



2. In the Eastern Assessment Zone:
 - a. **Decision** on harvest levels for both species in the Nunavut-East (within the Nunavut Settlement Area) and Nunavik-East (within the Nunavik Marine Region) management units;
 - b. **Recommendations** on the overall total allowable catch for both species; and
 - c. **Recommendations** on the distributions of the total allowable catch for both species between the Davis Strait management units–Davis Strait-West and Davis Strait-East.

NWMB AND NMRWB JOINT PUBLIC HEARING

On April 29, 2024, the Boards issued a public notice and invited relevant parties to a joint written public hearing for shrimp total allowable catch levels in the Eastern and Western Assessment Zones for the 2024/25 fishing season. Parties were asked to provide feedback on the Fisheries and Oceans Canada April 2023 request.

One submission was received by the May 22, 2024 deadline: a joint submission from Makivvik Corporation and Nunavut Fisheries Association² (collectively referred to as Industry stakeholders).

NWMB AND NMRWB DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the NWMB in-camera meeting on June 26, 2024 (NWMB IC002-2024) and the NMRWB in-camera meeting on June 13, 2024 (#63), the Boards reviewed all relevant written arguments and evidence provided through the written public hearing³. The Boards independently made decisions and recommendations. Having passed complimentary resolutions, the NWMB and NMRWB are providing this joint letter. The Board's decisions and recommendations are set out immediately below and more details are presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

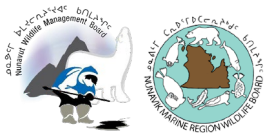
Decisions and Recommendations at the Assessment Zone Level

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Sections 5.2.3 and 5.4 of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement and Section 15.3.4 of the Nunavut Agreement, the NMRWB and NWMB recommend that the total allowable catch in the Western Assessment Zone for the 2024/2025 fishing season be as follows:

1. For northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 4,186 tonnes in Western Assessment Zone; and
2. For striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 15,384 tonnes in the Western Assessment Zone

² Nunavut Fisheries Association includes, Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, Baffin Fisheries Coalition, Arctic Fishery Alliance, Cumberland Sound Fisheries Ltd/Pangnirtung Fisheries Ltd.

³ All the relevant documents and written submissions received on time and considered by the Boards are publicly available for download from the NWMB's website, www.nwmb.com.



RESOLVED that, pursuant to Sections 15.3.4 and 15.3.7 of the Nunavut Agreement and Section 5.4.4 of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and the Nunavut Marine Region Wildlife Board recommend the following total allowable catch levels in the Eastern Assessment Zone for the 2024/2025 fishing season:

1. For northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 8,513 tonnes in Eastern Assessment Zone; and
2. For striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 2,100 tonnes in the Eastern Assessment Zone

Decisions and Recommendations at the Management Unit Level

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5.6.4 of the Nunavut Agreement, the NWMB approve the following total allowable catch for shrimp in the Nunavut-West Management Unit for the 2024/2025 fishing season:

1. For northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 2,093 tonnes in the Nunavut-West Management Unit within the Nunavut Settlement Area; and
2. For striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 7,692 tonnes in the Nunavut-West Management Unit within the Nunavut Settlement Area; and

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5.2.3 of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement, the NMRWB approve the following total allowable catch for shrimp in the Nunavik-West Management Unit for the 2024/2025 fishing season:

1. For northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 2,093 tonnes in the Nunavik-West Management Unit within the Nunavik Marine Region
2. For striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 7,692 tonnes in the Nunavik-West Management Unit within the Nunavik Marine Region; and

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5.6.4 of the Nunavut Agreement, the NWMB approve the following total allowable catch for in the Nunavut-East Management Units for the 2024/2025 fishing season:

1. For northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 526 tonnes in the Nunavut-East Management Unit within the Nunavut Settlement Area; and
2. For striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 907 tonnes in the Nunavut-East Management Unit within the Nunavut Settlement Area; and



RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 5.2.3 of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement, the NMRWB approve the following total allowable catch for shrimp in the Nunavik-East Management Unit for the 2024/2025 fishing season:

1. For northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 131 tonnes in the Nunavik-East Management Unit within the Nunavik Marine Region
2. For striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 389 tonnes in the Nunavik-East Management Unit within the Nunavik Marine Region; and

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 15.3.4 and 15.3.7 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and Section 5.4.4 of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement, the NWMB and the NMRWB recommend the following distribution of the total allowable catch in the Davis Strait-West and Davis Strait-East Management Units for the 2024/2025 fishing season:

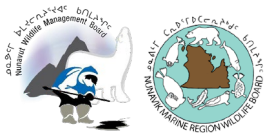
1. For northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 2,081 tonnes in the Davis Strait-East Management Unit that is further subdivided as follows:
 - i. A total allowable catch of 799 tonnes for the offshore; and
 - ii. A total allowable catch of 1,282 tonnes for Nunavut; and
2. For northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 5,774 tonnes in the Davis Strait-West Management Unit that is further subdivided as follows:
 - i. A total allowable catch of 3,874 tonnes for the offshore; and
 - ii. A total allowable catch of 1,710 tonnes for Nunavut; and
 - iii. A total allowable catch of 190 tonnes for Nunavik; and
3. For striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*):
 - a. A total allowable catch of 804 tonnes in the Davis Strait-East and Davis-Strait West Management Units.

REASONS FOR THE BOARDS' DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The decisions and recommendations made by the Boards are meant to ensure a sustainable harvest of northern and striped shrimp in the Eastern and Western Assessment Zones. The Boards have also considered the most recent scientific information on the stocks, including that provided by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and input from industry stakeholders.

Decisions and Recommendations at the Assessment Zone Level

In a separate issue presented to the Boards at its June 2024 Regular Meetings, Fisheries and Oceans Canada requested a decision on establishing and amending a Precautionary



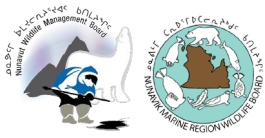
Approach Framework for shrimp in the Western and Eastern Assessment Zones, respectively. The proposed Framework included the adoption of a two-step harvest decision rule. In their submission to the Boards regarding total allowable catches, both Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Industry stakeholders recommended using the proposed two-step harvest decision rule. The Boards considered this consensus when considering the total allowable catches.

The most recent survey indicates a significant decrease in fishable biomass and a slight decrease in spawning stock biomass of northern shrimp in the Western Assessment Zone. Despite these decreases, northern shrimp levels are well above the proposed upper stock reference, with the spawning stock biomass above the long-term average, and firmly in the proposed Healthy Zone. Considering this, the Boards recommend using the two-step harvest decision rule to determine the total allowable catch. This results in a total allowable catch of 4,186 tonnes with an exploitation rate of 23.4%.

The most recent survey indicates a significant decrease in fishable biomass and spawning stock biomass of striped shrimp in the Western Assessment Zone. Despite these decreases, striped shrimp levels remain above the long-term biomass averages, well above the proposed upper stock reference, and firmly in the proposed Healthy Zone. Considering this, the Boards recommend using the two-step harvest decision rule to determine the total allowable catch. This results in a total allowable catch of 15,384 tonnes with an exploitation rate of 22.8%.

The most recent survey indicates a significant increase in fishable biomass and spawning stock biomass of northern shrimp in the Eastern Assessment Zone. This has been the first stock increase since 2020. These increases bring northern shrimp above the proposed upper stock reference and into the Healthy Zone; however, biomass levels are below the long-term averages. Furthermore, the northern shrimp fishery in Davis Strait-East is considered a “paper fishery,” meaning that although the total allowable catch exists, the fishery is currently not viably harvested, and thus the quota is rarely taken in this Management Unit. Considering this, the Boards recommend using the two-step harvest decision rule to determine the total allowable catch. This results in a total allowable catch of 8,513 tonnes with an exploitation rate of 17.7%. This recommendation also aligns with the current harvest decision rule which states that change in total allowable catch should not exceed 15%.

The most recent survey indicates a slight decrease in the fishable biomass of striped shrimp in the Eastern Assessment Zone. The spawning stock biomass decreased significantly and is below the long-term average. Striped shrimp fishable biomass has demonstrated a high level of variability, with a significant increase in 2020 followed by three consecutive years of decreases. The cumulative impact of the decreases resulted in a 63.8% reduction in the spawning stock biomass. Despite the biomass loss, the total allowable catch of striped shrimp increased over the same time period from 840 tonnes to 2,100 tonnes in 2023-2024. The total allowable catch has been entirely taken twice in the last three years. However, last year, the reported catch was only 8.24% of the total allowable catch. The Boards agree in principle with the two-step harvest decision rule



approach, however, considering the lower probability of this stock being in the proposed Healthy Zone (66.7% probability) and that it remains just above the upper stock reference limit, the Boards recommend a rollover of the total allowable catch so that the stock gets an additional year of stability to grow while bycatch impacts on other fisheries may be mitigated. This will result in an exploitation rate of 14.9% and a total allowable catch of 2,100 tonnes.

Decisions and Recommendations at the Management Unit Level

The Boards considered the joint feedback provided by the Nunavut Fisheries Association and Makivik Corporation, the primary harvesters of the stocks in question, regarding the distribution of the total allowable catch of shrimp in the management units for both the Western and Eastern Assessment Zones.

At the 2024 Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee meeting, stakeholders, primarily southern enterprises, indicated that the offshore fleet requires a striped shrimp bycatch allocation of 920 tonnes in the Davis Strait management units to successfully prosecute a northern shrimp fishery. In the joint submission to the Boards, Industry stakeholders acknowledged the importance of a designated allowance to the offshore to promote harvest stability. Industry stakeholders suggested that an offshore allowance be capped at 920 tonnes if the total allowable catch for the Eastern Assessment Zone is 2,464 tonnes or more and be set at 38.3% of the total allowable catch if the overall total allowable catch is less than 2,464 tonnes.

Thus, the Boards have accepted and applied Industry stakeholder's recommendations in their decisions and recommendations to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Sharing Total Allowable Catch Increases or Decreases among Nunavut Sub-Allocation Holders

As per NWMB's 2019 Allocation Policy for Commercial Marine Fisheries, in the event of an increase or decrease in quota equal to or greater than 15%, "Nunavut allocation holders will work together under the Nunavut Fisheries Association to determine proposed increases [or decreases] to each allocation holder". The Nunavut Fisheries Association sent a letter to the NWMB on May 30, 2024 agreeing that any such increases or decreases be shared proportionally (Appendix 3). The NWMB adopts the Nunavut allocation holders position and hereby recommend that any such increases or decreases be divided proportionally amongst the current Nunavut fishing enterprises according to their existing sub-allocation within each management unit in the Eastern and Western Assessment Zones.



CONCLUSION

The Boards hereby forward their decisions and recommendations to you for your consideration pursuant to the relevant terms of the *Nunavut 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 of Fisheries and Oceans Canada 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 the *Nunavut Agreement* and *Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement*.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Daniel Shewchuk'.

Daniel Shewchuk
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Iola Metuq'.

Iola Metuq
Chairperson
Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board

cc. Leigh Edgar, Fisheries and Oceans Canada;
Elysabeth Theberge, Fisheries and Oceans Canada;
Christi Friesen, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.



Appendix 1

Summary of the Boards decisions and recommendations of harvest levels and overall total allowable catches for both species of shrimp in the Western and Eastern Assessment Zones.

| Assessment Zone | Species | Scenario | Total Allowable Catch (tonnes) | Exploitation Rate | % Change of Total Allowable Catch |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| WAZ | P. borealis | 2-step | 4,186 | 23.4% | -12.6% |
| | P. montagui | 2-step | 15,384 | 22.8% | -11% |
| EAZ | P. borealis | 2-step | 8,513 | 17.7% | +15.3% |
| | P. montagui | Rollover TAC | 2,100 | 14.9% | 0% |



Appendix 2

The table below presents the recommended distribution of total allowable catch levels for the Western and Eastern Assessment Zones.

| Shrimp Fishing Area | Shrimp Species | Management Unit | Fleet | % Allocation of total TAC |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Western Assessment Zone | Northern | Nu-W | Nunavut | 50% |
| | | Nk-W | Nunavik | 50% |
| | Striped | Nu-W | Nunavut | 50% |
| | | Nk-W | Nunavik | 50% |
| Eastern Assessment Zone | Northern | DS-W | Offshore | 45.51% |
| | | | Nunavut | 20.09% |
| | | | Nunavik | 2.23% |
| | | DS-E | Offshore | 9.39% |
| | | | Nunavut | 15.06% |
| | | | Nu-E | 6.18% |
| | Striped | Nk-E | Nunavik | 1.54% |
| | | DS-W/E | Offshore | 38.30% |
| | | Nu-E | Nunavut | 43.19% |
| | | Nk-E | Nunavik | 18.51% |



Appendix 3

The following is a letter from three of the four Nunavut sub-allocation holders regarding the sharing proportions if there were to be an increase or decrease in total allowable catch equal to or greater than 15%.

30 May 2024

Jason Akearok, Executive Director
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
Box 1379
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Via email jakearok@nwmb.com

Dear Mr. Akearok:

Thank you for your letter of May 14, 2024 seeking the views of the Nunavut Fisheries Association (NFA) in relation to the NWMB Allocation Policy Section 12.2, more specifically our views on how possible increases or decreases in shrimp allocation might be shared among allocation holders in the event changes occur in TAC of 15% or greater.

We have discussed among members, and we are pleased to write to say we support sharing as per the status quo with no changes in allocation in respect of any potential decreases or increases.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Sincerely,



Derek Butler
Executive Director

C.c. Trevor Taylor, Chairperson, Fisheries Advisory Committee
Brittany MacLellan, Cumberland Sound Fisheries/Pangnirtung Fisheries Partnership
Chris Flanagan, Chief Executive Officer, Baffin Fisheries Coalition
Harry Earle, General Manager, Arctic Fishery Alliance
Jerry Ward, Director of Fisheries, Qikiqtaaluk Corporation.

Minister of
Fisheries and Oceans



Ministre des
Pêches et des Océans

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E6

September 16, 2024

Mr. Daniel Shewchuk
Chairperson
Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
tsataa@nwmb.com

Mr. Iola Metuq
Chairperson
Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board
tpalliser@nmrwb.ca

Dear Mr. Shewchuk and Mr. Metuq,

I am writing in response to your correspondence of July 18, 2024, regarding the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's (NWMB) and Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board's (NMRWB; the Boards) decisions and recommendations on *Pandalus borealis* and *P. montagui* in the Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ) and Western Assessment Zone (WAZ). I have addressed each of the decisions and recommendations separately by assessment zone herein, for the 2024-25 fishing season.

I would also like to thank you for your correspondence of July 22 and August 6, 2024 regarding the Boards' decisions to support adopting the proposed Precautionary Approach (PA) Frameworks and subsequent amendments to the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) for *P. borealis* and *P. montagui* in the EAZ and WAZ.

I accept the Boards' decisions to amend the IFMP to include the new PA Frameworks in the EAZ and WAZ for *P. borealis* and *P. montagui*.

I note the NWMB's concerns with the 2-step harvest decision rule (HDR) and the associated maximum exploitation rate (ER) sub-rule allowing up to a maximum of 1.5 times the target ER in the Cautious Zone. The highest ER using this approach would result in an ER of 30%, which is on the lower end of ERs commonly employed for other coldwater shrimps (i.e., 30-35 per cent), and would decrease as the stock declines further into the Cautious Zone. In the absence of a model, selecting a 1.5 times the maximum ER sub-rule was deemed a reasonable and cautious approach, which garnered broad support among members of the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee.

The word "Canada" in a serif font, with a small Canadian flag icon above the letter 'a'.

Western Assessment Zone

I agree with the Boards' recommendation for the WAZ to establish an aggregate Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for *P. borealis* of 4,186t resulting in a decrease of 12.6 percent (23.4 per cent potential Exploitation Rate [ER]) and an aggregate TAC for *P. montagui* of 15,384t resulting in a decrease of 11 per cent (22.8 per cent potential ER). These TAC levels are consistent with the WAZ Precautionary Approach framework supported by the Boards and do not pose a conservation concern.

Consistent with that approach, in the Nunavut West management unit, within the Nunavut Settlement Area, I accept the NWMB's decision to set the Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) levels for *P. borealis* at 2,093t and *P. montagui* at 7,692t; and in the Nunavik West management unit, within the Nunavik Marine Region, and I accept the NMRWB's decision to set the Total Allowable Take (TAT) levels for *P. borealis* at 2,093t and *P. montagui* at 7,692t.

I wish to clarify that *P. borealis* and *P. montagui* are both directed species in the WAZ.

Eastern Assessment Zone

I agree with the Boards' recommendation for the EAZ to establish an aggregate TAC for *P. borealis* of 8,513t resulting in an increase of 15.3 per cent (17.7 per cent potential ER). This TAC level is consistent with the EAZ Precautionary Approach framework supported by the Boards and do not pose a conservation concern.

Consistent with that approach, in the Nunavut East management unit, within the Nunavut Settlement Area, I accept the NWMB's decision to set the TAH level for *P. borealis* at 526t; and in the Nunavik East management unit, within the Nunavik Marine Region, I accept the NMRWB's decision to set the TAT level for *P. borealis* at 131t.

I carefully considered the Boards' recommendation for the EAZ to establish an aggregate TAC for *P. montagui* of 2,100t. While I appreciate the conservation considerations raised by the Boards and support the Boards' harvest level decisions within the Nunavut Settlement Area and the Nunavik Marine Region, I am unable to support the recommended allocation of 804t in the Davis Strait East/West management unit. I understand that during your public hearing process the Boards received a proposal that offshore bycatch allocations may be set at 38.3 per cent of the overall TAC when the overall TAC for the EAZ is less than 2,464t. However, it is not clear whether this proposed approach has been discussed with all affected licence holders. As a lower bycatch allocation has the potential to impede the offshore fleet's prosecution of the directed *P. borealis* fishery in these areas, I have decided that an allocation of 920t be available to the offshore fleet for this fishing season. This will result in the establishment of a more conservative TAC than harvest decision rules recommend, without risk to the offshore fleet's harvesting abilities in Davis Strait.

As such, I have established an aggregate TAC for *P. montagui* of 2,216t (15.7 per cent potential ER). Consistent with that approach, I accept the NWMB's decision in the Nunavut West management unit, within the Nunavut Settlement Area, to set the TAH level for *P. montagui* at 907t; and in the Nunavik East management unit, within the Nunavik Marine Region, I accept the NMRWB's decision to set the TAT level for *P. montagui* at 389t.

An appended table illustrates the overall quotas for each management unit based on my decisions herein (Appendix 1).

I would encourage the Boards to continue to engage with Departmental officials to discuss the ongoing management and administration of the shrimp resource in the EAZ and the WAZ.

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

Yours sincerely,



The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
Attachment: Appendix 1

c.c.: Mark Basterfield, Director of Wildlife Management, Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board
Denis Ndeloh, Director of Wildlife Management, Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
Leigh Edgar, Manager, Resource Management Operations, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Jorge Negrin Dastis, Senior Fisheries Management Officer, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Appendix 1

Western Assessment Zone – Total Allowable Catch

| Management Unit | <i>P. borealis</i> (tonnes) | <i>P. montagui</i> (tonnes) |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Nunavut West | 2,093 | 7,692 |
| Nunavik East | 2,093 | 7,692 |
| TOTAL | 4,186 | 15,384 |

Eastern Assessment Zone – Total Allowable Catch

| Management Unit | <i>P. borealis</i> (tonnes) | <i>P. montagui</i> (tonnes) |
|--|--|--|
| Davis Strait West -Offshore | 3,874 | - |
| Davis Strait East – Offshore | 799 | - |
| Davis Strait West - Nunavik | 190 | - |
| Davis Strait West - Nunavut | 1,710 | - |
| Davis Strait East – Nunavut | 1,282 | - |
| Davis Strait East and West - Offshore Bycatch | - | 920 |
| Nunavut East | 526 | 907 |
| Nunavik East | 131 | 389 |
| TOTAL | 8,512 | 2,216 |