

## International Focus on Fisheries Assessment Technology

**T**rawling is an integral part of fisheries assessment and commercial harvesting in marine and inland freshwater systems. Despite the importance of trawling, freshwater trawl operators possess rudimentary understanding of trawling gear, are limited in abilities to fix or diagnose trawling problems, and are unable to access marine trawling expertise. This situation provided a unique opportunity for the Sea Grant programs of New York and Rhode Island and the Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) to jointly organize a workshop to present trawling technology to inland trawlers from the Great Lakes and the European Union (EU).

A three-day trawling gear design workshop for freshwater users was held in Rhode Island in fall 2008. Representatives from Wisconsin Sea Grant, the Lake Michigan commercial fishing industry, and a European Union (EU) trawling consortium of 14 countries attended. Presentations focused on trawl designs, vessel demonstrations of variable trawl designs on fish catches, and participation aboard a research trawler along the Atlantic Coast.



NY Sea Grant organized post-workshop meetings and trawl sampling participation with fisheries assessment

*NYSG's Dave MacNeill (left) and Tom Juza, representing an EU trawling consortium (Czech Republic, Poland, France, Austria, Germany, Spain, Italy, the U.K., Norway, Finland, Hungary, Russia, Estonia and the Netherlands), studied trawling on the Atlantic and Lake Ontario. Juza said, "My country will use what I have learned to design and build a trawling vessel for assessing adult fish populations in Czech reservoirs that are stocked for recreational fishing."*  
Photo: Rhode Island Sea Grant



*Dave MacNeill, NY Sea Grant; Phil Moy, Wisconsin Sea Grant; and researcher Tom Juza of the Czech Republic study trawling technique aboard a National Marine Fisheries Service trawling research vessel along the Atlantic Coast. Photo: Rhode Island Sea Grant*

staff from Lakes Erie and Ontario for the EU biologist.

Information from these extension efforts is being used to develop trawl and vessel designs for use in inland waters by the Czech Republic Hydrobiology Institute in Czeska Budiovice that coordinates the EU freshwater assessment program. A trawl model will be built and evaluated at the MUN facility in Spring 2009. A trawling vessel, to be completed in Summer 2009, will assist a government-supported water quality monitoring program in several large reservoir waters in the Czech Republic. Those reservoirs supply more than 100,000 people with drinking water. A Lake Michigan commercial trawler used the workshop information to reconfigure his trawl design, significantly improving trawl sampling efficiency and reducing fuel expenditures.

*New York Sea Grant is a cooperative program of the State University of New York and Cornell University. Sea Grant Extension administration is located at 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.*

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