



March 27th 2015

The Honourable Gail Shea
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
15th Floor, Centennial Towers
200 Kent Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0E6

Dear Minister Shea:

Re: Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board decisions and recommendations concerning Northern and Striped shrimp total allowable catches and quotas in the Eastern and Western Assessment Zones

1. NWMB AND NMRWB DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) and the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board (NMRWB) recently held a joint written public hearing to consider harvest limits for Northern and Striped shrimp in the Western Assessment Zone and methods for determining harvest limits in the Eastern Assessment Zone. The Board initiated this process prior to the availability of scientific information on the available biomass for either species to avoid the delays that were encountered for the 2014-15 fishing season.

During their respective decision-making meetings, the Boards reviewed all of the relevant written arguments and evidence provided through the written public hearing¹. Having made complementary decisions and recommendations, the NWMB and NMRWB are providing this joint letter. The Boards' decisions and recommendations are set out immediately below.

¹ All of the relevant documents and written submissions received and considered by the Boards are publicly available for download from the NWMB's website (www.nwmb.com).

1.1 Quota and Total Allowable Take decisions

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5.6.4 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the NWMB approve the following shrimp quota levels in the Nunavut West and Nunavut East Management Units for a two year term (2015-16 to 2016-17 inclusive):

- 1. For Pandalus montagui shrimp:*
 - a. A quota of 3,069 tonnes in the Nunavut West Management Unit within the Nunavut Settlement Area; and*
 - b. A quota of 301 tonnes in the Nunavut East Management Unit within the Nunavut Settlement Area; and*
- 2. For Pandalus borealis shrimp:*
 - a. A quota of 1,040 tonnes in the Nunavut West Management Unit within the Nunavut Settlement Area; and*
 - b. A by-catch quota of 183 tonnes in the Nunavut West Management Unit within the Nunavut Settlement Area.*

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5.2.3 of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement, the NMRWB approve the following Total Allowable Take for shrimp in the Nunavik West and Nunavik East Management Units for a two year term (2015-16 to 2016-17 inclusive):

- 1. For Pandalus montagui shrimp:*
 - a. A Total Allowable Take of 3,069 tonnes in the Nunavik West Management Unit within the Nunavik Marine Region; and*
 - b. A Total Allowable Take of 129 tonnes in the Nunavik East Management Unit within the Nunavik Marine region; and*
- 2. For Pandalus borealis shrimp:*
 - a. A Total Allowable Take of 1,040 tonnes in the Nunavik West Management Unit within the Nunavik Marine Region; and*
 - b. A by-catch Total Allowable Take of 46 tonnes in the Nunavik East Management Unit within the Nunavik Marine Region.*

1.2 Total Allowable Catch Recommendations

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 15.3.4 and 15.3.7 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and Section 5.4.4 of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement, the NWMB and the NMRWB recommend the following Total Allowable Catch levels in the Western Assessment Zone and Eastern Assessment Zone for a two year term (2015-16 to 2016-17 inclusive):

- 1. For Pandalus montagui shrimp:*
 - a. A Total Allowable Catch of 6,138 tonnes in the Western Assessment Zone; and*
 - b. A Total Allowable Catch of 840 tonnes in the Eastern Assessment Zone; and*
- 2. For Pandalus borealis shrimp:*

- a. *A Total Allowable Catch of 2,080 tonnes in the Western Assessment Zone; and*
- b. *A Total Allowable Catch of 8,250 tonnes in the Eastern Assessment Zone, subject to the following conditions:*
 1. *That the resulting exploitation rate, based on the most recent science advice, does not exceed 20% when the biomass index for either species is in the Healthy Zone of the Precautionary Approach, 15% in the Cautious Zone, or 10% in the Critical Zone.*

FURTHER RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 15.3.4 and 15.3.7 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and Section 5.4.4 of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement, the NWMB and the NMRWB recommend defining a "precipitous change in biomass", a change that would necessitate further recommendations from the Board, as any change greater than 25%.

2. HEARING SUBMISSIONS

The Boards received two submissions, from Makivik Corporation and the Government of Nunavut Department of Environment. Both submissions supported maintaining the Total Allowable Catch for both species in the Western Assessment Zone at 2014-15 levels. The Government of Nunavut Department of Environment also supported maintaining the Total Allowable Catch for both species in the Eastern Assessment Zone, while Makivik Corporation suggested consideration for an increase in the Total Allowable Catch for Northern shrimp and supported maintain the Total Allowable Catch for Striped shrimp in the Eastern Assessment Zone.

3. NWMB and NMRWB CONSIDERATIONS

In reaching the above decisions and recommendations, the Boards carefully considered the submissions from Makivik Corporation and the Government of Nunavut Department of Environment, as well as input from the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee, including a suggestion from the Northern Coalition and Makivik Corporation that applying a 10% exploitation rate for Striped shrimp in the Western Assessment Zone would be beneficial to fishers in Nunavut and Nunavik. The Boards also considered the most recent science information presented by Fisheries and Oceans Canada at the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee meeting in Montréal.

The Boards feel that maintaining the Total Allowable Catch levels for both species in the Eastern Assessment Zone, and for Northern shrimp in the Western Assessment Zone, addresses recommendations provided by hearing parties through the Boards' written hearing process. In addition, applying a cautious 10% exploitation rate to a two-year average of the most recent fishable biomass estimates for Striped shrimp in the Western Assessment Zone provides for a moderate increase in the Total Allowable Catch while

recognizing that no information on the health of this stock is currently available to support a higher exploitation rate.

The decisions and recommendations made by the Boards ensure sustainable harvest of Northern and Striped shrimp in the Eastern and Western Assessment Zones, making use of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's most recent scientific information, while incorporating input from industry stakeholders and co-management partners. The Boards also felt it appropriate to make these decisions and recommendations for a two-year term (2015-16 to 2016-17 inclusive) as no new science information on the health of the stocks will be available for the Western Assessment Zone during that time, and decisions and recommendations made for the Eastern Assessment Zone are conditional on the health of the stocks.

4. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE BOARDS' DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Boards' decisions and recommendations:

1. Are justified pursuant to Section 5.3.3(a) of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* and Section 5.5.3(a) of the *Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement* – the restrictions limit Inuit harvesting of shrimp in the Nunavut Settlement Area and the Nunavik Marine Region only to the extent necessary to effect the valid conservation purposes of:
 - a. Maintaining vital healthy shrimp populations capable of sustaining harvesting needs as defined in *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Article 5 (Section 5.1.5(c)) and *Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement* Article 5 (Section 5.1.5(b)); and
 - b. Maintaining the natural balance of ecological systems within the Nunavut Settlement Area and the Nunavik Marine Region (*Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* and *Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement* Section 5.1.5(a));
2. Satisfy the requirements of *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Section 5.3.4 and *Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement* Section 5.5.4.1 for (i) the NWMB and the Minister to take account of shrimp harvested outside the Nunavut Settlement Area, and (ii) the NMRWB and the Minister to take account of shrimp harvested outside the Nunavik Marine Region, by persons resident elsewhere;
3. Ensure that shrimp harvesting inside both the Nunavut Settlement Area and the Nunavik Marine Region remains within sustainable catch levels, does not raise conservation concerns, and is consistent with the precautionary fisheries management approach for these fisheries.

5. CONCLUSION

Madame Minister, the Boards hereby forward their decisions and recommendations to you, for your consideration pursuant to the relevant terms of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* and the *Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement*. Please be assured that the NWMB and the NMRWB will continue to work collaboratively with the Department and other co-management partners in ensuring that the management of shrimp in the Nunavut Settlement Area and the Nunavik Marine Region fully aligns with the terms of *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* Article 5 and *Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement* Article 5.

If you or your officials have any questions with respect to the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the NWMB and the NMRWB at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ben Kovic', written over a horizontal line.

Ben Kovic
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Josepi Padlayat', written in a cursive style.

Josepi Padlayat
Chairperson
Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board

cc. Leigh Edgar, Senior Resource Management Officer, Fisheries and Oceans
Canada