

**SUBMISSION TO THE
NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

FOR

Information:

Decision:

Recommendation: X

Issue: 2025 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) level for Northern Shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) in Shrimp Fishing Area 0, and possibility of multiyear TAC



Northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*)

Background

A competitive fishery for Northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) exists in Shrimp Fishing Area (SFA) 0, located in Baffin Bay. SFA 0 is immediately adjacent to and partially within the Nunavut Settlement Area (NSA), however fishing is only permitted outside of the NSA (see map at Appendix 1).

The fishery in SFA 0 operates on a calendar year (January 1 – December 31). Harvesting activity, if any, would likely occur no earlier than June due to ice conditions.

The TAC in SFA 0 has been 500 t since 1996 with the exception of 2020 and 2023, where an interim TAC was set. No catches have been recorded since the onset of this fishery. Nunavut fishing interests have access to the SFA 0 fishery via Qikiqtaaluk Corporation's offshore licence and through 50% ownership of the Unaaq offshore licence. Beginning in the 2024 fishing season, Qikiqtaaluk Corporation and Baffin Fisheries Coalition were granted access to SFA 0 as Nunavut entities.

As this fishery occurs in waters adjacent to the NSA, the Department is seeking a recommendation from the NWMB on maintaining the 2025 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for *P. borealis* in SFA 0 at 500t. The Department is also seeking views on the possibility of having a TAC at this level for 2026.

Science Information

Regular stock assessment surveys for Northern shrimp are not conducted in SFA 0 as there has never been an active fishery in the area. SFA 0 was last assessed in 2010 based on surveys in 2006 and 2008 (Canadian Advisory Report 2010/024; Summary in Appendix 2).

These surveys indicated that biomass indices were low. The fishable biomass index was 750 t (2006) and 1,100 t (2008) with female spawning stock biomass index of 580 t (2006) and 800 t (2008). Based on the biomass indices from 2006 and 2008, if the historic 500 t competitive TAC was set and fully taken in 2023, the potential exploitation rate would be high (66.7 per cent and 45.4 per cent, respective of the fishable biomass index considered).

With only two surveys, no biomass trends can be determined. Current biomass levels and recruitment status are unknown. The area is not currently fished and based on the most recent observed biomass, future prospects for a fishery are limited. As there have been no surveys targeting SFA 0 since 2008, the Department may consider a request for a scientific survey in the coming years. However, such a request would be considered in the context of a number of other departmental priorities in regards to science research.

Consultations

In addition to requesting recommendations from the NWMB, the Department is seeking views from access holders and others with interest in this area (including the offshore fleet of Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC), Nunavut Fisheries Association, QC and BFC as Nunavut entities) on maintaining the SFA 0 TAC at 500 t for 2025. Additionally, the Department is interested in obtaining views on the establishment of a multi-year TAC of 500 t for 2025 and 2026.

Recommendation

In the absence of an annual science survey, and given that no fishing has ever occurred in this area, the Department recommends maintaining the competitive TAC for Northern shrimp (*P. borealis*) of 500 t for at least 2025. Stakeholder views will help inform the possibility of setting a multiyear TAC into 2026.

Summary of Request

DFO is requesting from the Board:

- 1) Recommendation on the 500t competitive TAC for Northern Shrimp (*P. borealis*) in SFA 0 fishable outside the NSA for 2025, including the option to implement a multi-year TAC for two years.

Prepared by: Jorge Negrin Dastis, Fisheries Resource Management, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

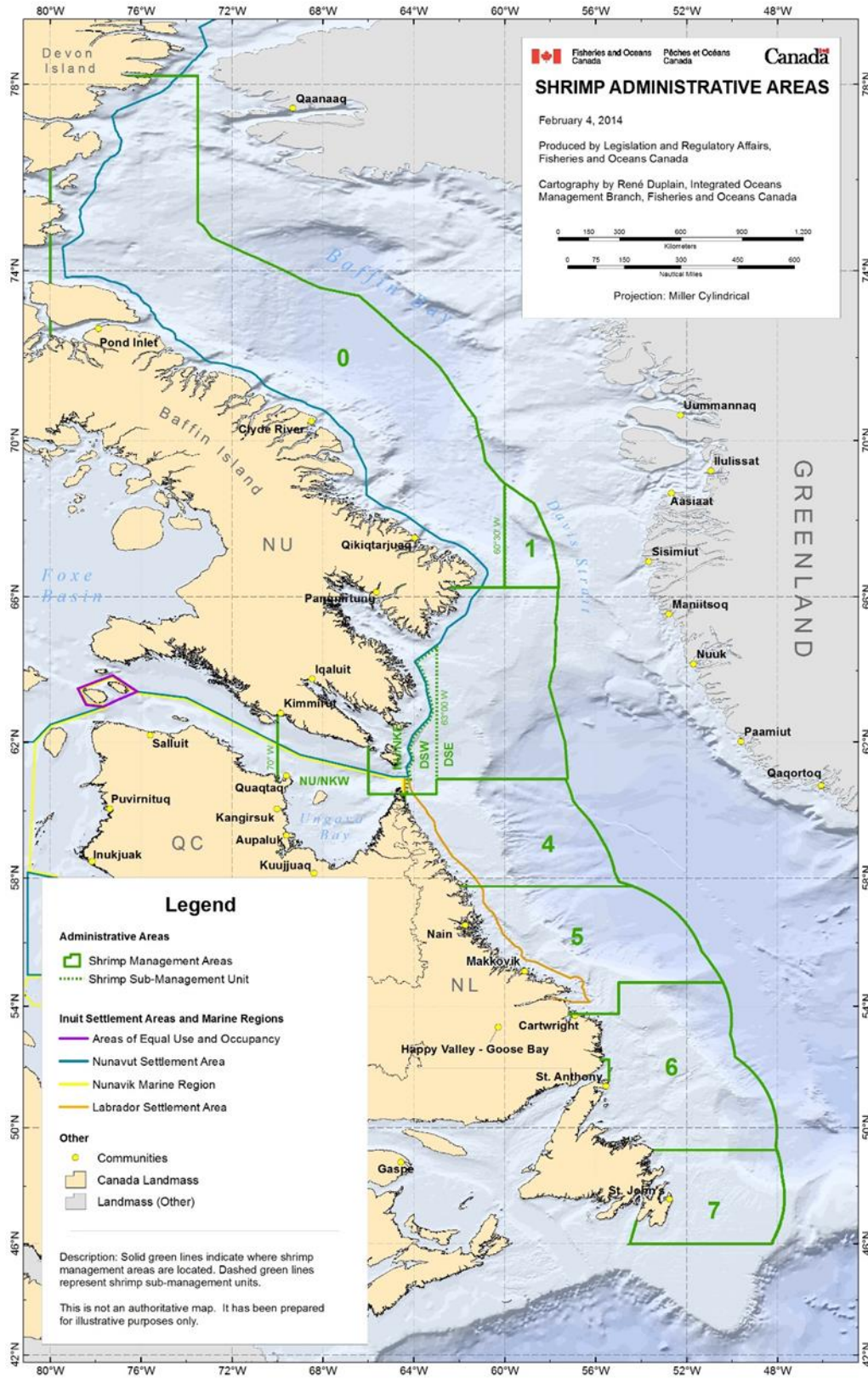
Date: January 3, 2025

Appendices (2)

Appendix 1 – Map of groundfish and shrimp administrative areas in Atlantic Canada (including Shrimp Fishing Area 0)

Appendix 2 – Summary: Assessment of Northern Shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) in SFA 0, 2, 3 and Striped Shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*) in SFA 2, 3 and 4 west of 63°W (Science Advisory Report 2010/024)

APPENDIX 1



APPENDIX 2

Science Advisory Report 2010/024

SUMMARY: Assessment of Northern Shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) in SFA 0, 2, 3 and Striped Shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*) in SFA 2, 3 and 4 west of 63°W

SFA 0 – *Pandalus borealis*

Fishery

- No fishery in recent years.

Biomass

- Resource status is based on two surveys conducted in 2006 and 2008.
- Fishable biomass index was 750 t (2006) and 1,100 t (2008).
- Female spawning stock biomass index was 580 t (2006) and 800 t (2008).

Recruitment

- Recruitment is uncertain.

Mortality

- Competitive TAC of 500 t could result in a potential exploitation rate index of 40%-70% based on the observed biomass. A lower TAC is recommended.

Current Outlook and Future Prospects

- Future prospects for a fishery are limited.
- There are no plans for future surveys in this area.