

***STATISTICAL PROFILE  
OF SEAL HUNT***

## **Statistics on Seal Hunt Activities**

In this section we are presenting an overview of the activities related to seal hunt in the Quebec Region. You will find information concerning the number of licences issued per type and per maritime areas as well as information concerning the captures of harp seal by fleet, and finally, data relating to the seal hunt observation activities.

### **Summary of the seal hunt, Magdalen Islands, 2005 season :**

Although the hunt season extends from November 15 to May 15 of each year, in 2005, the opening date for the seal hunt has been settled for March 29 in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The hunt activities have been concentrated on a five-day period. The vessels with an overall length exceeding 35' have then been hunting from March 29 to April 1st, at which date the quota had been reached for this category. Concerning the vessels with an overall length less than 35', their activities stopped on April 2nd.

About forty vessels over 35' from Magdalen Islands, and more than 100 individuals hunting with vessels less than 35', have participated in the fishing effort. Unlike the previous years, the seals were close to the Magdalen Islands coasts, allowing inshore hunters to participate to at least one day of hunt activities. Their captures were comprised of beaters. 80% of the catches of the Magdalen Islands hunters are being done with vessels over 35' long.

### **Summary of the seal hunt, North Shore, 2005 season :**

On the Quebec North Shore, 13 vessels over 35' long and approximately 90 inshore hunters, some hunting with vessels less than 35' long, have participated in the 2005 hunt. Concerning the Quebec Middle and Upper North Shore, only one vessel over 35' long and 15 inshore hunters have participated in the fishing effort.

The Lower North Shore has contributed to 82% of the catches for this Area. Finally, there were no end of season hunt for the Lower North Shore less than 35' fleet. The competitive quota attributed to this fleet in the Gulf of St. Lawrence had already been captured at the opening of the season at the end of March, period at which the Lower North Shore had not been able to participate due to unfavorable ice conditions. This type of situation did occur in the past years in this Area (see the figure « Evolution of catches, by area, per year » on page 88).

### Statistics and graphics 2004-2005 :

In 2005, the overall authorized allocation was 319 517 seals out of which 89 466 were for the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Out of this number, 58 094 seals were reserved for the vessels over 35' long.

The catches for the Quebec Region have reached 29 547 seals and were distributed as follows :

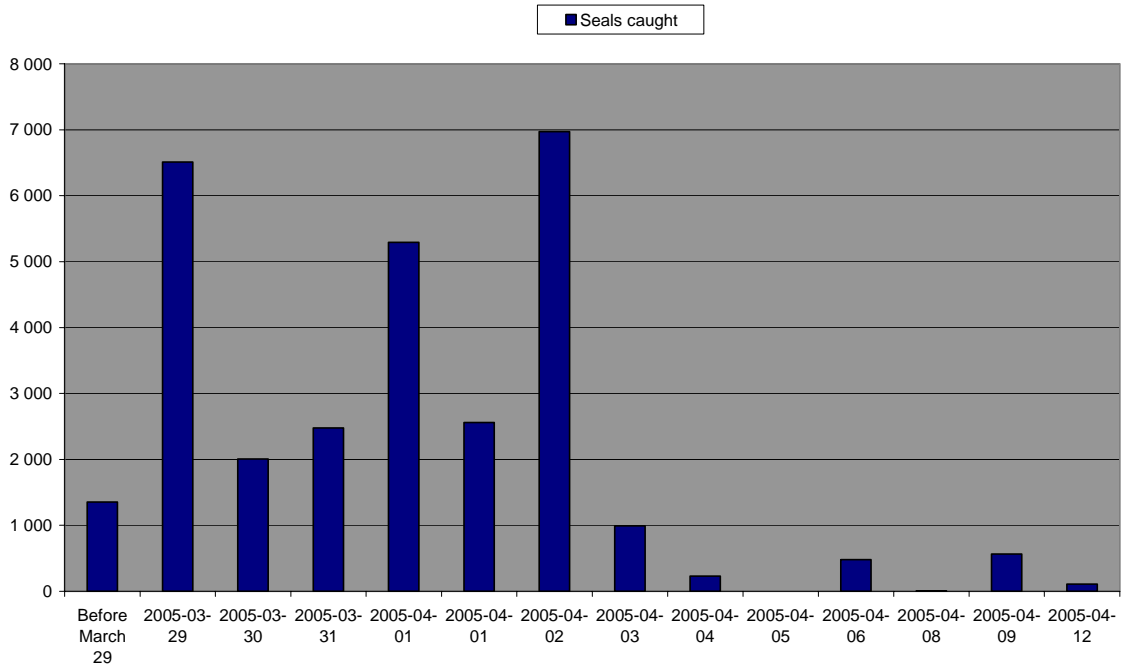
Fleet	Magdalen Islands		North Shore		Gaspé Peninsula		Total Quebec	
	Number of seals captured	Number of vessels	Number of seals captured	Number of vessels	Number of seals captured	Number of vessels	Number of seals captured	Number of vessels
< 35'	2 867	N/AV	5 359	N/AV	0	0	8 226	10
> 35'	12 091	40	9 230	13	0	0	21 321	40
< 35' – End of season	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14 958</b>	<b>N/AV</b>	<b>14 589</b>	<b>N/AV</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29 547</b>	<b>60</b>

### Comparison with 2004 :

Fleet	Magdalen Islands		North Shore		Gaspé Peninsula		Total Quebec	
	Number of seals captured	Number of vessels	Number of seals captured	Number of vessels	Number of seals captured	Number of vessels	Number of seals captured	Number of vessels
< 35'	2 199	13	2 588	N/AV	0	0	4 787	N/AV
> 35'	28 366	37	4 068	3	0	0	32 434	40
< 35' – End of season	0	0	2 108	N/AV	0	0	2 108	N/AV
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30 565</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>8 764</b>	<b>N/AV</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>39 329</b>	<b>N/AV</b>

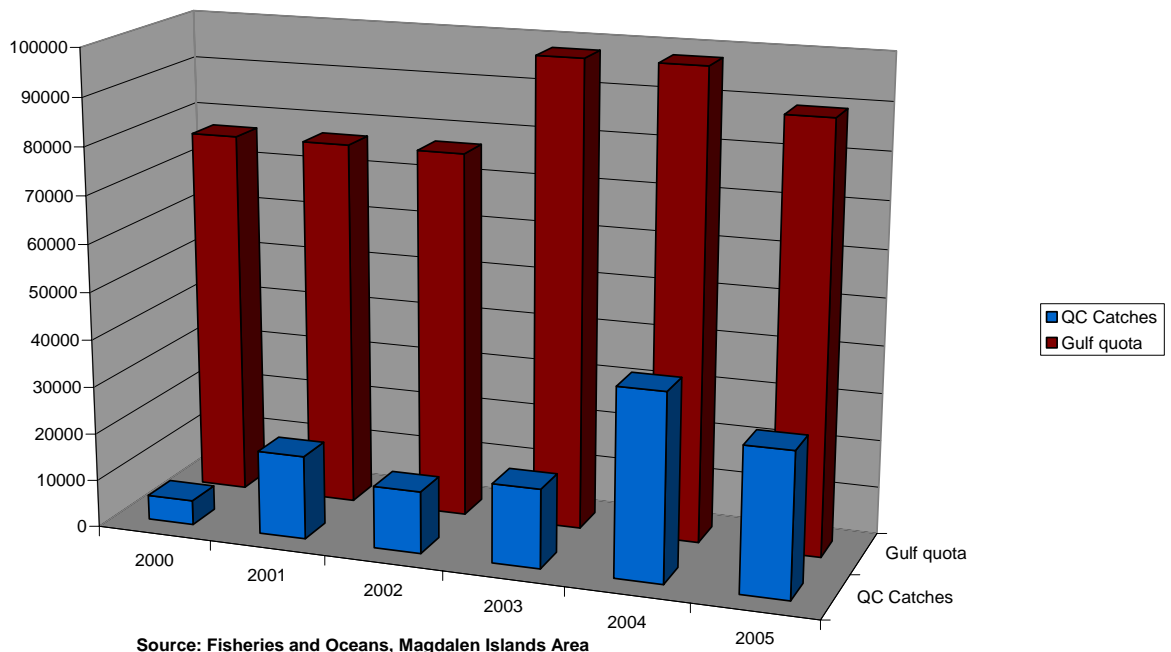
N.B. : The number of vessels is an approximation, considering that in 2005, the hunters using vessels less than 35' long were not requested to register them against DFO.

### Daily catches, harp seal, 2005 season, Quebec Region



Source : Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Magdalen Islands Area

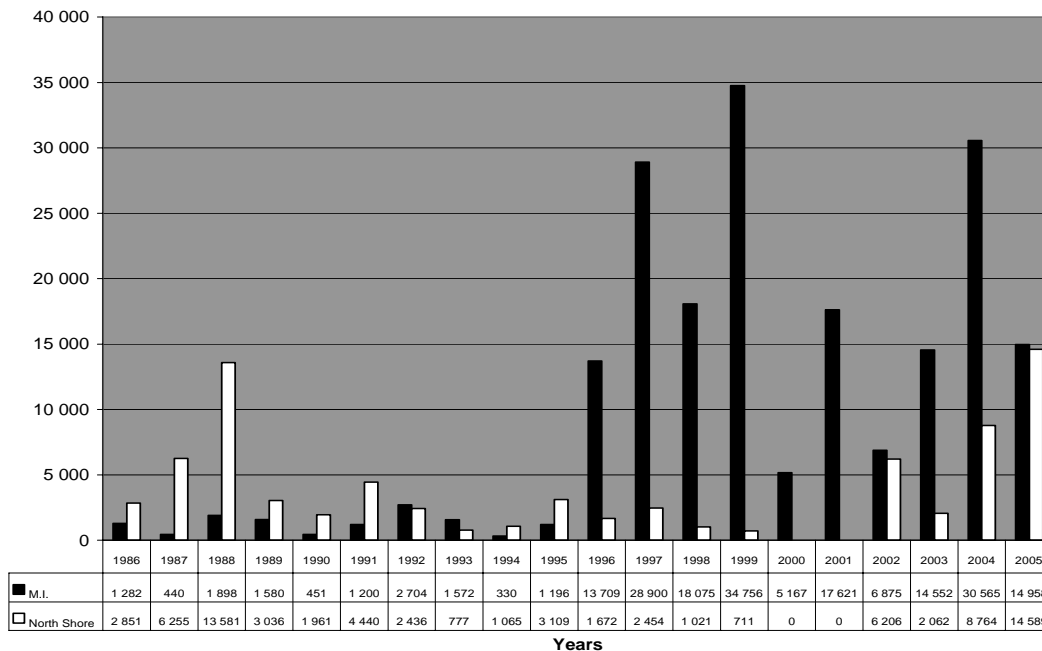
### Quebec Region sealers catches and Gulf quotas (unit : seal)



Source: Fisheries and Oceans, Magdalen Islands Area

## Evolution of catches, by area, per year :

Harp seal captures in Quebec Region 1986-2005



**N.B. :** There were no catches registered at DFO for the Gaspé Peninsula Area for the years mentioned above.

## Statistics, commercial licences :

According to the recommendations made by the Industry, DFO has imposed a freeze on the issuance of sealing licences, starting in June 2004, in order to slow down the growth on the fishing effort and to identify the conditions which should encompass the issuance of commercial sealing licences. This freeze, which has been extended up to May 2007, does not apply to Grey Seal hunting licences nor First Nations members or Lower North Shore residents for 2005.

## Number of commercial sealing licences issued, by type and by maritime area (2004-2005) :

Number of licences issued	Magdalen Islands		North Shore		Gaspé Peninsula		Total Quebec	
	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
<b>Commercial Professional</b>	755	817	708	798	57	59	1 520	1 674
<b>Commercial Hunter helper</b>	184	113	176	109	19	11	379	233
<b>Personal usage</b>	6	6	459	431	70	59	535	496
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>1 343</b>	<b>1 338</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>2 434</b>	<b>2 403</b>

Note : All licences are not necessarily active, we can note the approximative number of participants on the first page of this chapter.

### **Statistics, licences to observe the seal hunt :**

Each year, observers come to watch commercial seal hunt activities. In order to get to the hunt sites, observers must obtain an observer licence and respect a few conditions included in the licence. An observation licence is valid for a day and can be renewed on request. In 2005, all observers have been able to get on the ice and some have been able to renew their licence up to 4 times. People from Canada, United States, Central America and from Europe came to observe the commercial hunt. Most of them were journalists and photographers.

<b>Seal hunt observers licences</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Number of requests received <sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>51</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Number of licences issued</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Number of days of observation</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> Some people did not make any follow up on their request.

### **Statistics, product processing :**

In 2005, about 50% of the Quebec Region hunters' catches have been sold and processed within Quebec Region. The balance of the catches has been forwarded towards Newfoundland.

In Quebec, pelts provide the essential part of the value of the processed products. Once the fat is taken off the pelts and once these pelts are tanned, they take the road to Asia and Eastern Europe. The fat taken out of the pelts is then transformed into oil. Small quantities of meat are also processed for the local market and Quebec market (specialised market), as well as for personal consumption.