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Greenland halibut (*Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*) in NAFO Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO: Stock Trends based on annual Canadian Research Vessel survey results during 1978-2008

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Abstract

Greenland halibut are widely distributed throughout the waters off Labrador and eastern Newfoundland. During the late 1970s and most of the 1980s they were found in relatively high abundance along the deep slopes of the continental shelf, particularly in Division 2G. They were likewise plentiful in the deep channels running between the fishing banks especially in Divisions 2H, 2J and 3K. By 1991 distribution in the northern areas was greatly reduced and most of the resource was located in Division 3K. In Divisions 2J and 3K where most of the Greenland halibut resource presently resides, the stock biomass was relatively stable until the mid-1980s after which it declined substantially to reach an all time low in the early 1990s largely precipitated by the disappearance of older fish from the population. From about 1995 the stock began to increase and continued to improve to 1999 based upon several strong, successive year-classes particularly those of 1993-95. By 1999 the stock declined again and by 2002, it reached its lowest point since the early 1990s. Subsequently, the overall stock has increased and current biomass indices in Divisions 2J3K are similar to the estimates from 1995-1999. Recruitment following these strong year-classes appeared weaker at younger ages, yet conversely have appeared to be average or above average at older (commercially selected) ages. Although estimates of spawning stock biomass are largely unknown, the annual biomass estimates of Greenland halibut > 70 cm in Divisions 2J3K have been near zero for well over a decade. This paper updates the Canadian research vessel survey results using data collected in 2008, and compares these results to prior observations. Most of the key indicators from 2008 surveys indicate declines from 2007 level, although the 2008 estimates are subject to some bias as a result of incomplete survey coverage. Recent estimates of recruitment suggest poor stock rebuilding prospects in the near future.

Introduction

The abundance and biomass estimates for Greenland halibut (NAFO Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO) from random-stratified research vessel (RV) spring and autumn multi-species surveys conducted by Canada are updated for 2008. Stratified mean number and weight per tow are updated for each division, as are age-disaggregated survey indices. Healey and Brodie (2009) review the performance of the Canadian multi-species surveys in 2007 and 2008. In addition, Brodie and Stansbury (2006) provide an overview of the Canadian spring and autumn RV multi-species surveys including detail of survey coverage and timing over 1995-2006. Coverage shortfalls during the fall 2008 survey, particularly in deep water (1000m +), have resulted in Greenland Halibut survey indices which are not directly comparable to the indices in previous years.

Materials and Methods

Canadian Research Vessel Surveys

Subarea 2(2G, 2H, & 2J) and Division 3K

Dwyer and Healey (2005) document the sampling design and sampling frequency in Subarea 2 and Division 3K over 1978-2004. Division 2G is no longer covered by Canadian surveys. Division 2H is scheduled for survey coverage in every second year, and was included in the 2008 fall survey. A total of twenty strata in Divisions 2J and 3K were not completed in the fall of 2008. These include the inshore strata (strata 608-616), added to the survey design in 1996. Healey and Brodie (2009) describe the 2008 survey deficiencies in detail, and provide illustrations of the current survey stratification scheme used in Canadian surveys.

Divisions 3L, 3M, 3N and 3O

Surveys have been conducted by Canada in Divisions 3LMNO for many years; however, prior to 1996 the maximum depth usually did not exceed 400 meters. Therefore, data collected on Greenland halibut were considered inadequate to describe distribution and abundance for this stock and were not used for assessment purposes. In 1996, the survey design was extended to depths of at least 730 meters, and where possible, to 1500 meters during fall surveys. Beginning in 1996, inshore strata were added to the Division 3L survey. These strata (strata 784-800, inclusive) have been surveyed in most subsequent years with coverage deficiencies in 1999 (no coverage), 2006 (limited coverage) and 2007 & 2008 (no coverage). In addition to the inshore strata, the fall surveys of Division 3L were not fully completed during the 2004, 2005 and 2008 surveys. The most extensive coverage of Division 3M was achieved in 1996; since then, only the deep-water strata in the western and northern areas of Division 3M have been included in the survey design. Divisions 3LNO are surveyed annually in the spring and again in the autumn.

Comparative Fishing Exercises

The Canadian autumn survey series has employed various survey vessels and gear types (described in Dwyer and Healey, 2005). Data analysis and results of comparative fishing exercises conducted to allow comparisons through the time-series are presented in Warren (1996) and Warren *et. al.* (1997). Based upon the length-based conversion factors presented by Warren (1996) and Warren *et. al.* (1997), all data presented in this paper are in *Campelen 1800* trawl catch equivalents.

Data conversions for the *Engel 145'* trawl used in surveys in Divisions 3LMNO have not been conducted due to poor coverage of depths where most Greenland halibut are encountered.

Survey Coverage and Timing

Fall survey coverage details by NAFO division and depth zone for the true *Campelen 1800* surveys from 1996-2008 are presented in Table 1a. Similar information for the 1996-2008 spring surveys are presented in Table 1b. Multiple coverage deficiencies are of particular significance in assessing the status of this stock: sporadic coverage of Divisions 2GH during fall surveys, an incomplete survey of Division 3L in the fall of 2004 (see Healey and Dwyer 2005), incomplete coverage of Divisions 3NO during the spring 2006 survey, no survey of Division 3M during either of the 2004, 2005 or 2008 fall surveys and irregular coverage of the deep-water strata of Divisions 3NO. Further, the 2008 fall survey completed the fewest number of sets during the Campelen time-series, with extremely limited coverage of deep-water strata. These gaps in survey coverage increase the uncertainty in the survey results, and introduce bias to the total estimates of biomass and abundance as well as the stratified mean estimates.

Due to mechanical problems with the survey vessels, the duration of the survey period has lengthened in several of the recent years. This likely affects the survey estimates of Greenland halibut stock size, as it has been shown that commercial catch rates have seasonal trends and that these are highest in the early winter period (see Power, 2004). Healey and Dwyer (2005) note that “*Variable survey timing adds another layer of uncertainty in assessing this stock.*” An additional complicating factor is that vessel breakdowns have led to annual variations in the survey coverage by each vessel (e.g. *Teleost* surveying areas typically covered by the *Wilfred Templeman*). No

adjustments for such timing changes or vessel differences have been made. These sources of survey variation are discussed in greater detail in both Healey and Brodie (2009) and Brodie and Stansbury (2006). Healey and Mahé (2009) investigate the impact of the coverage deficiencies during the fall 2008 survey in Divisions 2J3K on the assessment of this stock.

Trends in Stock Size

Survey estimates of abundance and biomass and mean numbers and weights per tow are computed using standard stratified estimators. Approximate confidence intervals (95%) are provided for the stratified mean number and weight per tow; computational details can be found in Smith and Somerton (1981). Note that there are several instances when the lower confidence bound of these indices is negative. This is incorrect (obviously, the lower bound should always be greater than or equal to zero) and is a consequence of violating the distributional assumptions used to produce these confidence intervals. This result commonly arises when a limited number of large catches are taken by the survey. See Evans et al. (2000) for an alternate method of estimating the variability of stratified survey indices.

Age-length keys for Division 2J3KL combined, Division 3MNO combined were applied to the respective individual divisions (sample sizes presented in Table 2a), in order to obtain survey estimates at age. (One exception is that for the age-specific results for Division 2J3K combined – otoliths were only used from Divisions 2J and 3K.) The reduced number of otoliths from the fall 2008 survey is reflective of the decrease in the number of survey sets completed. To produce divisional survey results at-age from spring surveys, an age-length key from all samples in Divisions 3LNO were used (refer to Table 2b for sample sizes).

Estimates of mean biomass at length per tow are computed by converting mean numbers at length per tow and transforming to biomass using annual length-weight equations (sexes combined) from 1990-2008. These relationships were calculated using the model $W=aL^b$; resultant estimates are shown in Table 3. For the years 1978-89, the 1990 estimates were applied. The R^2 value was high for each relationship (Table 3), but in most years tended to underestimate weight for the longer fish in the population, indicating that the biomass is underestimated slightly for longest fish sampled from the population. We emphasize that this underestimation is problematic only for the biomass-at-length results.

Results and Discussion

Geographic Distribution

Figure 1 shows the area covered by this survey and place names referred to in the text. Figure 1 contains distribution plots for the most recent two fall surveys, 2007 and 2008, and for comparison, distribution plots from 1991 (small catches throughout Divisions 2J3K) and 2001 (widespread distribution within 2J3K, large catches along entire slope edge). Distribution patterns in 2007 and 2008 are quite similar to that in 2001, and the average weight caught per set in 2007 is comparable to that in the 2001 survey. Stock distribution in 2008 was similar to that in 2007, but the catches in Divisions 2J3K were higher in 2007 within the Hawke and Cartwright channels, and also the Funk Island Deep. Biomass in the Flemish Pass (Division 3LM deepwater) remains relatively low, despite the concentration of fishing effort in this area. In 2008, large catches were also measured within the Hopedale Channel in Division 2H. A comparison of the 2007 and 2008 distribution gives some spatial indication of the deficiencies of the 2008 survey, though the inshore strata of Divisions 3KL were not covered in either of these years (refer to the 2001 panel).

Trends in Stock Size

Biomass and abundance indices for Division 2G (by stratum) are presented in Tables 4 & 5, respectively; Tables 6 & 7 for Division 2H; Tables 8 & 9 for Division 2J; Tables 10 & 11 for Division 3K; Tables 12 & 13 for Division 3L fall; Tables 14 & 15 for Division 3M; Tables 16 & 17 for Division 3N fall; Tables 18 & 19 for Division 3O fall; Table 20 for Division 3L spring; Table 21 for Division 3N spring; and Table 22 for Division 3O spring. Survey coverage may also be inferred from these tables by examining the number of strata which do not contain survey results. (Table entries with “.” indicate that the stratum was not covered by at least two successful fishing sets, whereas values of 0 indicate the stratum was surveyed with no Greenland Halibut captured.)

Within Divisions 2GH, the temporal coverage of the survey has been irregular. Although Division 2G has not been surveyed since 1999, the historical biomass and abundance results (Tables 4 and 5, respectively) are provided. In Division 2H, the biomass index (Table 6) declined from 1978 through the late-1980's (excluding 1979 which was considered to be an anomaly). The index has generally increased since then, and the 2006 estimate of survey biomass is now the second largest in the time-series, exceeded by only the 1979 value. The 2008 survey biomass is an underestimate, as six strata were not completed during the fall of 2008. Some of these strata have been historically important to the total Division 2H biomass index. The time-series of abundance estimates for Division 2H (Table 7) are not consistent with the trends in biomass, particularly for the earliest data. The 2008 abundance estimate of Division 2H is also biased.

The annual survey series is continuous over 1978-2008 for both Divisions 2J and 3K. In Division 2J the biomass index was generally stable from 1978-84 (Table 8a and b). It then declined to reach a minimum in 1992, increased marginally until 1995 after which time it began to increase more rapidly due to improved recruitment. Over 1998-2007, the biomass index was generally stable. However, the 2006 index value was the largest in the Campelen time-series, predominantly as a result of substantial increases in just two strata in Hawke Channel (strata 208 and 227). The biomass index for 2008 is the second lowest value in the 1995-2008 period, although several of the strata that were not completed in the fall 2008 survey are typically important for Greenland Halibut. Of the strata covered by the 2008 survey, the current biomass estimate is 30% lower than any other year over 1996-2007, i.e. years which the Canadian survey covered down to 1500m. Estimates of abundance were variable throughout the late 1970's and 1980's (Table 9a and b). This index increased considerably through to the mid-1990's, and the estimated abundance has again been variable at a relatively high level in the past decade. A sizeable one-year increase in the 2006 value, influenced by large estimates in two strata, has not been subsequently sustained. A comparison of the Division 2J abundance from the strata covered in 2008 over the full 1996-2008 period indicates that the 2008 abundance is the lowest in this time-series.

In Division 3K, the biomass index was variable over 1978-89 at a relatively high level (Table 10a and b). By 1992, it had declined by over 50%, and remained low until 1995. After this time, the biomass index increased rapidly due to recruitment of the strong 1993, 1994 and 1995 year-classes to the survey, increasing steadily until 1999, the highest value in the time series (Table 10a and b). The index decreased rapidly over 1999 to 2002, but has subsequently increased, with a substantial change from 2006 – 2007, with increased survey catches over much of Division 3K. The 2008 survey of Division 3K is incomplete; however, in contrast to the Division 2J results, the aggregate biomass from the Division 3K strata covered during the 2008 survey is the fourth-largest in the 1995-2008 period. The Division 3K abundance index (Table 11a and b) indicated an increasing trend over most of the 1980's through to the mid-1990's. After 1996, the abundance index has decreased, and the 2005 and 2006 values are approximately half of the survey estimated abundance over 1998-2001. Although incomplete, the 2008 abundance estimate remains above the levels of 2005 and 2006, when the survey was fully completed.

The fall survey biomass indices for each of Divisions 3L, 3M, 3N and 3O are shown in Tables 12, 14, 16 & 18, respectively. The biomass index in Division 3L has declined from the relatively large values from the late 1990's and recent values indicate relative stability. Recent estimates of abundance (Table 13) have also been relatively stable. Survey coverage has varied from year to year in Divisions 3MNO (Tables 14, 16 & 18, respectively), particularly so in the deeper waters of Divisions 3NO (>732m) where higher concentrations of Greenland Halibut are typically found. The fall survey coverage problems of 2008 impact each of Divisions 3LNO to various degrees and Division 3M was not surveyed during 2008. Recent estimates of survey abundance indices for Divisions 3M, 3N and 3O (Tables 15, 17 & 19, respectively), are relatively low. The overall combined biomass estimate for Divisions 3LNO is low in proportion to the Subarea 2 + Division 3 total (14% for 2007).

Stock size estimates for the Divisions 3L 3N and 3O spring survey series are shown in Tables 20, 21 and 22, respectively. Each of the estimated biomass indices has declined substantially relative to the late-1990 levels, but recent estimates have shown some improvement since 2002, most notably in Division 3L during 2007, although this estimate is imprecise. Abundance estimates from Divisions 3L, 3N, and 3O spring surveys have been generally declining since the late-1990's. During the spring of 2006 very few strata within Divisions 3NO were sampled, and those covered were at relatively shallow depths (refer to Tables 20-22 for strata coverage).

Stratified Mean Number and Weight (kg) Per Tow by Division

Mean weights and numbers per tow (MWPT and MNPT, respectively) by division are presented in Tables 24a-g and 25a-g, respectively, and the mean weights per tow by Division are illustrated in Figure 3. Note that recent survey values

affected by substantial coverage deficiencies are indicated by different plotting symbols. Mean weight per tow by division with approximate 95% confidence intervals are also plotted in Figure 3. The mean weights per tow show similar trends to the annual swept area biomass series for all Divisions, although some estimates of MWPT and MNPT are biased due to the previously noted deficiencies in survey coverage.

MWPT estimates were highest in the late 1970's for Division 2G and 2H (Table 24a; Figure 3a) then declined to the lowest value in each time series in 1991. Within Division 2H, MWPT has been variable in more recent surveys, with relatively large estimates as compared to Divisions further south. The MNPT trends in each Division (Table 25a) have been similar to the MWPT results.

For Division 2J and 3K, the MWPT are given in Table 24b, as well as Figure 3a. In each division, the MWPT index declined from relatively high estimates of the early 1980's to reach an all time low in 1992. Over the next several years it increased to a peak in 1999 approaching the levels recorded in the early 1980's for Division 3K, compared to about 50% of the early 1980's level for Division 2J. A decline in MWPT from 1999 to 2000 was measured in both Divisions 2J and 3K. The index in Division 2J was stable over 2000-2007, with the exception of a substantial increase in 2006. However, within Division 3K, further declines were observed until 2002, and the index has subsequently increased in each of the past four years, increasing by almost two-fold from 2006-2007. The MWPT estimates in 2008 are substantially lower in 2008 compared to 2007 estimates, but are significantly biased as a result of incomplete 2008 survey coverage. The MNPT results from Divisions 2J and 3K (Table 25b) have been generally consistent over time, but as noted above, recent results indicate a divergence, particularly after 2001.

A comparison of mean weight per tow estimates between spring and fall surveys in Divisions 3LNO during 1996-2008(includes fall 1995 data for Division 3L) is presented in Table 24c-e and Figure 3b (mean number per tow found in Tables 25 c-e). All series indicate declines from the peak values of the late 1990's. Although some increases have been observed in Divisions 3L, 3N, and 3O in recent years (particularly in the 2007 3L spring survey) in general the MWPT indices remain low. Estimates of MWPT from Divisions 3LNO combined over 1996-2008 show that an increasing trend from 2002-2007 (excluding 2006, not surveyed), and the 2008 value is close to the time-series average. We emphasize that indices from fall surveys in Divisions 3NO may not be reliable indicators of the resource due to variations in the survey coverage of the deepwater over the time-series. In addition, recent problems in completing the surveys have affected the coverage of these divisions (e.g. Division 3L in autumn of 2004, Divisions 3NO during 2006 spring survey). The MNPT results (Tables 25 c-e) are similar to the MWPT, and overall the indices have been declining since the late 1990's.

The MWPT index from Division 3M (Table 24f and Figure 3d) has generally been declining since 1998. Note that this index includes only those strata which are part of the current survey design, located along the western slope of the Flemish Cap (strata 528-536). Similar trends have been measured in MNPT (Table 25f), and the 2006 (most recent survey) MWPT and MNPT results are amongst the lowest values in the time-series.

Table 24 g and Figure 3e shows a comparison of mean weight per tow in Divisions 2J3K and Divisions 2J3KL from 1995-2008. In general, each of these indices increased up until 1999, subsequently decreased to 2002, and with a consistent increase over the 2002-2007 period. As previously discussed, the 2008 estimates are biased. The Division 2J3K MWPT index resemble trends from the Division 3K index more closely as Division 3K is the larger of the two areas. Figure 4 compares the mean weight and number per tow for Divisions 2J and 3K combined for the entire time series. There was little trend in mean number per tow (Table 25h and Figure 4) up until the early 1990's, after which there was an increase in the index peaking with the highest level observed by 1996. Subsequent to this, the index has steadily declined. The MWPT results presented in Figure 4 indicated that the total stock (as represented by the Division 2J3K index) began to rebuild after 1995 and by 1999 approached near historic highs of the early 1980's. It declined again since then and by 2002 was near the low level that it was during the early 1990s. After 2002, the index has increased steadily to 2007; and although biased, the 2008 survey result is slightly below average.

Trends in Mean Biomass Per Tow by Size Category

Most of the stock biomass resides in Divisions 2J and 3K combined (Tables 26a and b) and these divisions comprise the longest time series of annual survey data throughout the stock area. In order to illustrate the mean biomass per tow trends for important size categories from 1978-2008, the data were combined for Divisions 2J and 3K (Fig. 4). Figure 4 shows trends in mean biomass per tow for Greenland halibut <30 cm, between 31-69 cm and >=70 cm. The value of 30

cm was chosen as it is approximately equal to the mean length at age 4 for Greenland halibut surveyed in Divisions 2J and 3K; it represents the recruitment to the fishery in the following year. The value of 70 cm was chosen because it is considered to be an approximation of the length at 50% maturity in female Greenland halibut.

The recruitment signal from this index is pessimistic - the current biomass estimate of the < 30 cm size group is amongst the lowest in the Campelen time-series. All recent values are much lower than the high levels driven by the 1993-1995 cohorts. (The 1978-1994 values for the <30cm are likely to ‘under-converted’ during the multiplicative length based conversions of the Engels data to Campelen trawl equivalents, most particularly at the smallest size classes). The relatively strong 1993-1995 cohorts can be seen in the improved biomass trends in the <30 cm class from 1995-1998, which translated to a substantial increase in the 30 cm-70 cm length class in the latter half of the 1990’s. This increase was not sustained, and by 2002 the 30-70 cm class had returned to the levels of the early 1990’s. It was anticipated that as the recruits from 1993-1995 year classes added growth, the contributions to the stock biomass should shift back to the more usual size compositions assuming normal recruitment patterns. However, this is clearly not the case, suggesting that either the strong recruitment was overestimated, overexploited or both before contributing growth to the stock as older, larger fish.

This figure also characterizes an unusual situation arising in recent fall surveys to 2007: a significant increase in the 30-70 cm class which was not precipitated by any evidence of recruitment in the <30 cm length class. The 2007 biomass per tow result for Greenland Halibut ranging from 30-70 cm is more than 2.5 times the 2002-2004 average. Such increases are consistent with indications of improvement in the commercial CPUE from various fleets throughout the stock area (Brodie et al. (2008), Fernández et al. (2008), and Vargas et al. (2008)). Investigations of the potential biases by age (discussed in detail by Healey and Mahé (2009)) would suggest that the stratified estimators of mean biomass over lengths from 30-70 cm for 2008 are likely to be negatively biased.

Based upon mean lengths-at-age, the 1993-1995 year-classes would be expected to producing an increase in the 70+cm values in the most recent two surveys. However, the 2007 value for the 70+cm class (0.07 per tow) is well below the series average. During the late 1970s and early 1980s Greenland halibut greater than 70 cm contributed about 20% to the estimated trawlable stock biomass. However, after 1982 this size category declined to the point that by 1991 virtually no Greenland halibut in this size range contributed to the estimates of stock biomass. Since 1991, this value continues to be at or near zero. The survey estimates indicate that any recent improvement in the stock has not come from the spawning stock biomass.

Age Composition

Annual stratified mean number per tow at age compositions from the Divisions 2J and 3K combined time series from 1978-2008 are presented in Table 26 and Figure 6. Although Greenland halibut were caught as old as 19 years, very few were ever caught older than 12 years with the age structure fairly consistent from about 1978-88 (Tables 26a and b). Since then the older ages began to disappear from the survey catches entirely and by 1995 none were caught older than 11 years. After 1995 some older fish again began to appear in the surveys at least up to 14 years old which continued into 2007 (Table 26b). For ages 1-4, the population abundance increased considerably during the mid-1990s as the large 1993-95 year-classes (Table 26b; Fig. 6) recruited to the survey. The mean number of fish per tow for these age classes has generally declined since that time. The current estimates for ages 1-4 are amongst the lowest in the Campelen portion of the time series (1995-2008). In fact, the most recent four survey estimates of the recruiting age groups have been lower than any of the estimates from the previous decade. The abundance of Greenland Halibut ages 5+ increased in the late 1990’s on the strength of the prior recruitment, but swiftly declined after 1999. The age 5+ index increased considerably over 2002-2007 (Table 26). In the 2007 survey, the estimate for age 6 is the second largest in the Campelen time-series, and the results for ages 7 through 12 are the largest values, respectively, in this time period. Again, we note that the 2008 estimates are biased. The amount and direction of these biases are likely to differ across age groups and hence it is difficult to compare the 2008 values against previous years. The mean number per tow estimate from the fall surveys of Division 2J3KL is shown in Table 27. Trends are generally consistent with the Division 2J3K index. For comparison, the increase in the data at ages 5+ is compared to index data for ages 6-9, which represents over 85% of landed weight in recent years. Excluding the biased 2008 estimates, the recent trends for the age 6-9 data are similar to estimated trends in several commercial CPUE series.

Age compositions (mean numbers per tow) of Greenland halibut by division from Campelen surveys during 1996-2008 are shown in Table 28a and b. In most years, the mean numbers from Divisions 2J3K (and Division 2H when surveyed)

tend to be much greater than that from other Divisions. One exception is the results from Division 3M during the late 1990's, which were usually only slightly lower than the results from Divisions 2HJ3K.

Age compositions for the Div 3LNO combined spring series (Table 29) demonstrate that younger age groups are typically most abundant in this survey. Observe that almost all of the year classes subsequent to those of 1993-1995 do not appear to be as strong at similar ages. In the previous assessment, the 2007 age 1 estimate was noted for being the second largest age 1 MNPT value over 1996-2007 (Healey, 2008). Yet at age 2, this year-class appears to be of average strength. Also, the strong results reported for ages 6-8 in the 2007 spring survey were maintained only for the 2000 and 2001 year-classes, aged 7 and 8 in 2008. The 2008 age 8 MNPT result is, by far, the largest in the time-series. Survey estimates in for each of these year-classes at young ages (<5) were generally below average.

Mean Length and Weight at Age

Survey estimates of mean length and weight at age within Divisions 2J3K over time are given in Table 30 and Figure 10. Weight at age was calculated by applying the length/weight relationship for each year to the average length. Length at age seems stable over time; however, weight at age appears to be gradually declining at the oldest ages. After declines in the early part of the time series, many of the data for ages 5-7 demonstrate periods of stability. At the youngest ages (<5), mean length at age and mean weight at age have improved over the past decade.

Canadian surveys during 2005 - 2008

Survey results for the Canadian fall survey of 2008 are difficult to interpret due to the substantial coverage deficiencies in most Divisions. Over 2005 – 2007, significant increases in Greenland Halibut biomass was measured in the Canadian fall surveys. These increases are most notable within Divisions 2J3K, and were unusual in that increases in the biomass index was not preceded by increased recruitment. Immigration from deeper waters, immigration from stocks in adjacent management areas, survey timing, distributional shifts and aging errors were considered as potential explanations for this phenomenon (e.g. see Healey (2007) and Healey et al. (2006)), with no evidence to suggest any of these factors are strongly impacting the recent survey estimates.

The 2005 - 2007 2J3K results are unusual in that the length structure (and subsequently, age structure) is unlike anything observed in the Divisions 2J3K Campelen time series. There are relatively few fish at the youngest ages, and the survey values for ages 6 and older in 2007 considerably exceed the average level for each age group. If the survey observations of low abundance at the youngest age groups translate into poor recruitment into the exploitable and spawning stock biomass, then this stock will be under considerable risk of collapse. The survey results for Division 3L and in Divisions 3NO (Figure 7) have similar age distributions. However, within Divisions 3LNO, these patterns have been observed in previous years, and are not a substantial aberration as in the case of the Division 2J3K results. In Divisions 3NO for instance, the changing age structure is reflecting the variations in annual depth coverage.

Recent survey results from Division 3L, immediately south of Divisions 3K, exhibit similar abundance and biomass dynamics to those within Divisions 2J3K. However, the relative increase in the Division 3L biomass index is much smaller than that within Divisions 2J3K.

As described in Healey (2008), survey indices for several other species within Divisions 2J and 3K have also increased in the recent period (e.g American Plaice, Atlantic Cod, Redfish, Roughhead Grenadier (biomass increase only), and Witch Flounder). In addition, several other non-commercial species such as eelpouts, wolffishes and snake blenny are showing large increases in biomass since about 2002.

Conclusions

Survey estimates of stock biomass in Divisions 2J and 3K, the area which provides the largest contribution to Canadian surveys, steadily increased over 2002-2007. The biomass estimate for 2008 is approximately 30% lower than the 2007 level. However, survey results for the Canadian fall survey of 2008 are difficult to interpret due to the substantial coverage deficiencies in most Divisions. Stock size estimates from 2008 among Divisions and surveys are somewhat variable, but they generally remained relatively low. Recent recruitment results suggest poor prospects for stock rebuilding in the future.

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Table 1b. Summary of successful sets in spring surveys in SA 2+3 in 1996 - 2008. Depth ranges given in metres, numbers of sets appear in parentheses.

Year	Division	Ship		Year	Division	Ship*	
		<i>W.Templeman</i>	Total			<i>W.Templeman</i>	Total
1996	3L	66-664(188)	188	2003	3L	62-698 (156)	156
	3N	42-665(82)	82		3N	39-681 (79)	79
	3O	65-685(86)	86		3O	63-726(79)	79
			356				314
1997	3L	60-681(158)	158	2004	3L	47-710 (151)	151
	3N	35-689(71)	71		3N	44-675 (79)	79
	3O	62-669(81)	81		3O	61-636 (79)	79
			310				309
1998	3L	53-721(163)	163	2005	3L	64-672 (133)	133
	3N	38-682(88)	88		3N	45-691 (78)	78
	3O	64-657(93)	93		3O	66-719 (79)	79
			344				290
1999	3L	41-692(177)	177	2006	3L	60-701 (141)	141
	3N	40-659(82)	82		3N	46-77 (22)	22
	3O	62-679(86)	86		3O	64-103 (32)	32
			345				195
2000	3L	61-681(134)	134	2007	3L	61-702 (137)	137
	3N	45-664(81)	81		3N	44-636 (79)	79
	3O	61-694(83)	83		3O	64-719 (79)	79
			298				295
2001	3L	34-695(154)	154	2008	3L	60-684 (122)	122
	3N	40-650(79)	79		3N	40-623 (71)	71
	3O	74-699(79)	79		3O	64-704 (80)	80
			312				273
2002	3L	42-710(146)	146				
	3N	40-641(79)	79				
	3O	63-628(79)	79				
			304				

* CCGS *A. Needler* conducted 47 sets in Divs 3NO during 2006 survey.

* CCGS *Teleost* conducted 40 sets in Div. 3L during 2007 survey.

* CCGS *Teleost* conducted 43 sets in Div. 3L during 2008 survey.

Table 2a. Number of age samples available per division combinations used to develop fall age-length keys. Age-length keys for 2GH combined, Div. 2J3KL combined and Div. 3MNO combined were applied to the respective individual divisions.

Year	Div. 2GH			Div. 2J3KL			Div. 3MNO			Total	
	2G	2H	Total	2J	3K	3L	Total	3M	3N	3O	
1978	1220	1134	2354	766	1616	-	2382	-	-	-	-
1979	756	841	1597	1192	1367	-	2559	-	-	-	-
1980	-	-	-	1561	1065	-	2626	-	-	-	-
1981	756	758	1514	1619	1356	-	2975	-	-	-	-
1982	-	-	-	1699	1349	-	3048	-	-	-	-
1983	-	-	-	1325	1240	-	2565	-	-	-	-
1984	-	-	-	1159	1341	-	2500	-	-	-	-
1985	-	-	-	1298	1457	-	2755	-	-	-	-
1986	-	-	-	1218	1114	-	2332	-	-	-	-
1987	783	1227	2010	1211	1192	-	2403	-	-	-	-
1988	680	1268	1948	1058	1053	-	2111	-	-	-	-
1989	-	-	-	667	533	-	1200	-	-	-	-
1990	-	-	-	575	513	-	1088	-	-	-	-
1991	65	377	442	514	564	-	1078	-	-	-	-
1992	-	-	-	505	498	-	1003	-	-	-	-
1993	-	-	-	476	505	-	981	-	-	-	-
1994	-	-	-	643	449	-	1092	-	-	-	-
1995	-	-	-	562	578	-	1140	-	-	-	-
1996	370	628	998	737	813	661	2211	354	315	134	803
1997	664	721	1385	850	950	897	2697	211	233	160	604
1998	311	635	946	970	870	743	2583	229	465	411	1105
1999	488	671	1159	797	802	516	2115	99	153	91	343
2000	NO SURVEY	-	608	716	673	1997	204	413	210	827	
2001	NO SURVEY	579	579	759	991	797	2547	292	395	287	974
2002	NO SURVEY	-	1101	972	693	2766	107	339	268	714	
2003	NO SURVEY	-	757	622	538	1917	154	150	223	527	
2004	NO SURVEY	848	848	777	614	311	1702	NO SURVEY	168	73	241
2005	NO SURVEY	-	785	846	477	2108	NO SURVEY	260	226	486	
2006	NO SURVEY	794	794	828	947	487	2262	136	126	50	312
2007	NO SURVEY	-	825	785	517	2127	106	322	217	645	
2008	NO SURVEY	777	777	541	555	352	1448	NO SURVEY	118	86	204

Table 2b. Number of age samples available per division combinations used to develop spring age-length keys. Age-length keys for Div. 3LNO combined were applied to the respective individual divisions.

Year	Div. 3LNO			Total
	3L	3N	3O	
1996	724	377	475	1576
1997	637	369	375	1381
1998	668	306	334	1308
1999	413	334	172	919
2000	358	230	75	663
2001	730	328	126	1184
2002	320	140	49	509
2003	321	180	65	566
2004	322	141	70	533
2005	316	83	118	517
2006	269	0*	0*	269
2007	375	170	61	606
2008	303	138	86	527

*Survey not completed.

Table 3. Length-weight relationships for Greenland halibut, for Division 2J3K, 1990-2008. W = round weight (kg) and L = total length (cm). From 1978-1989, the 1990 annual L/W equations were applied.

Year	Sex	Length-Weight Equations	N	r^2
1990	All	$W = 5.765 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.118}$	1067	0.978
1991	All	$W = 1.088 \times 10^{-5} L^{2.934}$	1073	0.985
1992	All	$W = 9.204 \times 10^{-6} L^{2.975}$	933	0.979
1993	All	$W = 6.359 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.077}$	975	0.987
1994	All	$W = 1.238 \times 10^{-5} L^{2.894}$	1088	0.981
1995	All	$W = 8.677 \times 10^{-6} L^{2.979}$	1068	0.983
1996	All	$W = 3.968 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.193}$	1421	0.989
1997	All	$W = 5.390 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.111}$	1755	0.989
1998	All	$W = 5.518 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.105}$	1796	0.988
1999	All	$W = 5.004 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.130}$	1535	0.990
2000	All	$W = 4.260 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.178}$	1283	0.988
2001	All	$W = 5.062 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.127}$	1714	0.983
2002	All	$W = 5.545 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.104}$	1916	0.990
2003	All	$W = 5.485 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.105}$	1351	0.989
2004	All	$W = 5.526 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.111}$	1374	0.991
2005	All	$W = 4.609 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.163}$	1601	0.989
2006	All	$W = 4.788 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.157}$	1744	0.990
2007	All	$W = 4.465 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.173}$	1574	0.990
2008 *	All	$W = 4.897 \times 10^{-6} L^{3.145}$	1084	0.991

* Survey Incomplete.

Table 14 Biomass estimates (t) of Greenland halibut from Canadian fall surveys in Div. 3M using a Campelen trawl during 1996-2007.
Division 3M was not surveyed in 2004, 2005 or 2008.

Depth Range (m)	V1 Area	V4 Area	Stratum	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2006	2007
128 - 146	342	342	501	0									
147 - 184	838	838	502	0									
185 - 256	628	628	503	91									
	348	348	504	0									
	703	703	505	12									
	496	496	506	33									
257 - 366	822	822	507	380									
	646	646	508	230									
	314	314	509	56									
	951	951	510	271									
	806	806	511	316									
367 - 549	670	670	512	261									
	249	249	513	64									
	602	602	514	171									
	666	666	515	434									
	102	102	537										
550 - 731	634	634	516	342									
	216	216	517	77									
	210	210	518	143									
	414	414	519	581									
	194	194	538										
732 - 914	.	525	520										
	.	253	524										
	.	530	528	279	1580	2297	.	950	1142	922	639	410	387
	.	98	533	59	270	77	.	119	78	56	185	130	152
	.	133	539										
915 -1097	.	517	521										
	.	226	525										
	.	488	529	72	218	667	562	508	1233	602	821	255	639
	.	238	532	938	466	524	398	124	278	114	256	476	439
	.	486	534	814	2026	1466	.	1437	1020	471	576	796	514
1098 -1280	.	533	522										
	.	177	526										
	.	1134	530	3769	1587	1506	1111	1285	958	162	1127	810	803
	.	92	535	235	218	434	.	720	30	165	119	25	94
1281 -1463	.	284	523										
	.	171	527										
	.	203	531	346	216	508	337	149	302	0	381	347	169
	.	112	536	202	385	296	.	219	218	34	202	.	179
Total Biomass (t)				10175	6966	7776	2408	5511	5260	2525	4306	3249	3376

Table 15 Abundance estimates (000s) of Greenland halibut from Canadian fall surveys in Div. 3M using a Campelen trawl during 1996-2008. Division 3M was not surveyed in 2004, 2005, or 2008.

Depth Range (m)	V1 Area	V4 Area	Stratum	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2006	2007
128 - 146	342	342	501	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
147 - 184	838	838	502	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
185 - 256	628	628	503	199	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	348	348	504	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	703	703	505	58	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	496	496	506	184	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
257 - 366	822	822	507	1427	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	646	646	508	1595	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	314	314	509	65	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	951	951	510	884	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	806	806	511	1360	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
367 - 549	670	670	512	315	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	249	249	513	84	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	602	602	514	180	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	666	666	515	489	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	102	102	537	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
550 - 731	634	634	516	358	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	216	216	517	131	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	210	210	518	176	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	414	414	519	658	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	194	194	538	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
732 - 914	.	525	520	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	253	524	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	530	528	292	1977	3297	.	1094	1361	923	778	405	413
	.	98	533	94	351	120	.	173	74	61	94	128	155
	.	133	539	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
915 - 1097	.	517	521	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	226	525	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	488	529	110	224	614	537	470	1188	470	962	336	423
	.	238	532	1408	557	688	557	141	327	126	405	507	426
	.	486	534	735	2674	1790	.	1872	938	532	557	879	449
1098 - 1280	.	533	522	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	177	526	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	1134	530	4619	1524	1595	1248	1181	884	201	1025	691	626
	.	92	535	165	247	373	.	386	34	104	70	14	62
1281 - 1463	.	284	523	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	171	527	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	.	203	531	182	73	517	293	140	115	0	307	312	184
	.	112	536	74	216	265	.	216	123	35	69	.	139
Abundance (000s)				15841	7841	9258	2635	5672	5045	2452	4267	3271	2875

Table 23b. Abundance and biomass estimates of Greenland halibut by Division, from the Canadian fall 2008.
Upper and lower indicate approximate 95% confidence limits.

Area	Total	Upper	Lower
Division 2H			
Abundance	148,141,222	385,704,563	-89,422,118
Biomass (kg)	32,310,855	50,097,195	14,524,515
Division 2J			
Abundance	210,076,298	263,756,651	156,395,946
Biomass (kg)	37,443,503	43,302,334	31,584,673
Division 3K			
Abundance	394,570,259	575,205,736	213,934,781
Biomass (kg)	121,955,437	173,090,488	70,820,386
Division 3L			
Abundance	62,677,704	77,995,148	47,360,260
Biomass (kg)	27,476,323	37,692,366	17,260,280
Division 3M	NO SURVEY		
Abundance			
Biomass (kg)			
Division 3N			
Abundance	2,242,370	3,538,966	945,774
Biomass (kg)	1,153,023	1,940,869	365,176
Division 3O			
Abundance	2,631,767	4,200,133	1,063,401
Biomass (kg)	886,081	1,246,700	525,463
Combined SA2+Div. 3KLMNO			
Abundance	820,339,620	997,422,401	643,256,839
Biomass (kg)	221,225,222	271,276,931	171,173,513

Table 24a. Mean weight (kg) per tow and associated CI for Greenland halibut in Div. 2G and 2H for 1978 - 2008.
 Refer to Tables 4 and 7 for variations in strata surveyed. In several years, Divs. 2GH have not been surveyed.

Year	Division					
	2G			2H		
Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	
1978	34.2	45.9	22.6	54.2	77.1	31.4
1979	31.6	42.2	21.0	101.3	132.6	70.0
1981	29.0	63.2	-5.2	37.6	47.7	27.4
1987	23.4	31.3	15.5	27.7	35.5	19.8
1988	18.9	33.0	4.8	29.0	36.4	21.6
1991	0.9	1.6	0.2	4.4	8.0	0.8
1996	11.8	23.4	0.1	16.5	19.6	13.3
1997	13.7	17.2	10.3	38.2	49.0	27.4
1998	4.4	8.1	0.6	25.4	43.0	7.7
1999	5.4	7.6	3.2	20.0	24.8	15.2
2001	NO SURVEY			30.7	44.0	17.3
2004	NO SURVEY			30.4	37.6	23.2
2006	NO SURVEY			41.8	63.5	20.2
2008	NO SURVEY			23.6	36.7	10.6

Table 24b. Mean weight (kg) per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 2J and 3K for 1978-2008.
 Refer to Tables 8 and 10 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division					
	2J			3K		
Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	
1978	39.0	50.2	27.8	37.9	49.1	26.6
1979	32.2	38.1	26.2	25.0	30.9	19.1
1980	32.5	40.0	25.0	28.0	33.3	22.6
1981	33.2	43.6	22.8	31.2	36.3	26.2
1982	44.3	52.3	36.2	28.3	33.7	22.9
1983	33.8	40.1	27.6	39.6	47.5	31.8
1984	35.8	45.2	26.5	38.3	46.7	29.9
1985	26.7	33.2	20.2	28.0	33.1	23.0
1986	31.2	42.6	19.8	38.9	48.0	29.7
1987	21.3	29.8	12.8	28.6	34.5	22.8
1988	15.6	19.1	12.2	29.9	37.1	22.8
1989	19.1	34.5	3.7	30.5	36.8	24.2
1990	18.5	23.2	13.8	23.2	31.0	15.4
1991	6.4	7.7	5.2	15.3	18.5	12.1
1992	5.6	7.4	3.8	10.3	13.1	7.5
1993	8.2	10.0	6.4	20.4	24.1	16.7
1994	8.5	11.1	5.8	12.5	14.3	10.7
1995	12.8	15.4	10.1	15.0	17.9	12.1
1996	18.6	23.6	13.7	23.6	27.7	19.5
1997	23.6	54.2	-7.0	25.6	29.2	22.0
1998	17.9	20.5	15.2	27.9	32.1	23.7
1999	25.4	29.1	21.6	37.7	46.7	28.7
2000	15.9	19.8	11.9	29.6	41.0	18.2
2001	18.9	24.9	12.9	25.3	28.8	21.7
2002	15.4	19.2	11.7	13.1	16.6	9.7
2003	17.2	21.4	13.0	14.0	16.0	12.0
2004	17.0	28.8	5.3	17.8	21.0	14.5
2005	17.6	21.5	13.7	22.2	26.1	18.4
2006	30.5	91.8	-30.9	22.4	27.1	17.7
2007	16.6	20.9	12.3	38.5	47.9	29.0
2008	11.4	13.1	9.6	28.3	40.1	16.4

Table 24c. Mean weight (kg) per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 3L Fall and Spring for 1995-2008.
 Refer to Tables 12 and 20 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division					
	3L - Fall			3L - Spring		
	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
1995	2.1	2.7	1.5	0.9	1.8	0.0
1996	5.8	7.0	4.6	1.8	3.0	0.6
1997	7.6	16.9	-1.7	3.5	4.7	2.2
1998	8.8	11.3	6.2	7.3	11.4	3.1
1999	5.8	7.4	4.1	4.0	9.4	-1.5
2000	5.5	7.8	3.2	5.0	6.1	3.9
2001	4.7	5.7	3.7	2.4	2.4	2.3
2002	3.5	4.4	2.6	1.2	1.7	0.7
2003	4.1	6.9	1.3	2.2	3.3	1.2
2004 *	3.4	3.9	2.9	1.8	2.3	1.3
2005	5.1	6.7	3.6	2.8	4.5	1.1
2006	5.4	6.8	3.9	2.7	4.5	0.9
2007	4.6	5.7	3.6	5.3	9.3	1.3
2008	5.1	7.1	3.2	3.6	6.1	1.0

*Substantially reduced coverage (Fall survey).

Table 24d. Mean weight (kg) per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 3N Spring and Fall for 1996-2008.
 Refer to Tables 17 and 21 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division					
	3N - Fall			3N - Spring		
	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
1996	2.1	3.8	0.4	1.4	4.0	-1.2
1997	2.7	11.8	-6.4	2.0	3.8	0.1
1998	5.6	9.4	1.9	2.4	10.0	-5.3
1999	1.2	2.1	0.2	2.5	4.5	0.5
2000	3.5	13.7	-6.7	1.8	2.9	0.6
2001	2.7	3.7	1.6	0.9	3.6	-1.9
2002	2.1	2.8	1.4	0.3	0.6	0.1
2003	0.4	0.7	0.2	1.1	2.7	-0.4
2004	1.2	6.3	-3.9	0.6	1.0	0.2
2005	1.3	1.7	0.8	0.7	1.4	0.0
2006	0.5	2.1	-1.2	*	*	*
2007	2.0	2.4	1.5	1.0	1.7	0.3
2008	0.5	0.8	0.2	0.9	1.1	0.7

*No Greenland Halibut captured (survey incomplete).

Table 24e. Mean weight (kg) per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 3O Spring and Fall for 1996-2008.
Refer to Tables 18 and 22 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division						
	3O - Fall			3O - Spring			
	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	
1996	0.4	0.6	0.2	1.1	2.0	0.2	
1997	0.8	1.3	0.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	
1998	2.0	4.4	-0.4	0.8	1.3	0.3	
1999	0.8	6.3	-4.8	0.5	0.9	0.2	
2000	1.5	2.3	0.7	0.1	0.2	0.0	
2001	1.6	7.4	-4.1	0.1	0.6	-0.4	
2002	1.5	2.1	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.0	
2003	1.0	1.8	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.0	
2004	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.0	
2005	0.8	1.1	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.1	
2006 *	0.1	0.5	-0.3	0.1	0.2	-0.1	
2007	1.3	1.7	0.9	0.2	0.9	-0.5	
2008	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.9	-0.3	

*Substantially reduced coverage in spring survey.

Table 24f. Mean weight (kg) per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 3M for 1996-2007.
Refer to Table 14 for variations in strata surveyed. Div. 3M not surveyed in 2004,2005 or 2008.

Year	Division				Division		
	3M - Fall			Strata 528-536 only	3M - Fall	Strata 528-536 only	
	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit		Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
1996	5.3	12.8	-2.2		14.4	42.4	-13.5
1997	15.0	23.2	6.8		15.0	23.2	6.8
1998	16.7	24.3	9.1		16.7	24.4	9.1
1999	8.5	13.5	3.5		8.5	13.5	3.5
2000	11.8	16.9	6.8		11.9	16.9	6.8
2001	11.3	15.1	7.5		11.3	15.1	7.5
2002	5.4	7.3	3.5		5.4	7.4	3.5
2003	9.3	13.3	5.2		9.3	13.3	5.2
2006	7.2	9.9	4.5		7.2	9.9	4.5
2007	7.3	10.5	4.0		7.3	10.5	4.0

Table 24g. Mean weight (kg) per tow for Greenland halibut in Div. 2J3K for 1978-2008
and Div. 2J3KL for 1995-2008. Refer to Tables 8, 10, and 11 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division					
	2J3K		2J3KL			
Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean wt/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	
1978	38.4	45.7	31.1	-	-	-
1979	28.1	32.2	24.0	-	-	-
1980	30.0	34.2	25.7	-	-	-
1981	32.1	37.2	27.1	-	-	-
1982	35.6	40.1	31.1	-	-	-
1983	36.9	41.8	32.1	-	-	-
1984	37.2	43.0	31.5	-	-	-
1985	27.5	31.1	23.8	-	-	-
1986	35.4	41.8	29.1	-	-	-
1987	25.5	30.0	20.9	-	-	-
1988	23.6	27.8	19.5	-	-	-
1989	25.4	30.7	20.2	-	-	-
1990	21.2	25.8	16.6	-	-	-
1991	11.5	13.4	9.6	-	-	-
1992	8.2	9.9	6.6	-	-	-
1993	15.3	17.5	13.1	-	-	-
1994	10.8	12.1	9.4	-	-	-
1995	14.1	16.1	12.2	9.1	10.2	8.0
1996	21.6	24.5	18.7	14.9	16.6	13.2
1997	24.8	28.3	21.3	17.5	19.5	15.5
1998	23.8	26.4	21.2	17.4	19.0	15.8
1999	32.5	37.8	27.2	21.3	24.4	18.2
2000	23.9	30.2	17.5	16.0	19.7	12.3
2001	22.7	25.5	19.9	15.0	16.7	13.4
2002	14.1	16.3	11.8	9.6	10.9	8.2
2003	15.3	17.2	13.4	10.5	11.7	9.3
2004 *	17.5	21.1	13.8	12.4	14.8	10.1
2005	20.3	22.9	17.8	14.1	15.7	12.5
2006	25.7	35.7	15.8	17.2	23.1	11.3
2007	29.1	34.6	23.6	18.8	21.9	15.7
2008	20.9	27.7	14.2	14.4	18.5	10.4

*Substantially reduced coverage in Division 3L.

Table 25a. Mean numbers per tow and associated CI for Greenland halibut in Div. 2G and 2H for 1978 - 2008.
 Refer to Tables 4 and 6 for variations in strata surveyed. In several years, Divs. 2GH have not been surveyed.

Year	Division			2H			
	2G	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
1978		122.4	171.0	73.7	224.4	670.5	-221.7
1979		65.0	95.0	35.0	285.4	381.5	189.3
1981		51.2	68.3	34.2	73.5	97.8	49.2
1987		106.4	159.4	53.4	225.5	393.5	57.6
1988		37.0	53.6	20.5	259.9	361.1	158.8
1991		9.3	19.3	-0.8	37.6	49.1	26.0
1996		51.5	72.7	30.4	137.1	166.9	107.3
1997		55.3	66.0	44.6	236.3	323.2	149.3
1998		23.8	134.2	-86.6	109.7	186.9	32.4
1999		25.5	34.3	16.7	91.5	116.6	66.5
2001		NO SURVEY			165.9	226.6	105.2
2004		NO SURVEY			177.1	250.6	103.7
2006		NO SURVEY			181.8	246.2	117.4
2008		NO SURVEY			108.4	282.3	-65.4

Table 25b. Mean numbers per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 2J and 3K for 1978-2008.
 Refer to Tables 8 and 10 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division					
	2J		3K			
Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	
1978	100.4	419.4	-218.7	163.1	230.8	95.3
1979	89.6	109.0	70.2	58.6	73.4	43.8
1980	43.7	57.8	29.6	54.1	67.9	40.3
1981	96.9	140.3	53.6	88.9	105.6	72.3
1982	67.3	79.8	54.8	64.1	74.7	53.4
1983	40.6	51.8	29.4	83.3	100.6	66.1
1984	56.8	83.3	30.4	74.6	92.0	57.3
1985	69.5	90.7	48.3	97.4	115.9	78.9
1986	49.6	72.4	26.8	141.1	168.3	113.8
1987	44.7	67.0	22.3	118.0	141.4	94.7
1988	32.6	48.2	17.1	126.2	153.2	99.2
1989	54.7	84.9	24.4	143.5	172.2	114.7
1990	52.0	66.3	37.6	84.7	133.3	36.2
1991	33.0	43.4	22.5	71.4	89.2	53.7
1992	44.2	62.1	26.2	96.0	145.4	46.6
1993	64.8	86.1	43.6	201.7	254.3	149.1
1994	82.9	109.5	56.2	146.7	164.0	129.4
1995	112.0	140.4	83.6	160.6	201.2	120.0
1996	195.0	255.8	134.3	208.5	244.8	172.2
1997	148.8	450.9	-153.3	187.7	225.8	149.7
1998	94.8	127.7	61.8	139.2	164.5	113.9
1999	137.1	164.2	110.0	150.1	181.9	118.2
2000	94.4	110.9	77.9	133.1	162.1	104.1
2001	128.5	184.9	72.1	127.4	146.3	108.5
2002	117.7	139.8	95.6	95.1	116.3	73.8
2003	142.1	188.8	95.3	93.8	121.9	65.8
2004	122.2	186.0	58.4	100.6	118.1	83.1
2005	100.4	122.6	78.2	69.5	79.9	59.1
2006	153.5	233.4	73.6	75.7	87.5	63.8
2007	84.5	110.4	58.5	128.6	153.5	103.7
2008	63.7	80.0	47.4	91.5	133.4	49.6

Table 25c. Mean numbers per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 3L Spring and Fall for 1995-2008.
Refer to Tables 12 and 20 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division					
	3L - Fall			3L - Spring		
	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
1995	13.3	20.1	6.6	3.2	5.8	0.6
1996	23.3	28.1	18.4	13.0	18.0	8.0
1997	24.2	28.6	19.8	20.8	35.4	6.2
1998	22.4	27.5	17.4	26.7	40.0	13.4
1999	11.6	14.7	8.5	11.9	13.7	10.1
2000	13.9	17.1	10.6	13.3	16.1	10.5
2001	12.6	16.1	9.2	7.0	9.3	4.7
2002	10.5	13.2	7.7	5.1	6.6	3.6
2003	14.3	19.2	9.4	11.2	38.7	-16.3
2004 *	13.2	16.5	10.0	8.1	10.1	6.1
2005	13.0	19.8	6.3	8.3	22.8	-6.2
2006	10.5	12.9	8.2	7.5	10.5	4.4
2007	9.2	11.8	6.7	13.2	19.0	7.4
2008 *	11.7	14.6	8.9	10.2	37.0	-16.6

*Substantially reduced coverage (Fall survey).

Table 25d. Mean numbers per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 3N Spring and Fall for 1996-2008.
Refer to Tables 16 and 21 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division					
	3N - Fall			3N - Spring		
	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
1996	20.4	136.4	-95.7	10.8	14.8	6.8
1997	14.8	83.4	-53.8	12.3	25.7	-1.2
1998	15.3	30.9	-0.3	10.4	46.2	-25.3
1999	3.2	13.8	-7.5	8.9	19.8	-1.9
2000	5.1	18.9	-8.7	8.8	55.4	-37.8
2001	4.7	8.9	0.6	2.6	4.9	0.4
2002	4.9	9.1	0.8	2.0	13.8	-9.8
2003	2.0	3.0	0.9	6.1	41.1	-28.9
2004	4.4	21.0	-12.3	2.5	3.6	1.3
2005	2.6	4.6	0.5	2.5	3.8	1.2
2006	1.4	8.3	-5.4	*	*	*
2007	2.9	3.9	1.9	2.5	4.2	0.9
2008	0.9	1.5	0.4	2.2	3.4	0.9

*No Greenland Halibut captured (survey incomplete).

Table 25e. Mean numbers per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 3O Spring and Fall for 1996-2008.
 Refer to Tables 18 and 22 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division						
	3O - Fall			3O - Spring			
	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	
1996	3.8	4.8	2.7	18.5	117.2	-80.3	
1997	5.7	8.4	3.0	7.7	11.7	3.7	
1998	5.9	6.9	4.9	5.0	8.3	1.6	
1999	1.9	14.6	-10.8	1.6	2.8	0.3	
2000	2.2	3.5	0.9	0.4	0.6	0.2	
2001	1.9	3.7	0.1	0.9	6.6	-4.8	
2002	1.8	2.4	1.2	0.6	0.8	0.5	
2003	2.0	2.7	1.2	1.4	4.2	-1.4	
2004	0.9	1.5	0.3	1.0	1.5	0.5	
2005	1.2	1.6	0.8	1.0	1.7	0.4	
2006 *	0.7	8.6	-7.1	0.3	1.2	-0.7	
2007	1.7	2.4	1.0	0.4	0.9	0.0	
2008	1.0	1.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.1	

*Substantially reduced coverage in spring survey.

Table 25f. Mean numbers per tow for Greenland halibut in Division 3M for 1996-2007.

Refer to Table 14 for variations in strata surveyed. Div. 3M not surveyed in 2004, 2005 or 2008.

Year	Division			Division				
	3M - Fall			3M - Fall Strata 528-536 only				
	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit		
1996	8.3	25.7	-9.2	16.5	82.7	-49.7		
1997	16.9	26.4	7.3	16.9	26.4	7.3		
1998	19.9	32.4	7.4	19.9	32.4	7.4		
1999	9.3	15.0	3.6	9.3	15.0	3.6		
2000	12.2	19.1	5.3	12.2	19.1	5.3		
2001	10.8	14.3	7.4	10.9	14.3	7.4		
2002	5.3	6.6	3.9	5.3	6.6	3.9		
2003	9.2	12.9	5.4	9.2	12.9	5.4		
2006	7.3	9.1	5.4	7.3	9.1	5.4		
2007	6.2	9.1	3.3	6.2	9.1	3.3		

Table 25g. Mean numbers per tow for Greenland halibut in Div. 2J3K for 1978-2008
and Div. 2J3KL for 1995-2008. Refer to Tables 8, 10, and 12 for variations in strata surveyed.

Year	Division			2J3KL		
	2J3K	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Mean no/tow	Upper Limit
1978	135.7	180.9	90.6	-	-	-
1979	72.1	83.3	60.8	-	-	-
1980	49.5	58.9	40.1	-	-	-
1981	92.6	113.4	71.7	-	-	-
1982	65.5	73.4	57.7	-	-	-
1983	63.3	73.4	53.3	-	-	-
1984	67.0	79.5	54.5	-	-	-
1985	85.4	99.0	71.9	-	-	-
1986	100.0	116.2	83.8	-	-	-
1987	86.3	101.4	71.3	-	-	-
1988	84.8	100.3	69.2	-	-	-
1989	104.0	121.2	86.9	-	-	-
1990	70.7	92.5	48.8	-	-	-
1991	54.9	65.4	44.5	-	-	-
1992	73.8	99.8	47.8	-	-	-
1993	144.4	174.5	114.2	-	-	-
1994	119.2	133.4	104.9	-	-	-
1995	142.3	168.1	116.6	88.0	102.9	73.1
1996	203.0	234.0	172.1	126.6	144.5	108.7
1997	172.0	208.8	135.1	108.9	130.2	87.7
1998	121.2	138.4	104.0	79.1	89.0	69.1
1999	144.6	165.0	124.1	88.7	100.6	76.8
2000	117.0	134.7	99.3	72.9	83.1	62.7
2001	127.8	148.4	107.3	78.7	90.6	66.8
2002	104.2	119.1	89.4	64.2	72.8	55.7
2003	113.4	133.7	93.0	71.1	82.6	59.6
2004 *	109.4	133.7	85.1	75.1	90.8	59.4
2005	82.1	92.5	71.6	54.0	60.4	47.5
2006	107.9	134.6	81.3	67.1	82.7	51.6
2007	109.7	126.2	93.3	67.3	76.8	57.7
2008	79.5	103.0	55.9	51.5	65.4	37.7

*Substantially reduced coverage in Division 3L.

Table 27 Greenland halibut stratified mean number per set at age from Canadian fall surveys conducted in Divisions 2J3KL combined during 1995-2008¹. Only otoliths collected in Div. 2J, 3K or 3L are used in the analysis. Numbers expressed in Campelen 1800 catch units.

Age (yrs)	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
0	6.73	2.87	1.44	0.90	3.89	1.84	5.23	4.85	5.72	2.71	3.06	2.29	1.33	5.57
1	30.32	59.31	17.10	13.19	8.65	23.21	25.96	23.87	27.44	22.10	9.77	19.11	19.64	10.20
2	31.18	29.08	34.25	15.50	20.62	13.91	12.85	14.56	15.88	20.96	10.21	10.91	8.40	6.85
3	9.69	20.85	26.66	18.82	15.96	9.74	10.05	7.64	8.13	10.39	5.59	4.98	7.31	5.58
4	3.62	6.59	15.30	14.01	15.87	7.68	9.75	6.29	6.81	9.06	9.28	10.73	11.77	6.42
5	4.53	4.62	7.78	10.16	12.83	8.75	6.11	4.37	4.49	6.82	7.84	8.50	5.78	5.13
6	1.55	2.03	3.75	4.00	7.76	5.45	5.61	1.63	1.68	1.94	4.89	6.48	6.92	4.42
7	0.29	0.83	1.75	1.78	2.50	1.83	2.49	0.73	0.71	0.80	2.87	3.10	4.23	2.62
8	0.07	0.18	0.60	0.47	0.48	0.35	0.49	0.23	0.19	0.24	0.45	0.83	1.55	1.29
9	0.01	0.13	0.17	0.13	0.09	0.06	0.09	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.13	0.22	0.14
10	0.01	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.06	0.02
11	0.00	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01
12	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.00
13	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00
14	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00
15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
18	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
19	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ages 0-20	88.00	126.58	108.91	79.07	88.72	72.86	78.68	64.22	71.10	75.10	54.09	67.12	67.26	48.26
Ages 1-4	74.82	115.83	93.31	61.52	61.10	54.54	58.61	52.36	58.25	62.51	34.85	45.73	47.12	29.05
Ages 5+	6.46	7.88	14.17	16.65	23.74	16.49	14.84	7.01	7.13	9.89	16.18	19.10	18.81	13.64
Ages 1-10	81.27	123.66	107.40	78.11	84.79	71.00	73.42	59.36	65.37	72.39	51.00	64.79	65.87	42.67

Table 28c Stratified mean number per tow, at age, by division, from 2008 Canadian fall surveys. See Table 2 for explanation of otoliths

2008

Age (yrs)	Div. 2G	Div. 2H	Div. 2J	Div. 3K	Div. 3L	Div. 3M	Div. 3N	Div. 3O	Total
0	0.20	13.85	5.56	0.47	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03	3.78
1	27.82	13.49	18.05	1.82	0.03	0.10	0.10	0.10	8.64
2	24.87	15.00	8.36	0.61	0.04	0.17	0.17	0.17	6.11
3	12.92	4.91	11.33	1.35	0.13	0.26	0.26	0.26	5.03
4	15.77	6.35	11.96	1.98	0.12	0.06	0.06	0.06	5.56
5	12.55	3.87	10.32	1.72	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	4.35
6	6.89	2.97	8.90	1.70	0.19	0.15	0.15	0.15	3.56
7	4.41	2.09	4.64	1.31	0.14	0.09	0.09	0.09	2.13
8	2.12	0.95	2.27	0.72	0.10	0.05	0.05	0.05	1.04
9	0.42	0.18	0.21	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.13
10	0.13	0.05	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03
11	0.06	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
12	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
13	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
14	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
15	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unk	0.16	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5+	0.00	26.80	10.14	26.37	5.52	0.00	0.58	0.42	11.25
9+	0.00	0.83	0.27	0.25	0.07	0.00	0.03	0.02	0.18
Total	0.00	108.37	63.74	81.63	11.76	0.00	0.93	1.03	40.37

Table 29 - Greenland halibut stratified mean number per set at age from Canadian spring surveys conducted in Divisions 3LNO combined during 1996-2008 (not surveyed in 2006). Only otoliths collected in 3L, 3N, or 3O are used in the analysis. Numbers are expressed in Campelen 1800 units.

Age (yrs)	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1	1.62	1.16	0.22	0.29	0.79	0.57	0.64	0.93	0.66	0.35	1.60	0.44	No Survey
2	4.24	3.92	0.81	0.55	1.07	0.71	0.57	2.14	0.57	0.31	0.52	0.77	
3	4.60	5.16	3.85	1.15	1.07	0.74	0.60	1.66	1.18	1.09	0.80	0.96	
4	2.18	3.23	6.19	1.98	1.51	0.68	0.58	1.57	1.18	0.95	0.40	0.71	
5	0.83	1.46	4.96	3.39	1.95	0.80	0.61	1.06	1.16	1.37	1.41	1.25	
6	0.28	0.51	1.24	1.09	2.04	0.72	0.21	0.21	0.26	0.82	1.49	0.75	
7	0.06	0.10	0.33	0.24	0.56	0.28	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.21	1.12	0.64	
8	0.00	0.01	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.18	0.28	
9	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02	
10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	
Ages 1-4	12.64	13.47	11.07	3.98	4.44	2.69	2.40	6.30	3.60	2.70	3.31	2.89	
Ages 5+	1.17	2.08	6.60	4.78	4.59	1.81	0.87	1.32	1.48	2.43	4.22	2.96	
Ages 1-10	13.81	15.56	17.67	8.75	9.03	4.51	3.27	7.62	5.08	5.13	7.54	5.85	

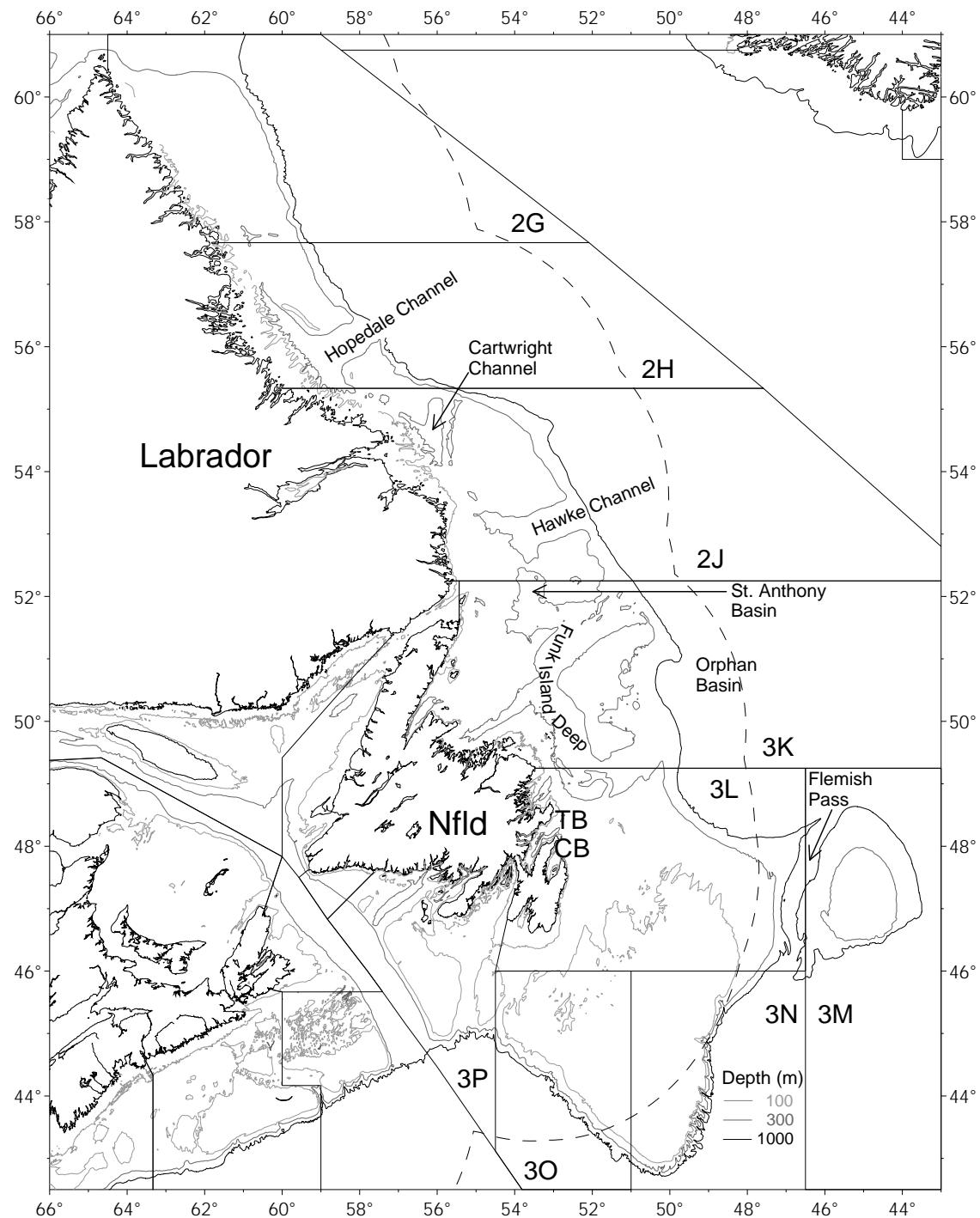


Figure 1. Map of stock area, with NAFO dividing lines, select isobaths, and names referred to in the text. TB and CB refer to Trinity and Conception Bays, respectively.

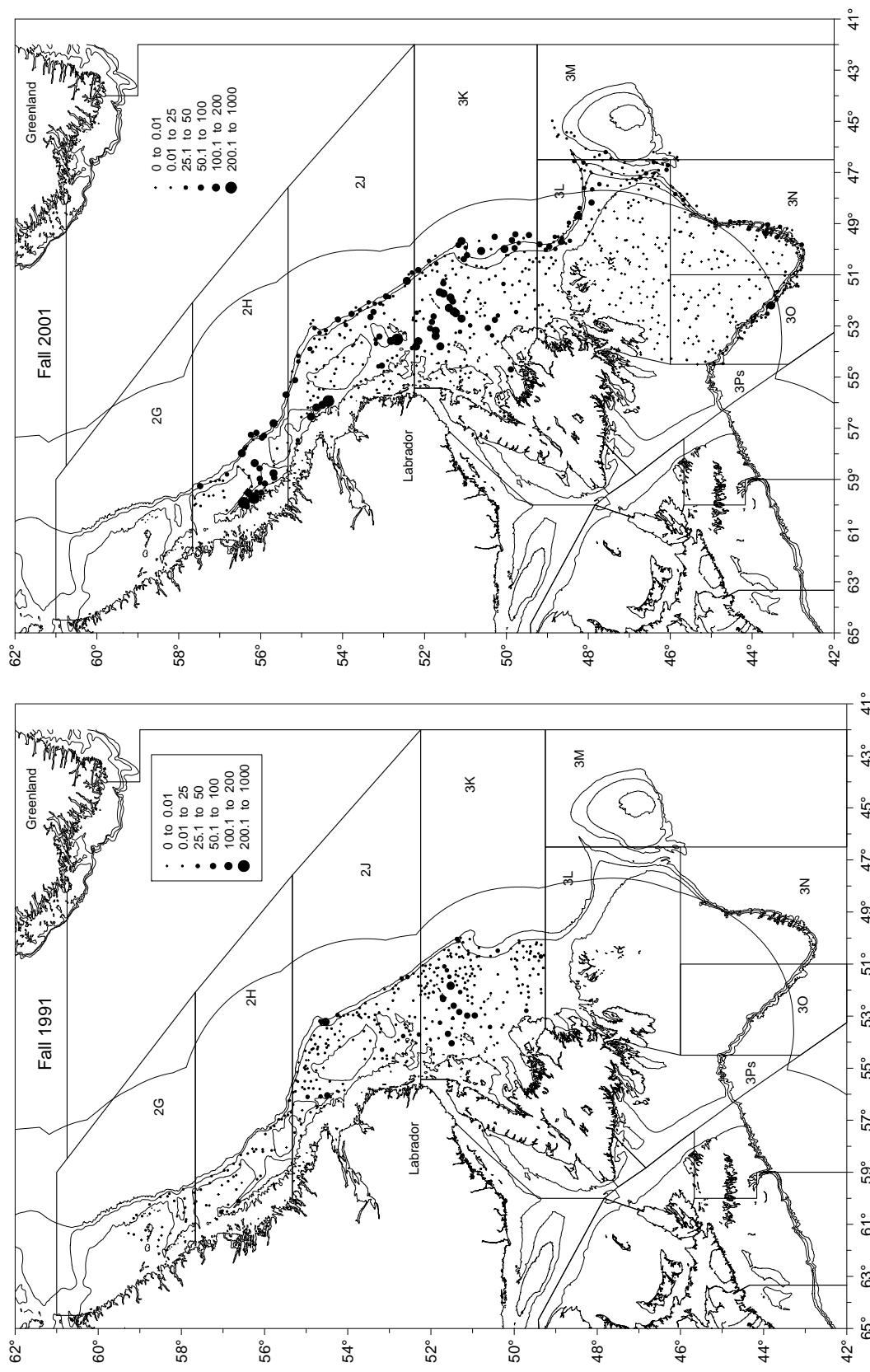


Figure 2. Distribution (kg per set) of Greenland halibut from Canadian fall surveys during 1991 (left) and 2001 (right). Depth contours at 200m, 500m, and 1000m are plotted, along with the NAFD Divisional boundary lines, and the 200 mile limit demarcating Canadian waters.

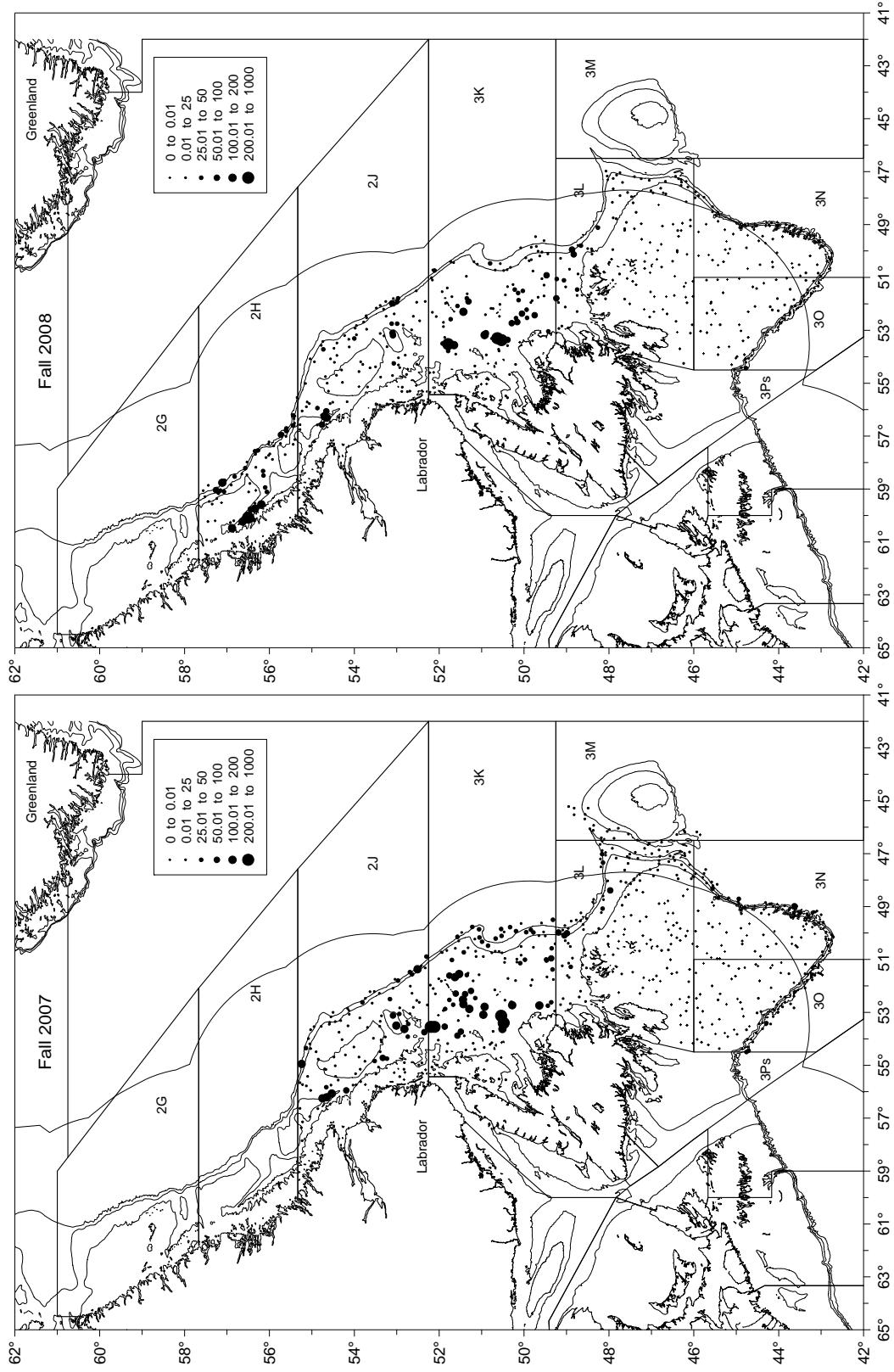


Figure 2 (cont.) Distribution (kg per set) of Greenland halibut from Canadian fall surveys during 2006 (left) and 2007 (right). Depth contours at 200m, 500m, and 1000m are plotted, along with the NAFO Divisional boundary lines, and the 200 mile limit demarcating Canadian waters.

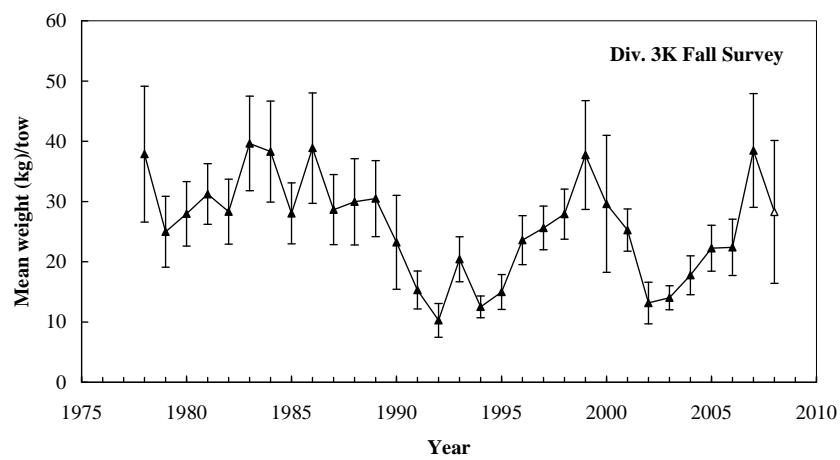
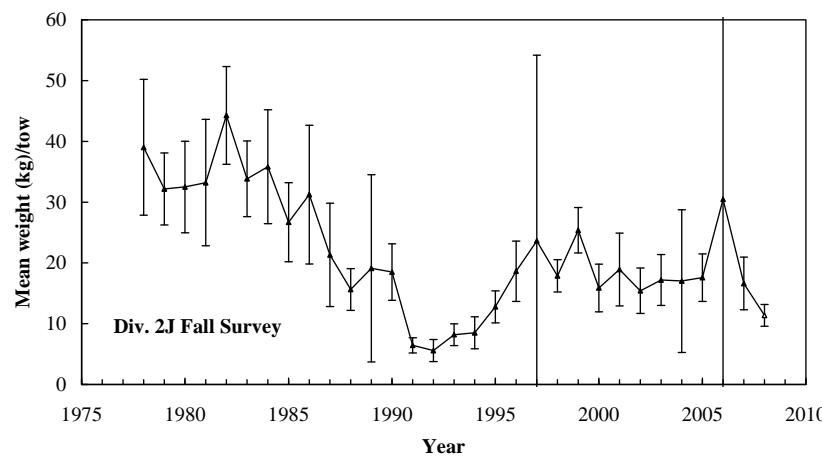
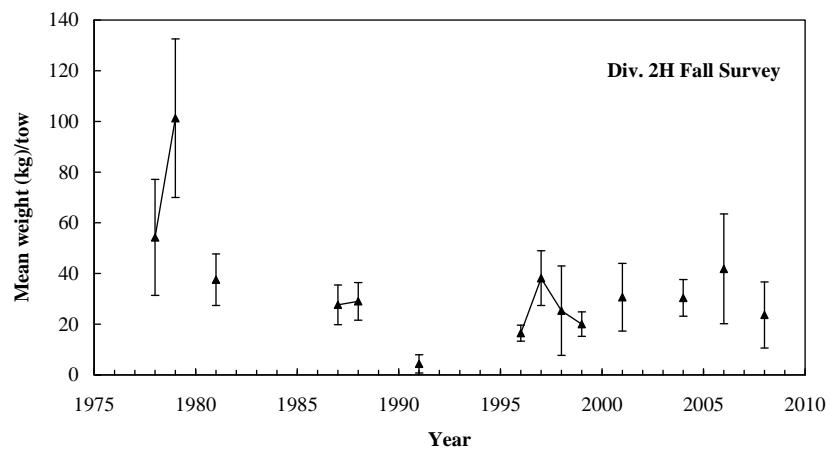
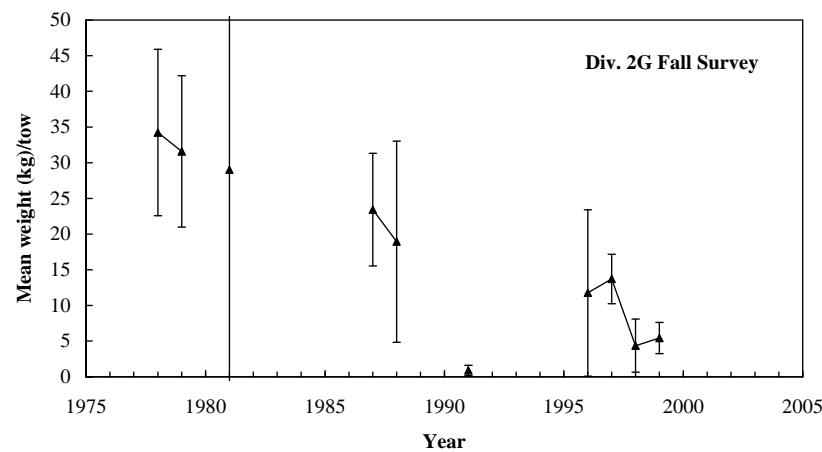


Figure 3a. Campelen stratified mean weight per tow estimates by NAFO Division from Canadian fall surveys during 1978–2008.

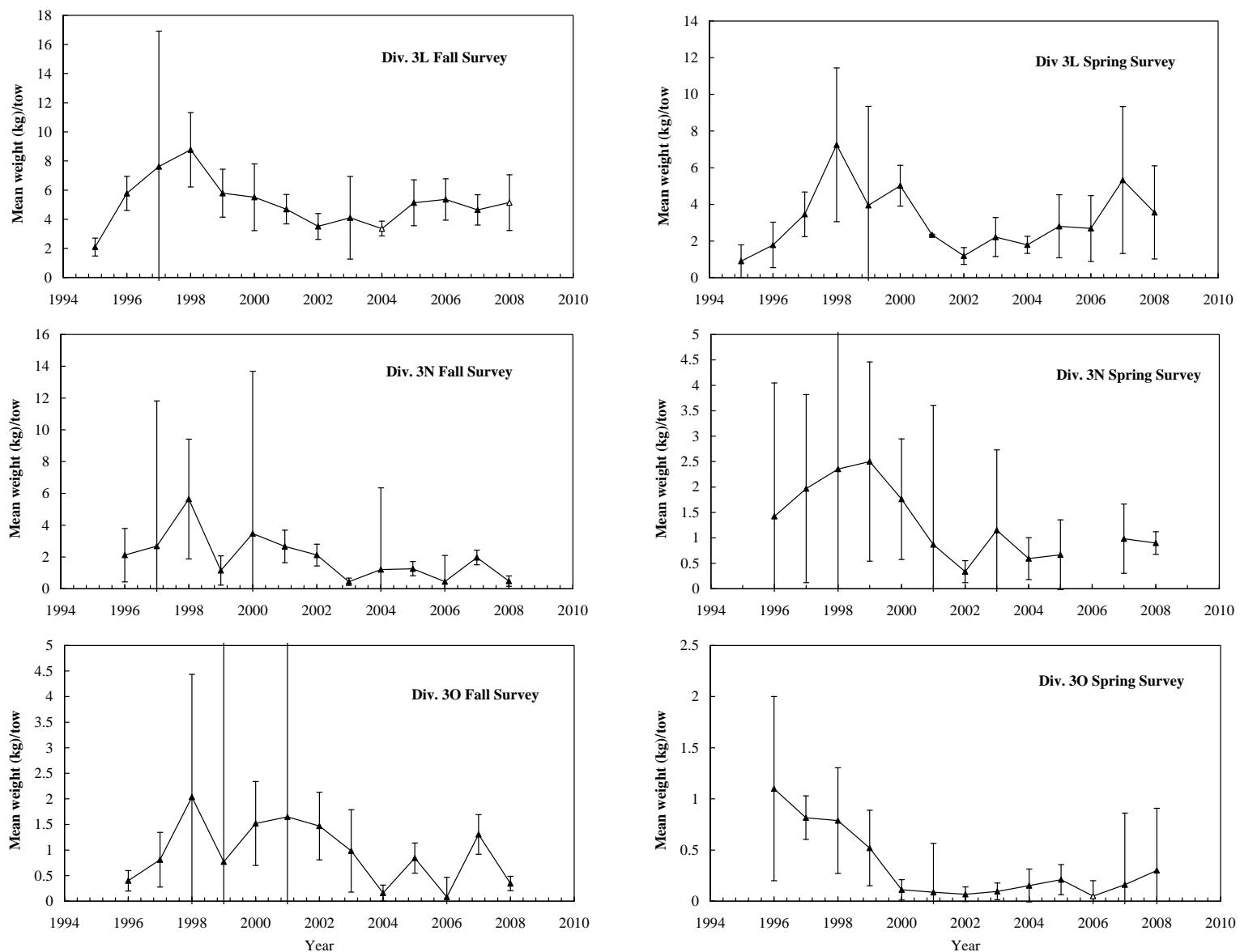


Figure 3b. Campelen stratified mean weight per tow estimates by NAFO Division during fall and spring surveys.

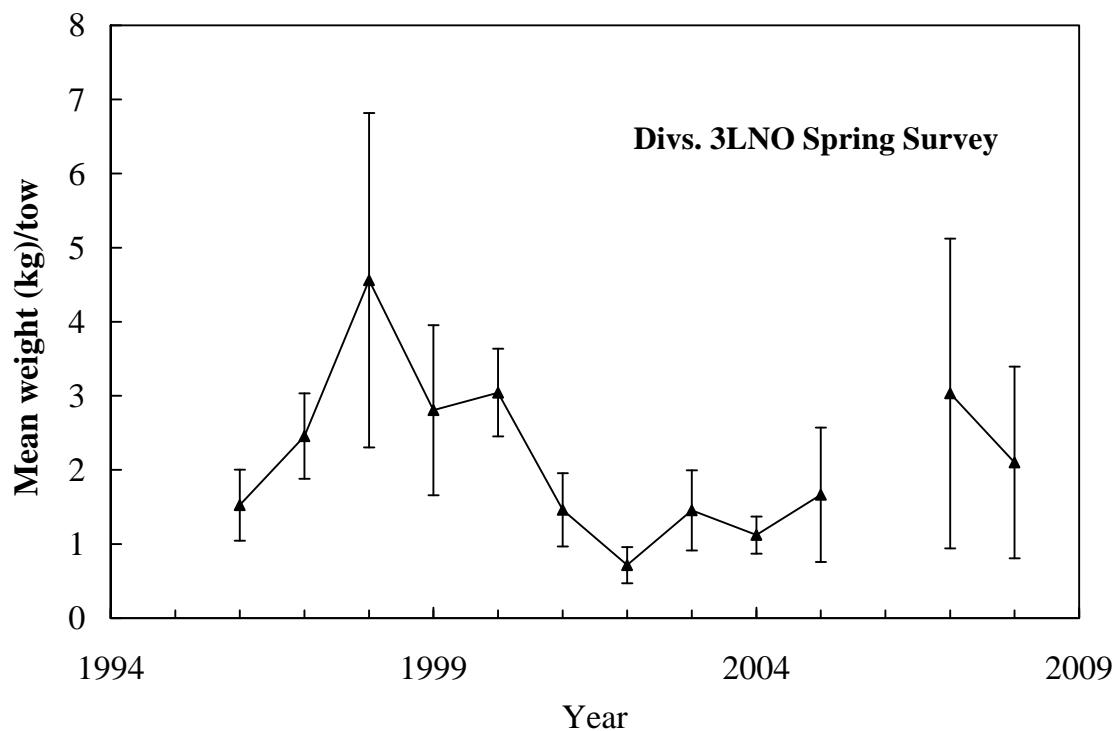


Figure 3c. Biomass Index for spring surveys in Divisions 3LNO combined.

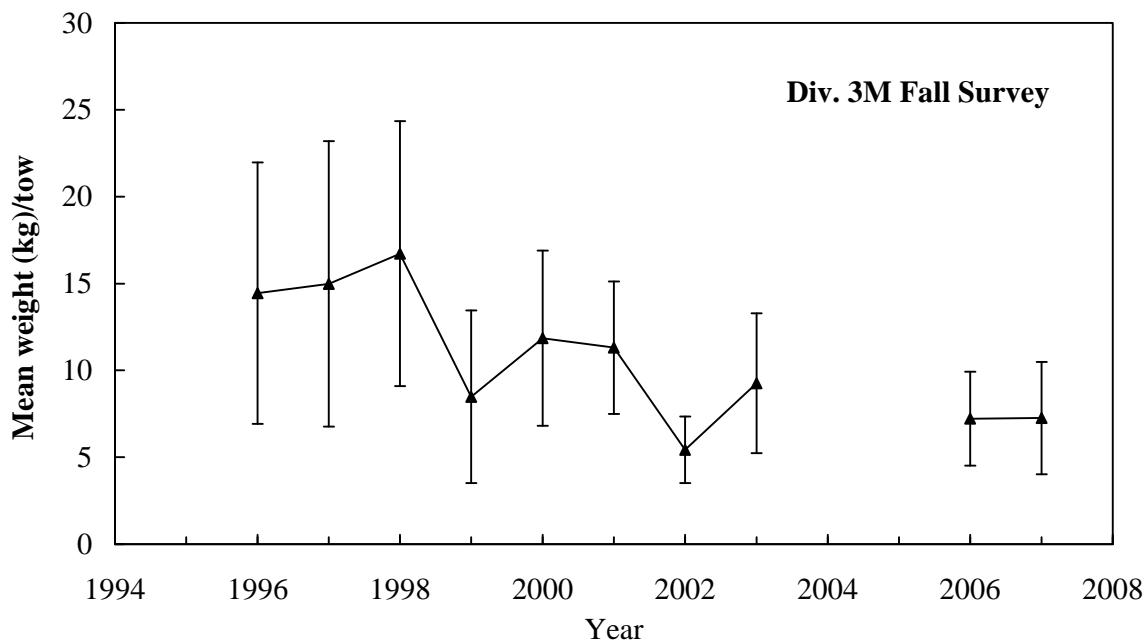
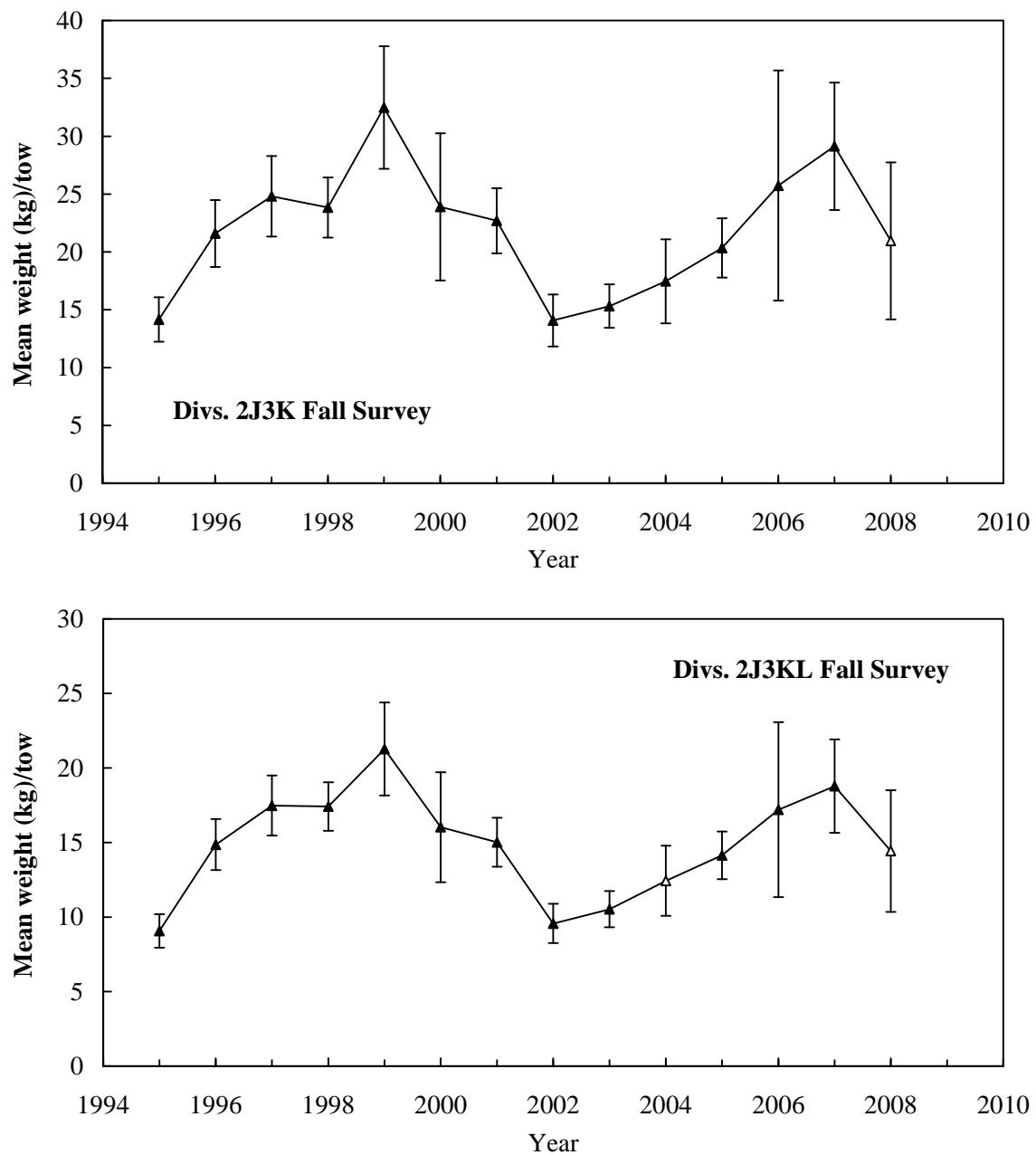


Figure 3d. Campelen stratified mean weight per tow estimates for Division 3M (strata 528-536 only).



Figures 3e. Campelen stratified mean weight per tow estimates for Divisions 2J3K combined and 2J3KL combined.

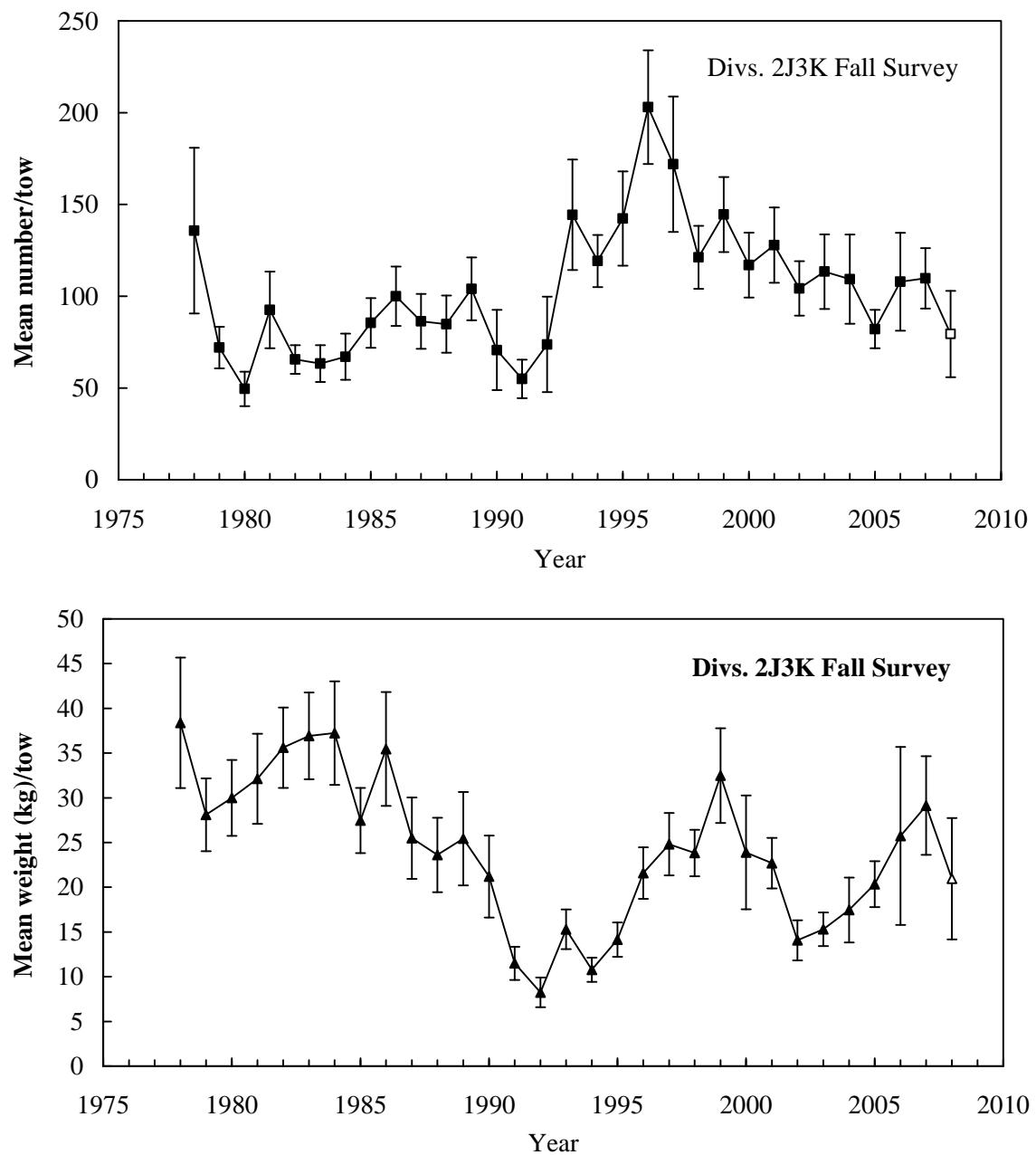


Figure 4. Campelen (or equivalent) stratified mean number and weight (kg) per tow of Greenland Halibut from fall surveys in NAFO Divisions 2J3K combined during 1978-2008.

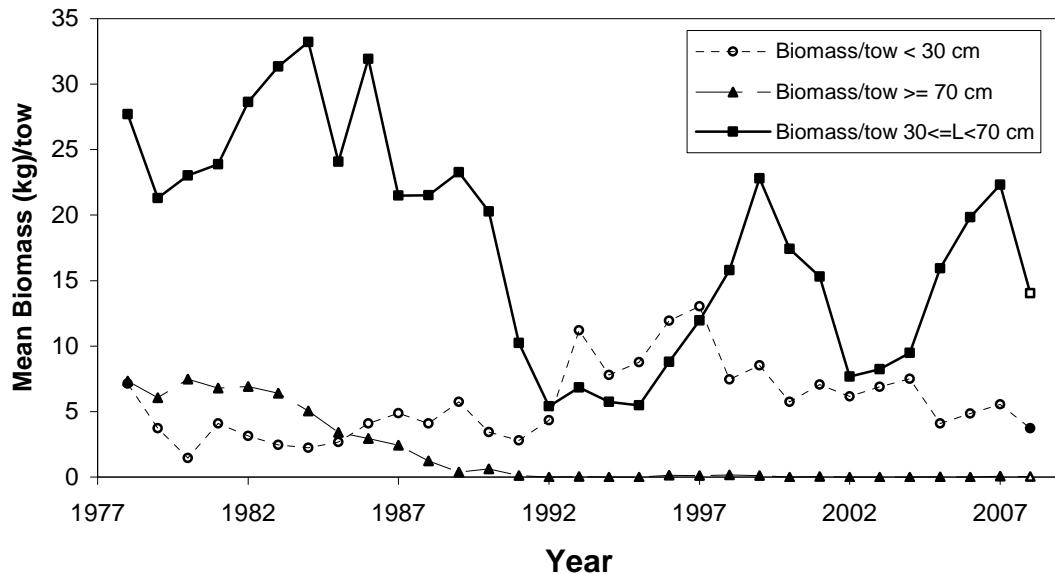


Figure 5. Mean biomass (kg) per tow of Greenland Halibut by selected length classes from fall surveys conducted in Divisions 2J3K during 1978-2008. See text for computational details.

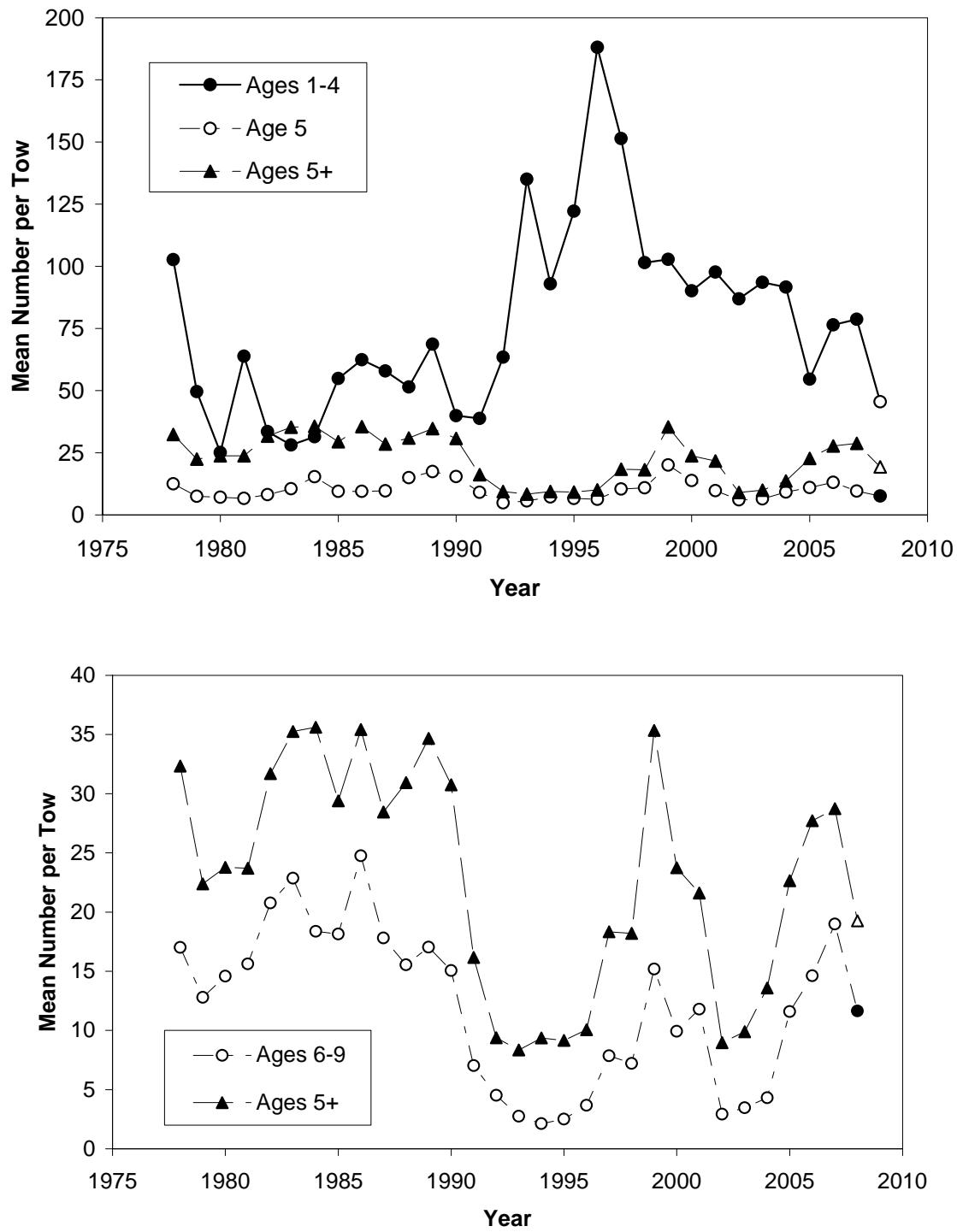


Figure 6. Trends in mean number per tow estimates by age/age grouping from Canadian fall surveys in Divs. 2J3K combined during 1978-2008. Upper panel: Ages 1-4 representative of recruitment, age 5 recruitment to the fishery, and ages 5+ exploitable biomass. Lower panel: Comparison of ages 5+ and ages 6-9.

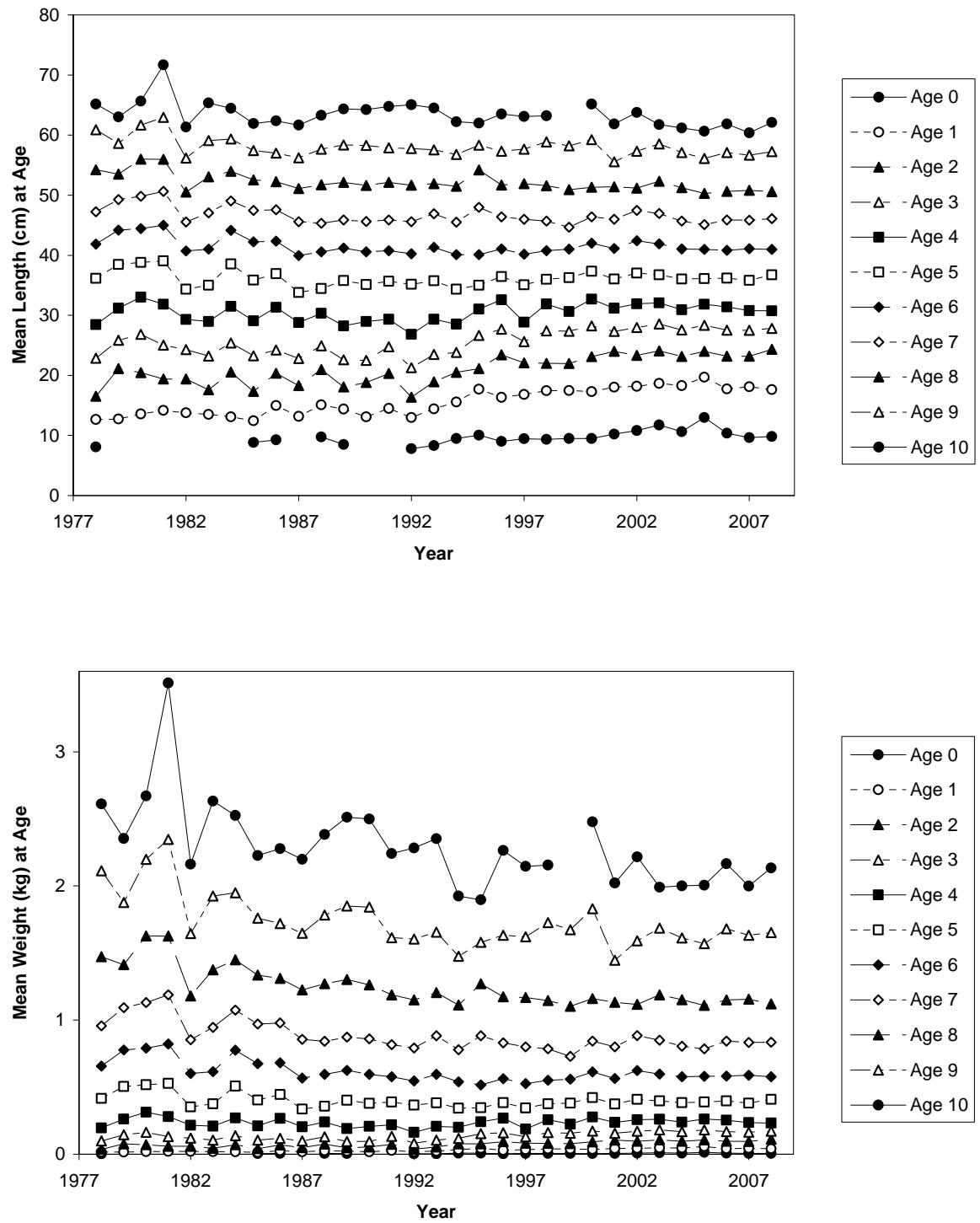


Figure 7. Length at age (cm) and weight at age (kg) for Greenland halibut from Canadian fall surveys in Div. 2J3K, ages 0-10, from 1978-2008.