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Norwegian fishing vessel can 'hand-pick' Iceland scallops, a potential boon for bottom fishing

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

Arctic Pearl embarks for the Barents Sea with new ecosystem-sensitive equipment

Norwegian research group SINTEF this week announced that the Arctic Pearl fishing vessel, equipped with new technology that is sensitive to the ocean-bottom ecosystem, is now headed to the Barents Sea in search of Iceland scallops.

SINTEF CEO Alexandra Bech Gjørv on Tuesday had the honor of naming the vessel at an event at the Fiskerstrand shipyard outside Ålesund. The vessel is the only one of its kind, he said.

The converted seismic vessel, developed by SINTEF and Ava Ocean, is the first in 30 years to be allowed to fish in certain areas because of its selective "shellfish picker" gear that employs a selective water pump to gather seafood into a suspended basket without touching the seabed. Bycatch or smaller shellfish are removed from the basket before it is raised to the surface.

"The aim here is to demonstrate that we have a harvesting system that not only effectively picks selected shellfish species from the seabed, but which does so without damaging the ecosystem on



The Arctic Pearl scallop-fishing vessel is equipped with new technology that is sensitive to the ocean-bottom ecosystem of the Barents Sea. Photo courtesy of Ava Ocean.

which the shellfish depend or negatively affecting population recruitment,” said Ava Ocean CEO Øystein Tvedt. “Only then will it be possible to develop a long-term fishery that is sustainable from both an environmental and economic perspective.”



(<http://penverproducts.com>).

The Arctic Pearl is joining forces with the Norwegian Marine Research Institute to document the impact of the vessel's equipment on seabed fauna and habitats.

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