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Japanese Research Report for 1988

by

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The total nominal catch by Japanese trawlers (joint ventures included) from the NAFO waters decreased (19%) from 10,800 tons in 1987 to 8,700 tons in 1988 (Table 1). This is mainly due to the decrease in the catches of redfish in Divisions 3K and 4V. Most of the catches of other species more or less decreased except for capelin. In recent years the catches of *Illex* in Subareas 3 and 4 have remained at the lowest level and no catch of *Illex* was recorded in 1988. Fishery for capelin continued in Division 3N as in the previous year and catch increased (75%) from 800 tons in 1987 to 1,400 tons in 1988.

The number of Japanese trawlers operated in the NAFO waters decreased from nine in 1987 to six in 1988. They were two 3,000, two 2,000, one 1,000 and one 500 GRT class stern trawlers. Total fishing effort decreased (16%) from 8,300 hours fished in 1987 to 7,000 hours in 1988. The decrease occurred in Divisions 3K and 4V as in the catch. On the other hand, fishing efforts in Divisions 1D, 2G and 3O increased.

The fishing grounds of Japanese trawlers were located on the continental slopes off West Greenland (Divisions 1A-1F), Labrador (2GHJ), Newfoundland (3K-3O), and Nova Scotia (4V). Japanese trawlers moved among these fishing grounds, as done in the previous years.

I. Subarea 1

A. Status of the Fisheries

Exploratory fishings were carried out by R/V Shinkai Maru mainly at depths around 1,000 m in Divisions 1C and 1D in April-May and July-November. Most of the catch were Greenland halibut. Other commercial vessels scarcely operated in this area, except for small fishery for redfish. The mesh sizes of the cod-ends used were 140-160 mm.

B. Special Research Studies

A Japan and Greenland Joint Research on Groundfish off Greenland

Under an agreement between the Japan Marine Fishery Resource Research Center (JAMARC) and the Greenland Trawling Company of the Greenland Home Rule (GTC), two types of trawl surveys, stratified bottom trawl survey and exploratory survey for the deepwater and pelagic resources, have been continued off West and East Greenland since 1987 by

using R/V Shinkai Maru . In 1988, the former survey was carried out off East Greenland in June/July and off West Greenland in September/October. The latter one was carried out from April to November.

Based on the stratified survey off West Greenland, abundances by species category are described in NAFO SCR Doc. 89/VI/ and for Greenland halibut some biological information such as distribution and size composition is presented in NAFO SCR Doc. 89/VI/ . The results of stratified survey off East Greenland will be submitted to the next ICES meeting.

II. Subarea 2

A. Status of the Fisheries

The fishery directed to Greenland halibut was carried out at depths of 520-1,050 m in Divisions 2GHJ during September-November. The Greenland halibut catch was 1,350 tons, an decrease (10%) from 1,500 tons in 1987. The mesh sizes of the cod-ends used were 130-160 mm.

III. Subarea 3

A. Status of the Fisheries

The redfish-directed fishery was carried out between 200-700 m in Divisions 3K, 3L, 3M, 3N and 3O all the year round. The total redfish catch decreased (30%) from 4,000 tons in 1987 to 2,840 tons in 1988. Redfish were taken mainly in Divisions 3K and 3O as in the previous years. Some fishing operations directed to Greenland halibut were made at depths of 520-1,050 m in Divisions 3KL. Capelin were caught at bottom depths of 45-60 m in Division 3N with mid-water trawls. The mesh sizes of the cod-ends used were 15-23 mm for capelin in Division 3N, 85-135 mm in Division 3O, and 130-160 mm in other Divisions.

IV. Subarea 4

A. Status of the Fisheries

The redfish-directed fishery was carried out in Division 4V in June-July, September and November-December at the depths of 260-480 m. The total redfish catch decreased (60%) from 1,200 tons in 1987 to 460 tons in 1988. No other directed fishery was carried out and no catch of *Illex* was obtained. The mesh sizes of the cod-ends used were 85-160 mm.

