

SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD
JUNE 2021

FOR

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Fisheries Management Operational Updates

Updates:

Marine Mammals:

1) Narwhal:

- DFO is in the process of coordinating with Hunters and Trappers Organizations/Associations (HTOs/HTAs) for the 2020/21 narwhal tag returns and summarizing the harvest statistics. This includes calculating the amount of carry-over tags available.
- Narwhal tags and information packages for the 2021/22 harvest season are currently being prepared. DFO has requested decisions on the community allocations from the Regional Wildlife Organizations (RWOs) including the carry-over numbers for some management units. For the Northern Hudson Bay management unit, the exact number of carry-over tags cannot be determined until all 2020/21 narwhal tags are returned to DFO. Once the allocation decisions have been confirmed, the 2021/22 tags will be distributed to communities.
- DFO continues to attempt coordination of a virtual meeting for the Nunavut Narwhal Working Group in 2021 to discuss the recently published Science advice on Admiralty Inlet and Eclipse Sound narwhal stocks and initiate the development of a plan for the review of the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Narwhal in the Nunavut Settlement Area. Delays in the scheduling of this meeting this year have occurred to allow the participation of all co-management organizations.

2) Walrus:

- In February 2021, the Minister of DFO approved a total of 21 walrus sport hunts for 2021 (Coral Harbour 17 and Arviat 4). These walrus sport hunt outfitters have been notified of their 2021 sport hunt allocation approvals. DFO will soon begin coordinating with the sport hunt outfitters on any booked hunts for 2021 and distributing sport hunt packages, which include the hunt report form, sampling kit, and licences.

- A Ministerial decision is expected in early May regarding the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's approval of an additional 6 sport hunts for 2021 in Coral Harbour.

3) Cumberland Sound Beluga:

- The Cumberland Sound Beluga Working Group continues to meet virtually while COVID-19 restrictions limit in-person meetings. In 2021, teleconferences were held in January, February, and March. The upcoming meeting in April was cancelled due to the recent COVID-19 outbreak on Baffin Island, but the Working Group hopes to resume its virtual meetings once restrictions ease in the Qikiqtaaluk.

4) Harvest Reporting:

- DFO has requested final harvest estimates from HTOs/HTAs for beluga, walrus, bowhead, and narwhal for the 2020/21 harvest season. This information will be used to finalize harvest data for this season. Reports of total marine mammal hunting mortality (landed and lost) are essential to develop reliable advice on sustainable harvests.
- Timely and accurate reporting is required under the Fisheries Act, Marine Mammal Regulations, and the Nunavut Agreement.

Greenland Halibut (Turbot):

1) Cumberland Sound Turbot Fishery

- The 2021 on-ice turbot fishery in Cumberland Sound started in early February and has now come to an earlier close than anticipated. On April 16, the Pangnirtung fish plant announced that they would no longer be accepting landings of turbot. This was a result of the fish plant having reached their storage capacity and their inability to transport fish out of Pangnirtung via Canadian North Cargo due to an outbreak of COVID-19 in Iqaluit.
- The final landing report received on April 20 indicated that there were 82 active fishermen participating in the winter fishery this year. Out of the 500 tonne Total Allowable Harvest, 436.8 tonnes has been harvested. This leaves 63.2 tonnes remaining and available for open water fishing in the summer.
- DFO will follow up with the Pangnirtung HTA, as the licence holder for this fishery, about their intent to undertake a summer fishery in 2021.

2) Division 0A

- Historically active fishing has started in June/July for 0A.

3) Division 0B

- Historically active fishing has started in late April/early May for 0B. Fishers have indicated they will start fishing in early May this year.

- Tuesday, June 22nd is the opening date for the 0B competitive fixed gear fishery in 2021. The Total Allowable Catch (TAC) is set at 900 t.

Northern and Striped Shrimp:

- DFO has received no indication of plans to fish Northern shrimp in Shrimp Fishing Area (SFA) 0 for the 2021 fishing season.
- The Northern shrimp fishery in SFA 1 opened on January 1, 2021. Active fishing is expected to begin early June 2021.
- The 2021/22 Northern and Striped shrimp fisheries in the Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ) and Western Assessment Zone (WAZ) opened April 1, 2021. Historically active fishing in the EAZ and WAZ has started in mid-May.
- At the time of this submission, the 2021(-22) TACs for Northern and Striped Shrimp in SFA 0, 1, EAZ and WAZ are pending.

Prepared by: Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Fisheries Management

Date: April 23, 2021