



April 19, 2018

Daniel Shewchuk
A/Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
P.O. Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU
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Robert Mosenko
Vice Chairperson
Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board
P.O. Box 433
Inukjuak, QC
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Dear Messrs. Shewchuk and Mosenko:

Re: NWMB-NMRWB joint written public hearing to consider the 2018/19 total allowable catch levels for Northern and Striped shrimp

The following letter and attachments provide the joint written submission from the quota holders for Northern and Striped shrimp from Nunavut and Nunavik.

In its February 21, 2018 addendum to the Boards, *Revisiting Total Allowable Catch levels for Northern (Pandalus borealis) and Striped (Pandalus montagui) Shrimp for the 2018/19 season*, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has provided the following recommendations:

Western Assessment Zone – 2017/18 TACs – montagui 6,138 t; borealis 2,080 t:

Option 1: Maintain both TACs at current levels, resulting in an ER of 19.8% for borealis and 13.7% for montagui. Changes to TACs could be considered next year.

Option 2: Rollover both TACs provided that last year's ERs are not exceeded (15.9% for borealis and 19.3% for montagui), which would result in TACs of 1,667t (15.9% ER) and 6,138t (13.7% ER) respectively)

Option 3: (Recommended): Establish ERs for both species at 15%, which would result in a decreased TAC for borealis (1,573t) and an increased TAC for montagui (6,737t).

Eastern Assessment Zone – montagui – 2017/18 TAC 840 t:

Option 1 (Recommended): The Boards could consider a precautionary 15% increase to the montagui TAC, resulting in a TAC of 966t and an ER of 3.9%

Option 2: The Boards could consider maintaining the 840t TAC (3.4% ER)

Eastern Assessment Zone – borealis – 2017/18 TAC 9,488 t:

Option 1: Reduce the TAC by 15% to 8,065t, resulting in an ER of 20.6%.

Option 2: (Recommended): Establish the ER at 20%, resulting in a TAC of 7,840t.

For the Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ), the quota holders support the industry consensus expressed at the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC) meeting and summarized in the *Consultation Summary and Record of Recommendations for 2018/19 Total Allowable Catches of Northern and Striped*

Shrimp in the Eastern Assessment Zone and Western Assessment Zone. For EAZ borealis, the quota holders support the DFO recommendation to “Establish the ER at 20%, resulting in a TAC of 7,840 t”. However, for EAZ montagui the quota holders are in support of a conservative approach and a rollover of the TAC for the coming year, maintaining the 840 t TAC (3.4% ER).

In the Western Assessment Zone (WAZ), DFO has indicated that one more year of stock survey results are required prior to establishment of a Precautionary Approach (PA) framework for this area. As a result and to be consistent with industry’s recommendations on EAZ montagui, the quota holders support a rollover of both montagui and borealis for the WAZ, rather than setting the precedent of establishing the TACs at a fixed ER level of 15%, as recommended by DFO. The rationale for this position is as follows:

- DFO’s submissions indicate that a rollover for 2018/19 is a reasonable approach: “Given that Science has four data points in the time series, and given the often precipitous changes in fishable biomass for both species in recent years, a reasonable approach to ensure that shrimp harvesting inside the settlement areas remains within sustainable catch levels is to maintain current TA Cs in the WAZ and acquire one additional data point on the time series before making modifications to the TA Cs. Maintaining existing TA Cs for 2018/19 is reasonable from a Science perspective given the newness of the survey.” “...the Department indicated to the Boards that maintaining the current TACs is a reasonable option, considering the current data point represents year four of the time series. Upon receiving the fifth data point next year, the Boards could take the decision to modify the TAC(s) at that time”;
- Although the surveys have indicated significant increases in the fishable biomass for montagui in both the WAZ and EAZ, to support a precautionary approach and to wait until both zones are covered under a PA framework, the quota holders support holding off on the recommended increases for 2018/19 and maintaining current TAC levels. A continuation of the current positive trend in fishable biomass could lead to future increases in the TAC;
- For borealis in the WAZ, although maintaining the TAC could result in a ER of 19.8% if all of the quota was harvested, past fishing results have shown that industry has not come close to harvesting the full borealis TAC in this area, thereby reducing the risk. Once the PA framework is established for the WAZ and a determination is made on whether the stocks are in the healthy, cautious or critical zones, then the ER limits can be implemented if required to adhere to the framework (as with borealis in the EAZ for 2018/19); and
- DFO has indicated that over the past couple of years there was a large influx of colder waters in the WAZ/EAZ zones which could account for the diverging fishable biomass levels for the two species, as montagui is known to prefer colder waters as compared to borealis. Further information is needed to determine whether this is a trend of a short-term situation, supporting maintenance of the status quo for this year.

The quota holders are concerned with an approach that would establish a precedent of setting the TACs at a fixed percentage of the fishable biomass, in this case 15%. Such an approach, if carried forward into the future would result in annual changes to the TAC, rather than having the certainty of fixed TACs that would only be adjusted based on precipitous changes in biomass. This would add an unnecessary level of uncertainty for industry.

In summary, quota holders are requesting that the Boards move forward with a recommendation of a rollover in TACs for the EAZ montagui and WAZ montagui and borealis and a TAC for EAZ borealis at a

20% ER, to be consistent with the PA framework. Once the PA framework is in place for both zones after this year, all stakeholders will be in a better position to evaluate and recommend reasonable TAC levels.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Regards,

Jerry Ell
Chairperson
Baffin Fisheries

Olayuk Akesuk
Chairperson
Qikiqtaaluk Corporation

Charlie Watt Sr.
President
Makivik Corporation

cc: Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Government of Canada
Honourable Joe Savikataaq, Minister of Environment, Government of Nunavut
Ms. Aluki Kotierk, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Mr. James Qillaq, Chairperson, Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board
Mr. Lootie Toomasie, Chairperson, Arctic Fishery Alliance
Mr. Joopa Sowdloopik, Chairperson, Cumberland Sound Fisheries/Pangnirtung Fisheries

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