



Report on Discards by the Canadian Maritimes Fleet

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Two reports on discard practices in the Canadian Maritimes fleet have been presented through ICNAF media. One dealing with discards of cod, haddock and other species in Divisions 4W and 4T was published by W. R. Martin in the Canadian Research Report for 1959, Part B for Subareas 4 and 5 (Ann. Proc. ICNAF, Vol. 10 for years 1959-60). The second, by Yves Jean, is included as Document No. 11 of the 1962 Annual Meeting, and deals in detail with discarding practices in Division 4T. The present report is of a more general nature and is derived from the two above-mentioned papers plus other unpublished information. It summarizes the known discard practices of the fleets operating from principal ports in the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Otter trawls

It is convenient to report otter-trawl discards by species, as identified in the ICNAF Statistical Bulletin.

Cod

For Division 4T, 1961 data showed discards of 2% by weight, the mean size of discards 39 cm, and all cod over 46 cm retained. For Division 4W, 1958-59 data gave discards of 5% by weight, mean size of discards 38 cm and all cod over 48 cm retained.

Haddock

For Division 4T where Canadian landings of haddock average only 2% of the total landings by weight for the fleet sampled, estimated discards for 1961 were 2% of the catch by weight. In Division 4W reports for 1958 and 1959 showed discards of 2 to 8% for catches landed round, and 10 to 17% for catches landed gutted. All haddock 42 cm in length were retained. Practically no haddock of less than 36 cm were retained.

by trawlers landing gutted haddock. However, in catches by boats landing round haddock, practically all were retained at 36 cm, tapering off to none retained at 28 cm.

Redfish

Observations on discards of redfish indicate that the Canadian dragger fleet in Division 4T discards few redfish. In Division 4W otter trawlers fishing redfish also discard very few since they are usually shovelled ungutted and unsorted into the hold for icing. On groundfish trips for other species large catches of commercial-sized redfish are usually retained while odd individuals mixed in catches predominantly of other species are often discarded.

Halibut

All halibut are kept except those below about 40 cm in length. The species is not very common in catches in Division 4T, and consequently most halibut are consumed or otherwise disposed of by the crews and do not appear in landing statistics. The otter-trawl fleet fishing in Division 4W lands and discards more halibut. Since Canadian fishermen are well aware of the relatively high price of this species, it is reported that a large proportion of discards are returned alive to the sea.

Flounders

In Division 4T, 51% of the plaice and 5% of the winter flounder were discarded from catches in 1961. Observations on witch indicated that all caught were of commercial size and were retained. The 50% cull point for plaice was 35 cm and for winter flounder about the same. In Division 4W in 1958 and 1959 both amounts and sizes of discards of flounders fluctuated greatly, depending on market demands.

Cusk, White Hake, Wolffish

In general, in Divisions 4T and 4W only the very large cusk, white hake and wolffish are kept. Discards of hake in Division 4T in 1961 were estimated to be 95% of the catch.

Pollock

Observations are available only for small (ca. 65 tons) draggers fishing in Division 4X and they are not supported by measurements of quantities or sizes of discards. When these boats are fishing for pollock, discards of the species are practically negligible. When they are fishing for other species, such as haddock, their discard practices are reported to be variable.

Other Species

All skate, silver hake, argentines, eelpouts, dogfish, sculpins, lumpfish and angler fish are discarded as unmarketable species.

Hook and line

For line catches there are only casual observations available. In general, the gear selects only the large members of populations of cod, haddock and halibut and almost all of these are retained. Very few redfish are caught. The cusk, white hake and catfish are mostly large and are either landed or cut up and used for bait. All the "other species" mentioned above for otter trawl are discarded.

Recommendation

For 1962 it is proposed that the Working Group on Sampling and Discards go a step further by recommending that ICNAF countries submit simple tabular reports on discards that would lead to estimates of annual discards by area and species. To this end a sample table for the Canadian otter-trawl fishery in ICNAF Division 4T has been attached. It is hoped that this might provide a starting point for consideration of a prescribed form that might be used by the Commission for discard reports.

ICNAF Report on Discards

Country: Canada

Area: Division 4T

Year: 1961

Recording System: Measurements of samples at sea (before discard) and for discards at sea and for landings ashore, and records of estimates of weights caught and discarded for each tow by crew member.

Type of Fishing	Species	No. of trips (tows) sampled	Size discarded	% discarded (wt)	Wt. landed 'yr metric tons	Products	Est. wt. discarded / yr. metric tons r.f.
O.T. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ mesh Northern N.B. dragger (Y. Jean ICNAF Doc. 11, 1962)	Cod	44 trips from 1956-61 (see ICNAF Doc. 11, 1962 Ann.Meeting)	50% cull point 41-45 cm	2%	41,206	fillets Frozen in blocks and packages little salting Frozen fillets	824
	Haddock		50% cull point 40 cm	2%	1,291		26
	Redfish		none	none	1,883	frozen fillets	none
	Halibut		none	none	Only few taken usually eaten by crew	--	none
	Plaice		50% cull point 35 cm	51%	Est. (10,080)	frozen fillets	10,491
	Hitch		none (no pre-commercial sizes caught)	none	12,601 (1,260)	frozen fillets	none
	Winter Fl.		about 35 cm	5%	(1,260)	frozen fillets	66
	Fluke		all but very large	ca. 95%	566	salted	5,993
	Skates						
	Belpouts						
	Lumpfish						
	Sea Ravens						
	Sculpins						
	Spliny Dogfish						
	all			100%	none		355