

**SUBMISSION TO THE**  
**NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**  
**FOR**

**Information:**

**Decision: X**

**Issue: Conversion of Northern Shrimp fishery in Shrimp Fishing Area 2 east of 63°W from exploratory to commercial status**

**Background:**

The Northern Shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) fishery in Shrimp Fishing Area 2 (SFA2) east of 63°W (Fig. 1) was designated as an official exploratory fishery in 1999 even though fishing in the north end of the area started in the late 1970s. As per DFO's *New Emerging Fisheries Policy*, the objective of an exploratory fishery is to determine whether a species/stock can sustain a commercially viable operation and to collect biological data to build a preliminary database on stock abundance and distribution.

The Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for this area has been maintained at 3,500 tonnes (t) since 1999 and has sustained commercial fishing operations for the past thirteen years. The TAC has never been fully harvested with average annual catches ranging between 31t and 974t. Catch per Unit Effort varied without trend at a moderate level from 1999 to 2008/09 and increased significantly during the past two fishing seasons (2009/10 and 2010/11).

In SFA2 east of 63°W, research trawl surveys have been conducted annually since 2005 with plans for the survey to continue indefinitely. DFO Science assessed the status of shrimp populations in 2008, 2010, and 2011 and advice is available at the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat website (<http://www.isdm-gdsi.gc.ca/csas-sccs/applications/Publications/index-eng.asp>). In each assessment, SFA2 east of 63°W was shown to have an actual exploitation rate (based on the catch taken in the fishery) of ~2% but a potential exploitation rate of ~11%. In comparison to other shrimp fishing areas within Canada, if all the current quotas were taken the exploitation rate would be considered conservative. There is sufficient biological data on *Pandalus borealis* abundance and distribution to indicate at present the harvest level is sustainable and the stock is healthy. Measures are in place to monitor the status of this exploited stock on an annual basis.

This fishery has completed the feasibility and exploratory stages of development as outlined in the *New Emerging Fisheries Policy* as well as some elements of the commercial stage (e.g. Integrated Fishery Management Plan in place). With a change in fishery status from exploratory to commercial, allocation holders in this fishery would continue to pay the prescribed access fee of \$66.50 per tonne.

**Consultations:**

DFO will be presenting this proposal at the annual Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC) meeting (March 8, 2012) in Montreal, Quebec. Nunavut industry, co-management partners and other stakeholders have all been invited. The NSAC recommendation will be forwarded to the Minister for decision.

**Recommendation:**

The NWMB approve the conversion of the Northern Shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) fishery in Shrimp Fishing Area 2 (SFA2) east of 63°W from exploratory to commercial status.

**Prepared by:**

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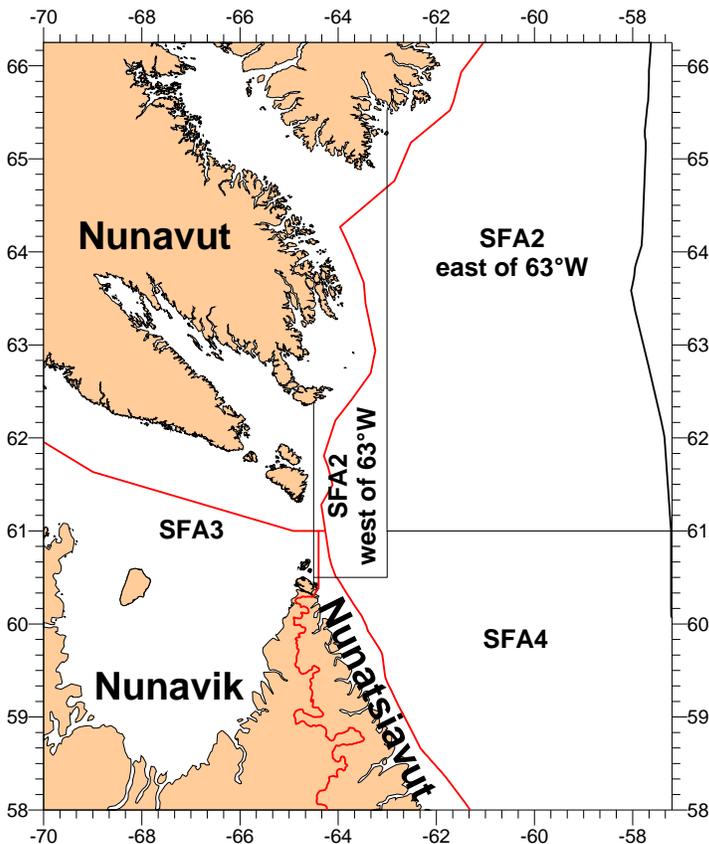


Fig. 1 Shrimp fishing areas (SFAs).