Fisheries and Oceans Canada | Pêches et Océans Canada
Ecosystems and Oceans Science | Sciences des écosystèmes et des océans

Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat
Newfoundland and Labrador Region | Science Advisory Report 2026/027

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (DIVISIONS 2HJ3KLNOP4R) SNOW CRAB (*CHIONOECETES OPILIO*) STOCK ASSESSMENT IN 2025

CONTEXT

This Fisheries Science Advisory Report is from the regional peer review meeting of February 16–19, 2026 on the Stock Assessment of 2HJ3KLNOP4R Snow Crab. Additional publications from this meeting will be posted on the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Science Advisory Schedule as they become available.

SCIENCE ADVICE

Status

- In 2026, the stock status in Assessment Division (AD) 3LNO is in the Healthy Zone of the Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) Snow Crab Precautionary Approach (PA) Framework, while ADs 2HJ and 3Ps are in the Cautious Zone and AD 3K is in the Critical Zone. Recent and ongoing data deficiencies result in the exclusion of AD 4R3Pn from the NL Snow Crab PA Framework.

Trends

- The overall exploitable biomass for NL Snow Crab increased from historic lows in 2016–18 and has remained relatively stable since 2020. This trend largely reflects an increase in exploitable biomass in AD 3LNO, which increased in 2025, and currently accounts for 90% of NL Snow Crab. Assessment Division 4R3Pn has also increased, whereas recent declines in the exploitable biomass in ADs 2HJ, 3K, and 3Ps, have resulted in levels near or at time-series lows in ADs 3K and 2HJ in 2025.
- In 2024 and 2025, abundance indices for pre-recruit, small crab, and mature female crab were at or near time-series lows in all ADs, indicating poor recruitment prospects over the next 1–4 years.
- Under status quo landings in 2026, the ERI in AD 3LNO is expected to remain relatively stable and within the range permitted in the Healthy Zone of the PA Framework. The ERIs in ADs 2HJ, 3K, and 3Ps are projected to increase to high levels, substantially exceeding the range permitted in their respective zones. The ERI is high in AD 4R3Pn.

Ecosystem and Climate Change Considerations

- The warm phase in ocean climate that started around 2020 continues in 2025. Ocean climate controls productivity at the ecosystem level and sustained warm ocean conditions are considered unfavorable for Snow Crab.

- The NL ecosystem collapsed during the late-1980s to early-1990s. Ecosystem biomass levels are approaching the post-collapse highs of the 2010s, with increases being driven by groundfish.
- Within each ecosystem unit, groundfish predation mortality has been increasing since 2020 and was at time-series high levels in 2025. Across ecosystem units, groundfish predation is comparatively much higher in 2J3K and 3Ps than 3LNO. These trends could be expected to add additional pressure on the stock and hinder future growth.
- Short-term predictions based on stock (e.g., pre-recruits) and climate (e.g., Cold Intermediate Layer) drivers indicate resource growth may be limited.

Stock Advice

- Under the NL Snow Crab PA Framework, the maximum exploitation rates are 42% for AD 3LNO (Healthy Zone), 35% for ADs 2HJ and 3Ps (Cautious Zone), and 20% for AD 3K (Critical Zone).
- The current exploitable biomass in ADs 3LNO and 4R3Pn remains high, however levels in ADs 2HJ, 3K, and 3Ps are low. Throughout NL, unfavorable ecosystem conditions, low abundances of pre-recruit, mature females, and small Snow Crab indicate that stock productivity is expected to be low in the near and medium term.

BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

Assessment Details

Year Assessment Approach was Approved

2025 (DFO 2025)

Assessment Type

Full Assessment

Most Recent Assessment Date

1. Last Full Assessment: 2025 (DFO 2025)

Stock Assessment Approach

1. Broad category: Index-based
2. Specific category: Index-based (including fishery-dependent and fishery-independent indices)

This assessment is detailed in Pantin et al. (2026). Changes to the established methodology for the current assessment include the addition of trawl data from DFO Quebec Region in 4R, establishment of a new short-term forecast model, and updated standardized Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) and percent discards models.

Ecosystem and Climate Change Assessment Approach

The physical environment was characterized by examining trends in ocean climate using oceanographic indicators, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Climate Index (NLCI). Food web components examined included:

1. lower trophic levels characterized using primary production and zooplankton indicators,

2. status and trends of the fish community, and
3. seabird and marine mammal information.

The characterization of ecological and environmental interactions included fish diets, estimations of food consumption, and predation mortality. Habitat elements included a summary on Significant Benthic Areas and existing fisheries closures, as well as an analysis of the importance of cold-water habitat for Snow Crab. Aggregated fisheries metrics considered included fishing footprint, and the risk of ecosystem overfishing. Explored pathways for climate change impacts included the link between ocean climate and ecosystem productivity, and the potential impact of changes in NLCI variability.

Stock Structure Assumption

Stock overview information: Pantin et al. 2025

Snow Crab in NL are part of a larger genetic stock unit in Canadian Atlantic waters, ranging from Labrador to the Scotian Shelf (Puebla et al. 2008). However, large-scale movements of individuals within the stock are thought to be limited, therefore assessments are conducted at the AD level, where some NAFO Divisions are combined. ADs differ from both NAFO Divisions, and the small spatial scale Crab Management Areas (CMAs) used to manage the fishery. Limit Reference Points (LRPs) have been developed for all ADs except AD 4R3Pn, where data deficiencies result in exclusion from the PA Framework.

Reference Points

The NL Snow Crab Precautionary Approach (PA) Framework is a multi-indicator decision-making PA system consisting of three stock status metrics (predicted CPUE, predicted discards, and proportion of females with full egg clutches) that reflect species biology, industry practices in management processes, fishery management objectives, and data sources and quality (Mullowney et al. 2018; Mullowney and Baker 2023). Each AD is assessed separately within the PA Framework, however, the reference points are the same for each AD.

- Limit Reference Point (LRP): predicted CPUE (pCPUE) = 5 kg/trap, predicted discards (pDIS) = 30%, and proportion of females with full egg clutches = 0.6.
- Upper Stock Reference (USR): predicted CPUE (pCPUE) = 9 kg/trap, predicted discards (pDIS) = 20%, and proportion of females with full egg clutches = 0.75.
- Removal Reference (RR): NA
- Target Reference Point (TRP): NA

Management Objectives

Harvest Decision Rule

A weighted scoring matrix is used to determine stock status zonation for each AD from the position of each metric relative to the LRP and guide Exploitation Rate Indices (ERIs) (Table 1). Stock status zonation for the upcoming fishing season is based on an assumption of status quo landings.

Table 1. Stock health scoring for stock status determination and allowable exploitation rate ranges within each zone.

Zone	Predicted CPUE	Predicted discards	Proportion of females with full egg clutch	Score	Exploitation Rate Index range
Healthy	4	2	1	5.5 to 7	Up to 42%
Cautious	2	1	0.5	2.5 to 5	Up to 35%
Critical	0	0	0	0 to 2	Up to 20%

Data

- DFO-NL multispecies trawl surveys Snow Crab data (1995–2025)
- DFO-QC 4R trawl surveys Snow Crab data (2004–25)
- DFO inshore trap survey data (7 inshore bays 1995–2025)
- DFO-FFAW Collaborative Post-season (CPS) trap survey (2003–25)
- Torngat Joint Fisheries Board (TJFB) post-season trap survey (2013–25)
- At-sea observer program (1999–2025)
- Commercial logbooks (1996–2025)
- Dockside Monitoring Program landings (1979–2025)
- DFO-NL Ecosystem Research Program Indicators (1960–2025)
- Atlantic Zone Monitoring Program Indicators (1950–2025)
- NASA Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer Aqua Ocean Color observation (2003–25)
- GLORYS12V1 bottom temperature data (1993–2025)

Data changes: Addition of DFO-QC 4R trawl surveys Snow Crab data and bottom temperature data (GLORYS) for short-term forecast model.

ASSESSMENT

Overall Stock 2HJ3KLNOP4R

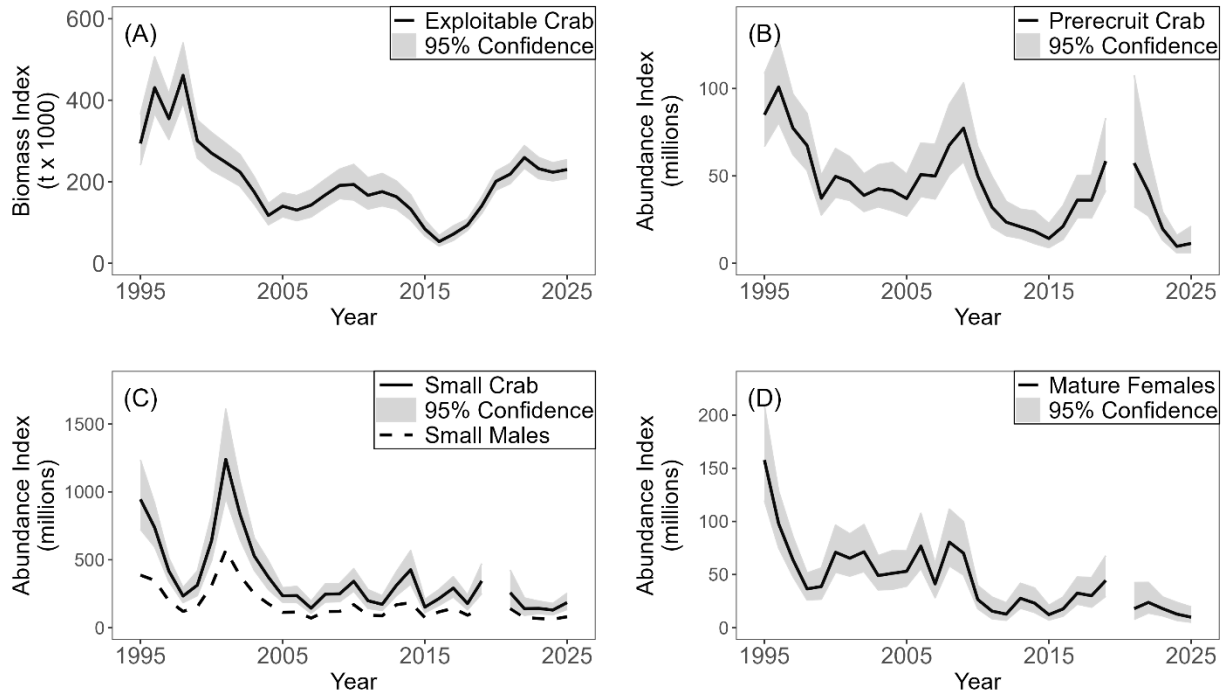

Figure 1. Stock-level indicators of Snow Crab in the Newfoundland and Labrador region (Assessment Divisions 2HJ3KLNOP4R). (A) Exploitable biomass index (males ≥95 mm carapace width; solid line = total exploitable crab, shaded area = 95% confidence interval), (B) Trawl-based pre-recruitment abundance index (adolescent males 70–94 mm carapace width; line = annual estimate, shaded area = 95% confidence interval), (C) Trawl-based small crab abundance index (crabs <45 mm carapace width; solid line = all small crab annual estimate, dashed line = small male annual estimate, shaded area = 95% confidence interval), (D) Trawl-based mature females abundance index (line = annual estimate, shaded area = 95% confidence interval). Trawl-based indices (B-D) do not include AD 4R3Pn.

Assessment Division 2HJ

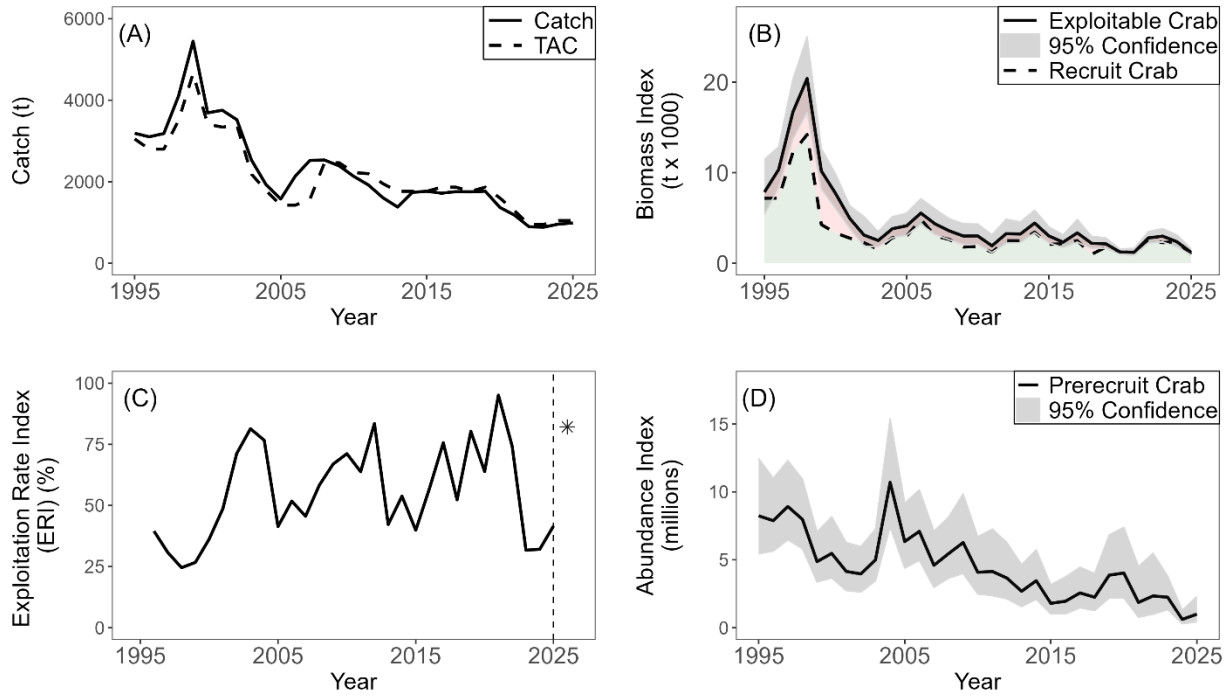

Figure 2. Indicators of Snow Crab in Assessment Division 2HJ. (A) Reported annual landings (solid) and Total Allowable Catch (TAC) (dashed), (B) Exploitable biomass index (males ≥95 mm carapace width; solid line = total exploitable crab, dashed line = recruit crab, grey shaded area = 95% confidence interval of total estimate, red shaded area = residual crab, green shaded area = recruit crab), (C) Exploitation Rate Index (ERI) (line = annual estimate, asterisk = projected ERI with status quo landings in 2026), (D) Trawl-based pre-recruitment abundance index (adolescent males 70–94 mm carapace width; line = annual estimate, shaded area = 95% confidence interval).

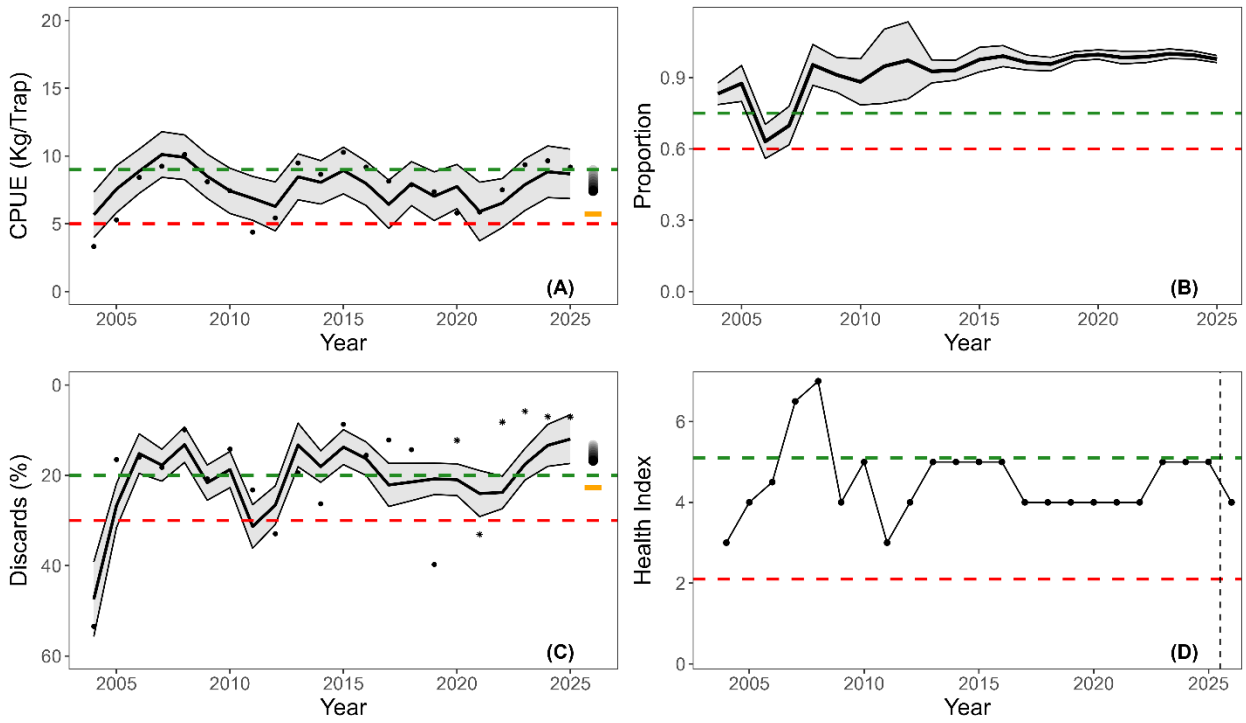

Figure 3. NL Snow Crab PA Framework in Assessment Division 2HJ. The bottom red horizontal line represents the LRP and the top green horizontal line represents the USR. (A) Predicted CPUE (solid line = the prediction, points = the annual observed standardized fishery CPUE, shaded area = the prediction interval, 2026 point = predicted value under status quo landings in 2026 with ERI ranging from 5–42% around the point), (B) Proportion of females with full egg clutch (solid line = observed proportion, shaded area = 1 standard deviation), (C) Predicted discards (solid line = the prediction, points = the annual observed standardized fishery CPUE, shaded area = the prediction interval, 2026 point = predicted value under status quo landings (yellow dash) and with ERI ranging from 5–42% (grey points), (D) Projected stock status (dashed vertical line = 2025).

Stock Status and Trends

Fishery

Landings in AD 2HJ remained near 1,700 t from 2014–19 but have since declined and were 988 t in 2025 (Figure 2A). Standardized CPUE was around 9 kg/trap from 2023–25.

Biomass

The exploitable biomass index in AD 2HJ (1,203 t [CI: 912, 1,586] in 2025) has oscillated at a low level for the last 15 years and declined by 60% over the last two years (Figure 2B).

Fishing Mortality

Under status quo landings in 2026, the ERI in AD 2HJ is projected to increase to 82% (Figure 2C).

Recruitment and Pre-recruitment

The exploitable biomass is dominated by recruits (new-shelled male crab of commercial size), with time-series lows in 2025 (Figure 2B). The trawl-based pre-recruit crab abundance index (adolescent males expected to contribute to the exploitable biomass over the next 2–4 years) has declined over the last two decades, with the two lowest recorded levels in the time-series in

the last two years (Figure 2D). This suggests continued poor recruitment prospects over the next 1–4 years.

Biological Indicators

There has been a downward trend in size-at-terminal molt in males and mature female abundance is near a time-series low.

Current Status

AD 2HJ is in the Cautious Zone of the PA Framework (Figure 3D). With status quo landings in 2026, the ERI will substantially exceed the allowable level for a stock in the Cautious Zone.

Assessment Division 3K

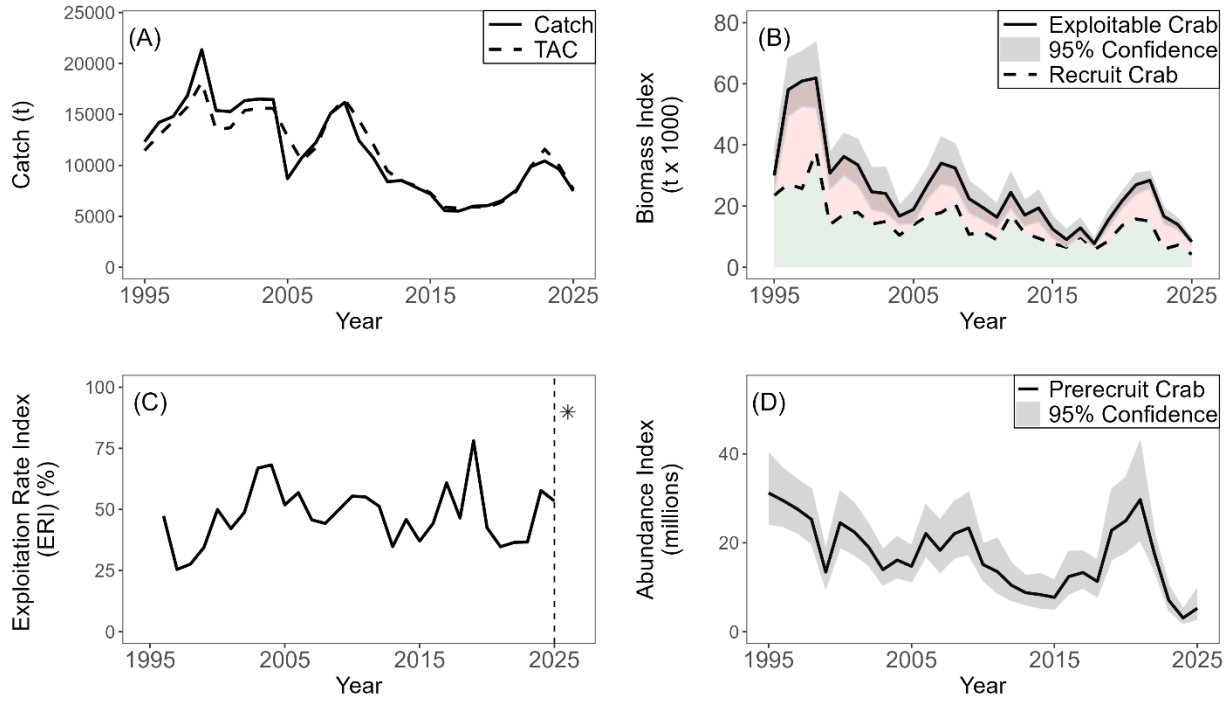

Figure 4. Indicators of Snow Crab in Assessment Division 3K. (A) Reported annual landings (solid) and Total Allowable Catch (TAC) (dashed), (B) Exploitable biomass index (males ≥ 95 mm carapace width; solid line = total exploitable crab, dashed line = recruit crab, grey shaded area = 95% confidence interval of total estimate, red shaded area = residual crab, green shaded area = recruit crab), (C) Exploitation Rate Index (ERI) (line = annual estimate, asterisk = projected ERI with status quo landings in 2026), (D) Trawl-based pre-recruitment abundance index (adolescent males 70–94 mm carapace width; line = annual estimate, shaded area = 95% confidence interval).

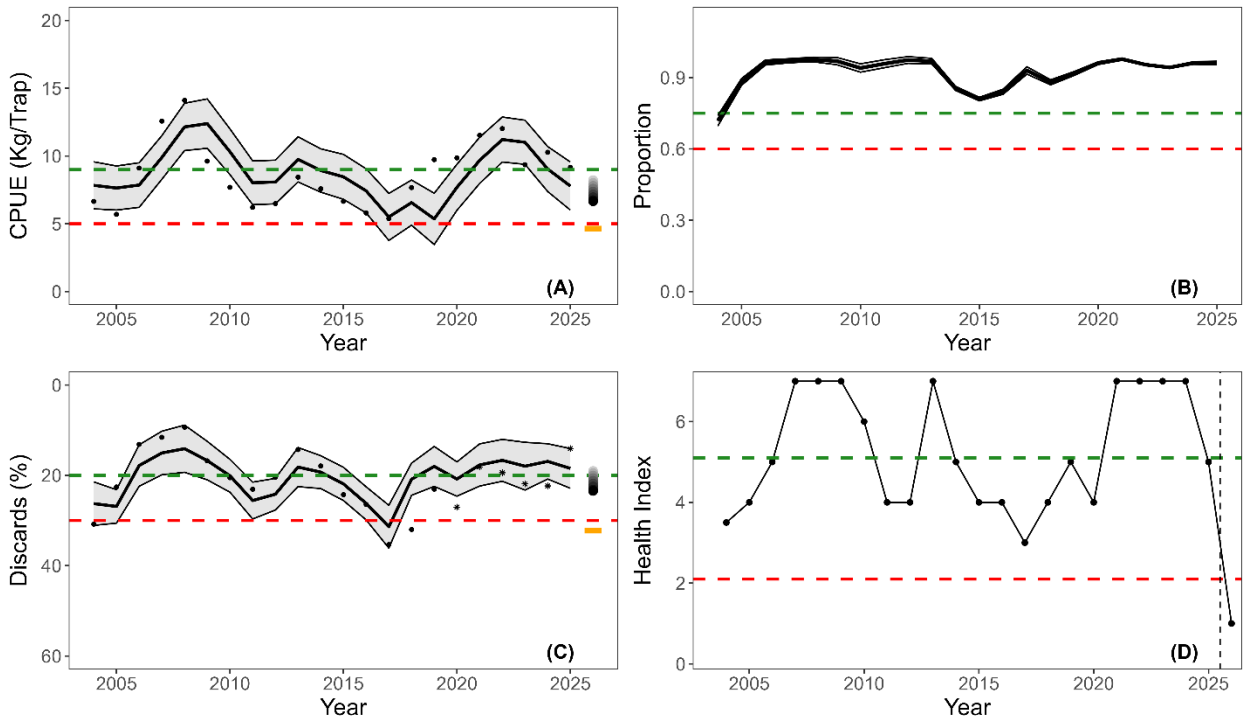

Figure 5. NL Snow Crab PA Framework for Assessment Division 3K. Red (bottom) horizontal line represents the LRP and the green (top) horizontal line represents the USR. (A) Predicted CPUE (solid line = the prediction, points = the annual observed standardized fishery CPUE, shaded area = the prediction interval, 2026 point = predicted value under status quo landings in 2026 with ERI ranging from 5–42% around the point), (B) Proportion of females with full egg clutch (solid line = observed proportion, shaded area = 1 standard deviation), (C) Predicted discards (solid line = the prediction, points = the annual observed standardized fishery CPUE, shaded area = the prediction interval, 2026 point = predicted value under status quo landings (yellow dash) and with ERI ranging from 5–42% (grey points), (D) Projected stock status (dashed vertical line = 2025).

Stock Status and Trends

Fishery

Landings in AD 3K increased from a time-series low of around 5,511 t in 2017 to a decadal high of 10,432 t in 2023. Landings were 7,479 t in 2025 (Figure 4A). Standardized CPUE was around 9–10 kg/trap from 2023–25.

Biomass

The exploitable biomass index in AD 3K (8,322 t [CI: 7,275, 9,519] in 2025) increased from a time-series low in 2015–18 to peak in 2021–22 and decreased by around 70% in the last three years (Figure 4B).

Fishing Mortality

Under status quo landings in 2026, the ERI is projected to increase to 90% (Figure 4C).

Recruitment and Pre-recruitment

The exploitable biomass consists of a fairly even mix of both new-shelled recruits and residual crab (old-shelled male crab of commercial size) (Figure 4B). The trawl-based pre-recruit abundance index recently peaked in 2021 and has since declined, with the two lowest recorded

levels in the time-series in the last two years (Figure 4D). This suggests diminishing recruitment prospects over the next 1–4 years.

Biological Indicators

There are signals of an emergent downward trend in size-at-terminal molt in males and mature female abundance is at a time-series low.

Current Status

AD 3K is in the Critical Zone of the PA Framework (Figure 5D). With status quo landings in 2026, the ERI will substantially exceed the allowable level for a stock in the Critical Zone.

Assessment Division 3LNO

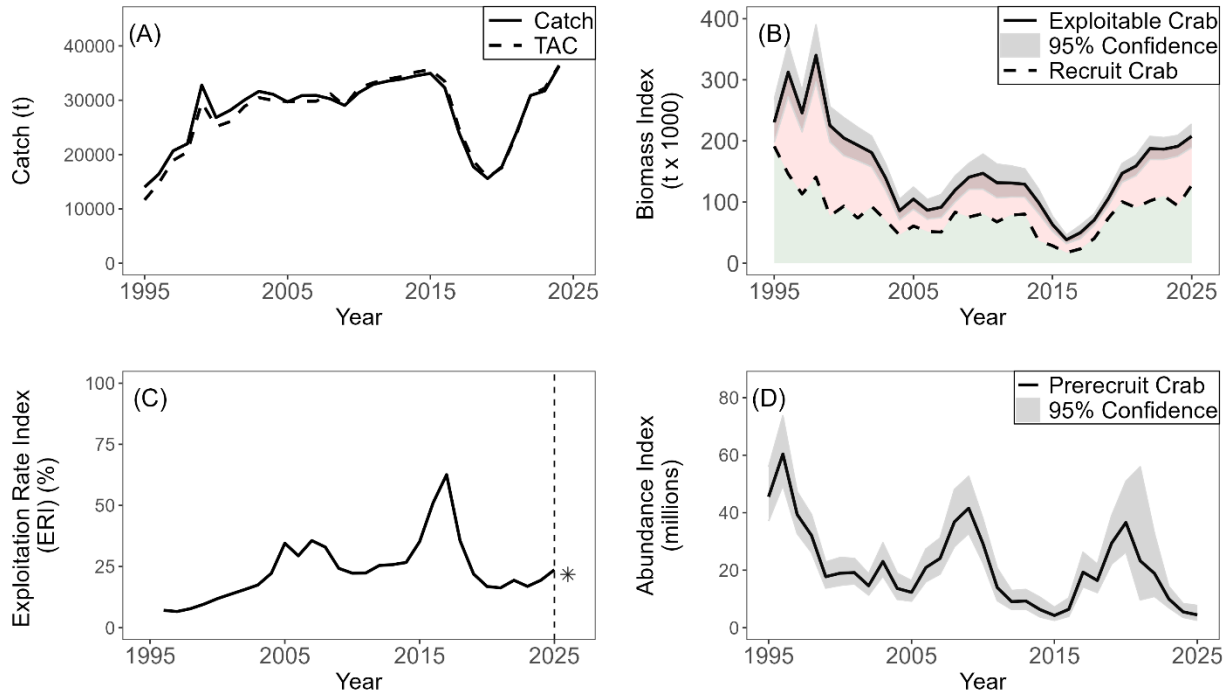

Figure 6. Indicators of Snow Crab in Assessment Division 3LNO. (A) Reported annual landings (solid) and Total Allowable Catch (TAC) (dashed), (B) Exploitable biomass index (males ≥95 mm carapace width; solid line = total exploitable crab, dashed line = recruit crab, grey shaded area = 95% confidence interval of total estimate, red shaded area = residual crab, green shaded area = recruit crab), (C) Exploitation Rate Index (ERI) (line = annual estimate, asterisk = projected ERI with status quo landings in 2026), (D) Trawl-based pre-recruitment abundance index (adolescent males 70–94 mm carapace width; line = annual estimate, shaded area = 95% confidence interval).

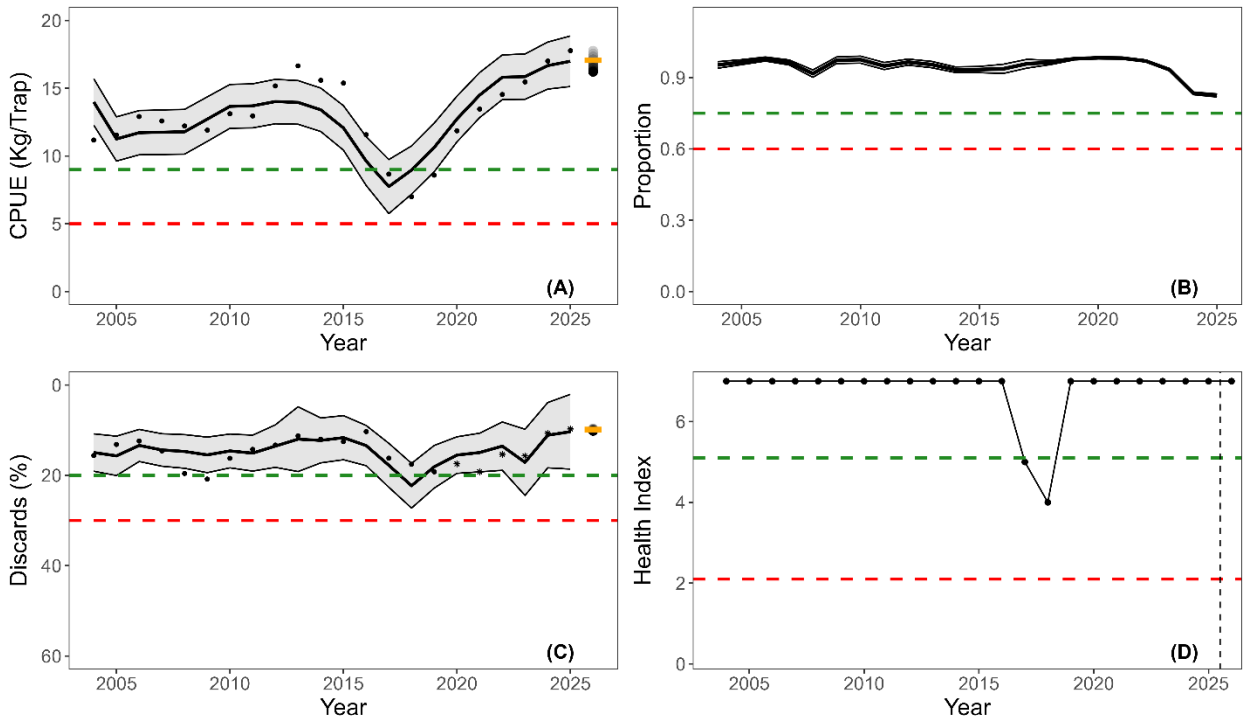

Figure 7. NL Snow Crab PA Framework for Assessment Division 3LNO. Red (bottom) horizontal line represents the LRP and the green (top) horizontal line represents the USR. (A) Predicted CPUE (solid line = the prediction, points = the annual observed standardized fishery CPUE, shaded area = the prediction interval, 2026 point = predicted value under status quo landings in 2026 with ERI ranging from 5–42% around the point), (B) Proportion of females with full egg clutch (solid line = observed proportion, shaded area = 1 standard deviation), (C) Predicted discards (solid line = the prediction, points = the annual observed standardized fishery CPUE, shaded area = the prediction interval, 2026 point = predicted value under status quo landings (yellow dash) and with ERI ranging from 5–42% (grey points), (D) Projected stock status (dashed vertical line = 2025).

Stock Status and Trends

Fishery

Landings in AD 3LNO increased from a two-decade low of 15,583 t in 2019 to a time-series high of 45,327 t in 2025 (Figure 6A). Standardized CPUE continued to increase from the time-series low in 2018 to over 17 kg/trap in 2025.

Biomass

The exploitable biomass index in AD 3LNO (207,789 t [CI: 189,481, 227,867] in 2025) increased from a time-series low in 2016–17 and was at the highest level observed in the last 25 years in 2025 (Figure 6B).

Fishing Mortality

Under status quo landings in 2026, ERI is protected to be 22% (Figure 6C).

Recruitment and Pre-recruitment

The exploitable biomass consists of a fairly even mix of both new-shelled recruits and old-shelled residual crab (Figure 6B). The trawl-based pre-recruit abundance index recently

peaked in 2020 and has since declined to near the time-series low in 2025 (Figure 6D). This suggests diminishing recruitment prospects over the next 1–4 years.

Biological Indicators

Size-at-terminal molt in males remains relatively high. Mature female abundance is at a time-series low and there is an emergent downward trend in female egg clutch fullness.

Current Status

AD 3LNO is in the Healthy Zone of the PA Framework (Figure 7D). With status quo landings in 2026, the ERI will be within the allowable level for a stock in the Healthy Zone.

Assessment Division 3Ps

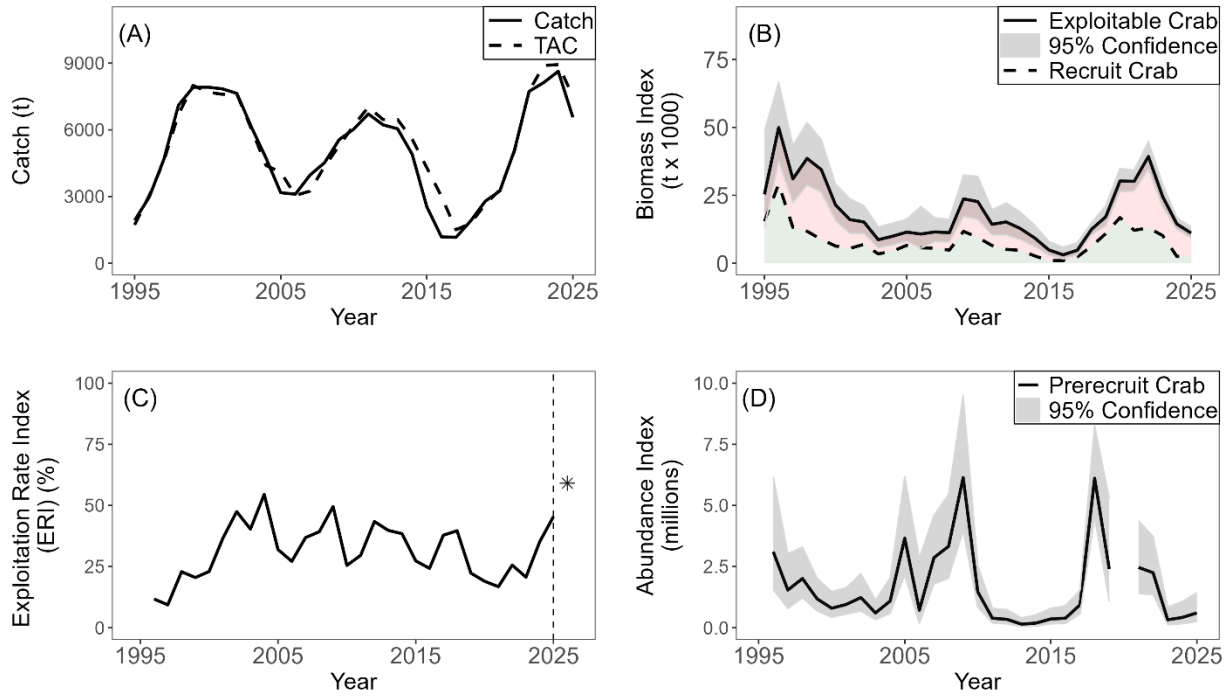

Figure 8. Indicators of Snow Crab in Assessment Division 3Ps. (A) Reported annual landings (solid) and Total Allowable Catch (TAC) (dashed), (B) Exploitable biomass index (males ≥95 mm carapace width; solid line = total exploitable crab, dashed line = recruit crab, grey shaded area = 95% confidence interval of total estimate, red shaded area = residual crab, green shaded area = recruit crab), (C) Exploitation Rate Index (ERI) (line = annual estimate, asterisk = projected ERI with status quo landings in 2026), (D) Trawl-based pre-recruitment abundance index (adolescent males 70–94 mm carapace width; line = annual estimate, shaded area = 95% confidence interval).

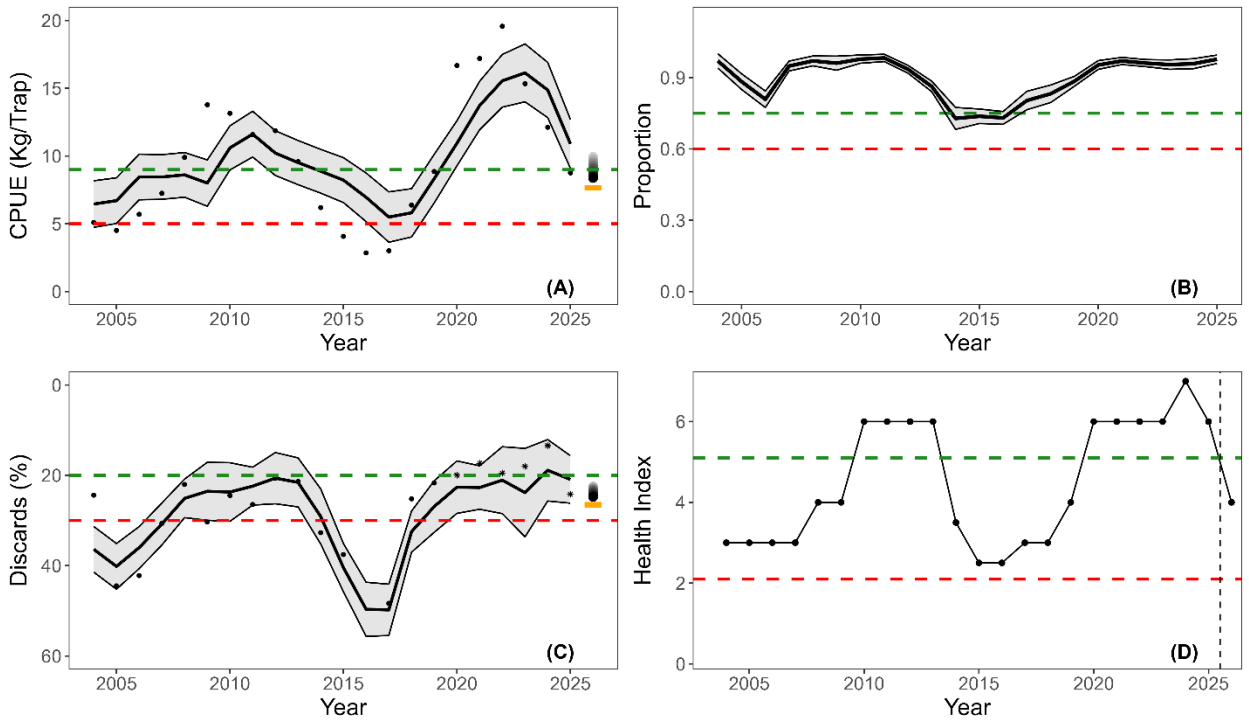

Figure 9. NL Snow Crab PA Framework for Assessment Division 3Ps. Red (bottom) horizontal line represents the LRP and the green (top) horizontal line represents the USR. (A) Predicted CPUE (solid line = the prediction, points = the annual observed standardized fishery CPUE, shaded area = the prediction interval, 2026 point = predicted value under status quo landings in 2026 with ERI ranging from 5–42% around the point), (B) Proportion of females with full egg clutch (solid line = observed proportion, shaded area = 1 standard deviation), (C) Predicted discards (solid line = the prediction, points = the annual observed standardized fishery CPUE, shaded area = the prediction interval, 2026 point = predicted value under status quo landings (yellow dash) and with ERI ranging from 5–42% (grey points), (D) Projected stock status (dashed vertical line = 2025).

Stock Status and Trends

Fishery

Landings in AD 3Ps increased from a time-series low of 1,165 t in 2017 to a time-series high of 8,633 t in 2024. Landings were 6,564 t in 2025 (Figure 8A). Standardized CPUE was at a time-series high of around 19 kg/trap in 2022, but has since decreased to around 9 kg/trap in 2025.

Biomass

The exploitable biomass index in AD 3Ps (11,107 t [CI: 9,227, 13,371] in 2025) increased from a time-series low in 2015–17 to near a time-series high in 2022. This index decreased by around 70% over the last three years (Figure 8B).

Fishing Mortality

Under status quo landings in 2026 the ERI in AD 3Ps is projected to increase to 59% (Figure 8C).

Recruitment and Pre-recruitment

The exploitable biomass has consisted of an even mix of both new-shelled recruits and old-shelled residuals throughout most of the time series. However, the exploitable biomass was heavily dominated by residual crab in 2024 and 2025 (Figure 8B). The trawl-based pre-recruit abundance index peaked in 2018 and declined to near a time-series lows in the last two years (Figure 8D). This suggests diminishing recruitment prospects over the next 1–4 years.

Biological Indicators

Size-at-terminal molt in males remains high. Mature female abundance is near a time-series low.

Current Status

AD 3Ps is in the Cautious Zone of the PA Framework (Figure 9D). With status quo landings in 2026, the ERI will exceed the allowable level for a stock in the Cautious Zone.

Assessment Division 4R3Pn

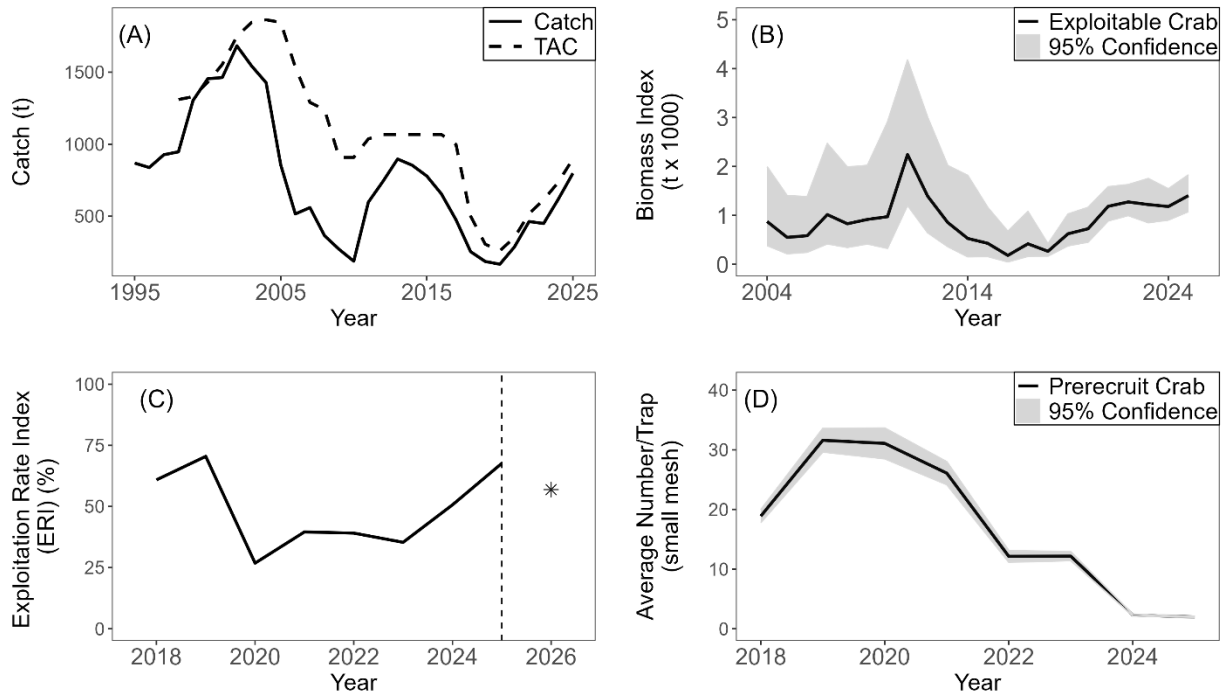

Figure 10. Indicators of Snow Crab in Assessment Division 4R3Pn. (A) Reported annual landings (solid) and Total Allowable Catch (TAC) (dashed), (B) Exploitable biomass index (males ≥95 mm carapace width; solid line = total exploitable crab, grey shaded area = 95% confidence interval), (C) Exploitation Rate Index (ERI) (line = annual estimate, asterisk = projected ERI with status quo landings in 2026), (D) Average number of pre-recruit crab per small-mesh trap in the CPS trap survey (adolescent males 70–94 mm carapace width; line = annual estimate, shaded area = 95% confidence interval).

Stock Status and Trends

Fishery

Landings in AD 4R3Pn have increased from a time-series low of 167 t in 2020 to 798 t in 2025 (Figure 10A). Standardized CPUE was at a time-series high of 10–11 kg/trap in 2024–25.

Biomass

The exploitable biomass index in AD 4R3Pn (1,403 t [CI: 1,076, 1,828] in 2025) remained around the same level for the last five years, which are some of the highest values of the time series (Figure 10B).

Fishing Mortality

Under status quo landings in 2026, the ERI in AD 4R3Pn is projected to be 57% (Figure 10C).

Recruitment and Pre-recruitment

The catches of exploitable crab in the CPS trap survey were dominated by residual crab in the last four years. Catch rates of pre-recruit crab in the CPS trap survey indicate a decline in pre-recruit crab in recent years (Figure 10D). This suggests poor recruitment prospects over the next 1–4 years.

Current Status

Recent and ongoing data deficiencies result in the exclusion of AD 4R3Pn from the NL Snow Crab PA Framework.

History of TAC & Catch

Table 2. Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and landings for the NL Snow Crab stock from 2016–25.

Year	Total Allowable Catch (TAC) (t)	Landings (t)
2016	45,317	41,420
2017	34,950	32,927
2018	28,830	27,663
2019	26,494	26,373
2020	29,156	29,114
2021	37,790	38,066
2022	49,990	49,806
2023	54,279	51,619
2024	57,119	56,095
2025	62,428	61,156

Ecosystem and Climate Change Considerations

The ocean climate in the NL bioregion has shown decadal-scale cold and warm phases. The warm phase that started around 2020 continued in 2025. Recent phytoplankton blooms have been early, which favors recruitment of the copepod *Calanus finmarchicus*, a key food item for fish. Total zooplankton biomass has been improving since the lows in the early mid-2010s.

Newfoundland and Labrador ecosystems collapsed in the late 1980s and early 1990s associated with extreme cold ocean conditions and ecosystem overfishing. Declines in biomass of groundfish were not compensated by increases in shellfish, with ecosystem biomass

remaining below pre-collapse levels. Some rebuilding was observed between the mid-2000s and early 2010s, after which declines occurred.

These ecosystems continue experiencing overall lower productivity conditions relative to the pre-collapse period related to bottom-up processes (e.g., food limitation). Improvements in ecosystem biomass have been observed since 2020 after the lows in the mid-2010s. These increases are driven by groundfish and not shellfish. Total Snow Crab biomass showed some improvements across ecosystems in the late 2010s and early 2020s, but this pulse is declining.

Fish predation mortality on Snow Crab peaked in the mid-late 2010s, and after some decline has been trending upwards since 2020. Within each ecosystem unit, values remain on the high end of the observations in 2J3K and 3LNO, and are approaching the historical high levels in 3Ps. Across ecosystem units, groundfish predation is comparatively much higher in 2J3K and 3Ps than 3LNO.

Ocean climate controls productivity at the ecosystem level, and a warm ocean climate does not favor Snow Crab. Environmental conditions (e.g. cold intermediate layer) and fishing appear to be the dominant drivers of Snow Crab, but the increasing trends and current high levels in fish predation mortality could add additional pressure on the stock, potentially hindering future growth. At present throughout the stock area, abundances of pre-recruit, small male, and mature female crab are near the lowest levels observed.

Projections

Projections based on exploitable and pre-recruit crab and the CIL show all ADs are expected to be at or near historic low biomass by 2028.

SOURCES OF UNCERTAINTY

Snow Crab movements across divisional boundaries may affect survey indices, resulting in uncertainties in distributions and the extent to which modes of growth progression can be followed from one year to the next. However, although evidence (i.e., tagging and distribution analysis on survey catch rates) suggests Snow Crab generally remain within ADs, these areas are not believed to be completely closed to immigration or emigration from adjacent ADs. Assessment Divisions were established to accommodate different types and amounts of available information and better conform with broad-scale resource status indicators and would largely account for large-scale movements of Snow Crab.

Increases in groundfish predators and bait loss in traps reported in the Snow Crab fishery have highlighted concerns regarding whether the changes in groundfish presence may also be affecting catch rates in trap surveys, with respect to loss of bait, direct predation, and/or avoidance of traps. Data collected during the 2025 CPS trap survey indicated that these changes in groundfish presence are not evenly distributed across or within ADs, with higher incidence in offshore areas of 2J and 3K. This could affect estimation of biomass and abundance in these areas. Additional research to understand and quantify the magnitude of this impact is warranted.

There are concerns regarding the utility of at-sea observer (ASO) data from sampling during the fishery due to low and inconsistent spatiotemporal coverage. There is concern that current coverage introduces bias in interpreting trends in catch rates at broad spatial scales and introduces high uncertainty. Measures should be taken to ensure representative ASO coverage to improve data quality from this program.

LIST OF MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Affiliation
William Coffey	DFO-NL – Science
Julia Pantin	DFO-NL – Science
Victoria Neville	DFO-NL – Centre for Science Advice
David Small	DFO-NL – Resource Management
Laurie Hawkins	DFO-NL – Resource Management
Martin Henri	DFO-NL – Resource Management
Murray Perrett	DFO-NL – Resource Management
Craig Taylor	DFO-Arctic – Resource Management
Bruce Wells	DFO-NL – Science
Charmain Hamilton	DFO-NL – Science
Chelsea Malayny	DFO-NL – Science
Darrell Mullowney	DFO-NL – Science
Darren Sullivan	DFO-NL – Science
David Belanger	DFO-NL – Science
Elizabeth Coughlan	DFO-NL – Science
Erika Parrill	DFO-NL – Science
Fatemeh Hatefi	DFO-NL – Science
Hannah Munro	DFO-NL – Science
Heather Andres	DFO-NL – Science
Jonathan Coyne	DFO-NL – Science
Kate Charmley	DFO-NL – Science
Kathleen Ryan	DFO-NL – Science
Katie Morrissey	DFO-NL – Science
Krista Baker	DFO-NL – Science
Mariano Koen-Alonso	DFO-NL – Science
Michael Hurley	DFO-NL – Science
Nicolas LeCorre	DFO-NL – Science
Rebecca Evans	DFO-NL – Science
Rachel Morrison	DFO-NL – Science
Sarah Fraser	DFO-NL – Science
Stephanie Boudreau	DFO-MAR – Science
Melissa Olmstead	DFO-NCR – Fish Population Science
Samantha Coombs	Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture NL
Rob Coombs	Nunatukavut Community Council
Todd Broomfield	Nunatsiavut Government
Alton Rumbolt	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Byron Oxford	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Chad Waterman	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Dean Hynes	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union

Name	Affiliation
Erin Carruthers	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Ivan Lear	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Jamie Barnett	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Jane Tucker	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Robbie Green	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Scott Spurvey	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Tony Ward	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union
Lorelei Roberts	Association of Seafood Producers
Renae Butler	Association of Seafood Producers
Ron Johnson	Torngat Fish Coop
Tanya Prystay	Torngat Secretariat
Elise Dehont	Memorial University – Marine Institute
Matthew Robertson	Memorial University – Marine Institute
Sherrylynn Rowe	Memorial University – Marine Institute

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

DFO. 2025. Newfoundland and Labrador (Divisions 2HJ3KLNOP4R) Snow Crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) Stock Assessment in 2024. DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Sci. Advis. Rep. 2025/030.

Mullowney, D., and Baker, K. 2023. Multi-indicator precautionary approach frameworks for crustacean fisheries. Can. J. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 80(7): 1207–1220.

Mullowney, D., Baker, K., Pedersen, E., and Osborne, D. 2018. Basis for A Precautionary Approach and Decision Making Framework for the Newfoundland and Labrador Snow Crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) Fishery. DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Res. Doc. 2018/054. iv + 66 p.

Pantin, J., Mullowney, D., Baker, K., Lefort, K., Coffey, W., Cyr, F., Munro, H., and Koen-Alonso, M. 2025. Assessment of Newfoundland and Labrador Snow Crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) in 2023. DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Res. Doc. 2025/080. vi + 152 p.

Pantin, J., Charmley, K., Mullowney, D., Baker, K., Lefort, K., Coyne, J., Munro, H., and Koen-Alonso, M. 2026. Assessment of Newfoundland and Labrador Snow Crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) in 2024. DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Res. Doc. 2026/038. vi + 164 p.

Puebla, O., Sévigny, J.-M., Sainte-Marie, B., Brêthes, J.-C., Burmeister, A., Dawe, E.G., and Moriyasu, M. 2008. Population genetic structure of the snow crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) at the Northwest Atlantic scale. Can. J. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 65(3): 425–436.

THIS REPORT IS AVAILABLE FROM THE:

Center for Science Advice (CSA)
Newfoundland and Labrador Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
P.O. Box 5667
St. John's, NL A1C 5X1

E-Mail: DFO.NLCSA-TNLCAS.MPO@DFO-MPO.GC.CA
Internet address: www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/

ISSN 1919-5087
ISBN 978-0-660-99932-6 Cat. No. Fs70-6/2026-027E-PDF

Correct Citation for this Publication:

DFO. 2026. Newfoundland and Labrador (Divisions 2HJ3KLNOP4R) Snow Crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) Stock Assessment in 2025. DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Sci. Advis. Rep. 2026/027.

Aussi disponible en français :

*MPO. 2026. Évaluation du stock de crabe des neiges (*Chionoecetes opilio*) de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador (divisions 2HJ3KLNOP4R) en 2025. Secr. can. des avis sci. du MPO. Avis sci. 2026/027.*