

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION: 2022 Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee Meeting

Main Discussion Points

Many members voiced support for the use of two-year averaging to set Total Allowable Catch (TAC).

- DFO articulated that it is not likely the Department will employ a 2-year averaging approach this year and will instead use the latest science advice.
- While many members were not supportive of using a single data point, they acknowledged the Department's stance on the issue and submitted their views on TAC based on the latest science advice.

Harvest Decision Rules and the use of +/- 15% in TAC changes year over year

- Stakeholders were not supportive of the harvest decision rule pertaining to a general maximum +/- 15% TAC change. They found this particularly problematic for situations such as SFA 4 where the biomass indices fluctuated significantly from the previous year.
- Stakeholders strongly recommended reviewing the HDRs.
- DFO noted that there is some flexibility when the science allows for it, given the HDRs include the word "generally".

Transparency in decision making and consulting with industry

- Several stakeholders were disappointed that last-year's NSAC recommendations were not approved by the Minister (e.g. usage of 2-year averaging). Members stated that there needs to be more transparency in decision-making.
- To promote transparency, DFO committed to providing NSAC participants with this summary of meeting discussions during the week of March 14th.

Science Presentations

Katherine Skanes, DFO Science, NL, provided the survey results for the full science assessment undertaken for SFAs 4 – 6 *Pandalus borealis*, and update assessment for SFA 4 *Pandalus montagui*.

- Survey Results:
 - SFA 6: Fishable Biomass (FB) decreased by 20% and Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) decreased by 3%
 - SFA 5: FB decreased by 12% and SSB decreased by 17%
 - SFA 4 *P. Borealis*: FB increased by 156% and SSB increased by 162%
 - SFA 4 *P. Montagui*: FB increased by 26% and SSB increased by 24%
- Members were concerned about a 30% reduction in sets in DFO Science's multi-species surveys last year (reduction was due to mechanical issues with vessels) along with two large localized tows that occurred in SFA 4 and the impact on the latest science advice.
- DFO Science noted that the reduced surveys did result in some data gaps for the assessment. However, DFO Science were able to use simulations, historic data, and survey coverage from 2021 to address the data gaps.

Wojciech Walkusz, DFO Science, Ontario & Prairie, provided the survey results for the update of stock status indicators for *P. borealis* and *P. montagui* in the Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ) and Western Assessment Zone (WAZ).

- Survey Results:
 - EAZ *P. Borealis*: FB decreased by 37.8% and SSB decreased by 40.9%
 - EAZ *P. Montagu*: FB decreased by 19% and SSB decreased by 22.4%
 - WAZ *P. Borealis*: FB decreased by 39.7% and SSB decreased by 19.8%
 - WAZ *P. Montagu*: FB increased by 27.7% and SSB increased by 39.5%
- Members questioned the assessment schedule and asked for consistency between the North and South for assessments. There were also questions surrounding the importance of Resolution Island as a spawning area and the need to further explore other possible spawning areas.

Management Measures

Review of Management Decisions 2020-21

- Derek Mahoney provided an overview of last years TAC decisions to provide some rationale surrounding the decisions that were taken by the Minister.
- Members were concerned their views were not being considered and stated it seemed the decisions did not align with any discussions at NSAC 2021.

Shrimp Fishing Area 6

- Many members voiced support for a 10% exploitation rate for the upcoming season. There was also support for a rollover of the 2021-22 TAC.
- Questions were raised surrounding the Limit Reference Point for the stock and the need for work to happen quickly to update it.

Shrimp Fishing Area 5

- Most members were in support of a rollover of the 2021-22 TAC. A step-wise directional reduction was also proposed starting with a decrease of 1000t.

Shrimp Fishing Area 4 - *P. Borealis*

- Members voiced concerns about the cap of 15% over the 2021-22 TAC given an increase of Fishable Biomass (156%). Most were supportive of an increase greater than 15%, although some members noted that caution should be taken.

Shrimp Fishing Area 4 – *P. Montagu*

- Members were supportive of a rollover of the TAC from 2021-22.

Eastern Assessment Zone *P. Borealis*

- Support for a rollover of TAC was voiced by many members, but a potential ER of 20% would also be palatable to some.

Eastern Assessment Zone *P. Montagu*

- Broad support was voiced for an increase in TAC to address bycatch issues that have been occurring in the area. The chair

Other Updates

For-information presentations on the Marine Mammals Protection Act, Abandoned, Lost and Discarded Fishing Gear and Conservation and Protection were given by Olga Kiseliova, Marilyn Sweet and Mike Hurley respectively.

Redfish Bycatch:

- Derek Mahoney provided an update on Redfish Bycatch and explained how the Conditions of License continue to be amended to address the issue. He highlighted a plan for DFO to form a working group with industry and Indigenous groups to create a plan forward.

SFA 1 Integrated Fisheries Management Plan Update

- Erika Parrill provided an overview of the recommended changes to the IFMP with regards to setting the TAC in SFA 1.
- Members noted they would need more information and time before providing comments but would likely be in support.

Shrimp Fishing Area 0 Access

- The chair provided an overview of the proposed expansion to SFA 0 and asked NSAC to members to provide written comments on the issue by April 1st.

Marine Stewardship Council Update

- Bruch Chapman informed other members that the last re-assessment is almost finished and that it is not likely any new conditions will come from that process.

The following agenda items were not presented due to time restraints and will be provided in writing in the weeks following NSAC:

- Update on Fish Stock Provisions
- New Conditions of License
- Updates to Daily Hail Form