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April 7, 2020

The Honourable Bernadette Jordan Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard 15th Floor, Centennial Towers 200 Kent Street Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6

Dear Minister Jordan:

Re: Arctic cod bycatch limits in the northern and striped shrimp fishery within and adjacent to the settlement areas

NWMB Decision

On February 2020, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (the Department) submitted a request for decision and recommendation to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB or Board) on Arctic cod bycatch limits within the Nunavut Settlement Area and adjacent to the Nunavut Settlement Area and in the Nunavik Inuit Settlement Area. Arctic cod is a common bycatch species in the northern shrimp fishery. The Department provided two options for the Board's consideration: (1) a bycatch limit of the greater of 5% by weight of catch of shrimp or 200 kg, averaged over the previous six tows, in all areas and (2) a bycatch limit of the greater of 10% by weight of catch of shrimp or 200 kg, averaged over the previous six tows, in all areas. The first option is the recommendation of Fisheries and Oceans Canada Resource Management division; the second option is a joint response submitted by all industry stakeholders from Shrimp Fishing Area 1 (SFA-1), the Western Assessment Zone (WAZ), and Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ).

The NWMB considered this request during its In-Camera Meeting (IC001-2020) on March 12, 2020, along with a joint industry position, and the Science Advisory Report and made the following resolutions:

RESOLVED that, pursuant to section 5.6.48 of the Nunavut Agreement, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board establishes an Arctic cod bycatch limit of the greater of 5% by weight of the catch of shrimp or 200 kg averaged over the previous six tows, for the Northern shrimp fishery, within the Nunavut Settlement Area in the Management Units Nunavut-East and Nunavut-West.



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RESOLVED that, pursuant to section 15.3.4 of the Nunavut Agreement, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board recommends an Arctic cod bycatch limit of the greater of 5% by weight of the catch of shrimp or 200 kg averaged over the previous six tows, for the Northern shrimp fishery, outside the Nunavut Settlement Area in the Eastern and Western Assessment Zones.

Reasons for NWMB Decision

In reaching this decision, the NWMB considered the following:

Due to the increased amounts of Arctic cod bycatch in the Western Assessment Zone during the 2018–2019 and the 2019–2020 fishing seasons, the Minister, pursuant to S.5.3.24 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, temporally adopted a change in the conditions of license from "the greater of 2.5% or 100 kg total weight averaged over the previous six tows" to "the greater of 5% by weight of catch of shrimp or 200 kg averaged over the previous six tows." The Department has informed the Board that since the Minister implemented these amendments, no fishing industry has triggered the move away provisions due to bycatch of Arctic cod. The Board is therefore convinced that a bycatch limit consistent with amendments implemented in the Western Assessment Zone for the past two seasons is acceptable.

The Board also considered industry stakeholder's request of "the greater of 10% by weight of catch of shrimp or 200 kg, averaged over the previous six tows, in all areas." However, given that the move-away provision had not been triggered under the amended conditions of license the Board decided a more precautionary approach was reasonable. The Board also considered the biomass estimate provided by the Department's science section. Based on the limited biomass estimate data, the assumption could be made that the bycatch removal from the shrimp fishery could be less than 0.1%. However, there is a high degree of uncertainty in these estimates due to insufficient data.

Given the lack of data on Arctic cod biomass, the importance of Arctic cod to the Arctic marine ecosystem and the likelihood that Arctic cod will continue to be caught as bycatch, the Board encourages the Department to conduct a directed survey for Arctic cod.

The NWMB looks forward to continued collaboration with co-management partners in the management of Nunavut's fisheries. Should you or your officials have any questions

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or concerns regarding the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB.

Sincerely,

Soul Shahal

Daniel Shewchuk Chairperson of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

c.c. D'Aoust, Courtney, Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Officer, Fisheries and Oceans Canada;

Gabriel Nirlungayuk, Regional Director General, Arctic Region, Fisheries and Oceans Canada;

Allison McPhee, A/Associate Regional Director General, Central and Arctic Region, Fisheries and Oceans Canada;

Larry Dow; Director, Northern Operations, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E6

JUN 0 3 2020

Mr. Daniel Shewchuk Chairperson Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Dear Mr. Shewchuk:

I am writing in response to your correspondence of April 7, and May 14, 2020, regarding the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (the Board) decisions and recommendations on Arctic cod bycatch limits in the Northern and Striped shrimp fishery, within and adjacent to the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA), and the Board's decision on removal of the bycatch designation for Northern Shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) in the Nunavut-East management unit of the Eastern Assessment Zone.

I have addressed each of the decisions and recommendations separately herein for simplicity.

Arctic cod bycatch limits

I accept, within the NSA in the management units Nunavut-East and Nunavut-West, the Board's decision to establish an Arctic cod bycatch limit of the greater of 5% by weight of the catch of shrimp or 200 kg, averaged over the previous six tows; and

I accept, outside the NSA, in the Davis Strait management units of the Eastern Assessment Zone, the Board's recommendation to establish an Arctic cod bycatch limit of the greater of 5% by weight of the catch of shrimp or 200 kg, averaged over the previous six tows.

Bycatch designation for Northern Shrimp (P. borealis)

I accept, in the Nunavut-East management unit of the Eastern Assessment Zone, the Board's decision to remove the bycatch designation for *P. borealis* allocations.

I appreciate the Board's collaboration and cooperation in the sustainable management of the shared shrimp resource in the north.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Jordan, P.C., M.P.

Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

