

**2025-2026 CONSERVATION HARVESTING PLAN
REDFISH – UNIT I
MOBILE GEAR FLEETS LESS THAN 30.48 METRES
QUEBEC AND GULF REGIONS**

Approved: June 20, 2025

1. Application

This *Conservation Harvesting Plan* (CHP) applies to all groundfish licence holders using mobile gear on vessels less than 30.48 metres in length from the Gulf and Quebec Regions, regardless of homeport, with the exception of groundfish enterprise allocation holders. This CHP pertains to the redfish fishery in Unit 1 (Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) divisions 4RST, 3Pn & 4Vn (Jan-May)) during the period from **May 15, 2025 to May 14, 2026**.

When fishing in another NAFO division and another management unit, the CHP for that management unit will apply. Directed fishing for any other groundfish species will require a separate CHP. It is to be noted that this CHP is subject to change following ministerial decisions or annual review.

2. Fishing Areas

The Unit 1 fishing area includes NAFO Divisions 4RST as well as sub-division 3Pn and 4Vn from January 1 to May 31.

Fishing area coordinates are detailed in the Licence Conditions as well as on fishing area maps available at the following address: <https://inter-l01-uat.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/infoceans/en/commercial-fisheries>

2.1 Restrictions

- At all times, it is prohibited to fish in waters less than 100 fathoms (183 metres) deep.
- In Divisions 4ST, fishing is prohibited at all times west of the 65° meridian West (65° 00' 00" W).
- In Division 4R, fishing is prohibited in the area east of 59° longitude West (59° 00' 00" W), unless an at-sea observer is on board the vessel during fishing activities.
- In Division 4T, fishing is prohibited in the area bounded by the coastline and the rhumb lines connecting the following coordinates, unless an at-sea observer is on board the vessel during fishing activities:

1.	49° 12' 50.40" N	65° 00' 00.00" W
2.	49° 25' 01.20" N	65° 00' 00.00" W
3.	49° 25' 00.22" N	64° 39' 57.64" W
4.	49° 07' 42.00" N	63° 47' 19.00" W
5.	48° 58' 22.00" N	64° 12' 48.00" W
6.	48° 54' 35.03" N	64° 00' 42.29" W
7.	48° 45' 23.17" N	64° 10' 05.59" W

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3. Permanent closures of fishing areas

3.1 Closures for the protection of corals and sponges in the St. Lawrence Estuary and Gulf

On December 15, 2017, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) created eleven coral and sponge conservation areas in the Estuary and Gulf of St. Lawrence in order to protect areas with high concentrations of sponges and sea pens.

All directed redfish fishing activities, including midwater trawling, are prohibited in these conservation areas.

For more information and maps of the eleven coral and sponge conservation areas, please visit the dedicated DFO website: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/ceccsr-cerceef/egsl-eng.html>.

3.2 Banc-des-Américains Marine Protected Area

On March 6, 2019, Fisheries and Oceans Canada created, jointly with the Quebec government, the Banc-des-Américains Marine Protected Area (MPA) in order to ensure the conservation and protection of this marine ecosystem.

Provisions of the *Banc-des-Américains Marine Protected Area Regulations* apply to licence holders and fishing vessel operators. In order to comply with them, please refer to the clauses that apply to your fishing activities: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2019-50/page-1.html>.

3.3 Other Closures

Fish harvesters are asked to take note of a modification to the area closure in Division 4T defined in the Notice to fish harvesters issued on August 11, 2009. Directed fishing for redfish is thus prohibited in the sector bounded by the rhumb lines joining the following coordinates, in the order in which they are listed:

1. 49° 07' 42" N 63° 47' 19" O
2. 48° 36' 44" N 62° 16' 49" O
3. 48° 16' 28" N 62° 16' 49" O
4. 48° 22' 10" N 62° 55' 02" O
5. 48° 32' 45" N 63° 15' 23" O
6. 48° 50' 13.3" N 64° 00' 48.9" O
7. 48° 58' 22" N 64° 12' 48" O
1. 49° 07' 42" N 63° 47' 19" O

4. Fishing Seasons

To respect the spawning period, fishing activities will only begin on June 15 and must end no later than March 31.

The fishing season established above is valid for the duration of this CHP. It represents the maximum fishing period, subject, among other things, to variation orders and specific closure periods. Openings may vary depending on specific circumstances and fisheries management considerations, including industry requests and the announcement of Total Allowable Catches (TAC), while closures may occur earlier, particularly once quotas have been reached or when there

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is a high probability of exceeding them. Specific periods will, if applicable, be confirmed through Notices to Fish Harvesters and Variation Orders.

Furthermore, it is important to note that during the authorized fishing period, it is the captain's responsibility to be aware of notices issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada and Transport Canada regarding maritime safety, as well as to follow safety standards and best practices, and to take all necessary measures to ensure safe fishing operations.

5. Management Regime

Competitive fishery.

6. Quotas

The Unit 1 redfish allocation for the inshore fleet (vessels less than 19.81 m in length) totals 7,420 tonnes (t) for 2025–2026, which will be distributed as follows:

Fleet	Share	Quota
Newfoundland and Labrador	41.23%	3,059.1 t
Nova Scotia (NS)	4.25%	315.4 t
NS, Gulf Region	(3.31%)	(245.7 t)
NS, Maritimes Region	(0.94%)	(69.8 t)
New-Brunswick (N.-B.)	7.29%	540.7 t
N.-B., Gulf Region	(5.68%)	(421.16 t)
N.-B., Maritimes Region	(1.61%)	(119.6 t)
Prince Edward Island	3.37%	250.3 t
Quebec	43.86%	3,254.4 t

The Unit 1 redfish allocation for the midshore fleet (vessels from 19.81 m to 30.48 m in length) for 2025–2026 is 2,860 tonnes (t). The allocation is shared as follows:

Fleet	Share	Quota
Crab vessels	4.49%	128.4 t
Shrimp vessels (4ST)	39.15%	1,119.7 t
Groundfish enterprise allocation vessels	56.36%	1,611.9 t

The Unit 1 redfish allocation to the Estuary and Gulf of St. Lawrence (EGSL) shrimp fleet totals 5,000 tonnes (t) in 2025–2026. It is distributed as follows:

Fleet	Share	Quota
Quebec	42.00 %	2,100.0
New-Brunswick	21.00 %	1,050.0
Newfoundland and Labrador	37.00 %	1,850.0

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A licence holder participating in the Unit 1 redfish fishery can only fish under one allocation at a time.

Licence holders/fishing vessel operators must hold valid Conditions of licence for the allocation they intend to fish.

7. Fishing Gear

All otter trawl gear type are permitted. The minimum mesh size of the cod-end and lengthening piece is of 90mm.

8. By-catch limits

By-catch is defined as the weight of a by-catch species divided by the weight of the directed species, in this case, redfish.

For the application of the bycatch protocol, the authorized bycatch limits of groundfish during directed redfish fishing in Unit 1 are as follows:

At all times within Unit 1 (Divisions 4RST and 3Pn4Vn (January to May)):

- Cod : 1% per fishing trip
- Greenland halibut : 1% per fishing trip
- Atlantic halibut : 2% per fishing trip

When fishing in NAFO Division 4T, the following additional limits apply:

- White hake : 1% per fishing trip
- American plaice : 1% per fishing trip
- Winter flounder : 1% per fishing trip

For any other groundfish species or stocks not mentioned above, the limit is 5% per fishing trip.

If bycatch limits are exceeded, the fishery may be closed, and legal proceedings may be initiated.

Bycatch caps for **cod 3Pn4RS, white hake 4T, and cod 4TVn** have also been established to guide the management of the redfish fishery in Unit 1. The caps applied to the redfish fishery by the fleets subject to this CHP are as follows:

Fleet	Cod 3Pn4RS (kg)	White hake 4T (kg)	Cod 4TVn (kg)
Inshore (< 19.81 m)	2,498	2,240	1,773
Crab and Shrimp vessels (19.81 m à 30.48 m)	419	377	298
EGSL Shrimp			
Quebec	704	634	502
N.-B.	620	558	442
NL	352	317	251

The Department will monitor bycatch. When a fleet reaches one of the caps indicated above, the Department will assess whether additional bycatch allowance can be re-allocated to cover bycatches. If no additional allocation is available, the fishery for that fleet may be closed in one or more divisions for the remainder of the fishing season.

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By-catch of groundfish species cannot be returned to the water unless a condition of licence explicitly authorizes to do so.

The Department monitors the dumping and discarding of groundfish at sea. If an individual or a fleet sector is suspected of dumping and discarding at sea, additional management measures, including fisheries closures and/or increased observer coverage funded by the industry, may be implemented, and legal proceedings may be initiated.

9. Small Fish Protocol

The minimum fish size under the Small Fish Protocol are:

Cod	43 cm
American Plaice	30 cm
Witch Flounder	30 cm
White Hake	45 cm
Winter Flounder	25 cm
Yellowtail Flounder	25 cm
Atlantic Halibut	85 cm
Greenland Halibut	44 cm
Redfish	22 cm

All Atlantic halibut less than 85 cm in length shall forthwith be returned to the place from which it was taken, in a manner that causes it the least harm.

Areas will be closed for specified fleet sectors when the number of undersized fish reaches or exceeds 15% of the catch of any of the above species.

10. Catch Monitoring & Test Fishery

Small fish and by-catch fleet closures will be of a minimum duration of 10 days. The cost of conducting all test fisheries will be borne by industry. If a fishery is closed, it will not re-open unless DFO feels that it can be effectively monitored and controlled. If any particular fishery is closed twice during the year because of by-catch or small fish, the fishery may remain closed for the remainder of the year.

11. Electronic Logbooks

The use of an electronic logbook (ELOG) is mandatory for all inshore and midshore licence holders and their operators subject to this CHP. Fish Harvesters must use a client application approved by DFO for use in their respective region. Furthermore, fish harvesters must obtain and install the ELOG Key in the client application to allow data transmission to the Department.

The ELOG must be completed for each fishing expedition and “closed” before arriving at port. A fishing expedition means a voyage that commences at the time a fishing vessel leaves a port to engage in fishing and terminates at the time fish caught during that period are offloaded. Hence, when a fish harvester goes back to port for a reason other than for offloading fish and leaves port again, the fishing expedition goes on until fish are offloaded.

To consult the list of client applications approved by the Department and to obtain your ELOG key, visit Fisheries and Ocean’s web page at the following address: www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/elogs

To request a modification to data that has been transmitted to Fisheries and Oceans, you must

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communicate with the client support service at 1-877-535-7307.

12. Vessel monitoring system

The use of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) approved by DFO is mandatory. Each licence holder/fishing vessel operator must register his DFO-approved VMS unit prior to the beginning of his fishing activities. Data transmission every 15 minutes is required.

The current list of DFO-approved VMS units and the procedure and form to register a VMS unit are available at the following address: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/sdc-cps/vessel-monitoring-surveillance-navire/index-eng.html>

13. Hail prior to departure

An hail prior to departure is mandatory for all licence holders/fishing vessel operators.

Licence holders/fishing vessel operators must contact the Fisheries and Oceans Canada at-sea departure reporting system by phone at 1-833-699-2013 or 1-506-431-3223 (satellite) at least 12 hours before the departure time of each fishing trip.

14. At-sea Observer Coverage

From June 15 to December 31, the At-Sea Observer Program applies to a minimum coverage of 25% of the redfish fishing trips.

From January 1 to March 31 At-Sea Observer Program applies to 100% of the redfish fishing trips.

The At-sea observer coverage levels are in place to ensure the proper monitoring of by-catch and discarding at sea.

15. Hail-in and Dockside Monitoring

An hail-in is mandatory and must be made at least one hour before arrival at the port, and dockside monitoring is required for 100% of the landings.

Before the start of a fishing trip, the licence holder/fishing vessel operator must have an agreement in place for at-sea hail and landing with a company legally designated by DFO. Landings must be made at one of the designated dockside monitoring ports.

When an Electronic Logbook (ELOG) is used, the licence holder/fishing vessel operator must provide their unique Electronic Logbook Identifier (ELOG-ID) to the dockside monitoring company at the time of the hail-in and to the dockside observer.

16. Other Management Measures

16.1. Crew registry

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Since April 1st, 2021, independent core licence holders (vessels less than 19.81m), and their approved substitute operators, must keep records of all the crew members working aboard the vessel on every fishing trip. These records must be maintained by the licence holder for a period of five (5) years. This requirement does not apply to midshore licence holders, pre-1979 corporation licence and to any licence issued under the authority of the Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences Regulations. For further details, refer to the March 17th, 2021 *Notice to Fish Harvesters* or contact the Licensing Office at 1-877-535-7307 or fishingpeche@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

16.2. Waste disposal

The licence holder/fishing vessel operator is prohibited from discarding in Canadian fisheries waters from their vessel any item that may be harmful to fish or fish habitat including but not limited to plastics, ropes, fishing gear, garbage bags, fuel, oil, rags, glass, bottles, metal, extruded polystyrene foam (e.g. Styrofoam) and tires.

17. Quota Reconciliation

Quota reconciliation provides that any overharvest of a quota in one year, on an Individual Quota regime or in a competitive fishery, will be counted against the quota established for following fishing season. For example, quota overruns by a licence holder or by a fleet during a fishing management year will be deducted from quotas for the following season on a one-for-one basis.

In the month following the end of the fishing season, the Department makes any necessary changes to quotas for the current year based on quota overruns, if applicable.

18. Species at Risk Act

Pursuant to the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), it is prohibited kill, harm, harass, capture, take, possess, collect, buy, sell or trade an individual or any part or derivate of a wildlife species designated as extirpated, endangered or threatened.

At the time this *Conservation Harvesting Plan* is promulgated, the Atlantic species targeted by these measures are the following ones: Spotted wolfish (threatened), Northern wolfish (threatened), Leatherback Turtle (endangered), the Striped Bass (St. Lawrence River population – endangered) and exceptionally the White Shark (Atlantic population - endangered). New species could be added to the SARA within the year.

All by-catches of species identified above must be immediately returned to the water and released at the location where it was caught, if the animal is still alive, in a manner that causes the least possible harm. Any bycatch of a species at risk must be recorded in the "Species at Risk" section of the electronic logbook. In addition, all interactions with a species at risk—including the North Atlantic right whale, Blue whale (Atlantic population), Beluga (St. Lawrence Estuary population), and White shark (Atlantic population)—must also be documented in this section.

These requirements are in addition to any obligation to report an interaction with a marine mammal using the prescribed form (see the section Reporting Interactions with Marine Mammals).

19. Management measures to minimize the risks of interactions with the North Atlantic Right Whale

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The Management measures to minimize interactions with North Atlantic Right Whales (NARW) can be found at the following address:

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/commercial-commerciale/atl-arc/narw-bnan/management-gestion-eng.html>

19.1 What to do if you observe a North Atlantic right whale

First and foremost, it is important to maintain a minimum distance of 100 metres from the animal, or 200 metres if the whale is accompanied by a calf. Details of live, free-swimming North Atlantic right whale sightings can be reported to DFO at: XMARWhalesightings@dfo-mpo.gc.ca or by phone at 1-844-800-8568. If you observe this species, please send us your contact information as well as details of the sighting (date, time, geographic location, number of individuals, etc.). If possible, you may also send photos or videos.

If you observe a right whale entangled in fishing gear, you must never attempt to free the animal yourself. The behaviour of an entangled whale is unpredictable and dangerous. You must contact Marine Mammal Emergencies as soon as possible at 1-877-722-5346 to provide the information needed for a trained response team to act (time and location of the entangled animal, the animal's behaviour, weather and sea state details, etc.).

19.2 Reporting Interactions with Marine Mammals

Fishing licence holders and fishing vessel operators must report all interactions with marine mammals that occur during fishing trips, including: incidental catches, collisions, and any sightings of entangled marine mammals, within 48 hours after the end of a fishing trip. To do this, the licence holder and fishing vessel operator must complete the relevant section in the electronic logbook or the Marine Mammal Interaction Form, available online at: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/mammals-mammiferes/report-rapport/page01-eng.html> and included with the Conditions of licence and submit it according to the instructions provided on the form.

The information will be used by the Department to estimate the levels of accidental mortality and injury sustained by marine mammals. This data will help DFO better assess the types of threats faced by Canada's marine mammals and to develop mitigation strategies.

In addition, if you observe a dead or distressed animal, please contact Marine Mammal Emergencies as soon as possible at 1-877-722-5346. If possible, do not hesitate to take photos or videos that will allow DFO to assess the situation and identify the species.

20. Conditions of licence

To obtain their *Conditions of licence*, fish harvesters must access the National Online Licensing System. For National Online Licensing System assistance, please contact customer support by phone at 1 877-535-7307 or by email at fishing-peche@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

Report North Atlantic Right Whale Sightings		Signalez les observations de baleines noires de l'Atlantique Nord	
			
			
<p style="font-size: small;">Source: Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life at the New England Aquarium</p>			
			
<p style="text-align: center;">V-shape blow Souffle en forme de V</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Y-shape black tail Queue noire en forme de Y</p>	
		<p style="text-align: center;">No dorsal Fin White spots on head Pas de nageoire dorsale Taches blanches sur la tête</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">MAINTAIN A MINIMUM 100 METRE DISTANCE</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">GARDEZ UNE DISTANCE MINIMALE DE 100 MÈTRES</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">PLEASE PROVIDE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information • Date and time of sighting • Lat Long coordinates • Number of Right Whales observed • Photos and / or videos (if possible) 		<p style="text-align: center;">SVP VEUILLEZ FOURNIR :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vos coordonnées • Date et heure de l'observation • Coordonnées Lat.\Long. • Nombre de baleines noires observées • Photos et / ou vidéos (si possible) 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Sightings of <u>live, free-swimming</u> North Atlantic Right Whales must be reported to:</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Les observations de baleines noires de l'Atlantique Nord <u>vivantes et nageant librement</u> doivent être signalées au :</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">DFO.GLFWhales-BaleinesGLF.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">DFO.GLFWhales-BaleinesGLF.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Sightings of <u>entangled, dead, or injured</u> North Atlantic Right Whales must be reported to the following regional organizations:</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Les observations de baleines noires de l'Atlantique Nord <u>enchevêtrées, blessées ou mortes</u> doivent être signalées aux organisations régionales suivantes :</p>	
<p>New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island: Marine Animal Response Society au 1-866-567-6277</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quebec: Marine Mammal Emergencies at 1-877-722-5346</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Newfoundland and Labrador: Whale Release and Strandings at 1-709-895-3003</p>		<p>Nouveau-Brunswick, Nouvelle-Écosse, Île-du-Prince-Édouard : Marine Animal Response Society at 1-866-567-6277</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Québec: Urgences Mammifères Marins au 1-877-722-5346</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador : Whale Release and Strandings au 1-709-895-3003</p>	