

We also address new quota flexibility provisions contained in the DFO submission and discussed previously at NSAC and NSAC indigenous, as well as subsequent DFO-industry meetings.

We thank you for the opportunity to make this submission, and thank you in advance for your consideration of it. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,



Derek Butler, Executive Director
Nunavut Fisheries Association



Andy Moorhouse, Vice-President
Economic Development Department, Makivvik

2026/27 Submission of the Nunavut Fisheries Association and Makivvik

Re: Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board Written Public Hearing to Consider the 2026–27 Total Allowable Catch Levels for Northern and Striped Shrimp

Introduction

The following is the submission of the Nunavut Fisheries Association (NFA) and Makivik Corporation (Makivvik), representing the respective allocation holders for Northern and Striped shrimp under consideration by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) and Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board (NMRWB). The submission is in response to the joint notice of May 1, 2026 for written submissions for the joint public hearing of the two Boards in respect of this matter.

Background

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has provided the Boards with the requisite materials including the Proposal, science summaries and a Summary of Stakeholder Views from the 2026 North Shrimp Advisory Committee Meetings of March 25 and 26th, 2025, for the 2026/27 Northern (*Pandalus borealis*) and Striped (*P. montagui*) shrimp fisheries in the WAZ and EAZ. As the boards will know, *Pandalus borealis* is assessed under the new model while *montagui* continues to be assessed as per prior years. Additional details on stock status for the four stocks under consideration in this written response are provided in the DFO submission referenced above, which is available to the parties.

We now address the specific industry recommendations and rationale for WAZ and EAZ for both *borealis* and *montagui* respectively. The submission closes with recommendations on distribution or sharing within the management units.

Western Assessment Zone (WAZ) - *borealis* and *montagui*

For ***P. borealis***, industry supports the TAC of 8,060 mt as contained in the DFO proposal and the consensus position at NSAC, and as detailed in the DFO proposal.

Discussion on quota flexibility to address underutilization across the Northern Shrimp Assessment Region (NSAR) took place at and post-NSAC. As proposed in the DFO submission a proposal to increase all SFAs by 5% to address this matter has been generally agreed, but Nunavut and Nunavik industry said a different consideration was required for shrimp fishery in the respective land claims areas. We would also underscore that the entire notion of underutilization in the NSAR is almost entirely a function of uncaught quotas and allocations held by NU and NK industry. More specifically, industry projects that

based on historic fishing pattern up to 85% of the unfished quota will be NU and NK quotas. As DFO itself noted in their submission, there is “close to full utilization in SFA 4 and 5.” Again, the underutilization is driven by WAZ and EAZ borealis held by NU and NK. Hence, NU and NK industry proposed that an 800 mt amount be made available from the WAZ to be caught in the eastern portions of EAZ. Our conviction remains that the 5% figure is as much lacking a clear and bounded rationale as the 800 mt number for WAZ alone, which is a low proportion of the uncaught NU and NK quotas.

The 5% catch utilization adjustments are represented in the table at the end of this submission, together with the initial TAC and TAC sharing recommendations.

Additionally, we would point out that while Fisheries and Oceans Canada raises concerns regarding shrimp nursery habitat and localized fishing pressure around Resolution Island, its own analysis acknowledges the absence of formal science in this regard. When shrimp spatial variability and mobility are added to the considerations, arguments against NU/NK’s position are further weakened. The case for allocation approaches based on SFA proximity and aligned with Inuit harvesting realities remains strong.

At this point however, after several attempts by NU-NK industry to obtain DFO concurrence with our position, we reluctantly propose accepting the DFO proposal for 2026/27 subject to confirmation that a meeting will be held within the next year between DFO and NU/NK industry to discuss this matter further. It is our hope to resolve this question more satisfactorily in the interests of those who have the lion’s share of the uncaught quotas in the NSAR.

For **P. montagui**, industry supports a TAC of 19,008 mt. This represents an increase from last year’s TAC, and a potential maximum exploitation rate of 23%. We would underscore that the Fishable Biomass (FB) is up 7.7% while Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) is up 65.3%. The stock is in the healthy zone with a 98% probability.

In its July 30, 2025 joint letter to the federal Fisheries Minister last year, the Boards recommended “an exploitation rate of 20.6% [for p. montagui for 2025/26]. This total allowable catch matches the recommendation by industry stakeholders.” It is therefore clear we can be in the realm of something close to 21%. In 2024/25, a year earlier, a 23.4% ER was proposed for WAZ borealis in the DFO Submission for the joint-Boards hearing. In 2021, a potential ER of 23.3% was acceptable, as per the CSAS SAR 2021/14 (p. 3), at a then-lower fishable biomass (FB) of 50,911 mt.

This year, our request on an increasing biomass - the 2nd highest in the time series - is for slightly more. As with EAZ montagui, we are recommending “an adaption of the 2-step function of the HDR”; whereas the 2-step HDR would generate a much lower TAC for EAZ montagui, the parties and DFO are comfortable recommending this adaptation resulting in a proposed TAC of 1,578 mt, more than what the simple rule would provide. Likewise for p. montagui in the WAZ, we are recommending an adaptation of the HDR.

As confirmed in the DFO submission, the available science advice indicates that the WAZ striped shrimp stock remains well into the Healthy Zone of the Precautionary Approach framework and was estimated in 2025 to be above the Upper Stock Reference (USR) with 98% probability, with the long-term geometric mean also well above the USR and at the second highest level in the time series. A potential ER of 23% for 2026, when well in the healthy zone, is a logical and acceptable management choice in the healthy zone. This is in line with the 23.3% potential ER of 2021, according to the CSAS SAR 2021/14 (p. 3), at a then lower fishable biomass (FB) of 50,911 mt. Again, the FB now sits at the second-highest in the time series at 82,646 mt, an increase of 162% from that level.

We would also note that history will show that industry has taken an historically conservative approach with WAZ montagui TACs, until we had fished the quota over more years, and developed both the markets and the capacity to harvest (with 5 dedicated vessels). With surveys now taking place annually since 2013 and stock well into the Healthy zone over this period, it is time to maximize ER in this zone. It is also worth noting that this stock is becoming more dominated by older year classes and harvesting in a timely manner is a proper management consideration.

Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ) - borealis and montagui

For **P. borealis**, industry supports the DFO and NSAC consensus positions for a 2026/27 TAC of 9,636 mt, and as detailed in the DFO proposal.

For **P. montagui**, NK/NU industry support the DFO and NSAC consensus position again, that is, a recommended TAC of 1,587 mt. As noted above, this stock is down considerably, and this TAC is derived from an adaptation of the 2-step HDR.

Bridging

Nunavut and Nunavik industry also request that DFO conclude industry discussions and present to the Management Boards in 2026 an updated bridging protocol proposal that reflects the same conservation components as are in place in other management areas.

We next turn to joint recommendations of the NU/NK industry on how the above recommended TAC levels should be distributed.

Distribution/Sharing of Recommended NU/NK Industry TACs

The following paragraphs present the position of the Nunavut and Nunavik industry on the sharing of the recommended TACs outlined above for 2026/27. Both industry groups commit to holding further discussions on future sharing arrangements in these areas, in collaboration with their respective land claims organizations.

Western Assessment Zone Sharing

We first turn our considerations to the Western Assessment Zone. The WAZ is located fully within the Nunavut (NU) and Nunavik (NK) settlement areas where access is limited to the

industry players. Since the WAZ fishery started, there has been agreement to share WAZ TACs between NU and NK on a 50/50 basis for both borealis and montagui. Industry supports a continuation of this practice. Based on the above recommended 8,060 mt borealis and 19,008 mt montagui TAC recommendations for 2026/27, this would result in the following sharing recommendations:

- WAZ Borealis – **4,030 mt each** for NU and NK
- WAZ Montagui – **9,504 mt each** for NU and NK.

Eastern Assessment Zone Sharing

In the Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ) stocks are subdivided into three areas, being Davis Strait West and East (DSW and DSE respectively) and Nunavut and Nunavik East (NU-E and NK-E respectively).

EAZ Borealis

Our submission makes the following sharing recommendations for the recommended TAC of 9,636 mt for EAZ borealis. These recommendations are in the same proportions as those accepted and implemented in recent years.

- NU – 1,937 mt in DSW, 1,455 mt in DSE, and 597 mt in NU/NKE, for a total of 3,989 mt;
- NK – 212 mt in DSW, 145 mt in NU/NKE, for a total of 357 mt; and
- Offshore – 4,384 mt in DSW, 906 mt in DSE, for a total of 5,290 mt.

EAZ Montagui

As laid out in the DFO Submission to the Boards, montagui in the EAZ is in decline. DFO and industry have nonetheless proposed a total quota of 1,578 mt. NFA and Makkivik propose that this be distributed to NU/NK based on the existing 70/30 split. Our sharing recommendation based on the proposed 1,578 mt TAC recommendation is as follows, including a share to DSW/DSE offshore for bycatch, in same proportions as 2025/26. It is to be noted that the DFO submission references the offshore as saying that 920 is required to enable them to prosecute their p. borealis allocations. All catches combined have not reached these levels in recent years. This '920 mt' allocation averaged 485 mt when the total quota was lower. We maintain their 2025/26 percentage share of 37.3% in our proposal here:

- NU/NK E (Inuit land claim beneficiaries) – 693 mt NU, 297mt NK, as per the long-standing sharing agreement in place between NU and NK; and
- DSW/DSE (offshore) – 588 mt

Additional Management Measures re Interim Allocations

Industry also concurs with the recommendation contained in the DFO proposal, as per discussions and agreement in the NSAC indigenous stakeholders meeting in relation to Interim Allocations. More specifically, we support the recommendation “to establish the maximum allowable interims to be released at an initial 75% of the previous year’s quota (up from the previously approved level of 50%), for the following reasons:

Operational Efficiency and Planning

Allowing a 75% interim quota enables industry to plan and initiate their operations more effectively. This higher interim allocation reduces uncertainty and facilitates better logistical arrangements. Efficient planning contributes to safer and more productive fishing activities.

Alignment with Conservation Objectives

The proposed increase to 75% remains within a precautionary framework, ensuring that the total allowable catch (TAC) is not exceeded. Interim quotas are adjusted based on scientific assessments and monitoring data. Therefore, increasing the interim quota does not compromise conservation goals but rather supports sustainable fishing practices by allowing better distribution of fishing effort throughout the season.

Responsive Management and Industry Collaboration

The fishing industry has expressed support for this change, highlighting the need for more responsive and adaptive management practices. By considering industry input and adjusting interim quotas accordingly, management authorities demonstrate a commitment to collaborative governance.

Precedent and Comparative Practices

In other jurisdictions, higher interim quotas have been implemented successfully without negative impacts. These cases provide a precedent indicating that, with proper monitoring and management, increased interim allocations can be part of a sustainable fisheries management strategy.

We also support a response separate on this item, in advance of decisions and recommendations related to quotas.

Ultimately, industry is of the view that greater efforts are required from the respective boards and DFO to advance final quota decisions in a more timely manner.

Summary

This submission has outlined the joint recommendations of the Nunavut and Nunavik shrimp industries with respect to the TACs, sharing in the EAZ and WAZ, and the

continuation of current management measures previously endorsed and accepted by industry, the Boards and DFO.

We remain available to respond to any questions of clarification or substance regarding this submission, and again thank the respective Boards for the invitation to submit our positions.

SUMMARY TABLE OF 2026/27 Recommendations				
Shrimp Stock	TAC Recommendations	Sharing Recommendations based on initial TAC	5% Catch Utilization Adjustments	Sharing Recommendations (inclusive 5% borealis adjustments and WAZ administrative transfer of 403 mt)
WAZ montagui	19,008 mt	NU – 50% of TAC – 9,504 mt NK – 50% of TAC – 9,504 mt	N/A	N/A
WAZ borealis	8,060 mt	NU – 50% of TAC – 4,030 mt NK – 50% of TAC – 4,030 mt	8,463 mt	NU – 50% of TAC – 4,231 mt (of which 201.5 mt transferred to EAZ) NK – 50% of TAC – 4,231 mt (of which 201.5 mt transferred to EAZ)
EAZ montagui	1,578 mt	NU/NK – NU/NK E – 990 mt directed fishery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NU – 693 mt • NK – 297 mt Offshore – DSW/DSE – 588 mt	N/A	N/A
EAZ borealis	9,636 mt	NU – 1,937 mt in DSW, 1,455 mt in DSE, 597 mt in NU/NK E, 3,989 mt total; NK – 212 mt in DSW, 145 mt in NU/NK E, 357 mt total; Offshore – 4,384 mt in DSW, 906 mt in DSE, 5,290 mt total.	10,118 mt	NU – 2,185 mt in DSW, 1,528 mt in DSE, 678 mt in NU/NK E, 4,390 mt total; NK – 374 mt in DSW, 202 mt in NU/NK E, 576 mt total; Offshore – 4,604 mt in DSW, 951 mt in DSE, 5,555 mt total.