

Fish Sampling Methodology for Monitoring Programs in the Northwest Territories

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Slave River Environmental Quality Monitoring Program

Methodology:

The Yellowknife Fisheries and Oceans Canada's (DFO) Fisheries Biologist collects and processes fish for the Slave River Program with support from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) district and regional staff.

Fish are collected in the Slave River below the Rapids of the Drowned and at two control sites, Leland Lake and Chitty Lake. Walleye (Pickerel), Northern Pike (Jackfish) and Whitefish are caught during open water season using gill nets. Burbot (Loche) are collected during the winter under the ice using hooks and bait. During the open water season, fish are caught using gill nets; hooks and bait are used under ice.

Once the fish are caught, the biologist measures and records the length, weight, sex, maturity of gonads, individual organ weights and the overall health of the fish (i.e. does the liver look healthy).

The fish tissue, liver and/or bile samples are then extracted and prepared according to the protocol of the lab carrying out the analysis. Some labs require that the tissue be wrapped in hexane-washed foil while others prefer that the tissue be bagged in a contaminant free bag.

Adjusting methodology is usually a function of what parameters are being analyzed in each sample. It is very important to maintain Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC) in the field with the QA/QC of the lab performing the analysis. The samples are shipped to the individual labs on dry ice.

Table 1 is a summary of the types of fish caught and the parameters that were measured or will be measured from the Slave River Program.

Fish Sampling Methodology for Monitoring Programs in Alberta (including the Northern Rivers Study)

Methodology:

- 1. Alberta Environment, Alberta Fish and Wildlife and personnel from the National Dioxin Survey collect fish in Alberta.
- 2. Captured species include Walleye, Northern Pike, Burbot, Goldeye, Longnose Sucker, White Sucker, Lake Whitefish, Mountain Whitefish, Bull Trout, Arctic Grayling, Flathead Chub and Northern Squawfish.
- 3. Fish collected throughout the Peace-Athabasca-Slave Basin are caught using angling, gill-netting and electrofishing methods.
- 4. Captured whole fish are placed in clean stainless steel buckets. Details regarding species, length, weight, general health of the fish, location and method of capture are recorded.
- 5. Fish are then prepared as recommended by the different labs (i.e. fillets, whole fish or livers). All fish being analyzed for dioxins and furans are placed in contaminant free plastic bags, frozen and shipped to Edmonton. Upon arrival in Edmonton, samples are checked for verification, inspected to ensure sample quality control (QA\QC) and stored in coolers at -20 C prior to shipment to the labs.
- 6. Table 2 summarizes the fish caught and analyzed for dioxins and furans from 1987 to 1989. Data from 1990 and 1991 are forthcoming. A total of 771 fish were captured and archived in 1990/91. In early 1992, Alberta expanded their analyses of fish (due to funding from the Northern Rivers Study) to include hydrocarbons, PCB's, resin acids, chlorinated phenols (organochlorines) and total metals.

SUMMARY

The methodology and analysis of fish sampling in the Northwest Territories and in Alberta are similar. This was intentional so that data collected could be compared. Territorial, Provincial and Federal government scientists and other scientific experts provided input into the development of each monitoring program. Moreover, there are only a few labs in Canada that perform dioxin and furan analysis on fish, so the same labs are used in both monitoring programs. This provides consistency and continuity and will provide an overall picture of contaminants throughout the whole Mackenzie River Basin.

TABLE 1
Fish Sampling and Analyses From the NWT Slave River Monitoring Program

| Parameter | 1988/89 | Site Collected | Lab Analysis |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Trace Metals | Year 1 of 3 - Mercury in Fish Tissue Study | Slave River | Cantest muscle/tissue 100g |
| Extractable Organic Chlorine | | | |
| Chlorophenols | | | |
| Dioxins/Furans | 5 longnose suckers (whole fish)* 5 burbot (liver)▶ | Slave River | DFO Lab |
| MFO | 21 Whitefish 21 burbot 2 inconnu (all livers)> | Slave River | DFO Lab |
| PCB's, Pesticides, Organochlorines | 5 longnose suckers (whole fish)* 5 burbot (liver)▶ | Slave River | DFO Lab |
| Toxaphene | | | |
| Hydrocarbons | | | |

* Whole Fish

A subsample is taken of the homogenized whole fish (organs and bones included)

▲ Tissue

Flesh only (also referred to as fillets), no skin tissue and no bones

► Liver

Single liver is analyzed

Bile

Bile extracted from liver

♦ Composite Fish

Tissue

Fish Sampling and Analyses From the NWT Slave River Monitoring Program

| Parameter | 1989/90 | Site Collected | Lab Analysis |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Trace Metals | Year 2 of 3 | Slave River | Cantest |
| Extractable Organic Chlorine | 10 walleye (tissue)₄ 7 burbot (tissue)₄ | Slave River | Envirotest |
| Chlorophenols | 2 walleye 1 burbot (tissue)▲ | Slave River | Envirotest |
| Dioxins/Furans | 10 burbot (whole fish - excluding livers)* 10 burbot (livers)▶ | Slave River | DFO Lab |
| MFO | 25 walleye 7 burbot (liver only)> | Slave River | DFO Lab |
| PCB's, Pesticides, Organochlorines | 5 suckers (tissue)▲ 5 burbot (liver)► | Slave River | DFO Lab |
| Toxaphene | 10 burbot (whole fish)* 10 burbot (liver)► | Slave River | DFO Lab |
| Hydrocarbons | 11 walleye (bile)• 7 burbot (bile)• | Slave River | DFO Lab |

* Whole Fish

A subsample is taken of the homogenized whole fish (organs and bones included)

▲ Tissue

Flesh only (also referred to as fillets), no skin tissue and no bones

► Liver

Single liver is analyzed

• Bile

Bile extracted from liver

♦ Composite Fish

Tissue

Fish Sampling and Analyses From the NWT Slave River Monitoring Program

| Parameter | 1990/91 | Site Collected | Lab Analysis |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|
| Trace Metals | Year 3 of 3 major ions and metals 29 fish 7 fish | Slave River Leland Lake | Cantest |
| Extractable Organic Chlorine | 10 fish (bile). 85 fish - walleye, burbot, whitefish, pike (tissue). | Slave River Leland Lake | Envirotest |
| Chlorophenols | 35 fish - walleye, burbot, whitefish, pike (tissue)▲ | Slave River Leland Lake | Envirotest |
| Dioxins/Furans | 5 whitefish (composite)♦ 15 walleye (whole fish)* 16 burbot (liver)▶ | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | Envirotest DFO Lab |
| MFO | 20 walleye (liver)► 20 pike (liver)► 20 whitefish (liver)► | Slave River Leland Lake | DFO Lab |
| PCB's, Pesticides, Organochlorines | 15 walleye (whole)* 16 burbot (livers)► | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | DFO Lab |
| Toxaphene | 15 walleye (whole)* 16 burbot (livers)► | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | DFO Lab |
| Hydrocarbons | | | |

* Whole Fish

A subsample is taken of the homogenized whole fish (organs and bones included)

▲ Tissue

Flesh only (also referred to as fillets), no skin tissue and no bones

LiverBile

Single liver is analyzed Bile extracted from liver

♦ Composite Fish

Tissue

Fish Sampling and Analyses From the NWT Slave River Monitoring Program

| Parameter | 1991/92 Up to Jan. 10/92 | Site Collected | Lab Analysis |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| Trace Metals | 61 fish - walleye, burbot, whitefish, pike (tissue)▲ | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | Cantest |
| Extractable Organic Chlorine | 20 fish (bile) • 75 fish - walleye, burbot, whitefish, pike (tissue) • | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | Envirotest |
| Chlorophenols | 25 fish (tissue)▲ 15 fish - walleye, burbot, whitefish, pike (liver)► | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | Envirotest |
| Dioxins/Furans | 10 (composite fish tissue)♦ 15 walleye (whole fish)* 16 burbot (liver)▶ | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | Envirotest DFO Lab |
| MFO | 60 fish - walleye, burbot, whitefish, pike (liver)► | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | DFO Lab |
| PCB's, Pesticides, Organochlorines | 15 walleye (whole)* 15 burbot (livers)▶ | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | DFO Lab |
| Toxaphene | 15 walleye (whole)* 16 burbot (livers)▶ | Slave River Leland Lake Chitty Lake | DFO Lab |
| Hydrocarbons | | | |

* Whole Fish

A subsample is taken of the homogenized whole fish (organs and bones included)

▲ Tissue

Flesh only (also referred to as fillets), no skin tissue and no bones

► Liver

Single liver is analyzed

• Bile

Bile extracted from liver

♦ Composite Fish

Tissue

TABLE 2
DIOXIN/FURAN FISH SAMPLING IN ALBERTA

| DATE | LOCATION | LAB | FISH SPP. |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| Oct 1987 | Wapiti R. d/s Procter & Gamble | ECO Logic Ltd. | longnose suckers (5) whole fish |
| Oct 1987 | Athabasca R. d/s Weldwood | Fisheries & Oceans Canada | longnose suckers (5) whole fish |
| Sept 1988 | Peace R. u/s Daishowa mill site | DFO, Burlington | pike (1), walleye (2), goldeye (1), all fillets |
| Oct 1988 | Smoky R. in Watino area | DFO, Burlington | goldeye (2) |
| Sept & Dec 1988 | Slave River, NWT near Ft. Fitzgerald, AB & Ft. Smith, NT | DFO Lab | burbot livers longnose suckers whole fish |
| Sept 1989 | Rock Lake | | mountain whitefish 5 fillets |
| Oct 1989 | Wapiti R. d/s Procter & Gamble | Fisheries & Oceans Canada, Burlington | composite samples: white sucker, 5 whole fish white sucker, 5 fillets white sucker, 5 fillets walleye, 5 fillets mountain whitefish, 5 fillets pike, 4 fillets pike, 1 fillet |
| Oct 1989 | Athabasca R. d/s Weldwood | Fisheries & Oceans Canada, Burlington | composite samples: mountain whitefish, 5 whole fish mountain whitefish, 5 fillets mountain whitefish 5 whole fish mountain whitefish 5 fillets mountain whitefish 5 fillets longnose suckers 5 whole fish longnose suckers 5 fillets |
| Oct 1990 | Athabasca d/s Weldwood | Chemex/Mann | longnose sucker, 6 fillets mountain whitefish 6 fillets mountain whitefish, 6 fillets |

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שנה של האליר לאלי Slave River - רי ערה Rapids of the Drowned עינה אראליה ניף ה, Leland Lake עינה Chitty Lake- ר. Walleye (Pickerel), Northern Pike (Jackfish) עינה האלרי של הירט שירט שירט שירט ביחים על שירט שירט ביחים על עליה של ע

۵% - የምህ, በህላጋ ላዜጋ ልናልጥና ለናርንናጋቡ ላዜጋ ላምለናርንናጋቡ አይላናርንልነጋና ለራሊባህ ተላናብቦ ኦታቴርንኔና ተበረጥናጋጋና እናትህትሄናርናጋቡ አይላናርን አስትህናርን አስትህናርናጋቡ.

ነን'፦ በበናነገርት ወቅኔነገርት ቴልዕ'ጋቀዥና ልቴልዕና ለአውኖ'፦ ዕላና ሳኒኔ ውንናነርውኖ'፦ ዕላና ውድኔ ምሩ ቴውኦኒናርው ቀሳንንና Slave River- ፊት ለትሊ የህህ ተልና.

- 2. Δ% Δ΄ ΡΕΠ΄ Γ΄ ΛΥΡΚ΄ LJ4% ۴٬ C΄ Walleye, Northern Pike, Burbot, Goldeye, Longnose Sucker, White Sucker, Lake Whitefish, Mountain Whitefish, Bull Trout, Arctic Grayling, Flathead Chub and Northern Squawfish.
- 3. Δ% Δ6 Λγροςς-ατό Clea Peace-Athabasca-Slave Basin-Γ בים αρηωί, L'Πορημό αιμο Διάηργορος Δ% ανοβίος αρή.

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| Oct 1990 | Athabasca d/s Weldwood | Chemex/Mann | longnose sucker, 6 fillets mountain whitefish 6 fillets mountain whitefish, 6 fillets |