

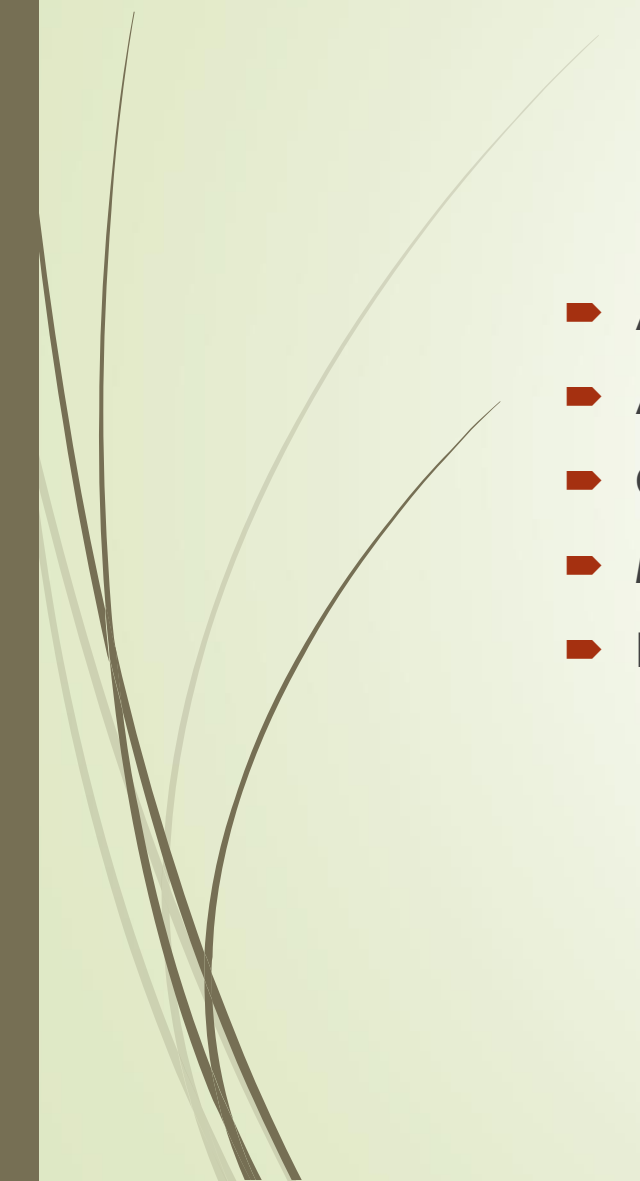


# **NEW BRUNSWICK CRAB INDUSTRY'S POSITION CONCERNING THE NORTH ATLANTIC RIGHT WHALE AND THE SNOW CRAB FISHERY**

**FOPO – OTTAWA – October 25, 2018**



# Prepared jointly by

- Association des crabiers acadiens inc.
  - Association des pêcheurs professionnels crabiers acadiens
  - Crabiers du Nord-Est inc.
  - Maritime Fishermen's Union
  - New Brunswick Snow Crab processors Association
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# Desired Results

- ▶ Improve the NARW management measures to ensure an ordered snow crab fishery and an effective protection of the NARW during the 2019 fishing season
- ▶ Lessons from the 2018 fishing season:
  - ▶ severe logistical challenges and an extremely difficult fishery
  - ▶ negative social and economic impacts, especially for processing sector
  - ▶ industry members excluded from DFO's decision-making process
  - ▶ Stakeholders' confidence in DFO shaken

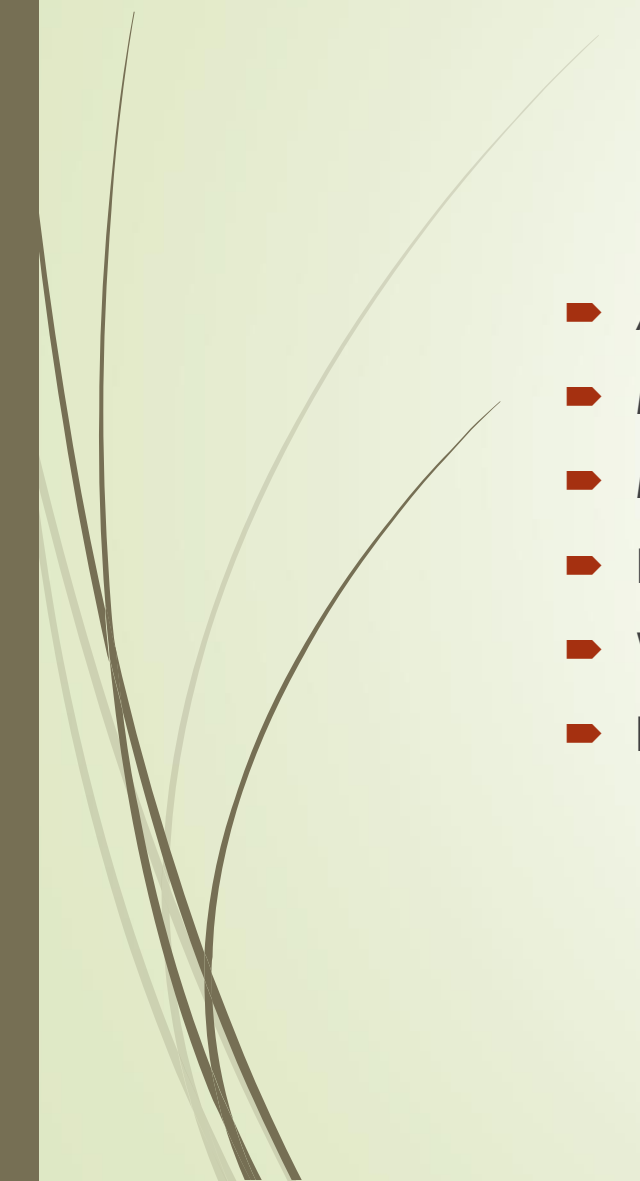


# Desired Results

- We seek to promote a real collaboration effort with DFO and are highly motivated by the healthy coexistence of North Atlantic Right Whales and the crab fishery
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# Management Measures to Uphold for 2019

- ▶ A common opening date for the fishery
  - ▶ Measures to restrict the speed of vessels in problematic areas
  - ▶ Marking of ropes and buoys (not only in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence)
  - ▶ Requirement to report lost gear to DFO
  - ▶ Weekly meetings between DFO and the industry
  - ▶ Importance of locating and eliminating cables floating on the water.
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# Management Measures to Uphold for 2019

- ▶ Need to insure early icebreaking activities in the northern New Brunswick harbors as soon as possible and need to start the fishing activities season when fishers and fleets can navigate safely.
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# Managing closed areas based on the observation of whale agglomerations

- ▶ More flexible management strategy regarding closed areas based on the presence of more than one whale.
  - ▶ Whales tend to concentrate in certain major areas of the crab fishery.
  - ▶ Whales tend to move towards specific locations to forage and remain there for several days or even weeks.
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# Managing closed areas based on the observation of whale agglomerations

- ▶ Integrate the additional data collected in 2018 as soon as possible in order to model changes in the incidences and movements of whales in the Gulf of St-Lawrence in 2018
  - ▶ Use this modelling exercise to devise other possible closed area scenarios for 2019
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# New closed area scenarios for the 2019 season

- ▶ This modelling exercise should help identify measures that are better suited to the exercise of our fishery while maximizing NARW protection by determining:
- ▶ opportunities to reduce the dimensions of closed areas;
- ▶ opportunities to effectively reduce the duration of closures;
- ▶ opportunities to use the dynamic closure formula exclusively;
- ▶ opportunities to apply scenarios that initiate closures in the presence of more than one whale (*i.e.*, 2 or 3 whales).




# New closure area scenarios for the 2019 season

- ▶ This modelling exercise should help identify measures that are better adapted to the fishery while maximizing whale protection by determining:
- ▶ opportunities to change the combination of static and dynamic closures by first relying on dynamic closures until the presence of whales is stabilized in a more precise area within the foraging area, as was the case in 2018.
- ▶ Once this area has been identified, select the desired protection dimensions around it, thereby delimiting a static exclusion zone until the end of the season.



# Duration of dynamic closures reduced to 7 days (or less)

- ▶ Whales can travel dozens of kilometres per day and therefore have a greater chance of being in the process of moving along when they are observed by air patrols.
- ▶ These whales may have already left the closed area when the management measure is implemented!
- ▶ A lack of whale sightings in such an area for seven days should support its reopening.
- ▶ However, if whales are observed in a closed area, reopening of this area should be postponed by an additional 7 days.



# Closure area evacuation time frame increased to 72 hours.

- ▶ A 72-hour time frame would ensure traps can be removed realistically and safely by all crew members.



# Training a local group fishers on NARW disentanglement techniques

- ▶ Calling on a trained disentanglement group from outside the region is certainly not the most effective solution for a marine mammal in distress.
- ▶ It would be important to train local teams that could travel to the site as quickly as possible in order to increase the odds of survival of entangled whales.



# Review DFO's decision-making process to improve preparedness ahead of the 2019 fishing season

- ▶ Need of an improved departmental consultative and decision-making process that is better adapted to the realities of the fishery.
- ▶ DFO people and stakeholders must agree on which management measures must be announced earlier rather than later.
- ▶ The scientific peer review for North Atlantic Right Whales must be transparent and include industry participation



**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**