

## APPENDIX 2 DRAFT NSAC Record of Discussion

**Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC)  
March 25, 2026.**

**Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Todd Williams, DFO Resource Management (RM), Ottawa, Chair, Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC), outlined the Agenda for the meeting.

- Members did not voice any comments or concerns on the Agenda items

**Science – Stock Updates**

Stock updates were provided for Northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) in the North and South Stock Assessment Regions (NSAR and SSAR) and Striped shrimp (*P. montagui*) in Shrimp Fishing Area (SFA) 4 and the Eastern and Western Assessment Zones (EAZ and WAZ).

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

Nicolas Le Corre, DFO Science, Newfoundland and Labrador Region, presented an overview of the survey coverage, environmental and ecosystem conditions, and survey biomass indices that provided the basis for the March 2026 *P. borealis* stock update.

- The stock status for the NSAR and SSAR is only updated during full assessments; it is not possible to estimate stock status during interim-year updates.
- Fishable Biomass (FB) and Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) survey indices, estimated using spatiotemporal models, are updated for use in the harvest decision rules that are being tested via Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE).
- Proportional breakdown of each assessment region's FB survey index into management areas is provided.
- The ocean climate in the NL Bioregion has shown decadal-scale cold and warm phases. The warm phase that started around 2020 continued in 2025.
- The biomass of key predatory fishes (Greenland Halibut, Atlantic Cod, and redfish) have increased in both assessment regions in the 2020s and remains high in 2025.
- Clearwater FNC requested the rationale for the warm water observed on the Labrador Shelf (3O), which is noteworthy because there are colder temperatures evident on the Eastern Scotian Shelf.
  - DFO Science suggested that it may be due to increased mixing of warm water from deeper off the ocean shelf.
- Ocean Choice International (OCI) indicated that warmer bottom ocean temperatures are occurring in other nearby areas (3N) and affecting other fisheries (i.e., yellowtail).
- Nunavut Fisheries Association (NFA) raised that comparing pre- (recent past) and post-collapse (current) biomass in the system is not a fair comparison; it is currently a shellfish dominant regime and it doesn't make sense to compare this to a groundfish dominated regime.
- Northern Coalition (NC) asked if the ecosystem is stabilizing at pre-collapse levels and if pre-collapse is referring to the early 1980s timeframe?
  - DFO Science indicated that pre-collapse refers to pre-1990s and there is uncertainty if the system will return to pre-collapse levels because of warming waters, etc.
- OCI noted that a more groundfish dominant ecosystem is returning, yet shrimp SSB and FB is increasing – what could be a rationale for this?

- DFO Science indicated that it is difficult to decipher the effect of predation – there are multiple aspects at play.
  - Potential predator-prey index is reported and this doesn't mean that predators are present in the same location as the shrimp.
  - There's an abundance of small redfish in the North and it is challenging to determine how much shrimp they are consuming.
  - Depends on fishing pressure.
- The Canadian Association of Prawn Producers (CAPP) noted that the biomass of shrimp in the deeper strata does not appear to be included in the ecosystem survey.
  - DFO Science responded that the survey covers 100m to 750m depth.

#### NSAR Indices and Trends

- The stock status was not updated in March 2026. The stock was estimated to be in the Healthy Zone when last fully assessed in March 2025.
- The SSB survey index in 2025 (150,000 t) increased from 2024 (142,900 t), and remains above the time-series average.
- The FB survey index in 2025 (231,000 t) increased from 2024 (186,300 t), but remains below the time-series average.
- In the context of the overall trajectory of the stock, these interannual changes in the indices are consistent with the stock biomass remaining near their respective time-series averages.

#### SSAR Indices and Trends

- The stock status was not updated in March 2026. The stock was estimated to be in the Healthy Zone when last fully assessed in March 2025.
- The SSB survey index in 2025 (73,400 t) increased from 2024 (55,500 t), but remains below the time-series average and is around the lowest level in the survey time series.
- The FB survey index in 2025 (114,500 t) increased from 2024 (90,900 t), but remains below the time-series average and is around the lowest level in the survey time series.
- In the context of the overall trajectory of the stock, these interannual changes in the indices are consistent with the stock biomass remaining near their respective time-series low levels.

#### FB Spatial Distribution

- The spatial distribution (proportion) of the FB survey index within each stock assessment region was provided to inform the relative distribution of the stock assessment region harvest level into the management areas (i.e., the SFAs).
- CAPP, NFA, and OCI requested clarification on the methodology used to calculate the FB proportions and for DFO to provide calculations (including amounts) of FB in each management area under the old methodology (OGMAP and STRAP) and the new methodology (spatiotemporal modeling) dating back to 2016.
  - DFO Science indicated that the entire survey timeseries data (1996-2025) was input into the spatio-temporal model to calculate the FB and proportions over the entire survey timeseries, but only the most recent years were shown. The FB proportions were requested by DFO RM.
  - DFO RM indicated that tables illustrating these calculations will be provided.

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

Samantha Fulton, DFO Science, Arctic Region, presented and an overview of the survey coverage and survey biomass indices that provided the basis for the March 2026 *P. montagui* stock update.

#### SFA 4

- Stock status is in the Healthy Zone.

- SSB index increased by 20% (to 30,000 t) from 2024.
- FB index increased by 19% (to 33,900 t) from 2024.

### EAZ

- Stock status is in the Critical Zone.
- SSB decreased by 77% (to 3,045 t) from 2024.
- FB decreased by 79% (to 3,298 t) from 2024.

### WAZ

- Stock status is in the Healthy Zone.
- SSB decreased by 16% (to 55,465 t) from 2024.
- FB index increased by 14% (to 82,646 t) from 2024.

### *Discussions on TAC and Management Measures*

- NC remarked that the increase in the WAZ biomass is orders of magnitude higher than the biomass in EAZ, and these stock areas are likely not truly discrete; we are likely observing the biomass distribution at the moment it is surveyed, and the combined stock status as a whole may be relatively unchanged.
  - Noted that the relative shifts in stock biomass pose a challenge to developing management measures for these management areas and there was interest expressed in previous years to examine the stock in more holistic way.
  - From a science perspective, how significant should the EAZ stock assessment findings be as we approach management of the resource?
  - DFO Science responded that this year's survey catches of striped shrimp near Resolution Island were much lower relative to adjacent areas. Survey maps show that a concentration of biomass has moved from the EAZ to just over the WAZ management line.
  - Further, the SSB in EAZ is a relatively smaller value, so drops in percentage appear much worse than they actually are in absolute terms (tonnage amounts).
  - A one-year biomass decrease in the EAZ may not be of high concern from a science perspective in context of increases in adjacent regions, but is something to keep an eye on.
- NFA noted that there are several decreases in biomass followed by increases evident in the EAZ time series.
- NRL raised that the dividing line between EAZ and WAZ has been problematic for many years. The changes in stock status are largely driven by migrations in distribution between EAZ and WAZ which yield mathematical effects (artifacts) due to the dividing line.
  - Requested that a Working Group be struck to address this issue.

### **2026-27 Total Allowable Catches (TACs)**

DFO RM presented TAC recommendation options for *P. borealis* and *P. montagui*.

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

TAC recommendations for the Striped shrimp stocks followed application of the 2-step Harvest Decision Rule (HDR) accepted by NSAC in previous years. TAC discussions for the WAZ were reserved for the Indigenous meeting.

### SFA 4

- Applying the 2-step = 5,828t (ER of 17.2%).
- Maintaining the 2025 = 4,033t (ER of 11.9%).
- CAPP supported maintaining the TAC at 4,033 t. No objections were raised.

EAZ

- A 10% exploitation rate (ER), as per following the HDRs, results in a TAC of 330t.
- NRL, NC, and CAPP noted that 330 t would pose challenges to the directed *P. borealis* stock in the EAZ and re-iterated their request for a Working Group to examine the EAZ-WAZ management area border.
  - There was general agreement among NSAC members that 330 t is not sufficient for cover *P. montagui* bycatch in the *P. borealis* fishery.
- CAPP proposed applying an adaptation of the 2-step function of the HDR, resulting in a TAC of 1,578t.
  - No objections by industry were raised. The Chair noted the preference for a variation in the application of the HDR for a TAC of 1,578t.
- DFO Science clarified that a 20% maximum ER would not be a major concern for them at this time, however, they could not support removals beyond this level.
  - The Precautionary Approach framework should be used in managing the stocks, and as such, registering the adjustments as an overallocation may be preferable in this regard (as opposed to the overallocation integrated within the TAC).
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**Northern shrimp (*P. borealis*)**

TAC recommendations for Northern shrimp were based on MSE-tested HDRs, applying a 4-year moving average of the FB spatial distribution, and a catch utilization adjustment.

NSAR Harvest Level

- Stock status was in the Healthy Zone when last fully assessed (March 2025).
- Harvest levels for variations of the shortlisted 2-Step HDRs with an ER of 20% and 17% were presented.
- NSAC members (NC, OCI, CAPP) supported retaining NSAC's previous recommendation (from January 20, 2026 meeting) for the HDR with a 20% ER, a maximum harvest level change of 25%, and a 4-year phase-in period (Max25\_4-year\_20%).
- Max25\_4-year\_20% results in a NSAR harvest level of 41,760 t.

SSAR Harvest Level

- Stock status was in the Healthy Zone when last fully assessed (March 2025).
- Harvest levels for variations of the shortlisted 2-Step HDRs with an ER of 10%, 12.5%, and 15% were presented.
- NSAC members (FFAW, CAPP) supported retaining NSAC's previous recommendation (from January 20, 2026 meeting) for the HDR with a 15% ER and a maximum harvest level change of 25% (Max25\_15%).
- Max25\_15% results in a SSAR harvest level of 15,780 t.

Management Area TACs

TACs were presented with the various shortlisted HDRs for the NSAR and SSAR. TACs with the NSAC-recommended HDR for the NSAR and SSAR noted above were as follows:

- WAZ: 4-year average of biomass (19.3%) of the NSAR harvest level = 8,060t.
- EAZ: 4-year average of biomass (23.1%) of the NSAR harvest level = 9,636t.
- SFA 4: 4-year average of biomass (35.3%) of the NSAR harvest level = 14,752t.
- SFA 5-North: 4-year average of biomass (22.3%) of the NSAR harvest level = 9,302t.
- SFA 5-South: 4-year average of biomass (7.2%) of the SSAR harvest level = 1,132t.
- SFA 5 (North and South combined): 10,434t
- SFA 6: 4-year average of biomass (82.3%) of the SSAR harvest level = 12,991t.

- 3L: 4-year average of biomass (10.4%) of the SSAR harvest level = 1,641t; Canadian domestic TAC for SFA 7 = 1,367t .
- 3NO: 4-year average of biomass (0.1%) of the SSAR harvest level = 16t.

### Catch Utilization Adjustment

The industry proposal, tabled at the January 20, 2026 NSAC meeting, to add 5% of TAC to each management area in the NSAR was discussed.

- Since the January 20 meeting, views provided to the Department indicated limited benefits of the proposed 5% catch adjustment to Nunavut and Nunavik (NU and NK) entities. Land Claimants submitted a proposal for underutilized quota in the WAZ to benefit NU/NK entities in NU/NK-East and Davis Strait West (DSW), subject to co-management Board decisions.

### *Discussions on TAC and Management Measures*

- NC asked why the new survey data was not integrated into the TAC\_1 to TAC\_5 projections? When will it be?
  - DFO Science responded that this data was not included in the MSE diagnostic performance statistics because the full MSE will not be run again until it is reviewed (i.e., 2028). However, the survey data was included in updating the biomass indices and determining the NSAR and SSAR harvest levels.
- OCI questioned why additional HDRs were tested after the past NSAC meeting, suggesting that it was not worth expending capital to add this calculation given that the improvements in LRP are minimal yet would have a significant impact on economics.
  - DFO RM responded that RM wanted to see the full profile of options for risk assessment purposes.
- CAPP indicated that the tests with the additional ERs have not changed their recommendation, noting that the 2025-26 ERI would be 17.8% if that TAC was fully caught, and that we're on track to be within the range for ER this year.
- FFAW re-iterated that their previous HDR recommendation with 15% ER still stands. The 0.2% difference in pLRP is an improvement, but has significant implications for inshore fleet amounting to ~\$3 million in reduced TAC.
  - Questioned if the HDR numbers for 12.5% ER will be included in the advice to the Minister as an option?
  - DFO Science responded that they recognize the socio-economics implications and that the choice is a management decision, but recommended exploring additional HDRs with lower ERs from a conservation perspective because those lower ERs would be more closely aligned with Umsy values; 15% ERI is almost 2x Umsy numbers. Further, the LRP is much lower than in the past, presenting increased uncertainty with how the stock would respond should it enter the Critical Zone.
- CAPP suggested that with an HDR selected, SFA-specific TAC recommendations are simply arithmetic. Indicated that they are comfortable with the TACs, though their support is conditional on having a method of catching the full harvest level.
  - NC and NFA supported this argument.
- Regarding the catch utilization adjustment, CAPP indicated that it should be included in the TAC (i.e., SFA harvest level + utilization adjustment), rather than an over-allocation which may raise concerns from an MSC perspective.
  - The catch utilization adjustment could be viewed as a way to help the actual removals be more akin to what the model assumes was removed.
  - NFA questioned if this approach would have any impacts to MSE or the model?
  - DFO Science noted that the MSE assumes that 100% of the HDR amount is removed.
- St. Anthony Basin Resources Inc. requested clarification on why the catch utilization adjustment is only for the NSAR and not the SSAR?

- DFO RM responded that greater utilization is realized in the SSAR, but views regarding a proposal for the SSAR are welcomed.
- Clearwater FNC noted that SSAR underutilization would likely occur in the future once SFA 7 is re-opened.
- DFO Science indicated concerns that the catch utilization adjustment could result in increased localized fishing pressure and that this adjustment should be recorded separately from the TAC for tracking purposes.
- CAPP re-iterated that the industry proposal continues to be that each SFA in the NSAR receives a 5% increase to the TAC from the MSE HDR output, and that every quota holder within each NSAR SFA receives a 5% increase, which should also apply to Davis Straight West.
  - NFA supported including the 5% adjustment in the TAC, but recognized the need to document how the resulting TACs were determined.
  - DFO RM suggested that TAC can be articulated as inclusive of the HDR output and catch utilization adjustment.

## Other Updates

### Electronic Video Monitoring (EVM) and Shore-based Reporting

DFO provided an update on the EVM and shore based reporting initiatives.

- EVM in the offshore fleet, which is voluntary, cannot be used while fishing inside the Nunavut and Nunavik Settlement Area waters. Using EVM would be subject to Board decisions to be used in the future.
- Similarly, EVM and the shore-based reporting do not apply for offloading in Greenland.
- The shore-based program will have mandatory and voluntary components:
  - Dockside carton counting (and weighing for industrial shrimp only) by independent service providers will be mandatory.
  - Package inspection to determine the “net frozen weight” of all product types will also be mandatory.
  - Further inspection to determine the net drained (or thawed) weight is optional.
- There will be a 1-year pilot phase for the shore-based program and the fleet will be given a 60-day notice prior to this program coming into effect.
- NRL supported that some aspects of the shore-based component are voluntary.
  - Clarified that industrial shrimp, which is a raw material sold as a raw material and at actual weight, wouldn't require sampling.
  - Noted that it is important that the requirement to provide a complete and accurate hail on a daily basis remains the licence conditions.
- NC expressed concern at the pace that the initiative is being implemented, given and outstanding questions and concerns.
  - Operational considerations as to how this is going to work and additional costs that may be incurred. Will there be incremental effort and time constraints?
  - Next steps are unclear – is further dialog with inspection companies planned?
  - Supports EVM, as long as there's no intent to make it mandatory.
  - Unclear when the specific implementation date will be. Does the term "pilot" extend to EVM? Requested that draft protocols and forms be distributed to NSAC so members can have opportunity to review.
- The Chair indicated that the pilot is for the shore based component, to indicate that there could be changes to the sampling requirements etc., and that “pilot” does not imply mandatory EVM in the future.
  - Further, the Chair committed to:
  - Focus on the implementation questions and ground truthing operational requirements with the service providers.

- Send protocol documents to NSAC members for their review, and outline next steps in terms of engagement with service providers. Provide 60 days notice to NSAC once operational elements are developed.

### Licence Conditions

DFO provided an update on the key changes in the 2026 conditions of licence.

- Added a requirement for licence holders with access to multiple quota types in Davis Straight West to record the allocation type being fished in the Comments section of the logbook.
- Added a requirement to report catches in SFA 5 to SFA 5 North or SFA 5 South in the Comments section of the logbook.
- Added requirement to report tows in SFA 5 that cross the line between SFA 5 North and SFA 5 South in the Comments section of the logbook.
- Added a new Schedule which outlines technical specification and conditions about the functioning and operation of the EVM system, noting that more specific requirements would be in the EVM protocol, which is being finalized and would be distributed.
- Added a new Schedule requiring those using EVM to hail out.

### SFA 7

DFO provided an update on the potential re-opening of SFA 7.

- Regarding the 9.4% allocation to Prince Edward Island Atlantic Shrimp Company (PEIASC), the Minister was considering the potential for using that allocation for Section 10 purposes, and had requested PEIASC to provide information with respect to that.
- PEIASC chose not to submit an application, nor provide additional information related to the projects which had been funded through their allocation over the years, which DFO had offered to share with the NSAC memberships.
- The Minister is further contemplating what she would like to do with their allocation.
- The TAC for SFA 7 will be established along with SFAs 4-6, informed by the MSE-tested HDR. However, any decision to re-open SFA 7, and associated TAC, will be announced together with allocation decisions.
- The PEIASC clarified the position of the PEIASC and PEI Government on this matter.
  - While their allocation supported science research, it was never tied to scientific research, there have been all sorts of other projects supported over the years.
  - The PEIASC could mount a credible proposal, but they do believe their access to Northern shrimp in SFA 7 should not be subject to NSAC members support. It should be guaranteed by the Government of Canada, as re-iterated by PEI Minister Bell and Minister Hudson, who personally met with Minister Thompson.
  - PEIASC's and PEI Government's position is that if there is an allocation in SFA 7, PEI should continue to receive their 9.4% allocation.
  - Indicated they would be happy to share the PEIASC letter with the committee.

### Section 10 for NSRF in SFA 4

- The Minister decided to allocate 1,500t for 2026-27 from the SFA 4 TAC, and that, from now on, the 1,500t will be distributed proportionately to all allocation holders in SFA 4 according to the sharing key.

### Conservation and Protection (C&P)

- C&P provided an update on enforcement activities over the past year.

### Safety at Sea

- Transport Canada presented information pertaining to safety at sea.

### **Participants**

Sherry Glynn – Fish Food Allied Workers Union (FFAW)

Julian Ryan – 3K North, FFAW  
 Catherine Boyd, Dany Jabbour, and Jim Gibbons – Clearwater Seafoods  
 Bruce Chapman – Canadian Association of Prawn Producers  
 Carey Bonnell – Ocean Choice International  
 Michelle Moffat – MV Osprey  
 Brian McNamara, Brent McNamara, and Mark Quinlan – Newfoundland Resources Ltd.  
 Tony Wright – Makivvik Corporation  
 Alastair O’Reilly – Northern Coalition  
 Brynne Divine – Oceans North  
 Patrick Martin and Jerry Ward – Qikiqtaaluk Corporation / Qikiqtaaluk Fisheries Corporation  
 Derek Butler – Nunavut Fisheries Association  
 Christopher Mitchelmore – St. Anthony Basin Resources Inc.  
 Ron Johnson – Torngat Fish Producers Co-operative Society Ltd.  
 Emma-Rose Murphy – Nunatsiavut Government  
 Paul Loder and Peter Adams – Baffin Fisheries Cooperative  
 Ann-Julie Cote – Ministère de l’Agriculture, des Pêcheries et le l’Alimentation du Québec  
 Shawn Frank – Pikalujak Fisheries  
 Dave MacEwan – Government of Prince Edward Island  
 Lewis Creed – Prince Edward Island Atlantic Shrimp Company  
 Cyril Boudreau – Government of Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture  
 Leigh Gustafson – Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB)  
 Keith Coady – Arctic Fishery Alliance  
 Ben Davis – Torngat Wildlife Plants and Fisheries Secretariat

Todd Williams – DFO Resource Management (RM) National Capital Region (NCR), Chair  
 Leigh Edgar – DFO RM NCR  
 Liliya Baranova – DFO RM NCR  
 Dirk Algera – DFO RM NCR  
 Brian Lester – DFO RM NCR  
 Nicholas Duprey – DFO Science NCR  
 Nicolas Rolland – DFO Science NCR  
 Nicolas Le Corre – DFO Science NL Region  
 Krista Baker – DFO Science NL Region  
 William Coffey – DFO Science NL Region  
 Martin Henri – DFO RM NL Region  
 Wojciech Walkusz – DFO Science Arctic Region  
 Samantha Fulton – DFO Science Arctic Region  
 Matt Martens – DFO FM Arctic Region  
 Sandra Moore – DFO FM Arctic Region  
 Danielle Roy – DFO RM Gulf Region  
 Andrew Humber – DFO Conservation and Protection NL Region  
 Paul Glavine – Transport Canada

## Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee - Indigenous Meeting – March 26, 2026

A virtual meeting of the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC) took place on March 25, 2026. The Department held a virtual post-meeting with Indigenous participants on March 26, 2026, which included representatives from:

- Nunavut Fisheries Association (NFA)
- Torngat Fish Producers Co-Op
- Qikiqtaaluk Corporation (QC) / Qikiqtaaluk Fisheries Corporation (QFC)
- Northern Coalition (NC)
- Canadian Association of Prawn Producers (CAPP)
- NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC)
- Ueushuk Fisheries
- Torngat Joint Fisheries Board
- Nunatsiavut Government (NG)
- Baffin Fisheries Coalition (BFC)
- Makivik Corporation
- Newfoundland Resources Ltd (NRL)

The perspectives on science and management of *P. borealis* and *P. montagui* in the EAZ and WAZ in this document encompass views expressed at the Indigenous meeting; views at the broader NSAC meeting on March 25, 2026 are provided in a separate document.

### Science – Stock Updates

DFO Science recapped the *P. borealis* and *P. montagui* stock updates presented at the NSAC main table.

- NFA asked if biomass trends for *P. montagui* in WAZ and EAZ could be assessed and reported similarly to SFA 4 *P. montagui* (i.e., a model-based assessment method)?
- DFO Science indicated that it is not possible to parse out the trends for *P. montagui* in WAZ and EAZ because they are encompassed within SFA 4, which uses the entire region to determine the spawning stock biomass trends.
  - The most effective way to address this would be to emulate what has been done for Northern shrimp – treat it as one biological stock.

### 2026-27 Total Allowable Catches (TACs)

DFO RM presented TAC recommendation options for *P. borealis* in the EAZ and WAZ, and for *P. montagui* in SFA 4, EAZ, and WAZ.

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

TAC recommendations for the Striped shrimp stocks followed application of the 2-step Harvest Decision Rule (HDR) accepted by NSAC.

#### EAZ

- Stock status is in the Critical Zone.
- A 10% exploitation rate (ER), as per following the HDRs, results in a TAC of 330t.
- There was recognition of the movement of the stock across the EAZ and WAZ dividing line, which creates uncertainty and potential for fluctuations in the stock dynamics.
- NSAC recommended applying a modified 2-step HDR = 1,578t (ER of 47.8%) instead.
- Indigenous meeting participants supported the NSAC recommendation to apply the modified 2-step HDR, resulting in a TAC of 1,578t.

#### SFA 4

- Stock status is in the Healthy Zone.
- Applying the 2-step HDR = 5,828t (ER of 17.2%).

- Maintaining the 2025 TAC = 4,033t (ER of 11.9%) (recommended at NSAC).
- No objections were raised against the NSAC recommendation.

### WAZ

- Stock status is in the Healthy Zone.
- Applying the 2-step HDR = 15,743t (ER of 19.0%)
- QC/QFC, Makivvik, NFA, BFC, and NC indicated their support for an ER of 20% or higher given the current Healthy status and the stock's past biomass trends that illustrate the stock is able to easily tolerate a 20%+ ER with no conservation risks.
  - Should take advantage of the stock being in the Healthy Zone while the opportunity exists.
- NRL raised that larger, older shrimp are increasingly accounting for more of the catches, which is very desirable from a marketing perspective.
  - It is possible that by setting conservative TACs, we're seeing the sizes of shrimp increase because they are surviving longer.
  - To maximize sustaining catching older, larger shrimp, it would be advantageous to know what the mortality-at-age rates are.
  - NC noted that the science update supports NRL's conclusions: fishable biomass has increased while spawning stock biomass has decreased, suggesting that there's more in the fishable biomass reaching the end of the life cycle.

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

TAC recommendations for Northern shrimp in the EAZ and WAZ were consistent with the approach presented at NSAC.

### EAZ

- Stock status was in the Healthy Zone when last fully assessed (March 2025).
- NSAC recommended applying the MSE-tested HDR selected for the NSAR and the 4-year average of biomass in EAZ = 9,636t .
- No objections were raised against the NSAC recommendation.

### WAZ

- Stock status was in the Healthy Zone when last fully assessed (March 2025).
- NSAC recommended applying the MSE-tested HDR for the NSAR and the 4-year average of biomass in WAZ = 8,060t.
- No objections were raised against the NSAC recommendation.

## **Management Measures**

### Catch Utilization Adjustment Proposals

- In response to the catch utilization adjustment proposed by CAPP at NSAC on January 20, Nunavut (NU) and Nunavik (NK) entities (Makivvik/NRL and NFA) requested an alternative catch utilization proposal for NU/NK to allow an additional 800t to be fished in EAZ (NU/NK E and DSW). This alternative proposal from NU/NK was discussed.
  - Department suggested that this 800t could be split by adding 200t to NU/NK-E and 600t to NU/NK-DSW, to be shared 50/50 between NU and NK.
- DFO Science requested clarification on when in the season the adjustment would be applied and whether the amount of removals already registered would be considered before the adjustment is applied.
  - DFO RM indicated that the proposed adjustments would be considered as part of the TAC for each management area, applied at the beginning of the season.
  - NFA raised that the NU/NK proposal would be a one-year trial, with potential adjustments made the following year.
- CAPP expressed support for the flexibilities and the NU/NK proposal in principle, but concern with allowing additional quota to be fished in EAZ without any transfer of the quota out of the WAZ, essentially resulting in overallocation in the EAZ.
- DFO Science asked whether the increased QC/QFC fishing capacity would mean that the TACs in WAZ

and EAZ will be become more fully utilized, and what that may mean regarding these catch utilization proposals.

- NRL noted that even with the increased fishing capacity, the risk of fully utilizing the catch in these areas is very low.
- CAPP raised that the *P. borealis* and *P. montagui* biomass distributions may be shifting between EAZ and WAZ such that the decrease/increase in biomass in one area could be resulting in a corresponding decrease/increase in the other, highlighting the importance of accounting for adjustments between the two areas.
- DFO RM noted for awareness that applying the increases equally within the settlement areas would change the traditionally held 80:20 NU-NK sharing arrangement to 73:27.
  - NRL acknowledged that the minor change to 73:27 sharing was known among NU and NK interests when developing their catch utilization proposal.
- NFA raised that the NU/NK proposal is conceptually similar to the 5% proposal discussed at the NSAC table. The key difference is the amount of quota made available and potentially caught in the EAZ and WAZ.
- CAPP highlighted that allowing quota from one management area to be fished in another (i.e., WAZ quota fished in EAZ) conceptually departs from the 5% proposal and how the management of the fishery has operated to date, and could be considered precedential. Would others be allowed the flexibility to fish quota from one area in another area? Is the NU/NK proposal to be treated as an exception (i.e., one-off)?
  - DFO RM indicated the NU/NK proposal is similar in objective to the CAPP proposal.
  - Striving to provide flexibility without changing allocation keys, sharing arrangements, or opening up new access for entities that didn't have access previously.
- CAPP expressed that ad hoc operationalization and precedent-setting potential of the NU/NK proposal should be avoided. Further, a rationale for the amount in the NU/NK should be developed, so it is not arbitrarily selected. A unifying proposal that meets the flexibility objectives and melds consistency in the 5% and NU/NK proposals regarding rationale and approach should be developed.
  - NFA noted that the 5% proposal is also based on allowing uncaught quota in one area to be fished in another (i.e., Davis Strait East quota to be caught in SFA 4 and SFA 5).
  - NRL noted that the two proposals are the same in concept and complementary in terms of amounts. However, there needs to be consideration regarding the source of the underutilization and adjustments should equally benefit those entities from where it is occurring. To the extent it is sourced from land claims areas, land claimants should benefit accordingly.
- BFC indicated that land claim agreements are a critical component towards evaluating the catch adjustment proposals, and supported NRL's position regarding land claims beneficiaries.
  - The desire for flexibility stems from minimizing environmental (sea ice affecting northern companies to a greater extent) and operational (fleet availability) constraints.
  - Seeking flexibility not to be able to catch more quota necessarily, rather to be able to catch quota in more appropriate areas depending upon the time of year.
- CAPP noted that the 800t adjustment amounts to ~10% of the potential WAZ TAC, which is twice the percentage increase of the 5% proposal, and raises potential equitability and conservation concerns. Further, the EAZ contains commercial and land claims areas, so adjustment decisions in this area affects all harvesters.
  - Reiterated that limits should be set on adjustment amounts for the NU/NK proposal.
  - BFC indicated that the 5% proposal results in similar tonnage amounts being allocated to industry stakeholders in SFA 4 and 5-North relative to the NU/NK proposal.
- NC raised that the stocks are not biologically divided, this is only for management purposes to retain the existing allocation structures. In situations where there is no risk to the resource, maximum flexibility should be implemented to improve operational efficiencies without prejudice to the risk to people's respective shares.
- DFO Science noted concerns with both the 5% proposal and NU/NK proposal regarding uncertainty with resultant concentration of effort and increased fishing pressure in the NSAR management areas, especially in light of the other proposed flexibilities (e.g. carry forward) that may be operationalized, which will also result in increased pressure.
- The Chair noted the the committee's agreement on the desire to have a catch utilization adjustment included in the TAC. The Department will follow up in the coming days with further information and

invite participants to submit views and potential alternative proposals that reconcile the two existing proposals.

### **Other Updates**

#### Nunavut Fisheries Regulations (NFRs)

DFO provided an update on the NFRs, which are being co-developed with Indigenous partners.

- The Atlantic Fishery Regulations will no longer apply within the Nunavut Settlement Area and Nunavik Marine Region; key provisions will be “ported over” to avoid disruption. No anticipated changes to commercial shrimp fishing or licensing; existing licenses will continue to be valid.
- QC/QCF sought confirmation that NFRS would not affect existing commercial operations outside Nunavut (e.g., Ungava Bay) and whether communal fish plans could be used outside settlement areas.
- DFO clarified that communal plans apply only within settlement areas and that commercial fishing outside of settlement areas remains unchanged.

#### Electronic Video Monitoring (EVM) and Shore-based Reporting

DFO provided an update on the EVM and shore based reporting initiatives.

- EVM in the offshore fleet, which is voluntary, cannot be used while fishing inside the Nunavut and Nunavik Settlement Area waters. Using EVM would be subject to Board decisions to be used in the future.
- Similarly, EVM and the shore-based reporting do not apply for offloading in Greenland.
- The shore-based program will have mandatory and voluntary components:
  - Dockside carton counting (and weighing for industrial shrimp only) by independent service providers will be mandatory.
  - Package inspection to determine the “net frozen weight” of all product types will also be mandatory.
  - Further inspection to determine the net drained (or thawed) weight is optional.
- There will be a 1-year pilot phase for the shore-based program and the fleet will be given a 60-day notice prior to this program coming into effect.
- NRL noted that the term service providers need to be expanded beyond what been used in recent years to include offloading companies, independent contractors.

#### Licence Conditions

DFO provided an update on the key changes in the 2026 conditions of licence.

- Added a requirement for licence holders with access to multiple quota types in Davis Strait West to record the allocation type being fished in the Comments section of the logbook.
- Added a requirement to report catches in SFA 5 to SFA 5 North or SFA 5 South in the Comments section of the logbook.
- Added requirement to report tows in SFA 5 that cross the line between SFA 5 North and SFA 5 South in the Comments section of the logbook.
- Added a new Schedule which outlines technical specification and conditions about the functioning and operation of the EVM system, noting that more specific requirements would be in the EVM protocol, which is being finalized and would be distributed.
- Added a new Schedule requiring those using EVM to hail out.

#### SFA 7

DFO provided an update on the potential re-opening of SFA 7.

- Regarding the 9.4% allocation to Prince Edward Island Atlantic Shrimp Company (PEIASC), the Minister was considering the potential for using that allocation for Section 10 purposes, and had requested PEIASC to provide information with respect to that.
- PEIASC chose not to submit an application, nor provide additional information related to the projects which had been funded through their allocation over the years, which DFO had offered to share with the NSAC memberships.
- The Minister is further contemplating what she would like to do with their allocation.
- The TAC decision for SFA 7 will align with SFAs 4-6, however, the decision to re-open SFA 7 will align with allocation decisions.

#### Section 10 for NSRF in SFA 4

- The Minister decided to allocate 1,500t for 2026-27 from the SFA 4 TAC, and that, from now on, the 1,500t will be distributed proportionately to all allocation holders in SFA 4 according to the sharing key.