

## **FFAW 2026 MACKEREL SPAWNING SAMPLING PROGRAM – HARVESTER CALL-OUT**

**NEW PROJECT:** the objective is to document the extent and timing of mackerel occurrence and spawning in NL waters. The project is meant to systematically document harvesters' observations and to collect biological samples opportunistically, when harvesters are participating in other fisheries. More participants, means more eyes on the water and an opportunity to document the extent and timing of mackerel in NL waters.

Pending project approval, the FFAW is accepting applications from Newfoundland fish harvesters to participate in a mackerel spawning sampling program taking place from May through August 2026.

Participating harvesters will document mackerel presence/absence and collect biological samples during regular fishing activities across designated areas on the West, Northeast and South coasts of Newfoundland and southern Labrador.

Sampling will occur up to three days per week, with a maximum of 30 mackerel retained per day-at-sea under a scientific licence.

### **Participating harvesters will be required to:**

- Record date, location (coordinates), and fishing activity
- Document mackerel presence (absent/present/reported)
- Collect a random subsample of 5–30 mackerel when present
- Record biological data including:
  - Length
  - Weight
  - Sex
  - Gonad weight
  - Maturity stage
  - Freeze samples as required

### **Eligible harvesters must:**

- Be actively fishing between May and August
- Operate in one of the designated areas (East – 3KL, South – 3Ps, West – 4R, South-2J)
- Be willing of catching mackerel as bycatch or using handline
- Have access to GPS for recording locations

FFAW staff will provide protocols, data sheets, and ongoing support throughout the project.

**For an application –or** more information, please contact Project Coordinator April Wiseman at the FFAW office at 709-576-7276 or [awiseman@ffaw.ca](mailto:awiseman@ffaw.ca) \*Application deadline will be May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026