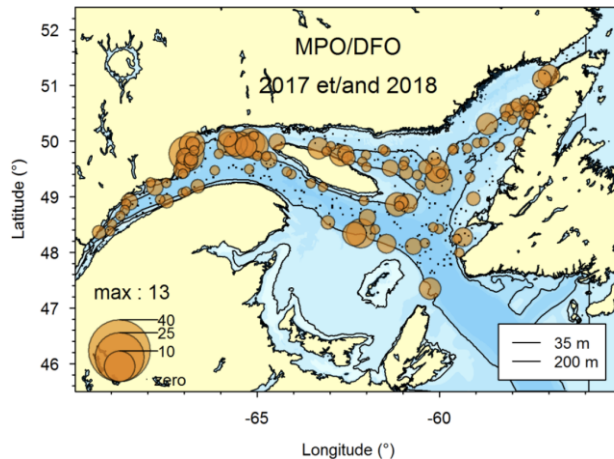


Drivers of habitat associations for the recovering Atlantic halibut stock in the Gulf of St. Lawrence

After 50 years of low abundance following its collapse, the Atlantic halibut (*Hippoglossus hippoglossus*) stock in the Gulf of St. Lawrence (GSL) recently recovered to sustain a lucrative fishery supporting the economies of coastal communities in five Canadian provinces. However, the long-term sustainability of this emerging fishery remains uncertain due to the lack of a spawning stock biomass index as well as poor knowledge of spawning and nursery areas, and of seasonal migrations within the management unit. These important knowledge gaps in the dynamics and ecology of the stock partly stem from the lack of information on the drivers of habitat associations. Based on decadal data time series derived from annual bottom-trawl monitoring surveys in the GSL, we aim to assess the role of environmental (e.g., temperature, prey availability) and demographic (e.g., ontogeny, density-dependence) factors on spatio-temporal variability in habitat associations for GSL halibut. Results from this project will directly contribute to informing the assessment and developing sustainable management strategies for an important recovering fishery.

Additional information and thesis supervision: [Dominique Robert](#), Supervisor, and [Hugues Benoit](#) (MPO), Co-supervisor.

Atlantic halibut catch in the Northern Gulf of St. Lawrence bottom trawl survey in 2017-18



This project will support efforts towards the sustainable management of the fishery

