

News Release

Nunavut Summer Turbot Fishery Creates a Splash

PANGNIRTUNG, Nunavut (August 20, 2010) – This summer has yielded plenty for Nunavut's emerging commercial turbot fisheries. A key milestone was marked this past weekend, when the Pangnirtung pier saw the first offload of wet turbot: part of the Cumberland Sound summer inshore test fishery project. The project, which began with an exploratory fishery in 2009 has been conducted in partnership with Pangnirtung Fisheries, CanNor, and Kakivak Association. The 10,000 pounds of turbot offloaded this weekend will be processed at Pangnirtung's fish plant, and then is destined for markets near and far. With 472 metric tonnes remaining in the Cumberland Sound turbot quota, project partners hope this offload will be followed by many more throughout the summer and to the end of the season this Fall.

"Hopefully this first offload is a sign of good things to come" said Wayne Lynch, Director of the Department of Environment's Fisheries and Sealing Division. "We are truly committed to working at the community level and with our strong fisheries networks to build this industry as a very promising and sustainable economic growth area for Nunavut."

The 2010 summer inshore turbot fishery will provide over 10 weeks of direct employment for local crew on board the 49' vessel, with an additional 13 weeks of employment generated at Pangnirtung Fisheries Ltd. Through this project, various training opportunities were created for Nunavummiut through engaging local community members as fisheries observers. These observers will also have the opportunity to train in the use of cutting edge technology in order to collect data on the marine habitat of potential harvest species.

"Developing Nunavut's fisheries potential to the benefit of all Nunavummiut is a major priority" said the Honourable Daniel Shewchuk, Minister of Environment. "I truly look forward to building on this great success and further developing fisheries potential and prosperity across all Nunavut regions."

The Department of Environment plans to further explore opportunities for fisheries development in the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions, with a number of community workshops scheduled to take place this fall and winter. Among these workshops will be another Nunavut Coastal Resource Inventory Project this fall, engaging a seventh community in identifying local resources for potential fisheries development.

Further research and development on Nunavut's turbot, char, and shrimp fisheries and other new fisheries will also begin when the Department of Environment's new research vessel launches in the summer of 2011.

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Communications 2010-43-C