

# ***Notice to Fish Harvesters***

## **2015 Prince Edward Island** **Atlantic Halibut Fixed Gear Fleet – September Fishing Period**

**Moncton, NB – August 21, 2015** - Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) today announces that Atlantic halibut fishing will be authorized for Prince Edward Island (PEI) fixed gear licence holders with vessels less than 13.1716 metres (45 feet) in overall length that have registered for the second fishing period of 2015 (September 1-4, 2015).

In 2015, the Prince Edward Island Atlantic halibut fishery is taking place during two fishing periods; July 21-24, 2015, and September 1-4, 2015, with daily close times of 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. Vessels will not be permitted to leave port before 04:00 hrs and shall return to port no later than 20:00 hrs the same day.

Fishing periods may be modified for the proper management of the fishery (total quota caught), due to inclement weather or other uncontrollable circumstances. Fishers may only participate in one fishing period.

The Atlantic halibut allocation for the PEI fixed gear fleet in 2015 will be 47.38 metric tonnes. Based on the number of registered participants for the two fishing periods, an individual, seasonal catch limit of 145 kg ROUND WEIGHT will be implemented. The accepted conversion from head on gutted (HOG) weight to round weight is ( $HOG \times 1.14 = ROUND\ WEIGHT$ ). The maximum number of hooks permitted to be fished or on board a vessel at any time per licence holder is 300.

To ensure catch limits are respected, all Atlantic halibut caught in excess of the authorized amount shall be forthwith returned to the water from which it was taken and where it is alive, in a manner that causes it the least harm.

Once an individual by-catch limit of 50 kg of cod has been caught, all fishing gear shall be immediately removed from the water and fishing shall cease for the remainder of the fishing period. All cod caught in excess of the 50 kg amount shall be forthwith returned to the water from which it was taken and where it is alive, in a manner that causes it the least harm.

The conditions of licence are now available in the National Online Licensing System (NOLS) to licence holders who registered for the first fishing period. It is advised to refer to the attached checklist and to request the condition of licence in advance in order to avoid delays.

Please refer to the attached Conservation Harvesting Plan for additional details and management measures related to this fishery.

### **For more information contact:**

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