Icelandic Scallop Survey
Broom Point to Ferolle Point
**Introduction**

The smaller of the two species of scallop commonly found in the waters of Newfoundland and Labrador is the Icelandic scallop, *Chlamys islandica*. They can be found in water depths of 30 to 100 fathoms but are normally located in beds with water depths of 30 to 60 fathoms. The bottom substrate is normally hard with variable composition consisting largely of sand, gravel, shell fragments and stones. Commercial aggregations are found in the Strait of Belle Isle, St. Pierre Bank, Grand Bank and in waters off Labrador. Harvesting occurs year round on St. Pierre Bank and Grand Bank and May to November in other areas.

The collapse of the groundfish fishery in 1992 has resulted in considerable pressure to assist small fishing enterprises (ie. vessels less than 14 meters in length) throughout the province in diversifying and targeting fish species in non-traditional fishing areas. Funding through the Fisheries Diversification Program, provided assistance for a survey to identify the quantities of Icelandic scallop which may be available in scallop fishing area 14B between Broom Point and Ferolle Point on the Northern Peninsula. Identification of an Icelandic scallop resource would help fishing enterprises utilize the 200MT quota which is annually allocated by DFO for this area.

**Methodology**

Through a tender process, Chester Davis of Lanse Au Loup was contracted to conduct two, ten-day surveys. The first survey was carried out between Table Point and Ferolle Point, and the second between Broom Point and Table Point. Mr. Davis supplied the 42' vessel, M.V. "Valley Breeze", equipped with a type of drag gear known as a ‘Double Labrador Bucket’ and all other gear necessary to complete the surveys. Mr Davis has over 17 years’ experience in the scallop fishery and is very familiar with the areas to be surveyed.
An observer was hired through Seawatch Inc. and was responsible for: recording all data related to the project, ensuring that the fishing plan was executed as outlined, providing progress reports on a semi-weekly basis, and conducting biological sampling as requested.

The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture obtained the experimental fishing license necessary to carry out this project from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

**Results**

**Table Point to Ferolle Point**

The 10-day survey was conducted during the period of July 18 to July 30, 2001. A total of 197, 15-minute tows were completed (Refer to Figure 3). The towing speed was 3.5 knots with each tow covering a linear distance of 1 ½ to 1 3/4 kms. This resulted in a total linear distance of approximately 317 kms being explored. The depths of water encountered ranged from 25 to 80 fathoms, with the average being 41 fathoms.

A total of 7 kgs. of very small Icelandic scallop were harvested during the 10 days of survey activity. Some tows produced significant quantities of old shells, but in most cases, no scallop were found in these locations.

**Broom Point to Table Point**

There were 202, 15-minute tows completed via the 10-day survey which was carried out between August 15 and September 1, 2001 (Refer to Figure 4). The average water depth was 43.5 fathoms and varied from 25 to 80 fathoms. A total linear distance of approximately 328 kms was explored via tows that were conducted with a vessel towing speed of 3.5 knots.

The 10 days of survey activity yielded a total of 5 small Icelandic scallop (0.2 kgs). The by-catch consisted of very small amounts of sea urchins, star fish, toad crab and snow crab.

Towing positions were altered in two locations near Parson’s Pond to avoid gear conflict with existing flounder gear.
Conclusions

There is no commercial potential for Icelandic scallop in the areas which were surveyed between Broom Point and Ferolle Point.

It was the opinion of Mr. Davis that the bottom conditions were too rough, rocky and hard to sustain a scallop habitat in either of the areas identified in this project.

In most cases, the scallop drag would be taken back onboard the vessel with very little of anything (fish or substrate) being harvested.

No further Icelandic scallop exploratory work is recommended for the areas identified in these surveys.

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The $10 million Fisheries Diversification Program is part of the $81.5 million Canada-Newfoundland Agreement Respecting the Economic Development Component of the Canadian Fisheries Adjustment and Restructuring Initiative.