

## APPENDIX 5

### **Consultation Summary: Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (April 4-5, 2023)** **2023-24 Total Allowable Catches for Northern and Striped Shrimp in the WAZ and EAZ**

A meeting of the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC) took place on April 4, 2023. The Department held a post-meeting with Indigenous participants on April 5, 2023. Meetings were well attended by groups that have direct interests in the Western and Eastern Assessment Zones (WAZ and EAZ), namely:

- Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB)
- Nunavut Fisheries Association (NFA)
- Torngat Fish Producers Co-Op
- Qikiqtaaluk Corporation (QC)
- Northern Coalition
- NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC)
- Innu Nation
- Torngat Joint Fisheries Board
- Nunatsiavut Government (NG)
- Baffin Fisheries Coalition (BFC)
- Makivik Corporation

Other participants at NSAC included representatives of the offshore fleet, individual licence holders, provincial government representatives, and Oceans North (non-governmental organization). Staff from the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board (NMRWB) were not in attendance at the Indigenous post-meeting, but did attend NSAC on April 4, 2023.

The Department sought views on Total Allowable Catches (TACs) for *Pandalus borealis* and *P. montagui* in the EAZ at the main NSAC table, with discussions on WAZ TACs reserved for the Indigenous post-meeting. DFO reminded NSAC participants of the NWMB and NMRWB's (the Boards') decision-making role in WAZ, and decision and advice role in the EAZ.

The Department encouraged Nunavut and Nunavik industry to make their views on TACs known to their respective Boards as part of the upcoming joint hearing process on 2023-24 TACs for Northern and Striped shrimp in the WAZ and EAZ. NFA members and Makivik Corporation confirmed their intent to submit a joint recommendation through this process in the coming weeks.

### **Eastern Assessment Zone**

#### ***Northern shrimp (P. borealis):***

- Canadian Association of Prawn Producers (CAPP) applied their proposed Harvest Decision Rule (HDR) developed in 2022 with support of the Northern Coalition and NFA, to recommend a TAC of 8,687t (potential ER 23.5%).
  - The proposed approach to setting TACs responds only partially to year-to-year changes in biomass (pursuing only 50% of the targeted change in TAC) in the

first year, with opportunity for further response in the following year.

- Northern Coalition supported the proposed TAC of 8,687t and called for reconsideration and feedback to industry's 2022 HDR proposal.
- NFA recommended to maintain the 20% ER with TAC 7,382t, noting it would accept a 15% ER (TAC 5,537t) that is aligned with ERs for Cautious Zone stocks. NFA noted that its support for lower ERs, however, should not be interpreted as foregoing higher ER in some future circumstance.
- Members pointed to consistently low catch rates in the Davis Strait East management unit, such that potential ERs for the EAZ are an overestimation that would not be realized.
- Members were critical of the current HDR that indicates changes in the TAC should generally not exceed 15% of the previous TAC, unless the stock is declining precipitously (a unidirectional rule for increasing TAC).
  - Members were concerned for the number of years needed to make progress towards/return to target exploitation levels as the biomass increases.
- NFA observed patterns of increasing and decreasing biomass over the time series that might suggest a biomass increase can be expected in the coming years.
  - DFO, echoed by Oceans North, noted risk in anticipating such a pattern will continue and risk of a delayed management response under this assumption.
- BFC pressed that any discussion of biomass decline to the lowest levels in the time series should be considered in the context of similarly low levels in 2017 or 2013, after which the biomass increased.
- Participants discussed the potential impacts of an increasing biomass of redfish (*Sebastes* sp.) on the *P. borealis* stock in terms of competition for food (plankton), and potential for future predation on shrimp by redfish.

***Striped shrimp (P. montagui):***

- CAPP proposed that the TAC for *P. montagui* include an 920t bycatch allowance for the offshore fleet in the Davis Strait management units, calculated as 49% of a recommended TAC of 1,920t. It was proposed that this allowance be static to promote year-to-year stability.
- BFC did not support the idea of a static allowance in the case where other interests would see their share fluctuate with overall TAC changes.
- NFA supported a 15% ER, upwards to 20% ER, as being appropriate for a Healthy Zone stock.

**Western Assessment Zone**

***Northern shrimp (P. borealis):***

- QC supported a potential ER of 20% (TAC 4,788t).

***Striped shrimp (P. montagui):***

- No specific TAC levels were recommended.

### **Management Measures:**

- Makivik Corporation revisited a request to allow crossing between the management units of NK-E and NK-W in a single tow. This request stems from challenges in accessing large shrimp aggregations situated on the management line.
  - DFO reiterated the need to accurately report catches as per conditions of licence, and confirmed that the management unit line aligns with stock assessment boundaries.
  - DFO clarified that crossing between management units within the same assessment zone is currently permitted, where removals are attributed to the same overall TAC.
  - Makivik Corporation called for continued discussion towards a solution, with possibilities including a defined subset of quota for which crossing management unit lines can occur, or changing of the management unit lines to avoid this problem area.
- Members pointed to considerable delays in final TAC decisions and the implications of these delays in terms of limited time to harvest quotas. DFO and Board staff were encouraged to explore ways to minimize these delays and tighten decision timelines where possible.

### ***Access and Allocations:***

- Following a statement from the Northern Shrimp Research Foundation (NSRF) offered at NSAC on April 4, members inquired about a possible re-allocation of *P. borealis* quota in Shrimp Fishing Area 4 that is currently used to fund science survey work in SFA 4 and the EAZ, and facilitates survey work in the WAZ.
  - Makivik Corporation and NFA members stressed the importance of continued science information provided through the NSRF survey to inform management decisions.
  - Members clarified that WAZ survey work was funded from Nunavut and Nunavik fishing interests directly, rather than from SFA 4 quota.
  - NCC expressed concern for SFA 4 quota that effectively funds EAZ surveys.