

SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD AND NUNAVIK MARINE
REGION WILDLIFE BOARD

FOR

Information:

Decision: X

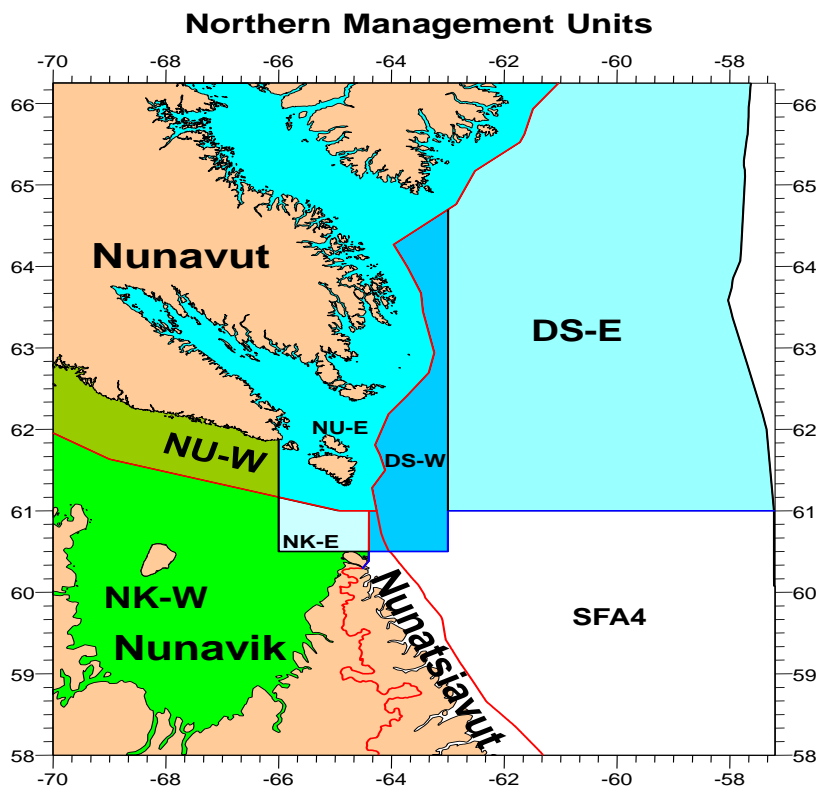
Recommendation: X

Issue: 1) Modifying Management Measures for Nunavut (NU) and Nunavik (NK) Allocations in NU/NK East (NU/NKE) and Davis Strait West (DSW); 2) Removing the Bycatch Designation for *Borealis* in NU/NKE

Map:

Blue areas – Eastern Assessment Zone

Green areas – Western Assessment Zone



Background

Two shrimp species (*Pandalus montagui* and *Pandalus borealis*) occur in the Northern shrimp fishery that takes place in the Davis Strait and eastern Hudson Strait which includes parts of the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA) and the Nunavik Marine Region (NMR). Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for each species is set for two distinct science assessment zones (Eastern and Western), then distributed into management units as per defined sharing arrangements.

This request to the Boards pertains to the management line separating the Nunavut / Nunavik East (NU/NKE), and Davis Strait West (DSW) management units in the Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ), which functions to delineate the Nunavut Settlement Area and the Nunavik Marine Region waters and the offshore area. Nunavut and Nunavik have allocations in each of these management units, as determined through various decision / recommendation processes between the respective wildlife boards and the Minister. The offshore fleet has allocations in DSW. Davis Strait East is not implicated in this request.

As each management unit is assigned its own quota and allocations, catches must be attributed accurately and accordingly, as per conditions of licence. Licence holders must therefore indicate exactly how much shrimp was caught specifically in NU/NKE, and also in DSW against a specific allocation. Currently, accurate reporting of these allocations according to management units is only possible by beginning and ending a tow in one management unit without crossing into the other.

Given the presence of shrimp at the boundary line and increased focus on ensuring that accurate reporting is being achieved in Canadian fisheries, the Department entered into discussions with Nunavut and Nunavik industry on a way forward, which resulted in the current proposal to allow enterprises that fish Nunavut and Nunavik allocations (through direct allocations and via transfers from other suballocation holders) on both sides of the line to cross over the line in a tow to maximize fishing efficiency operations.

From a Science perspective, the stock assessment for *P. borealis* and *P. montagui* is done at the spatial scale of the EAZ, not the management unit. Without an in-depth analysis of the distribution of the resource and fishing efforts (locations of tows), it is virtually impossible to determine the impact of shifting the fishing efforts between the management units that are proposed to be merged exclusively for the three entities. It appears, however, that the management line dividing the NU/NKE and DSW units is located in the middle of the shrimp aggregation located around Resolution Island. It would be reasonable to assume that currently harvests from NU/NKE and DSW are from the same pool of shrimp. Science expects that the removal of the management line between NU/NKE and DSW for the three entities would have limited overall impact on the resource in the EAZ at this time.

The Department is seeking concurrence from the Boards to allow their combined NU/NKE and DSW allocations to be harvested anywhere in these management units. The process for establishing these Nunavut and Nunavik allocations – by decision within the settlement areas, and by advice for DSW will remain the same, however harvesting and reporting will be based on the larger geographical area of the two management units. In essence and specifically for these allocations, the Department proposes removing the boundary line and approving that each entity will have one single suballocation per species that can be fished anywhere in NU/NKE and DSW, instead of distinct allocations that must be caught in each management unit. This addresses the Condition of Licence requirement for accurate reporting and allows for more streamlined operations without presenting a conservation concern. Offshore allocations will continue to be restricted to Davis Strait.

In order for this change to be possible, the bycatch designation for borealis shrimp in NU/NKE made by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and the Nunavik Marine

Region Wildlife Board in 2012 letters dated October 2 and 12 respectively, and accepted by the Minister would need to be modified to be consistent with the directed fishery designation for borealis in DSW. The bycatch designation was in place to align with the previous management regime prior to the 2013 boundary change, in which the SFA 3 (now the Western Assessment Zone) borealis allocation was considered to be a bycatch fishery. There is no bycatch designation for either species in the WAZ.

Montagui is currently a bycatch fishery for the offshore fleet in Davis Strait, and a directed fishery within the settlement areas. The Department will seek recommendations from the Boards and the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee on the bycatch designation of montagui in Davis Strait for the 2020/21 fishery.

Consultations

The Department had a conference call with Nunavut and Nunavik industry that harvests the NU and NK allocations (Baffin Fisheries Coalition, the Nunavut Fisheries Association, Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, and Makivik Corporation / Newfoundland Resources Ltd) on the requirement for accurate reporting on Monday, April 1. Industry agrees that the proposed way forward allows accurate reporting of catches against Nunavut and Nunavik allocations while not impeding operations, and notes the absence of any conservation concern.

Summary of Request

The Department requests the Boards to agree that:

- 1) Harvesters fishing NU and NK allocations can harvest their NU/NKE and DSW allocations anywhere in that combined area; and
- 2) the bycatch designation for borealis will be removed in NU/NKE.

Next Steps

Should the Boards agree with this approach, the Department will amend the Condition of Licence to reflect that entities fishing Nunavut and Nunavik allocations in both NU/NKE and DSW are permitted to catch these allocations anywhere in the combined NU/NKE and DSW geographical area.

Prepared by: Ecosystems and Fisheries Management, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

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