

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

**Information: X**

**Decision:**

**Issue: *Fisheries Act* closures in waters adjacent to Nunavut**

**Background:**

Canada has committed to increasing the proportion of marine and coastal areas that are protected to 5% by 2017. To achieve this target, “other effective area-based conservation measures” are being evaluated for their role in marine conservation. These include areas closed to fishing which conserve biodiversity.

For the eastern Arctic, the primary venue for consultation has been the multi-stakeholder Marine Conservation Working Group (Working Group) (draft Terms of Reference in Appendix 1) formed under the auspices of the multi-stakeholder Eastern Arctic Groundfish Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The primary focus of the Working Group to date has been the identification of potential groundfish and shrimp fishing area closures in Baffin Bay and Davis Strait, including Hatton Basin. The outcomes of Working Group discussions are as follows:

1. A proposal for a new fishing area closure, supported by the Working Group, in the Hatton Basin area (Figure 1) to conserve corals and sponges. Hatton Basin was noted as an area of focus by DFO during its presentation to the Board on Marine Conservation Targets (MCT) on March 7, 2017;
2. A proposal, supported by the Working Group, to adjust the existing Narwhal Overwintering and Coldwater Coral Zone (Zone) closure to groundfish fishing in Baffin Bay (Figure 2), which was also noted by DFO during its March 7, 2017 MCT presentation to the Board.
  - The existing closure was supported by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) in 2007. This closure was re-evaluated by the Working Group which considered MCT guidelines and new science information. As it currently stands, the existing closure does not meet MCT criteria due to shrimp fishing within its boundaries. Based on input from the Working Group, DFO proposes the following adjustments (Figure 3) to support continued protection for Narwhal overwintering food sources and cold water coral concentrations, and to help Canada meet its commitment to MCTs:
    - Maintain the prohibition to groundfish fishing with mobile gear (i.e. bottom trawl) within the existing Zone boundaries;
    - Allow groundfish fishing with fixed gear (i.e. bottom set gillnets or longlines) in the southeast corner (area 35 km x 15 km) of the Zone; and,
    - Implement a new closure to shrimp fishing (which uses bottom trawl) in part of the Zone.
  - DFO has committed to conduct a more thorough scientific assessment of Narwhal bioenergetics and prey use in Baffin Bay in the next two years. DFO recommends the north east boundary of the new shrimp fishing closure track between the 400 m and 500 m

bathymetric contour depending on locations of coral concentrations. DFO intends to re-evaluate the Zone adjustments once new information is available to ensure conservation objectives are being achieved.

- The proposed adjustments continue to protect the core portion of the Southern Winter Area used by three Narwhal stocks (Admiralty Inlet, Eclipse Sound and Melville Bay) as well as significant concentrations of Large Gorgonian Corals; and,
3. The Working Group identified a third fishing closure proposal to conserve habitat for corals, sponges, sea pens and overwintering Narwhal in Davis Strait. This proposed area closure was not noted to the Board in the Department's presentation on March 7, 2017. This area is highlighted as another potential contribution to Canada's MCTs for 2017 and will be discussed further by the Working Group. DFO will present a formal proposal to the NWMB at its September meeting.

Besides protecting Narwhal and Sensitive Benthic Areas with corals and sponges, the above proposed measures also confer conservation benefits to Greenland Halibut, shrimp, other finfish and invertebrates, other marine mammals, and seabirds.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) appreciates the extensive input put forward by the Working Group and the hard work and cooperation of its members.

#### **Consultation:**

Besides the Working Group, DFO has sought the views of other stakeholders and interested groups (including representatives from co-management organizations, groundfish and shrimp fishing industry, territorial/ provincial governments, and environmental organizations) on fishing closure recommendations in Baffin Bay and Davis Strait. A detailed list of consultations to date is found in Table 1.

Consultations are ongoing. DFO will continue to engage the Working Group as well as seek comments from the Eastern Arctic Groundfish Stakeholder Advisory Committee, NWMB, Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board, Nunatsiavut Government, Torngat Joint Fisheries Board, Government of Nunavut, and Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. DFO will provide a verbal update on further consultation outcomes at the June 5 meeting.

#### **Recommendation:**

The NWMB provide comments to DFO on the proposed fishing closures. Comments are requested before July 14, 2017.

**Prepared by:** DFO, Central & Arctic Region, Fisheries Management

**Date:** May 11, 2017

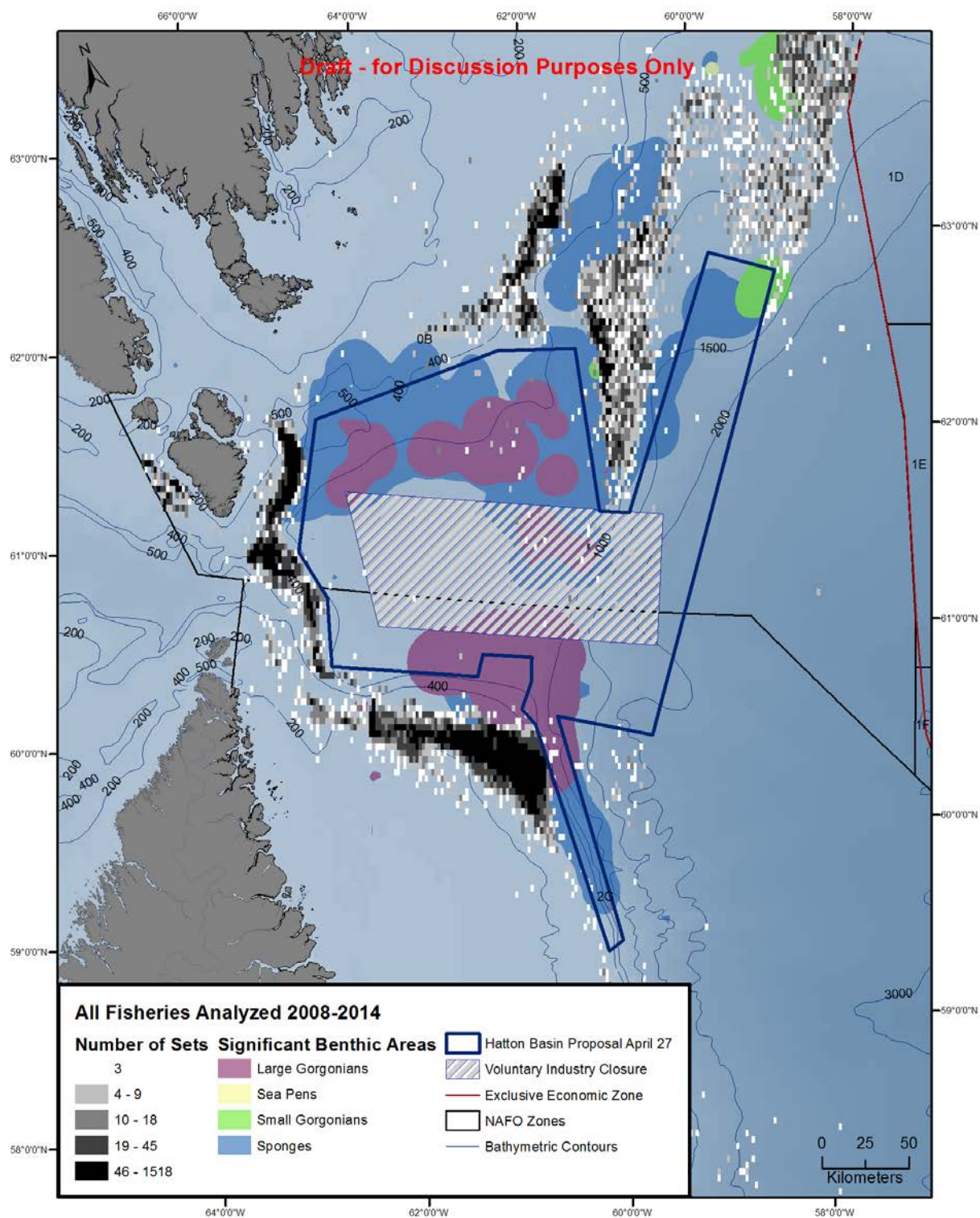


Figure 1. Proposed area in Hatton Basin closed to all bottom contact fishing gear to conserve sensitive benthic areas.

Map to be inserted

Figure 2. Proposed adjustments to existing Narwhal Overwintering and Coldwater Coral Zone closure. Maintain existing boundaries for groundfish mobile gear, modify boundaries for groundfish fixed gear by excluding southeast corner, and implement closure to shrimp fishing which follows existing groundfish boundaries except in northeast corner where the boundary follows approximately the 400-500 m bathymetric contour.

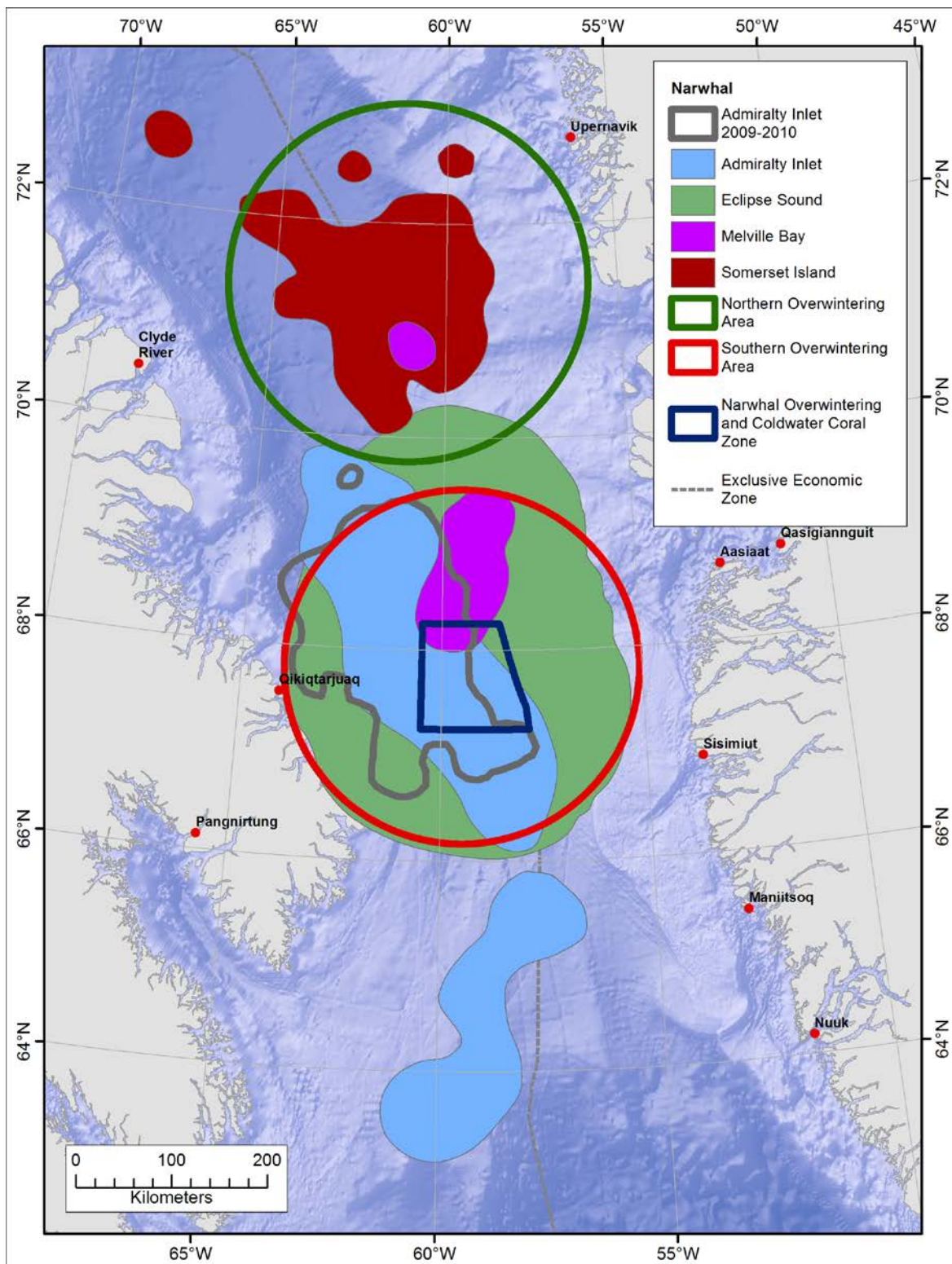


Figure 3. Winter home ranges of Baffin Bay narwhals (from DFO 2017).

Table 1. Consultations to date.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Engagement event</b>	<b>Participants</b>
22-Dec 16	Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agrifoods	Senior provincial officials
18-Jan-17	Eastern Arctic Groundfish Stakeholder Advisory Committee (EAGSAC) meeting	Provinces/Territories, Indigenous Partners, Industry, Environmental Organizations
13-Feb-17	Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Fisheries, Forests and Agrifoods	Senior officials
22-Feb-17	Fish Food and Allied Workers	President and senior officials
24-Feb-17	Northern Coalition	Executive Director
28-Feb-17	Fish Food and Allied Workers Inshore Council	Harvesters representatives from across NL Region
28-Feb-17	Innu Nation	Senior Official
1-Mar-17	Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board meeting	Indigenous Partner
1-Mar-17	Torngat Joint Fisheries Board Secretariat	Executive Director and staff
2-Mar-17	NunatuKavut Community Council	Senior official
3-Mar-17	Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation	Senior official
3-Mar-17	Miawpukek First Nation	Senior official
06-Mar-17	Groundfish Enterprise Allocation Council/Canadian Association of Prawn Producers	Executive Directors, industry representatives
07-Mar-17	EAGSAC Marine Conservation Working Group	Indigenous Partners, Industry, Environmental Organizations
07-Mar-17	Nunavut Wildlife Management Board meeting	Indigenous Partners
09-Mar-17	Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC) meeting	Industry, Indigenous Partners, Provinces/Territories
10-Mar-17	C&A/NL consultations with shrimp harvesters/NSAC members	Provinces/Territories, Indigenous Partners, Industry, Environmental Organizations
19-Mar-17	Boston Seafood Show Marine Conservation Target Roundtable	Provinces/Territories, Indigenous Partners, Industry, Environmental Organizations
20-Mar-17	Torngat Joint Fisheries Board Secretariat	Indigenous partner
21-Mar-17	Nunatsiavut Government	Senior staff representatives
27-Mar-17	EAGSAC Marine Conservation Working Group	Indigenous Partners, Industry, Environmental Organizations
28-Mar-17	World Wildlife Canada, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Ecology Action Centre and Oceans North	Senior officials from each organization



28-Mar-17	Torngat Joint Fisheries Board	Indigenous partners, provincial officials
07-Apr-17	EAGSAC Marine Conservation Working Group	Indigenous Partners, Industry, Environmental Organizations
19-Apr-17	EAGSAC Marine Conservation Working Group	Indigenous Partners, Industry, Environmental Organizations
27-Apr-17	EAGSAC Marine Conservation Working Group	Indigenous Partners, Industry, Environmental Organizations
02-May-17	World Wildlife Canada, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Ecology Action Centre, Oceans North, David Suzuki Foundation, Western Legal Defence Fund	Senior officials from each organization
04-May-17	Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agrifoods	Senior officials
05-May-17	Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment, Fisheries and Sealing Division	Senior official

## **EASTERN ARCTIC GROUNDFISH STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EAGSAC)**

### **MARINE CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **Preamble**

The Eastern Arctic Groundfish Stakeholder Advisory Committee (EAGSAC or Committee), as per its draft Terms of Reference, may form a Working Group to fulfill a specific task, as defined by the Committee. The Members and leadership of the Working Group will be set and agreed upon by the Committee.

Working Groups will develop their own Terms of Reference, subject to approval by the Committee. Terms of Reference will outline the nature of the task, along with the required deliverables and timeframe. The Working Group will report its findings only to the Committee.

The Working Group will follow the Governance and Reporting Structure, Roles and Responsibilities, Procedural Matters, Communication, and Administration items detailed in the EAGSAC Terms of Reference unless otherwise noted in this document.

#### **Task**

On, January 19, 2017 EAGSAC established a Marine Conservation Working Group (MCWG) to do the following:

- Validate the fishing footprint generated by DFO;
- Review current groundfish and shrimp fishing closures;
- Identify potential areas requiring further management measures, such as closures, to assist with conservation needs and future economic viability of the fishery; and,
- Recommend groundfish and shrimp fishing closure boundaries to EAGSAC in Baffin Bay and Davis Strait.

#### **Membership**

Via a nomination process from stakeholder organizations held in February and March 2017, the MCWG will be composed of the following members:

- Dave Bollivar (Arctic Fishery Alliance)
- Brian Burke (Nunavut Offshore Allocation Holders Association)
- Bruce Chapman (Canadian Association of Prawn Producers)
- Susanna Fuller (Ecology Action Center)
- Patrick Martin (Baffin Fisheries Coalition)
- Jeffery Maurice (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.)



- Alistair O’Rielly (Northern Coalition)
- Peter Rose/Mark O’Connor (Makivik)
- Sakiasie Sowdlooapik (Cumberland Sound Fisheries Ltd./Pangnirtung Fisheries Ltd. Partnership)
- Trevor Taylor (Oceans North)
- Kris Vascotto (Groundfish Enterprise Allocation Council)
- Jerry Ward (Qikiqtaaluk Corporation)

While it is anticipated MCWG members will reflect the views of their organizations, membership is also open to regional and local Inuit representatives with an interest in the fisheries who would like to contribute to the discussions.

### **Secretariat**

The following DFO staff will compose the secretariat:

- Beth Hiltz (RM/MCT, C&A) (Chair)
- Jason Simms (RM/MCT, NL)
- Bethany Schroeder (Oceans, C&A)
- Shawna Powell (Oceans, NL)
- Margaret Treble (Science, C&A)
- Jeff McDonald (C&P, C&A)

### **Workplan**

A workplan is detailed in Appendix 1. It will evolve over time.