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Cuts to crab quota will have devastating impacts on Nunatsiavut, says Minister Flowers

Nunatsiavut's Minister of Lands and Natural Resources says cuts to crab quotas in North Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) Zone 2J off the north coast of Labrador will result in devastating economic impacts throughout the region.

"Most of the crab harvested by and for Labrador Inuit is in the northern portion of NAFO Area 2J where the cut in quota amounts to about 45 per cent over last year," notes Greg Flowers. "This is extremely difficult to absorb for our harvesters and processors and, eventually, and will be devastating to our communities where the fishery is a major economic contributor."

The Minister notes that while cuts were expected, they go far too deep, especially for those who depend on the crab fishery to sustain their livelihoods.

Meanwhile, the Nunatsiavut Government has repeatedly expressed concerns to the federal Fisheries Minister over access to additional crab and shrimp quotas adjacent to the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area, especially from entities with no legal rights or titles in the region.

"In keeping with the spirit of the Constitutionally-protected Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, and Canada's stated goal of reconciliation, we have requested access to all potential increases in shrimp quotas adjacent to our shores," says Minister Flowers "Any new licenses or allowing access to these areas to others should be outright denied."

Requests for a meeting with Fisheries Minister Joyce Murray have yet to be accepted, Minister Flowers noted.

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