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November 29, 2024

Mr. Steve Devitt
Atlantic Groundfish Council
(sdevitt@atlanticgroundfish.ca)

Dear Mr. Devitt,

I am writing in relation to the Atlantic Groundfish Council's (AGC) 3Ps cod Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) and the issue you raised with groundfish logbook returns in the less than 35 feet fleet.

There are no plans to amend the conditions of licence with respect to logbook returns and the Department is moving ahead with a phased implementation of electronic logbooks (ELOGS). While this will ensure that ELOG options are available for all harvesters, it will take time to implement across all fisheries. In the 3Ps cod fishery, and particularly for smaller vessels, paper logbooks will continue to be used in the near term. As they are generally submitted to the Department at the end of the fishing season, the data contained in these logbooks are not currently used in the day-to-day monitoring of fish landings.

Real time monitoring of fish landings is achieved through independent Dockside Monitoring (DMP) which provides accurate and timely third-party verification of fish landings. All 3Ps groundfish licence holders in this fleet are subject to this landing requirement.

Enforcement is carried out by fishery officers through regular patrols (air, sea and land). Logbooks may be used by the Conservation and Protection program in broader compliance investigations and this could include follow-up with licence holders. Maintaining the mandatory condition of licence on logbook returns supports these investigations.

I trust that this response provides assurance to the FIP evaluators that the 3Ps cod fishery is subject to rigorous monitoring by the Department. I commend the AGC for continuing to work towards eco-certification in this fishery. As always, the Department supports your efforts, subject to work planning and priorities. If you have additional concerns related to the FIP, please reach out to either Jill Duff, jill.duff@dfo-mpo.gc.ca or Paul Glavine, paul.glavine@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

Sincerely,

William McGillivray
Regional Director General
Fisheries & Oceans
Newfoundland and Labrador Region