

Notice to Fish Harvesters

EKME: #4082849

August 14, 2019

2019-2020 GULF NOVA SCOTIA – ATLANTIC HALIBUT FIXED GEAR FLEET SUMMER ATLANTIC HALIBUT FISHERY OPENING

Antigonish (Nova Scotia): The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) announces that fishing will be authorized for Gulf Nova Scotia (GNS) fixed-gear licence holders fishing Atlantic halibut in Groundfish Fishing Areas 4T1, 4T8, and 4T2a and 4T2b with vessels less than 19.812 metres (65 feet) in overall length (vessel class A146).

The 2019-2020 GNS Summer Atlantic halibut quota is 29.491 t.

Only those harvesters who did not participate in the GNS spring halibut fishery are eligible to participate in the summer halibut fishery.

This fishery will take place from 06:00 hrs Tuesday, August 27 to 20:00 hrs Friday, August 30, 2019 and from 06:00 hrs Tuesday, September 3 to 20:00 hrs Friday, September 6, 2019. There will be no consideration of delaying the fishery due to inclement weather or other uncontrollable circumstances. **Landings will be monitored and the fishery may be closed prior to the scheduled closing dates. If additional openings are required they will be announced at a later date.**

DFO wishes to remind fish harvesters to take extra care when navigating during the summer halibut fishery as vessels are loaded with gear. Harvesters are encouraged to act diligently in setting their gear and should ensure that vessels are loaded safely.

When fishing for Atlantic Halibut anywhere in the Gulf of St. Lawrence where a notice of a temporary closure was given due to the presence of North Atlantic Right Whales (NARW), the licence holder shall closely attend their fishing gear at all times and must remove all fishing gear from the water prior to entering port. The licence holder shall also remove all fishing gear from the water as soon as a NARW is observed in the vicinity of the fishing activity when it is safe to do so.

2019 Management

- The maximum number of hooks permitted to be fished or on board a vessel at any time will be 1500 per licence holder.

Requirement to report lost and retrieved gear:

- Since 2018, licence holders must report lost gear to DFO. This management measure will allow the amount of gear lost annually to be quantified and help identify the need to increase efforts to retrieve gear that has been lost, which would reduce the risk of whale entanglements.



- **Starting in 2019**, licence holders must report the retrieval of any of their own gear previously reported lost to DFO. Retrieval of a fishing gear can only occur under a valid fishing licence and only in relation to the fishing gear authorized by the fishing licence (**new requirement**).

To report lost or retrieved gear, licence holders must complete and submit the *Lost Fishing Gear* form or the *Retrieval of Previously Reported Fishing Gear* form, included in their licence conditions and available online at <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/commercial-commerciale/index-eng.html>.

- The appropriate forms must be completed and submitted within 24 hours of entering to port (**new timeframe**).
- Specific information of what must be reported is identified in the forms.

Requirement to report interactions with marine mammals:

- In order to comply with the implementation of the US Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA) regulations, licence holders must now provide information regarding all interactions with a marine mammal including: bycatch, collisions and all sightings of entangled marine mammals that occur during fishing expeditions.
- A Marine Mammal Interaction Form (included with licence conditions) or available online: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/mammals-mammiferes/report-rapport/page01-eng.html> must be completed and submitted by email to: DFO.NAT.InteractionsMM-InteractionsMM.NAT.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca within 48 hours of the end of a fishing trip.

Please refer to the Conditions of Licence and Conservation Harvesting Plan (attached) for additional management measures.

The conditions of licence will be available shortly. The Department wishes to remind licence holders that to be able to obtain their conditions, they need to attach an eligible vessel to their groundfish licence.

Furthermore, it is reminded that, during the period where fishing is authorized, it is the responsibility of the licence holder to take into account the marine safety notices issued, among others, by Environment and Climate Change Canada and Transport Canada, as well as the standards and best practices in marine safety, and to take all measures to ensure a safe fishery.

For more information, please contact:

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