

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

FOR

Information:

Decision: X

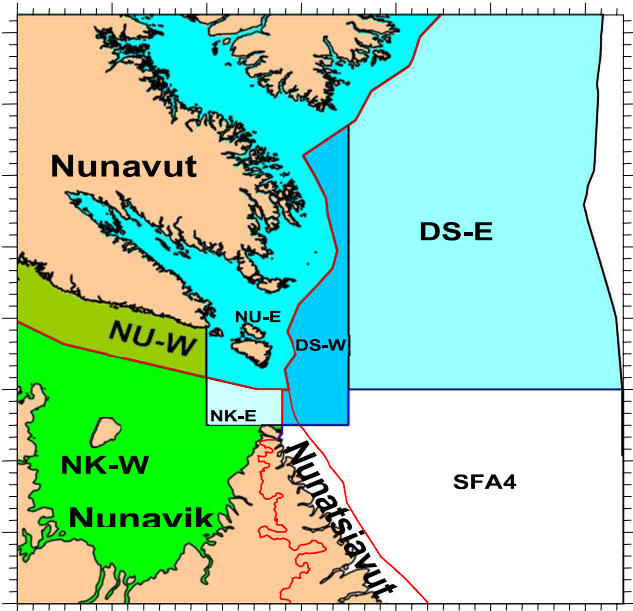
Recommendation: X

Issue: Modification of season-bridging protocols for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations in the Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ)

Map:

Blue areas – Eastern Assessment Zone

Green areas – Western Assessment Zone



Northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*)



Striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*)

Background

Two shrimp species (*P. borealis* and *P. montagui*) occur in the Northern shrimp fishery that takes place in the Davis Strait and eastern Hudson Strait. This fishery is managed according to two distinct stock assessment zones, the Western Assessment Zone (WAZ) and the Eastern Assessment Zone (EAZ) (Appendix 1).

While allocations are provided annually for commercial fishing, season bridging of quota is regarded as a useful operational flexibility in the WAZ and EAZ shrimp fisheries that allows for additional opportunities to catch allocations in full, without compromising the sustainability of the resource. Season bridging is also available in southern Shrimp Fishing Areas.

Collectively, season bridging in the shrimp fisheries refers to 1) borrowing from the following year's quota to be fished in the current year; and 2) transferring some of the current year's unused quota to be caught in the following year (carry forward). Under the current bridging protocols in the EAZ (for *P. borealis*), up to 350t is available for carry forward for Nunavut allocations and 20t for Nunavik allocations, to be fished within the first 120 days (April 1 - July 31 of the following year) (Appendix 2). Quota that is not caught by this date will remain unfished.

In 2020, the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board (NMRWB) and Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) made decisions and recommendations, as appropriate, to maintain the existing season bridging protocols for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations within the WAZ and EAZ, until such time as Harvest Decision Rules (HDRs) are developed for these areas. DFO was in agreement that this extension of season bridging protocols was a constructive way forward while this work is ongoing.

Further in 2020, DFO committed to initiate discussions with the Boards regarding the possible reduction of carry-forward allowances for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations should the EAZ *P. borealis* stock enter the Cautious Zone. The 2022 survey indicated a third consecutive stock decline, such that the stock is now situated just above the midpoint of the Cautious Zone. A recommendation regarding carry-forward allowances for 2023-24 is outlined below.

The Department has received requests from industry to amend season bridging allowances for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations in the WAZ and EAZ, citing inequities among fishing fleets. DFO is actively considering these requests under the broader development of HDRs, and is not yet at a place to seek a decision from the Boards on this matter. DFO confirms that a dedicated resource has been hired to advance work on the development of HDRs in the WAZ and EAZ, beginning in May 2023.

More recently in March 2023, DFO received a request from the Canadian Association of Prawn Producers (CAPP) and the Northern Coalition, representing enterprise allocation holders in the Davis Strait, to extend the deadline for harvesting of carry-forward allowances in the EAZ from July 31 to August 31, in perpetuity. The same request for extension was made in a

submission from Baffin Fisheries Coalition to DFO in March 2023. Rationale provided by industry for the extension includes 1) limited ability to prosecute the fishery in the EAZ due to unfavorable ice conditions in some years; and 2) economic considerations whereby shrimp harvested later in the season (August) are typically of better quality and value.

Notably, DFO approved industry's request to extend the carry-forward harvest deadline in all EAZ management units in 2022 (due to unfavorable ice conditions that year). A recommendation regarding extension of this deadline in 2023 is outlined below.

Science Considerations

In past, the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for *P. borealis* in the EAZ has not been fully taken. This is in part because ice conditions effectively end the fishing season before quotas can be fully prosecuted and because of minimal harvest of quotas in the Davis-Strait East management unit. While harvesting of carry-forward allowances potentially increases the exploitation rate in a given year, the increase would be minimal under current allowances for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations and the offshore fleet in Davis Strait; catches (including carry-forward) are not expected to exceed the TAC for bridged seasons. Further analysis would be required in order to assess the impact of any future changes to these allowances.

DFO Science notes that the deadline by which to harvest carry-forward allowances does not serve as an end to fishing activity (i.e. fishing does not cease at the deadline), but rather an administrative end after which catches must be reported against current year quotas. For this reason and on the basis that catches are not likely to exceed the TAC, extending the carry-forward harvest deadline does not present a conservation concern at this time.

Recommendation

Carry-forward allowances – Further to DFO's commitment from 2020, the Department has considered the appropriateness of reducing carry-forward allowances for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations in 2023-24, given the EAZ *P. borealis* stock has entered the Cautious Zone.

Since current carry-forward allowances are relatively small (350t for Nunavut; 20t for Nunavik), a partial reduction of these allowances in 2023-24 would not amount to substantial reduction in fishing pressure (i.e. would not significantly impact the potential exploitation rate). In the absence of a conservation concern, reducing carry-forward allowances for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations in 2023-24 is considered unnecessary to ensure stock sustainability. DFO recommends maintaining the current carry-forward allowances for Nunavut and Nunavik allocations for the 2023-24 fishing season.

Carry-forward harvest deadline- DFO considered the rationale provided by industry in its request to extend the deadline by which to harvest carry-forward allowances in the EAZ in 2023, from July 31 to August 31. A review of ice charts obtained from Environment and

Climate Change Canada suggests that ice conditions are not expected to be a limiting factor in accessibility of the EAZ in 2023.

In the absence of a conservation concern, DFO recommends to approve requests to extend the carry-forward harvest deadline from July 31 to August 31 for all EAZ management units, for 2023 only. DFO will examine the carry-forward harvest deadline as part of its review of season bridging protocols through the development of HDRs.

Summary of the request

DFO is seeking from the NWMB and NMRWB, for 2023-24:

- 1) Decisions on whether to maintain current carry-forward allowances for Nunavut (350t) and Nunavik (20t) EAZ *P. borealis* allocations, respectively, acknowledging the stock is in the Cautious Zone.
- 2) Decisions to extend the carry-forward harvest deadline for Nunavut and Nunavik *P. borealis* allocations in the Nunavut/Nunavik-East management units, from July 31 to August 31.
- 3) Recommendations to extend the carry-forward harvest deadline for Nunavut and Nunavik *P. borealis* allocations in the Davis Strait management units, from July 31 to August 31.

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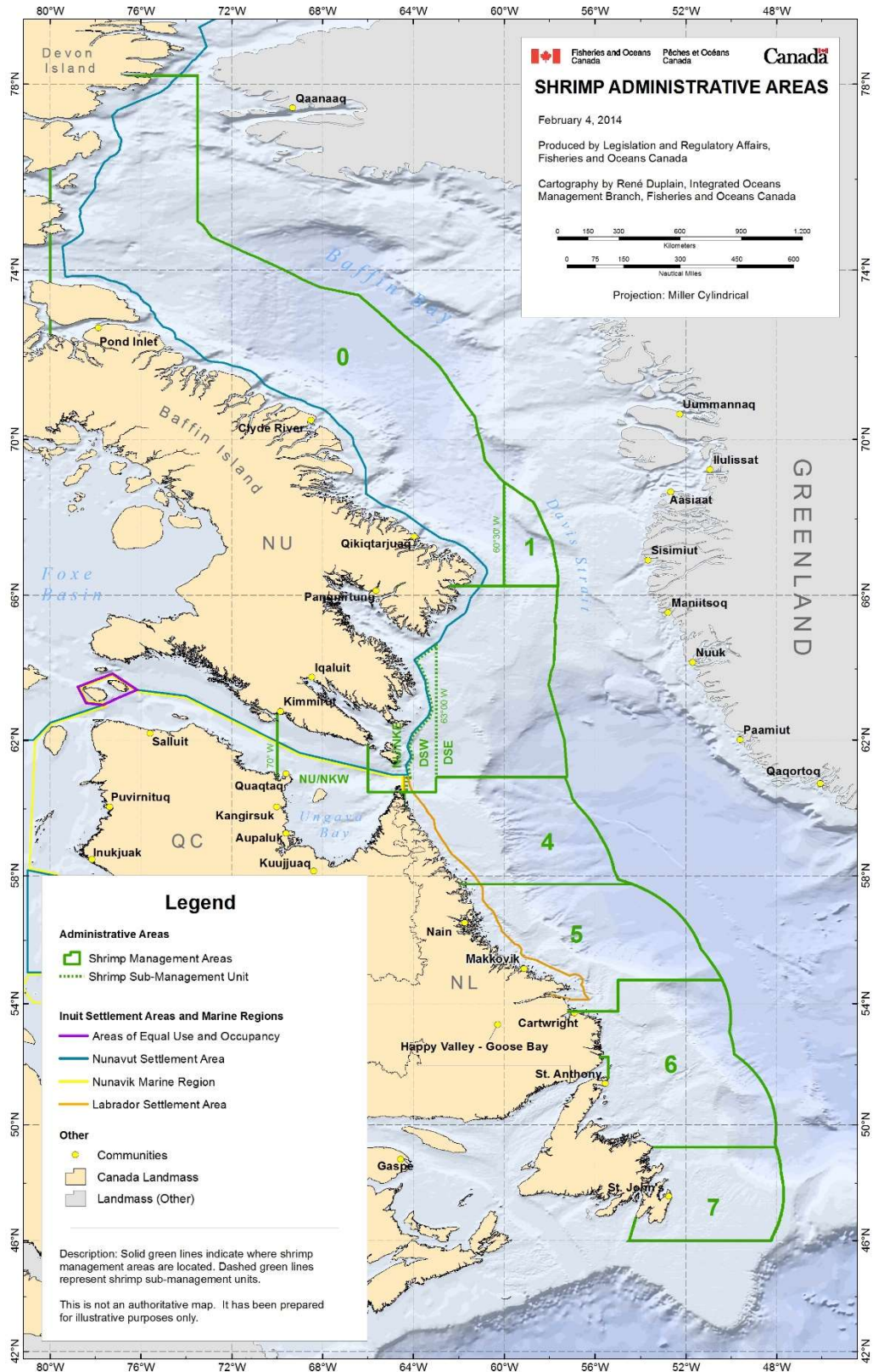
Date: May 5, 2023

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Map of shrimp administrative areas in Atlantic Canada

Appendix 2 – Season bridging protocols for NU and NK Allocations in the WAZ and EAZ

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

Season Bridging Protocol for NU and NK Allocations in the WAZ and EAZ

Carry Forward

WAZ (*P. montagui*)

The Department will make 800t available in the WAZ for carry forward to Nunavut and Nunavik allocation holders annually; sharing of this amount will be consistent with the sharing arrangement established by the Boards.

Currently, based on the 50/50 split, Nunavut and Nunavik will each be able to bridge a total of 400t each. Any carry forward quota not caught by September 30 of the following year will remain unfished.

EAZ - Davis Strait, NU/NK E (*P. borealis*)

350t will be available for carry forward for Nunavut and 20t for Nunavik allocations, to be fished by **July 31** of the following year. Quota that is not caught by this date will remain unfished.

Borrowing

WAZ (*P. montagui*)

Nunavut and Nunavik shall share a total of 550t annually for borrowing based on sharing arrangements established by the Boards, which is currently 275t each. Requests to borrow quota will be assessed by the Department on a case by case basis in consideration of ice and climate conditions.

EAZ - Davis Strait, NU/NK E (*P. borealis*)

Nunavut and Nunavik entities shall be allowed to borrow a total of 225t and 10t respectively from their following year's allocations, to be fished in the last month (March) of the current fishery.

Table 1. Nunavut and Nunavik allocations available for carry forward and borrow.

Area	Nunavik		Nunavut	
	Carry forward	Borrow	Carry forward	Borrow
WAZ <i>P. montagui</i>	400t	275t	400t	275t
WAZ <i>P. borealis</i>	N/A			
EAZ <i>P. montagui</i>	N/A			
EAZ <i>P. borealis</i> <i>(Davis Strait NU/NK E)</i>	20t	10t	350t	225t