



Fisheries  
and Oceans

Pêches  
et Océans

Pacific Region  
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Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
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December 7, 2021

Dear Prawn and Shrimp by Trap commercial licence eligibility holders/vessel owners and communal commercial licence holders

**Subject: On-board Freezing and Glazed Prawn Requirements**

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) would like to clarify important, existing regulations that apply to on-board freezing of prawns that require harvesters to freeze prawns in a way that the size limit can be readily determined. Under subsections 36(1) and 36(2) of the *Fishery (General) Regulations*, any person who catches a fish while commercial or recreational fishing must have it packaged in a way that allows for the species, number, weight, and size to be readily determined. This regulation has been in place since 1993 and is essential to allow DFO to verify fishers' catch and properly manage fisheries. It is important that all packaging at sea allows for size limits to be readily determined by a fishery officer.

- For on-board freezing of prawns, “readily determined” means that prawns must have the head on and the minimum size limit for whole prawn (33 mm carapace length) can be measured, from the most posterior part of the eye orbit to the posterior mid-dorsal margin of the carapace without added difficulty.
- Where the head has been removed or “tailed”, the telson must be attached and the minimum size limit for tailed prawn (22 mm telson length) can be measured, along the mid dorsal line of the telson from the anterior margin to the posterior margin. The telson is the central piece of the tail “fan”.
- If you will be “tailing”, measure the telson on the prawn tails before removing the head. Do not assume that a prawn that met the carapace length requirement will also meet the telson length requirement once it is headed. Due to natural variability, some will not.
- Harvesters should measure prawns with a set of vernier calipers to ensure that no undersize prawn are retained.

Each individual piece of product, whole or tail, should be frozen so that the head or telson is visible separately on each individual piece of product. Each individual piece of product must be easily selected and measured when frozen on-board.

Packaging may include whole prawns frozen at sea (FAS) “finger” packaged in industry-standard 1 kg boxes, which is the most common product type.

Standards for packaging frozen prawn tails on-board will be specified in the conditions of licence for the upcoming 2022 season to specify that:

- Tailed prawns be frozen individually, then packaged; or
- Packages used for prawn tails frozen on-board in sea water have:
  - (1) a volume size no greater than 250g; and
  - (2) are clear, transparent and shallow in depth so that each individual prawn tail inside the package is visible for inspection.

We wanted to give you this advanced notice on our planned approach, and ahead of sending out the draft 2022-23 Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP), so that you can prepare for the season. We will be accepting comments and feedback on this approach until December 28, 2021 (i.e. end of day). We will finalize the approach as promptly as possible so that we can communicate what the requirements will be. After consultation, a final version of the 2022 conditions of licence will be distributed so that you can adequately prepare for the season.

The draft 2022-23 Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Prawn and Shrimp by Trap (IFMP) will be available in early January 2022 for public comment for 30 days (<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/shell-crust/pab-ccc/index-eng.html>). The final IFMP will be available in April from the Federal Science Library (<https://science-libraries.canada.ca/eng/home/>) prior to the 2022 season (no earlier than May 1, 2022).

Please refer to the fishery notices (<https://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm>) for updates.

Sincerely,

Laurie Convey  
Resource Management Biologist, Prawn & Shrimp by Trap