

Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee Meeting
March 9, 2017
St. John's NL
Summary of Stakeholder Views

TAC Discussions

SFA 6

- 79% of TAC taken
- CPUE at lowest level in 10 years
- Critical Zone – 24.5% decline in fishable biomass over last year
- PA for Northern shrimp specifies a 10% exploitation rate (ER) for the stock in the Critical Zone
- Continued MSC certification uncertain

Views:

- TAC recommendations ranged from 10,400t to 18,000t. Some were of the view to use a 2 year average of the fishable biomass (FB), and others supported a single year
- Offshore fleet and Association of Seafood Producers advocated for a TAC of 10,400t (10% ER)
- Some groups (FFAW and the Nunatsiavut Government (NG) advocated for a 12.5% ER using a 2 year average of FB (TAC = 15,125t), and the FFAW indicated a further reduction next year (supported by Association des Capitaines Propriétaires de Gaspésie)
- Some stakeholders (FFAW, Northern Coalition) expressed concern with the Limit Reference Point (LRP), plus the uncertainties regarding the interactions of cod and shrimp, and predation
- Government of NL supported a 15% ER
- Governments of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick supported a 10% ER using a 2 year average (12,100t TAC)
- An inshore fleet Chair indicated that all of SFA 6 TAC should be allocated to the inshore fleet; SFA 6 should be closed to fishing from January – June; and that all inshore sharing arrangements should be maintained
- Fogo Island Co-Op recommended a 15% ER (TAC 18,000t)

SFA 5

- 71% of TAC taken
- Healthy Zone
- Declined by 26.5% (precipitous)
- Rollover of TAC would be ER of 23.3%
- 2 year averaging and rollover of TAC equals a 19.9% ER

Views:

- Concern decline could be a year effect
- 2 year averaging keeps it in the Healthy Zone
- Supports a rollover using 2 year average: offshore fleet, Province of NL,
- Supports small reduction: NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC), the NG, Government of Nova Scotia

SFA 4 Borealis

- TAC was fully caught
- No trend in fishable or female spawning stock biomass
- Slight (5.2%) increase in FB for the first time in 4 years, slight decrease in SSB (4.1%)
- Rollover of TAC would be 15.7% ER
- A rollover of the ER (16.5%) would result in a 754t TAC increase

Views:

- All views were for a rollover of TAC
- The Innu indicated that if there is an increase, 100% of it should go to them.
- The NG indicated that if there's an increase, 100% of it should go to them.

NSRF Quota – 1,700t

- The NSRF has requested 1700t to undertake the science work this year
- Use of Fish policy is still in draft form

Views:

- NG and Torngat Joint Fisheries Board are of the view this is a lost opportunity for the NG
- NG supports the Science work but doesn't feel the entire quota should come out of SFA 4

SFA 4 Montagui

- Decreased by 49%
- Less than 20% of the 4,033t bycatch TAC was taken
- No PA

Views:

- The offshore fleet supported a rollover
- The NG indicated DFO should undertake to learn more about the stock
- No other comments

Eastern Assessment Zone Borealis

- Roughly 70% of the TAC caught
- FB decreased by 17%
- Healthy Zone
- Rollover of 9,488t TAC is a 14.5% ER

Views:

- Unanimous for a TAC rollover
- No other comments

EAZ Montagui

- Increased by 125.7%
- Extreme fluctuations in past few years, including in and out of the Healthy and Cautious zones
- Healthy Zone, but uncertain because of fluctuations
- About half of the TAC was fished
- Current TAC is 840t; a rollover would be an ER of 6.1%
- Caution is advised when setting TAC

Views:

- Unanimous calls for a rollover
- No other comments

Discussion: Who should be able to fish special allocations in SFA 6?

This has been raised in the past, with polarized views among stakeholders.

Currently the offshore fleet fishes the special allocations in SFA 6. The Ministerial Advisory Panel made a recommendation that special allocations should be able to choose which fleet harvests their allocation. However, mindful of leveraging concerns, the MAP's recommendation included the provision that if inshore vessels are selected, harvesting arrangements should be made at the fleet level, (eg 2K, 3L) and not at the individual harvester level.

SABRI indicated they want full control of their allocation, and the MAP's proposal doesn't give them that. They will support an approach in which they can fully manage and control who fishes their allocation.

Fogo indicated they want more choice in which inshore harvesters fish it. They have paying members and they have a right to fish it. FFAW supported this.

Association of Seafood Producers indicated there should be no change to the way special allocations are harvested.

Discussion: Should the permanent sale or transfer of a special allocation be permitted?

With the abolishment of the Last In, First Out (LIFO) policy, special allocations are now in receipt of a percent share in the Northern shrimp fishery. The Committee discussed if a special allocation holder would be permitted to permanently transfer their special allocation to another stakeholder in the fishery.

The group indicated that without context, it is difficult to weigh in. Some expressed the view that if a permanent sale or transfer results in increased Indigenous participation it should be permitted.

Marine Conservation Targets (MCTs)

The group discussed MCTs, noting a fully day of detailed discussion would occur tomorrow. Generally, there was concern expressed with the proposed Narwhal Overwintering Closure. This is a year round closure that covers 80% of the fishing grounds in SFA 1. Fishing does not occur when narwhal are present in the winter, nor does it occur in shallow waters. The group asked for justification as to why this closure is being imposed on the shrimp industry. It is unreasonable, they have not received any criteria and the timeline is very tight.