

MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL
ASSOCIATION OF SEAFOOD PRODUCERS

PRESS RELEASE
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68,000 TONNES OF PRAWNS SEEK ECO-LABEL

1st Canadian Prawn Fishery enters full assessment for MSC certification

One of the world's largest shrimp fisheries is entering assessment against the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)[1] environmental standard for well-managed and sustainable wild capture fisheries. The Canadian Northern Prawn Fishery is the first shrimp fishery in the Atlantic to engage with the world's leading independent environmental certification and eco-labelling programme.

Derek Butler from the Association of Seafood Producers in Newfoundland & Labrador [1] which is seeking certification for the fishery says: "Entering full assessment represents a great achievement, in that it will be the first Atlantic coldwater shrimp fishery in the world under assessment, and will help advance the sustainability of fisheries through the marketplace."

Rupert Howes, Chief Executive of the MSC, welcomes the fishery's move and adds: "I'm delighted that this prawn fishery has decided to enter full assessment. Every new fishery entering assessment is another vote of confidence in the MSC certification programme. I'm sure that this development will be of great interest to European and US retailers increasingly concerned about the environmental sustainability and provenance of their seafood."

Newfoundland & Labrador Fisheries Minister Tom Rideout says his province is supportive of the initiative of industry. "This is really important to the future market development of cold water shrimp, and the sustainability of our fishery. We are happy to offer grant funding in the amount of \$50,000 to cover a significant portion of the initial costs. I congratulate the Association of Seafood Producers and industry on this important step."

Accredited certification body Moody Marine[3] will conduct the independent evaluation of the fishery. They will assemble a team of experts which will examine the status of the fish stock, the impact of the fishery on the marine eco-system and the effectiveness of management systems. If the fishery is certified and traceability is established, the fishery will be able to use the distinctive blue MSC eco-label on product packaging. The MSC's eco-label offers consumers a quick and easy way to make the best environmental choice in seafood.

In total, over 50 fisheries with annual catches of more than 3.5 million tonnes of seafood are engaged in the MSC programme. They represent 42 percent of the world's wild salmon catch, 32 percent of the prime whitefish catch, and 18 percent of the lobster catches for human consumption. 21 fisheries are now certified to the MSC standard and more than 400 seafood products carry the blue MSC eco-label in 26 countries.[4]

The Canadian Northern Prawn Trawl Fishery is the second largest coldwater *Pandalus borealis* (also known as Nordic Shrimp and Coldwater Shrimp) fishery in the world and catches a total of 150,000,000 pounds (around 68,000 metric tonnes or 75,000 US short tons) of prawns per year.

The fishery under assessment is off the east coast of Canada and will include the Newfoundland and Labrador inshore fishery off the northeast coast, the Gulf and the Scotian Shelf.

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Further information:

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Notes to the Editor

[1] The MSC is an international non-profit organisation that was set up in 1997 to promote solutions to the problem of overfishing.

[2] Association of Seafood Producers in Newfoundland & Labrador: The Association of Seafood Producers is a not-for-profit corporation, set up to serve as the industry association for Newfoundland and Labrador's seafood producers, and to act in the best interests of the seafood industry generally. Association members produce more than 60% of the total production value of Newfoundland and Labrador's fishing industry, with total annual sales well over \$500 million. Collectively, Association members own and operate some 40+ processing plants in rural communities throughout the province. For more information please visit www.seafoodproducers.org

[3] Please visit <http://www.moodymarine.com> for more information.

[4] Information on all fisheries certified to the MSC standard and lists of seafood products bearing the MSC eco-label are available on the MSC website at www.msc.org