



Prawn Newsletter

from The Pacific Prawn Fishermen's Association



Volume 2, Issue 5

November 2001

Letter from the President

Brian Van Dorp
President



Your directors and I want to thank all the licences holders for their co-operation and patience through this initial year of the joint project agreement between DFO and the PPFA.

We now have the benefit of the past season's experience and are working hard to simplify the paperwork and payment method for the 2002 fishery.

I am encouraged by the continuous growth in our membership, which now exceeds 76% of the 252 prawn licence holders. Our goal is to encourage all to become members in the near future.

I was pleased that at the November 2 Prawn Caucus Meeting in Nanaimo, where Mr. Morrison of DFO announced that the Association had done an

excellent job and it is DFO's intention to work with the PPFA for the 2002 prawn fishery.

In this newsletter, there are some very important articles for your attention. The update to the Joint Project Agreement between DFO and the PPFA, and the update to the Service Contract with J.O. Thomas are included to keep you informed. When the winter shrimp fishery is over, we are expecting post season reports from DFO and J.O. Thomas around January, 2002 time frame.

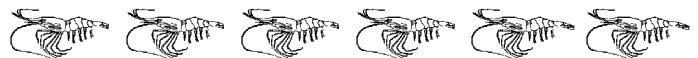
We have including a discussion paper from TNAC. As you are aware, PPFA has a seat on TNAC and the prawn harvest agreement was presented by the federal government for discussion at the last TNAC meeting. Jim Morrison has also indicated to the prawn sectoral committee that discussion regarding the proposed prawn harvest agreement will take place in the January/February time frame. The PPFA's position is that the federal government should buy out existing prawn licences for treaty settlements and that all prawn licences have the same set of rules and regulations. Segregated fishery is not sustainable. The salmon fishery is a prime example of a harvest agreement that has gone amiss.

Jim Morrison has also provided us with a glimpse of the activities behind the scene during the prawn fishing season.

In closing, the PPFA will be working closely with the newly elected prawn caucus to ensure that our prawn fishery will open on time. ■

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Results of Prawn Caucus Election

DFO recently completed the process to elect Prawn Caucus representatives. A total of 220 ballots were received representing 87% of licence holders. This is an unprecedented vote and means that advice from the Caucus is very representative of the license holders. The new Prawn Caucus representatives and the number of votes they received are as follows:

- BC Prawn Fishermens Group (Mike Cullen and Dan Stevens) 32
- Mid Island Prawn Group (Bob Alford) 16
- North Island Prawn Association (Tom Orr and Kelly Loxton) 38
- Pacific Prawn Group (Nathan Pearl) 17
- Pro Quota Group (Brian Van Dorp and Kevin Erikson) 33
- Powell River Prawn Group (Chris Marshman) 17
- Steveston Prawn Group (Dean Keitsch and John Jenkins) 31
- Bill Stefiuk 28

DFO has also invited the PPFA as the representative industry association to participate in the Prawn Caucus meetings as a non-voting member. ■



Update on The Joint Project Agreement between DFO and the PPFA



Prawn license holders were advised last year that DFO would not be able to fund many of the management, monitoring, enforcement and research activities associated with an increasingly complex prawn by trap fishery. Furthermore, DFO no longer has the authority to collect through license fees funds for management of the fishery. To address the needs of the fishery, DFO and the PPFA entered into a Joint Project Agreement (JPA) to:

- (a) To contract with a service provider to conduct a spawner-index testing program necessary for in-season management of the commercial prawn by trap fishery;
- (b) Provide financial contributions to DFO in support of management, enforcement and science activities required for the proper care and management of the commercial prawn by trap fishery.

While the Collaborative Agreement will be between DFO and the PPFA, it is for the benefit of all prawn by trap license holders. Operational program deliverables under the JPA included:

- ❖ The provision of replacement trap tags and the electronic registration of replacement trap tag numbers to a DFO internet database.
- ❖ Arranging for and providing in-season fishing activity (hail) information and transferring hail information to a DFO internet database.
- ❖ In-season monitoring of the prawn fishery including on-board gear and document inspections and collection of spawner-index information. All information to be transferred to a DFO internet database.

The identified funding contributions to DFO included:



- ❖ Provision of \$85,000 to DFO to fund enforcement, management and research activities for the May 1 to July 31, 2001 period
- ❖ Provision of \$7,590 as a contingency to fund enforcement, management and research activities for a maximum of 10 days should the fishery extend beyond July 31.

As you are aware the fishery closed prior to July 31. As stated in the Prawn Caucus letter to W license holders dated March 27, 2001: *"If there is a surplus, license holders will receive a refund in proportion to their payment as a single or stacked license."* Schedule C, Part 1, Section A, Subsection 3 of the JPA requires DFO to provide the PPFA with a post-season report identifying how the project funds have been expended to support the mutual objectives described in the joint project agreement. The PPFA will likely not receive this report from DFO until near the end of the year. Until such time we can not advise license holders and the Prawn Caucus whether or not there is any surplus to be refunded to license holders.

We can advise you, however, that 2 of the 252 licenses did not participate in this year's fishery and of the 250 that did participate, 15 have not yet contributed to the DFO cost-sharing activities identified in the Joint Project Agreement. The PPFA is trying to contact these licenses to ask that they send in their contribution. However, if they choose not to make their payments, the refund back to all other license holders will be reduced by some amount necessary to cover those who did not pay. The PPFA believes that this is not a fair and equitable situation and is working with the Prawn Caucus and DFO to develop an industry funding mechanism that addresses this problem.

In recent discussions with DFO the Department has indicated they would like to enter into another Joint Project Agreement with the PPFA for the 2002 commercial prawn by trap fishery. ■



Update on the Contract With J.O. Thomas



Consistent with the PPFA's obligations under the JPA, the association entered into an agreement with J.O. Thomas and Associates (JOT) to carry out spawner-index sampling, compliance inspections and provide information to DFO for in-season management of the fishery. JOT was selected by the Prawn Caucus through a competitive bidding process conducted in February of 2001. The PPFA entered into an agreement with JOT in April.

To date JOT has successfully carried out its requirements under the agreement, including: recruitment and hiring; training; trap tag distribution; vessel activity reporting; vessel deployment; spawner-index sampling; compliance inspections; and data management.

A total of 95,250 initial and 35,000 replacement tags were inventoried and stored by JOT for the fishery. Between April 4 and April 30, 178 initial sets of 300 tags and 36 sets of 500 tags were issued. Between May 1 and July 18, 13 replacement sets of 300 tags and 4 replacement sets of 500 tags were issued.

Fishing vessel hails were taken by JOT to help direct enforcement, understand the levels of distribution of fishing effort for management, and direct monitors to ensure adequate spawner-index sampling coverage. JOT provided a 24 hour toll-free service 7 days per week. As of the end of September, 1263 hails had been taken and documented. Hails will continue to be taken from localized fisheries in Masset Inlet, Prince Rupert Harbour, and Sooke until December 31.

JOT deployed vessels throughout the fishery to monitor activity and conduct spawner-index sampling. A total of 1358 samples comprising



Update on Contract with J. O. Thomas
.... continued from page 3

23,015 traps were collected, the largest number of traps ever sampled since the inception of the commercial fishery program. Samples were taken from 209 of 214 (97%) vessels fishing, representing all major and most other fishing areas through the season.

A total budget of \$340,572 (plus GST) was set to cover program costs to July 31, 2001. Actual costs to July 31, 2001 were \$329,542 (plus GST). A contingency budget of \$23,662 (plus GST) was set to provide coverage in the event of a fishery extending beyond July 31. The contingency budget was not used and will be refunded back to license holders.

A final report from JOT, including total program expenditures, will be provided to each license holder in January after JOT has completed their contract obligations.

The service provider contract was a one year agreement. The PPFA will be working closely with DFO and the Prawn Caucus on completion of a new "Request for Proposal" for service providers to bid on early in 2002. ■



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Week 9 of the Prawn Fishery – June 25 to 29

Jim Morrison

Shellfish Management Biologist



Monday. This note wasn't written until Friday, and by now, Monday seems like a long time ago. On Monday, Mike, Jennifer and Jim discuss last week's contamination sampling program, and decide on a course of action for further sampling. Mike and Jennifer begin assembling gear for this week's sampling.

Tuesday. Mike and Jennifer head out in Area 17 to pick up contamination samples. Samples results arrive by fax at 8:30. Contamination is present in prawns coming over the rail. Results are faxed to CFIA Parksville, and then discussed. As the day progresses, all fishers who assisted in the sampling are advised of their results, and the buyers who assisted with sample collection receive a general overview. JM calls Mike and Jennifer and bait cup residue is added back into the sampling program.

Wednesday. Mike and Jennifer take the first set of samples up to the lab in Courtenay, to meet the 24 hr. deadline for delivery. There are phone calls coming in from fishers and the observer expressing concern for 29-3. But there's only one sample out of that area this week, and the data hasn't arrived yet. The need for more samples, quickly, is identified to Doug T. at JOT, and the observer arranges to meet boats to get the index samples.

The observer that was working 14 came across some low index values and carried on in this area to ensure there was a good picture. However, he was unable to get to 15, which is now running short on information.

Fishers are calling. Some just state that they want areas closed, some are providing catch by grade information, some are indicating that fishing is as expected for this time of year. There are discussions of last week's new moon on the summer solstice, the high pressure area that some believe leads to reduced catches, and the appearance of a few "soft heads" or "big skirts"



showing up, which may indicate that the prawns are molting in a number of areas in the Gulf. Right after molting, when they are still softshell, prawns may be less apt to move into the traps until they harden up.

Thursday. Mike and Jennifer are out in 17, collecting contamination samples. Jim is writing impact statements for prawn investigations, which will be provided to Crown Counsel for information and presentation in court. A summary of comments received from fishers this week is e-mailed out to the other prawn managers.

Friday. Some fishery managers begin looking at the spawner index files for this week at about 6:30. The e-mail from Hai includes 16 files, for sampling in 16 different fishery management areas over the preceding week. The files are stripped out of the e-mail, then brought up on the computer screen, printed out and reviewed for samples which are below the target index. The target for June is 5.9 for most coastal areas, and 6.8 for the special management areas. At this time of season, we start to see mixed results in areas being fished down – we are looking for those areas where about half of the indexes are near or below target, and the other half are above. We hope that we don't find too many where all of the index values are at or below the target. When we see low numbers, we also look at the information about the fisher's experience – former years of fishing at this location, and has he been at this location this year long enough to find the prawns. On the other hand, if he has spent too many days at this location, maybe he's not moving his gear around enough. Lot's of questions.

Hai has also prepared some computer graphics files. These show on-screen maps of where this week's samples have come from, all of the sampling done to date, and the areas that are presently closed. These maps will be used to consider where there has been sampling coverage, and where we need observers next.

Jennifer leaves the office at about 7:30 – taking

yesterday's samples up to the lab in Courtenay.

Mike arrives and fires up his computer. He goes into a new program set up for the prawn fishery this year to receive the incoming information from J.O. Thomas over the internet. It's called FOS, the Fishery Operations System. In particular for this day, Mike calls up the vessel activity reports and generates a print out from the hail information, that summarizes how many boats are fishing in each fishery management area. This will be compared to last week's report, to see where the effort has shifted, largely as a result of the closures that have been coming on line.

Mike notes that the hail reports are starting to get unreliable. There's boats that show hailed into closed areas, which have likely left and not rehauled, and there's some hails that haven't been renewed since the opening. That just makes it tougher to figure out what needs to be done.

8:30. Time to fire up the conference call.

11:30. That was a tough conference call. About 1 hour longer than previous weeks. Lot's of discussion. Jim M., Jim B., Hai, Beth, Kim, Doug T., Juanita, Randy and Mike participated this week. It changes a bit from week to week depending on who is available. The review runs from north to the south, Area by Area. Working from the hail database, Mike indicates what has happened with recent vessel movements in that Area. Jim B. and Hai review the spawner index information that has come in for the past week, often to the computer maps of sample locations to show sampling distribution/coverage. The fishery manager for the area reviews information received from the fishers. Doug T. provides any comments received from the observers for that area. Closures are discussed, decided and a date set. The need and timing for more index sampling is reviewed. Doug T. advises on observer availability. Recommendations are provided to Doug for areas needing attention. The we go on to the next coastal Area, step by step.



This week - hails are too broad in the north for observers to find the boats for sampling. Closures are decided for portions of Area 5, 6, 7, 8. We need to find out more about an area. One person offers to call a fisher's wife, and ask that the question get relayed out to the fisher about conditions in his fishing area. One vessel refused to have an on-board inspection. A fishery manager will contact C&P and recommend that Officers visit the vessel. Another Area needs more info – Doug. T to call observers and ask what they are seeing and what the fishers are telling them. It's agreed that the Area will be closed if more info is not available by the following Friday. The observer that was heading for 11 will be sent back into 12 as there's a greater need for information there at this time. It's time to check on Bute. Area 14 is starting to show mixed results typical of the "mid-season" fishery, but closures are not required yet. Area 15 also needs attention quickly. Add note to announcement that this Area is under review. A fishery manager will try to contact some fishers and observers across the weekend, and will share the information with the other managers on Monday for a possible short notice closure decision. 16-2 will close, and announce that 16-21 is under review. Parts of 29 and 28 will close, and Howe Sound needs sampling. Close parts of 17 and 18. A fishery manager will try to reach a fisher on the west coast Vancouver Island to get advice on suspected weakness in one Area. Final discussions of observer distribution for the upcoming week are completed. There's some suggestion of more vessels heading to Saanich Inlet. If so, that may require a short notice closure.

After the conference call, fishery managers prepare the variation orders announcing the closures which were decided this day. This includes variation orders for the shrimp trawl fishery as well, as prawn retention is affected by the closures. Telephone information messages in Nanaimo and Prince Rupert are updated by the end of the day. Mike faxes updates to the CCG broadcast stations, for inclusion in the broadcasts on Monday and Tuesday.

This week appears to mark the transition between the mid-season and end-season portions of the fishery. In mid-season there is an increasing pattern of areas showing mixed high and low indexes. The end-season pattern commences with vessels moving around as a result of closures, concentrating on the remaining fishing grounds.

This was week 9. ■



I call Myself a Fisherman

Rochelle Kooyman



You know when you meet someone and you're asking them about themselves, like where they come from? And they ask you about yourself, like what you do for a living? I love it when they ask me that. I get a little surge of pride and I'm pretty sure I start to glow before I get the first word out: "I'm a fisherman". It took a long time for me to get comfortable saying it. You see, I was in university when I first started fishing, so I called myself a student. I got the odd thrill back then in telling someone what I was, but I think it had more to do with the student discount I was hoping to get than it did with pride in that 'occupation'. Oh, and I wasn't much of a student. The parts I looked forward to most were weekends, and summers. Especially the last two summers of school, cuz I got to go fishing! It was heaven for me. I worked hard, felt productive and slept well. I met lots of fun, resourceful, self-reliant, and probably half-crazy fishermen. Things were pretty straightforward. If you work hard each day, and there are prawns down there, you'll catch them. If there aren't, you won't. If it blows hard, there'll be big waves. If something breaks down (and something will), you fix it. And if you've got something funny, lewd or crude to say, say it loud! Well, after graduating, I was happy to stop calling myself a student. But when I'd compare myself to the fishermen I'd met, when I heard their stories –



I call Myself a Fisherman.... continued from page 6

like coming from the prairies, knowing nothing about the water, buying a boat and just going for it. Or getting a boat at twenty or twenty-one, hardly having run one before, and taking off salmon or halibut fishing with a deck-hand, some grub and a whole lotta "piss-and-vinegar". God, the places they'd been, the things they'd done. I wasn't worthy of the same title. Which presented a wee problem: if I wasn't a student, and I wasn't a fisherman, what the heck was I? At first, "deck-hand" worked ok, but then I started to run the boat for awhile (and didn't do too badly, even though as my buddy told it I kept setting *under* him). Still, calling myself "skipper" felt too bold and presumptuous. And "fisherwoman" had too many syllables and didn't respect the courage, sacrifices and determination of the men who created the industry. Finally, after some humming and hawing, I decided to call myself a fisherman. I did not buy a boat when I was twenty, nor have I been a hundred miles off-shore when it's blowing 60 or 70 or more. But I've put some time in on the water, I've taken the helm awhile, and I love fishing. I believe myself fortunate to have such a great livelihood. I get to work among people whose company I enjoy and whom I admire. They are funny, ingenious, interesting and often mischievous. I breath fresh air all day, I see the sun sparkle on the water and porpoises splash playfully by. I have yet to get the flabby arms that women my age complain of. And I get that thrill and surge of pride every time someone asks me... "So what do you do for a living?" ■



PRAWN CAUCUS MEETING

November 29th

Coast Bastion Hotel, Nanaimo
10:30



PRAWN SECTORAL MEETING

November 30th

Dorchester Hotel, Nanaimo
10:00



Summary: Prawn & Coliform Sampling Program



Jennifer Toole

DFO

Fisheries and Oceans personnel undertook 2 rounds of sampling from June 19 to July 18, 2001 to assess the presence of faecal coliform bacteria in prawns. The first round of sampling of hold water and prawns confirmed that prawns contained coliform bacteria before coming onboard the fishing vessels. The second round of samples of bait and prawns was intended to determine whether this coliform bacteria was from bait or environmental sources.

Sampling Procedures (June 19 & 20, 2001)

Fishermen and buyers in the Powell River area assisted DFO in collecting prawn and hold water samples for analysis. Five vessels and three buyers participated in sampling Pacific Fishing Management areas 13, 14 & 15.

Hold Water Samples

- A hold water sample of at least 100ml was collected before the first haul, in sterile bottles provided by North Island Lab, by each of 5 participating vessels. Samples were labelled with CFV/VRN and time, and stored in a cooler at a temperature less than 4 degrees Celsius.
- A second hold water sample was collected by each fisher after 2-4 strings were hauled and prawns were kept in hold water. This sample was also labelled and stored as above.
- Water samples were picked up by Fisheries and Oceans personnel and transported via Bates Air Ltd. to North Island Lab. Samples were transported at temperatures less than 4 degrees Celsius and delivered within 6 hours of the time of sampling, as recommended by Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program (CSSP) sampling protocol.
- In total 4 pairs of hold water samples were collected.



Prawn Samples



- 8 – 10 prawns were retrieved by fishers from one trap off each string.
- Prawns were collected using ziploc bags in a manner to prevent contamination of sample from the sampler's hands (wash water was also provided). Prawns were taken directly out of the trap before contact with any vessel surfaces.
- Samples were double bagged in ziploc bags labelled with vessel and location information, and placed in coolers for pick up by Fisheries and Oceans personnel. These samples were picked up the same day and transported the next day to North Island Lab. Samples were held and transported at temperatures < 4 degrees Celsius, and were delivered within 24 hours of the time of sampling as recommended by CSSP sampling protocol.

Sampling Procedures (June 21 – July 19, 2001)

Sampling was continued by Fisheries and Oceans personnel on board commercial fishing vessels in Pacific Fishery Management areas 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, & 19. Samples of prawns and bait were collected from the same trap and analysed to assess any correlation between product showing coliform bacteria and the bait.

In most cases, Fisheries and Oceans personnel boarded fishing vessels to take samples directly from traps. In several cases vessels offered to contribute to the sampling program and were provided with kits for collection of samples.

Paired samples of bait and prawns were taken from one trap in a string, and labelled with vessel and location information:

- Prawn samples were gathered directly from the trap before contact with any vessel surfaces, using latex gloves. Samples were

collected into ziploc bags and placed into plastic containers (live prawns were able to puncture through doubled ziploc bags in the first phase of sampling). Samples were labelled with vessel and location information.

- Bait residue samples were collected out of the bait cup from the same trap that prawns were taken from, and held separately from prawn samples to avoid cross contamination.
- Samples were transported at temperatures <4 degrees Celsius, and delivered to North Island Labs within 24 hours for analysis.

Summary of Results

- The first round of samples established that prawns were contaminated before arriving on board the vessels. Consequently, hold water samples were discontinued in subsequent sampling.
- CFIA identified concerns regarding product according to the following bacteriological guidelines:
 - 3 or more of 5 samples **>400 MPN/100g, but < 4000 MPN/100g.**
 - 1 of 5 samples **> 4000 MPN/100g**
- A total of 121 samples were obtained between June 19 and July 18, 2001.
 - 8 hold water samples
38% showed coliform counts
 - 70 prawn tissue samples
30% showed coliform counts
 - 43 bait samples
21% showed coliform counts

Excluding bait mixed with fish, only 12% of bait samples tested positive for coliform bacteria.

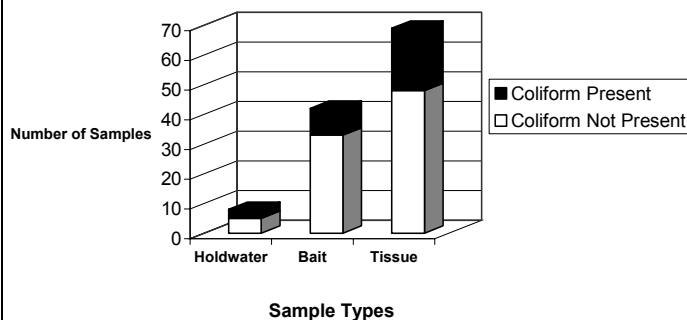


Summary: Prawn & Coliform Sampling Program
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- Hold water showed higher coliform levels after product was kept in holding tanks, than before hauling.
- Prawns showing coliform counts were found in all Pacific Fishery Management areas sampled except PFMA 12, in which case only contaminated bait was found. However, it was only possible to collect a limited number of samples, therefore these numbers may not be representative.
- Prawns showed coliform counts even when bait showed no coliform counts.
- There were 3 prawn tissue samples and 1 bait sample that showed coliform counts >4000 MPN/100g.
- All bait samples containing fish showed coliform counts.
- All prawn tissue samples from the Victoria area showed coliform counts.

DATA

Results of Coliform Sampling



DRAFT TNAC – FISHERIES COMMITTEE Discussion Paper Prawn Harvest Agreements



As part of the fisheries component of treaty negotiations, First Nations are seeking access to commercial harvesting opportunities. However, many First Nations are not interested in access to regular commercial fisheries. Canada has developed the option of entering into Harvest Agreements (HAs), which will provide harvesting opportunities similar, but not identical, to the regular commercial fishery. One species that is under consideration for possible use in a Harvest Agreement is prawns. Canada is seeking advice on the issues involved in negotiating such a Harvest Agreement. Canada will also seek advice from industry representatives in the appropriate sectors.

Fishery Background

Prawn (*Pandalus platyceros*) are the largest of the seven commercially harvested shrimp species (*Pandalus spp.*) on Canada's Pacific coast. The commercial fishery is limited entry with each of the 253 licences allowing for the use of 300 traps per vessel. Currently, a second licence may be stacked on a vessel, in which case a limit of 500 traps is imposed. In special management areas the number of traps is reduced to 50 % of the above figures. All licenses are allowed to fish coastwide in areas open to prawn harvesting.

The commercial fishery is actively managed by "spawner index", which is a measure of the average number of females per standard trap caught in 24 hours. When the spawner index reaches a set level, the fishery is closed. In-season closures may occur in local areas and sub-areas for conservation or manageability. The coastwide fishery is typically open for 70-90 days in May to July.

A minimum size limit ensures non-retention of juveniles, which is mainly accomplished with trap mesh size limits. As well, fishers are permitted to haul traps only once per day (single haul) in order to reduce handling and release mortality of



undersized prawns, by providing time for undersized prawns to leave the traps.

Information on the prawn fishery and biology is available, including the Prawn and Shrimp by Trap Integrated Fishery Management Plan and other documents, at www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ops/fm/shellfish/prawn/default.htm.

Harvest Agreements – General

Harvest Agreements are a tool available to negotiators to provide a First Nation with access to commercial fishery opportunities. It is expected that these agreements will:

- Operate under a common regulatory framework which will lead towards convergence with the future commercial fishery;
- Operate under a licence issued by the Minister
- Be negotiated concurrently with, but not protected as part of, a treaty with a First Nation;
- Establish a fishery separate from the treaty protected domestic harvest;
- Establish commercial fishing opportunities comparable to the commercial fishing capacity already acquired or to be acquired;
- Be evergreen (e.g. term of 25 years, renewable on the same terms at the discretion of the First Nation every 15 years for a further 25 years);
- Include provisions for the harvest and disposition of fish, harvest monitoring, and fisheries management;
- Ensure that First Nations pay any management costs associated with the fishery at rates equivalent to commercial harvesters; and
- Include a dispute resolution process and a process for termination of the Harvest

Agreement including a requirement for fair compensation.

First Nations will have certain interests they wish to see reflected in a HA. These may include economic development, capacity building, sharing of treaty benefits within their community, and reentering commercial fisheries in which they previously participated. One desire expressed by many First Nations is to provide opportunities for more community members by splitting the benefits among several smaller vessels. Another interest is to diversify their fishery by acquiring capacity in different fisheries to provide fishing opportunities throughout the year.

In order for HAs to be a successful tool in treaty negotiations, negotiators will need to take into account third party concerns, including advice received from industry, as well as the interests of First Nations.

For further information, refer to the paper “Harvest Agreements – Where to From Here?” distributed to TNAC earlier this year.

Prawn Harvest Agreements – Options for Defining Shares

A number of options may be considered to define the opportunity or share of the prawn fishery that a First Nation might access through a HA. Some options are:

1. Licence Equivalents - Provide the First Nation with opportunity to acquire fishing capacity equivalent to ‘x’ licences. If the number of traps per licence changes in the regular fishery, then the HA would change accordingly. If “splitting” of licences is permitted, then vessel/trap limit options could be tested and explored over time. Licence splitting issues could be dealt with in licence conditions. *Licence equivalents may provide flexibility for adjustments as the fishery evolves.*



2. Trap Allocation – Provide the First Nation with a fixed number of traps. Minimum/maximum traps per vessel could be specified in the HA as in option 1. *This option is less flexible as the number of traps is fixed, regardless of changes in the regular commercial fishery.*
3. Share of Total Allowable Catch – Provide the First Nation with a share of the TAC in a given area. *This option may be difficult to implement as the fishery is not managed to a TAC and catch data is not generally available until well after the fishery has closed.*
4. Special Area – Provide the First Nation with an area in which they would have priority or exclusivity over the regular commercial fleet, either for the entire season or part of it. Recreational harvesters would have to be taken into account. *Production in local areas can be subject to high annual variability.*
5. Other Options?

Management Considerations

Relationship to the Regular Commercial Fishery

Flexibility regarding splitting of traps/vessel – Rules to limit stacking were implemented to reduce concentration of ownership, increase employment and provide for the participation of a small boat fleet. Trap splitting provisions of a HA are directed at similar objectives.

Question: What limitations should be considered if trap splitting is to be included in a prawn HA?

Area – First Nations are most likely to want to harvest prawns in their local area, especially if trap splitting is permitted, allowing for the use of smaller vessels.

Question: Should prawn HAs include area limitations? What happens if the limited area is closed?

Other Licence Conditions

Question: Where could there be flexibility in other licence conditions governing conduct of HA prawn fisheries (e.g. times, methods, gear, identification)?

Monitoring, Enforcement and Catch Reporting

Trap splitting may raise enforcement concerns. Smaller vessels may be more difficult to identify, more vessels must be inspected, smaller trap limits may allow more opportunity for multiple hauls, etc. Commercial harvesters are required to report all catches on fish slips and in harvest logs.

Acquisition of Harvest Capacity

Licences will be retired on a voluntary basis from the commercial fleet and will be directed as much as possible at vessels that have fished in the area local to the First Nation in recent years.

Question: Should governments or a First Nation retire prawn harvest capacity?

Question: Should a prawn HA specify a maximum capacity that may be acquired and fished under the HA?

Licence Transferability

In the regular commercial prawn fishery, harvest capacity may be leased or transferred. The harvest capacity in prawn HAs could theoretically be transferred back into the regular commercial fleet. The HA and any associated licence conditions would not be transferable.

Question: Should harvest capacity from a prawn HA be able to be leased or sold? What limitations should be placed on the lease or sale of the capacity? If sold, can it be replaced at a later date?

Other

Question: What other issues should be considered?

The Elected Directors of the Pacific Prawn Fishermen's Association



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