grand Banks. To give the straddling fisheries in that area any hope of recovery NAFO must take the same measures Canadian fishermen have had to endure for the last TWENTY years. During that period we have lost 15 percent of our fishing population (80,000) to seek employment out of the Province and with them the loss of 30,000 jobs resulting from the fisheries collapse caused by NAFO overfishing and DFO mismanagement. The NAFO propaganda contained in recent press releases will undoubtedly be acceptable to some. The recent WWF report, supporting this toothless organization, is dead wrong and will not be taken seriously by most NLERS. People with real knowledge of the history of our fisheries between 1949 and 2011 will know the vast difference between truth and fantasy concerning NAFO fisheries management. It appears the WWF is insulated from the real world of fisheries on the straddling stocks of the Grand Banks.

To bring us back to earth and a touch of reality, 3NO cod has been known for a century to be the fastest growing cod in the North Atlantic by far, yet after twenty years there is NO sign of recovery despite recent statements. The truth is NAFO continues to fish 3NO at every opportunity. Just as they continue to overfish shrimp (under the Objection Procedure clause). Ask the Danes through Faroes and Greenland fishermen for confirmation. Reference the American Plaice fishery, which represented 70 percent of the fish offshore landings to N&L South Coast previous to the moratorium. NAFO with Canadian agreement actually tripled the AP bycatch rate in the Yellowtail fishery thereby preventing any recovery of that valuable fishery.

The WWF report is far off-base with the real world. Even more alarming are recent indications that the Canadian Government in their proposed cost-cutting measures intends to gut DFO stock assessments (see below). This does nothing to give Newfoundlanders and Labradorians much hope or encouragement for the future of this Province. After twenty years it's time all concerned joined together to deal with problems we have with DFO and NAFO.
Gus Etchegary
Chairman, Fisheries Community Alliance

DFO plans to gut stock assessments:

"You will see from the attached that DFO managers are planning massive cuts aimed mainly at stock assessment and fisheries management.

The intent is to reduce the frequency of most stock assessments from annual to only every 3-5 years (multi-year). There will be concomitant reductions in science, fisheries management and enforcement activities. The intent is to save many millions of $ as part of DFO's contribution to the federal government deficit reduction program.

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Given that Newfoundland has the highest number of managed fisheries the impact is likely to be felt the greatest here. No other Province in Canada is impacted by DFO mismanagement of our fisheries and corresponding mismanagement of straddling stocks by NAFO.

Doing stock assessment every 3-5 years will increase the uncertainty in the data and hence in the scientific advice provided to managers. In theory this would mean more cautious fisheries management decisions, but this is unlikely to happen. Instead fish stocks off Newfoundland will be put at risk as a result of government cut-backs."
TAGS: sustainable, fisheries, fish, sustain, NAFO, WWF, cod, stock assessment, DFO cuts

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