

Coastal Acoustic Research Vessel

In Budget 2008, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture was provided \$450,000 in support of cod recovery initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador. A total of \$200,000 of this funding was provided to the Fisheries Conservation Group at the Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University (MI) for the construction of a new coastal research vessel, the RV Gecho II. The funding was also used to equip the research vessel with new electronics.

The research vessel will allow for the continuation of cod research conducted in Smith Sound by Dr. George Rose, Director of the Centre for Fisheries Ecosystem Research at MI. Dr. Rose has been conducting research on this coastal population of cod for over twelve years. This work represents the longest observation series of coastal cod populations in Newfoundland and Labrador, and provides annual insights into the status of a large aggregation of cod along the northeast coast of Newfoundland. These surveys have assessed cod biomass, egg and larval densities, oceanography, and other factors. This data helps form the basis for the best described coastal ecosystem in Newfoundland and Labrador waters.



The RV Gecho II will be used for this on-going research and will provide an opportunity to expand into new inshore fisheries related research initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador.

RV Gecho II



The RV Gecho II is a 10 metre fisheries research vessel, designed for work in the coastal waters off Newfoundland and Labrador. This vessel will enable research in coastal bays with unique inshore spawning and nursery habitats. It will also allow for better monitoring of inshore cod migration.

The vessel is specifically equipped for surveying fish with two scientific echo sounders, firing five transducers that are capable of detecting and measuring marine life from plankton to large fish, double global position systems, a bridge echo sounder, radar, and VHF and Sirius radios, all of which are networked for data sharing.

The hull and cabin were custom built by Milton Fibreglass in Shoal Harbour. Blue Water Marine and Equipment Ltd. of Mount Pearl outfitted the propulsion system. Custom aluminum and steel work for the sonar deployment system were completed by ProArc Fabrication Ltd. of Mount Pearl. Storage batteries and the inverter system for the scientific equipment were supplied by Solar Winds Energy of Clarenville.

Additional equipment includes an array of telemetry equipment for tracking tagged fish, tow equipment for capturing early life stage fish and a Remote Operated Vehicle. As well, there is an oceanographic winch and CTD that is capable of temperature and salinity measurements, to a depth of 500 metres. Safety equipment includes survival suits, a Zodiac life raft and a GPIRB, supplied by Atlantic Electronics Ltd. of Mount Pearl.