

CURRA

Moving Forward



Building Economically, Socially and Ecologically Resilient Fisheries and Coastal Communities

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About us

The CURRA was a 7-year community-engaged research program of innovative, interdisciplinary research projects related to helping communities and organizations along Newfoundland's west coast develop strategies for the recovery of fish stocks and fishery communities.



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Core Funders

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada
Canada

Newfoundland Labrador

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

CENTRE OF Environmental EXCELLENCE

IBES
Institute for Biodiversity Ecosystem Science & Sustainability

THE HARRIS CENTRE
Memorial University

RDC

Parks Canada
Parcs Canada
Canada

Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Pêches et Océans Canada



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With thanks to our steering committee:

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Bonnie McCay
Craig Pollett
Peter Sinclair
Keith Sullivan

And to…

Charles Mather
Photographs, other images and cover design and map: Pam Hall



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Our Vision

- Building resilient fisheries and coastal communities is one of the most important ***opportunities and challenges*** of our time.
- Fisheries **(particularly owner-operator fisheries)** are the major source of employment and wealth generation in many places.
- Our fisheries and coastal communities are not broken, **but they are *under-valued* and vulnerable.**



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Our Vision…

- Many strengths but also vulnerabilities
- The risk of policy failure is a key source of vulnerability.
- We need a road map to a policy framework that
  - ❖ can help shift our emphasis from down-sizing to revitalizing
  - ❖ appropriately values and supports investment in our fisheries and coastal communities.



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Policy Paper Overview

- Chapter 1: Contemporary Fisheries and Coastal Communities
- Chapter 2: Are our Fisheries “Broken”?
- Chapter 3: The Strengths of our Fisheries and Coastal Communities
- Chapter 4: The Real Vulnerabilities in our Fisheries and Coastal Communities
- Chapter 5: Recommendations for Moving Forward
- Chapter 6: Conclusion: What’s at Stake and Why?



Real strengths

- A network of fisheries-dependent communities along much of our coast
- Strong owner-operator fisheries and onshore processing – economic engines of coastal communities
- Species diversity
- Some industrial diversity

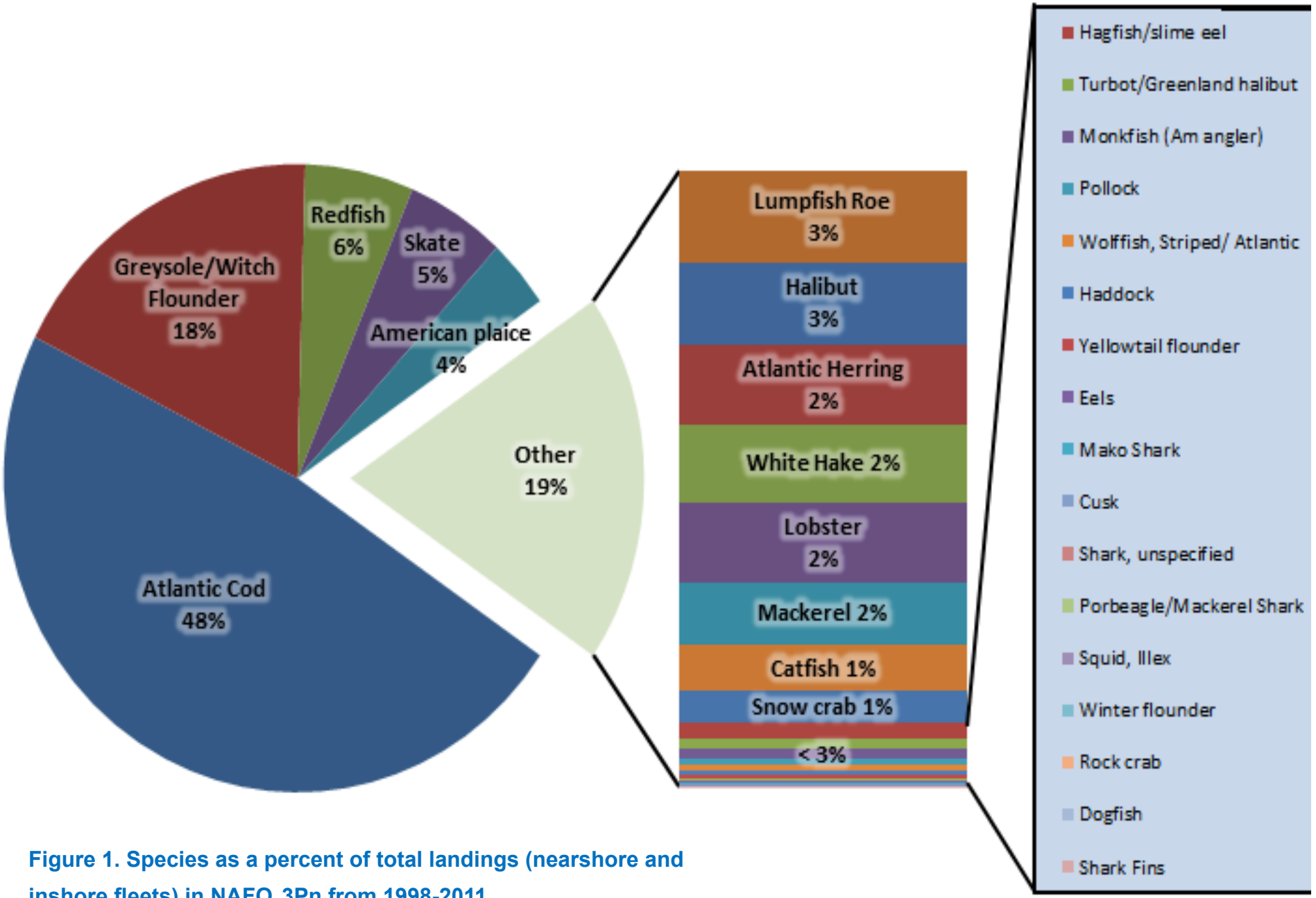


Figure 1. Species as a percent of total landings (nearshore and inshore fleets) in NAFO 3Pn from 1998-2011



Real strengths…

- The best trained harvester labour force in the country.
- Harbour, Fishing, Processing and Transport Infrastructure
- Deep local knowledge and fisheries science
- Trained researchers from multiple disciplines and with diverse expertise
- Oceans Act, Species at Risk Act and Signatory to international agreements



Real Strengths - provincial

- 2011 *Coastal and Ocean Management Strategy and Policy Framework*
- Fish Harvesting Safety Association
- Minimum Processing Requirements
- A Quality Assurance Program that improved market returns for snow crab
- High quality seafood that meets international food quality and traceability standards
- Aquaculture – particularly mussel sector



Real strengths…

- Innovative policy initiatives – “community” quotas.
  - Fogo Island Co-operative.
  - Labrador Fishermen’s Union Shrimp Company,
  - St. Anthony Basin Resources Incorporated (SABRI),

Before the “triple bottom line” approach to business became fashionable, these initiatives integrated economic and social objectives with ecological sustainability.



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Foley, P., C. Mather, and B. Neis, 2013. 'Fisheries Allocations Policies and Regional Development: Successes from the Newfoundland and Labrador Shrimp Fishery.' A report prepared for *The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development*, Memorial University of Newfoundland. St. John's. Available at: http://www.mun.ca/harriscentre/reports/arf/



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LFUSC

- Co-op created in 1978 to apply for **two offshore shrimp licenses**.
- Now a company owned by inshore harvesters.
- Mandate to invest profits in infrastructure and employment in the inshore fishery.
- Chartered foreign and Canadian vessels to generate royalties and profits.
- Reinvested profits in fish plants in 80s and 90s.

SABRI

- Non-profit created in 1997 to manage a 3, 000 tonne **Special Allocation** of shrimp.
- Volunteer board with community representation.
- Mandate “to administer a 3000 metric tonne allocation of Northern Shrimp on behalf of the communities from Big Brook to Goose Cove, in a manner resulting in expansion of the region’s economic base and improved employment opportunities in harmony with a rural setting and lifestyle.”
- Contracted quota out to a company with offshore vessel in return for royalties, jobs.
- Reinvested profits in shrimp plant, cold storage facility, inshore fishery, aquaculture, sports and recreation, training, and scholarships.



Other strengths

- FFAW Union
  - negotiates prices and wages
  - allows working people to participate in decisions about resource allocations, processing licenses, working conditions
  - engaged in stewardship and science
  - marketing innovations



Other strengths

- Large, internationally competitive vertically-integrated companies well linked to international markets
- Some small processors serving regional and niche markets.
- Growing global demand for seafood and anticipated growth in key resources



Indeed…

Given these strengths, the real criticism that should be levelled is that our fisheries and the coastal communities of which they are a part are undervalued.





Real Vulnerabilities

- Down-sizing versus revitalizing our fisheries and coastal communities
- Claims the industry is broken and that simple ‘solutions’ or panaceas will fix these broken fisheries.
- Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs) and vertical integration: a solution for whom?



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Other Vulnerabilities…

- Disinvestment from federal science and elimination of key programs (contaminants)
- Inaction or limited action on Ecosystem Based Management, MPAs, biodiversity protection, habitat protection
- Limited provincial engagement in coastal and resource management
- Underfunding of the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Limited internal diversity in expertise in government
- Silos– disconnected fisheries policy-making



Industry vulnerabilities…

- Dependence on commodity markets
- Lack of marketing association and branding
- Weak investment in domestic markets, market niches
- Weak synergies between sectors (i.e. fisheries-tourism)





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Community vulnerabilities

- Ongoing outmigration from coastal communities
- Retreat from Minimum Processing Requirements without investigation of alternatives
- Plant closures and impending retirements
- Intergenerational transfer of assets, knowledge, expertise, licenses – tipping point?





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Other Vulnerabilities…

- Climate change and ocean acidification

- Declining seafood security
- Lack of integrated coastal zone management

- Absence of a regional mechanism to promote synergies between sectors and regional economic development



Conclusion

- Our vulnerabilities will deepen unless we *shift our emphasis from downsizing to revitalizing our fisheries and coastal communities*, which are -- and will continue to be if valued --the backbone of the nature and essence of Newfoundland and Labrador

- We need to *develop a policy framework* that can act as a road map to this end.



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Moving Forward: Recommendations





SECTION 1: OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

****Recommendation 1.** *The federal and provincial governments, the FFAW and industry should continue to shift their emphasis from downsizing to revitalizing our fisheries and coastal communities, by developing and implementing a policy framework with revitalization as its core objective*.



Revitalize

--to give new life or vigour to something

--Recharge, regenerate, rejuvenate, renew…

- http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/revitalize

Not just a smaller version of what we have today…



Conservation and Management

** **Recommendation 5 +** *The federal government should provide the investment needed to ensure that it is able to live up to its commitments in international agreements*

…the Province should increase its capacity to participate as a major stakeholder in fisheries science and management, particularly as these affect coastal communities.



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Recommendation **6c.**

Establish a network of coastal community observatories throughout the province

Mandate: community-engaged, multidisciplinary problem-solving research, training and value-added activities



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- Bonne Bay Marine Station, Norris Point, NL



- see the vision for the Bonne Bay Marine Station in Norris Point, NL outlined here:

http://www.curra.ca/future_of_bbms.html

- West Coast Aquatic, Vancouver Island

- http://westcoastaquatic.ca/about/

West Coast Aquatic



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Recommendation 4 and others…

The new policy framework should include:

- *…a carefully developed strategy for supporting the viability of small and medium-scale owner-operator enterprises.*
- *retention and enforcement of the owner-operator and fleet separation policies and the policy around controlling-agreements*
- *balanced and coherent policies arrived at through transparent processes and should therefore reject the 'last-in-first-out' policy (LIFO) in the shrimp fisheries*



**Recommendation 11.

Onshore processing (supported by Minimum Processing Requirements - MPR) creates employment, wealth and local markets. The province should…

- *launch a systematic investigation into the history and effects (past and present) of MPR*
- *assess the full range of other types of strategies that might be used to achieve, or ideally exceed, their capacity to support diverse fisheries and to anchor fisheries wealth*



Use an integrated rural development approach

Recommendation 2, etc.

The revitalization strategy should be based on the recognition that fisheries resilience, and the resilience of coastal communities are interdependent…

… bring representatives of coastal municipalities and many other groups more fully into fisheries discussions, so that they…can provide input on issues that are vital to the future resilience of both our fisheries and these communities.

…innovative ideas, investment capital…



Regional government…

Recommendation 15 and others…

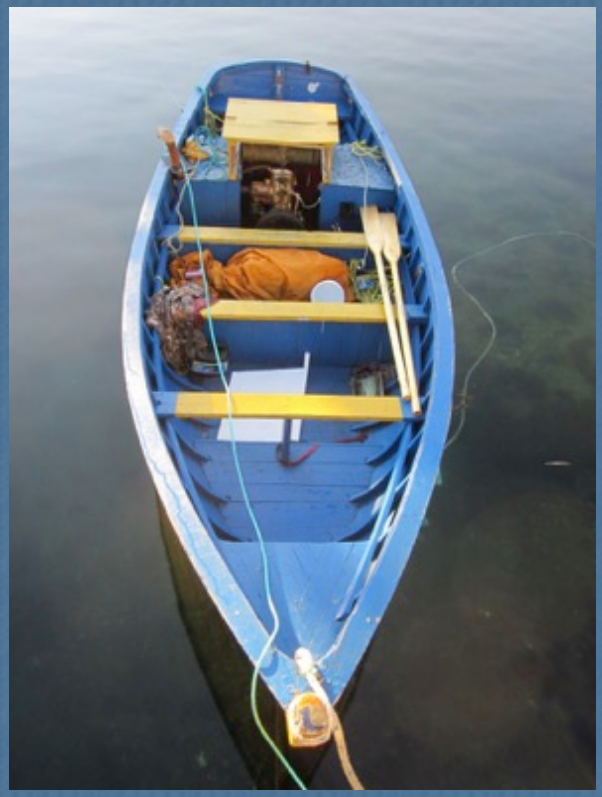
- *…create a mechanism (ideally some form of regional government) … to develop regionally appropriate initiatives, promote synergies between sectors, carry out integrated coastal zone management, care for infrastructure…*
- *ensure that this regional mechanism is adequately resourced, locally elected, not subject to the changing political agendas of federal and provincial governments*



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Deal with this problem…

"Having never been independent or autonomous, municipalities survive through stubborn perseverance and an increased tolerance of accepting and doing less. …Municipalities are provided with enough support to get by, but not nearly enough to be sustainable and thrive." (Keenan and Whalen MNL n.d.)





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Young people and revitalization…

- *… support the intergenerational transfer of harvesting and processing enterprises and their assets in a way that ensures these are retained, wherever possible, by people living and working in the regions adjacent to the resources on which they rely.*

- *Engage more young people in fisheries and help them to enter the industry…(special licenses, quotas…)*
- *Draw on their skills and training (social media) to revitalize the industry*



Recommendation 21.

…encourage young people's interest in, and entry into fisheries,

…to get the on- and off-water training they will need to thrive in this complex and challenging industry.



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Recommendation **12b +**

Focus on the full basket of more than 50 different species that are currently landed in different regions, and species we are not yet landing. Seek to develop…

1. *new and existing local, national, as well as international, specialized market niches for seafood products*
2. *fair-trade marketing options that emphasize fair wealth distribution as well as sustainable fisheries.*
3. *more opportunities for hybrid enterprises (fisheries-tourism; stewardship-fisheries-tourism…)*

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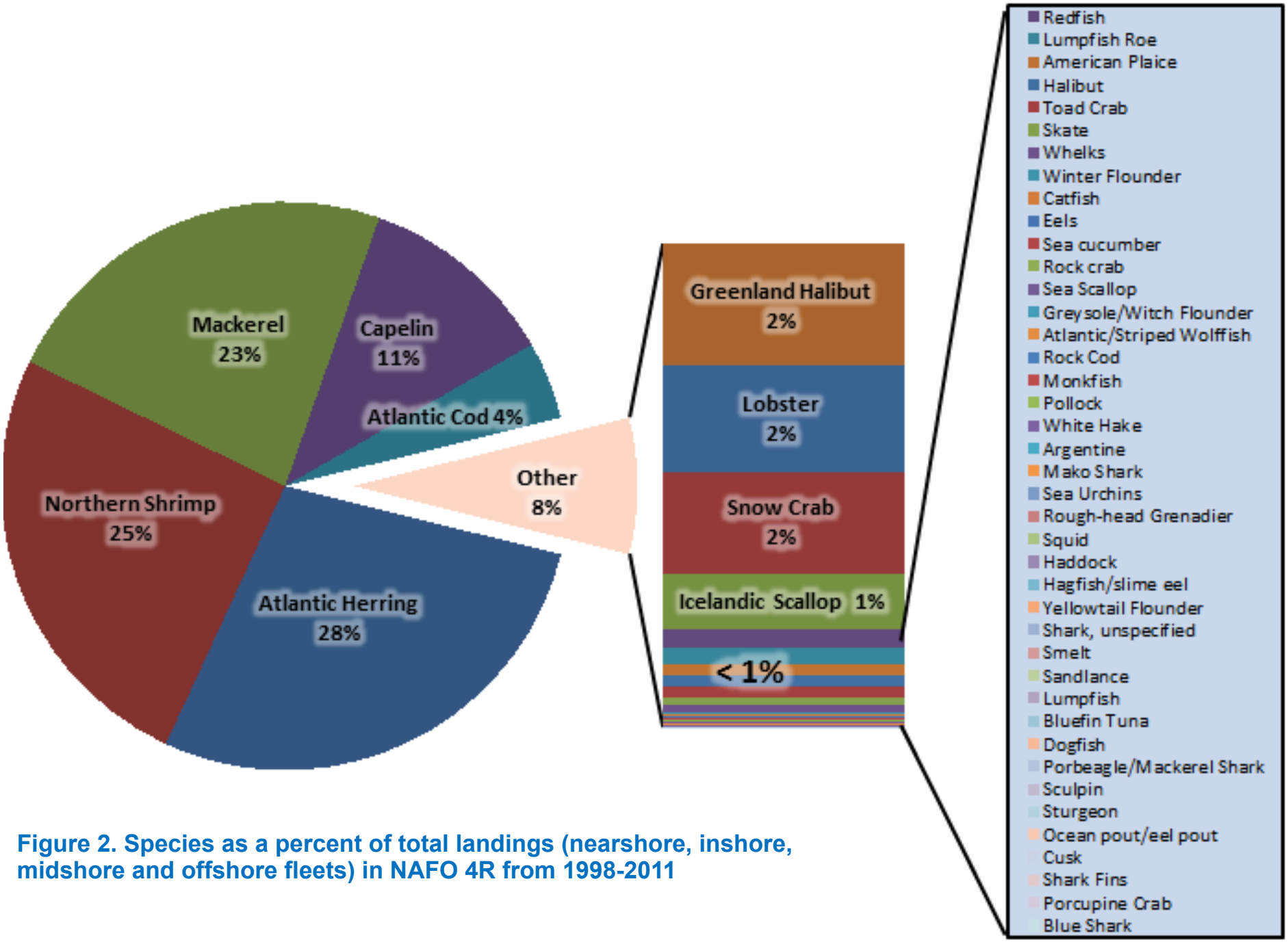


Figure 2. Species as a percent of total landings (nearshore, inshore, midshore and offshore fleets) in NAFO 4R from 1998-2011



Provincial Seafood Security

Develop strategies to enhance the contribution of the industry to provincial food security – thereby creating new markets and improving our health

- *triple per capita seafood consumption by 2020*
- *encourage the establishment of more retail seafood outlets*
- *community-supported fisheries and other social finance mechanisms…*

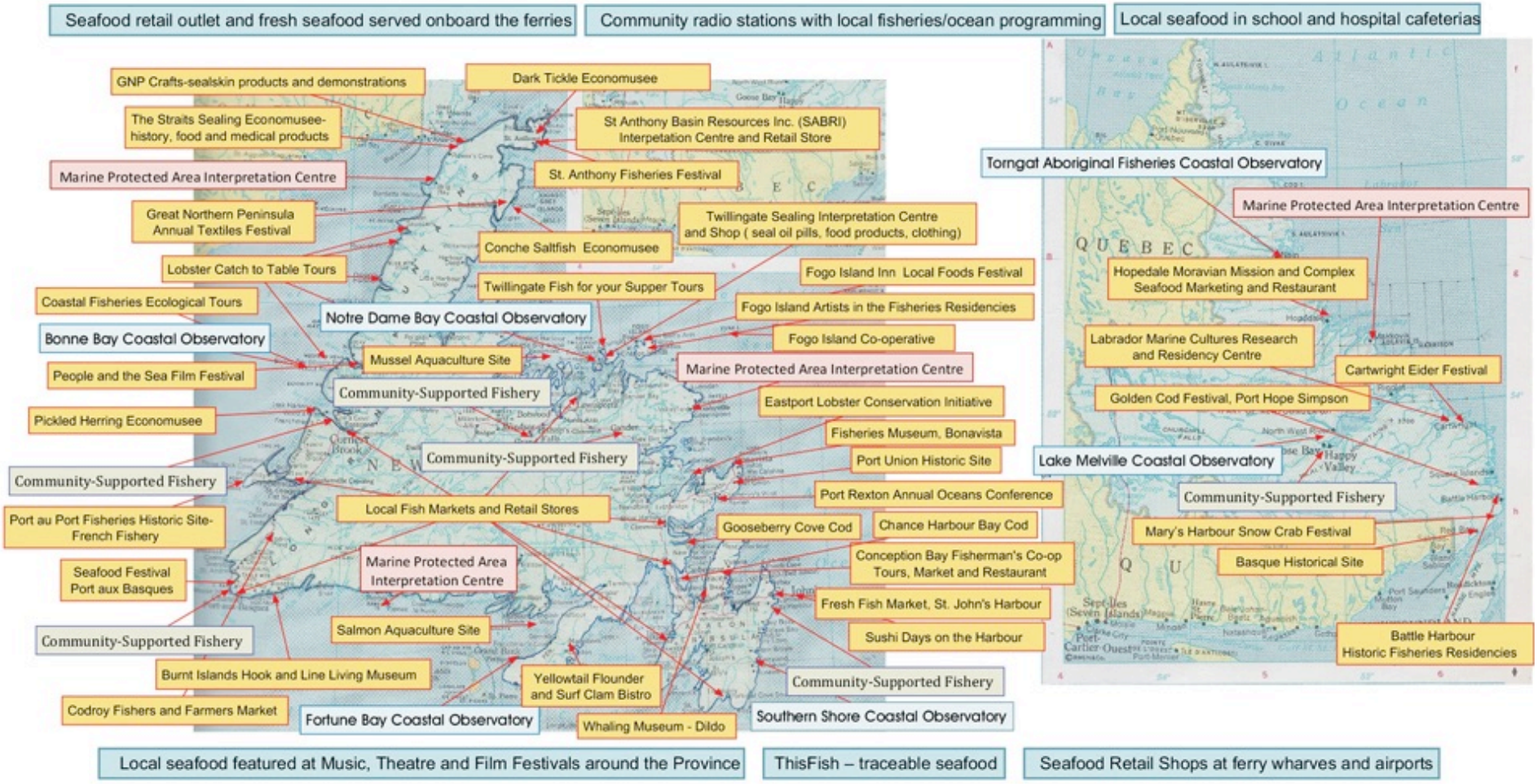


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In conclusion

- Our fisheries and coastal communities are rich and diverse, but they are vulnerable in key areas
- *We need to celebrate our fisheries*, past and present, and the people who work in them.
- We need more opportunities for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to learn about our fisheries, to enjoy the fruits of our work and generations of investment.
- There are no shortcuts to resilient fisheries and thriving coastal communities.

Diversifying Our Fisheries, 2020



Created by Pam Hall, with Dr. Barb Neis and Dr. Rosemary Ommer, 2014

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Thank you for your attention



Community - University Research for Recovery Alliance

www.curra.ca