Review of the 2025 snow crab (Chionoecetes opilio) fishery in the southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence (CFAs 12, 12E, 12F and 19)

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The review of the 2025 snow crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) fishery in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence (sGSL; Crab Fishing Areas (CFAs) 12, 12E, 12F and 19) is presented. Preliminary landings in the sGSL in 2025 totalled 18,530 t out of a revised quota of 17,964 t. The allowable quota in the Notice to Harvesters was 17,884 t.

For CFA 12 harvesters, landings were 15,236 t (revised quota of 14,729 t). The catch per unit effort (CPUE) values from logbooks decreased in 2025 (52.7 kg per trap haul (kg/th)) compared to 2024 (60.3 kg/th).

In CFAs 12E and 12F, landings were 269 t (revised quota of 259 t) and 1,096 t (revised quota of 1,100 t), respectively. In CFA 12E, CPUE values are lower in 2025 (36.2 kg/th) compared to 2024 (78.3 kg/th). In CFA 12F, CPUE values also decreased in 2025 (79.0 kg/th) compared to 2024 (90.0 kg/th).

In CFA 19, landings reached 1,876 t (revised quota of 1,876 t). The CPUE values for CFA 19 decreased from 136.5 kg/th in 2024 to 113.5 kg/th in 2025.

RÉSUMÉ

Harbicht, A., Surette, T., and Landry, J.-F. 2026. Review of the 2025 snow crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) fishery in the southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence (CFAs 12, 12E, 12F and 19). Can. Data Rep. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 1474: vi + 25 p.

La revue de 2025 de la pêche au crabe des neiges, *Chionoecetes opilio*, dans le sud du golfe du Saint-Laurent (sGSL ; zones de pêche au crabe (ZPC) 12, 12E, 12F et 19) est présentée. Les débarquements préliminaires dans le sGSL en 2025 ont atteint 18 530 t sur un quota révisé de 17 964 t. Le quota alloué dans l'Avis aux pêcheurs était de 17 884 t.

Pour les pêcheurs de la ZPC 12, les débarquements ont atteint 15 236 t (quota révisé de 14 729 t). La prise par unité d'effort (PUE) selon les carnets de bord a diminué en 2025 (52,7 kg par casier levé (kg/cl) comparativement à 2024 (60,3 kg/cl).

Dans les ZPC 12E et 12F, les débarquements ont atteint 269 t (quota révisé de 259 t) et 1 096 t (quota révisé de 1 100 t), respectivement. Dans la ZPC 12E, la PUE a diminué en 2025 (36,2 kg/cl) par rapport à celle de 2024 (78,3 kg/cl). Dans la ZPC 12F, la PUE a diminué en 2025 à 79,0 kg/cl, par rapport à 2024 (90,0 kg/cl).

Dans la ZPC 19, les débarquements étaient de 1 876 t sur un quota révisé de 1 876 t. La PUE de la ZPC 19 a diminué par rapport à 2024 (136,5 kg/cl), à 113,5 kg/cl en 2025.

1. INTRODUCTION

Snow Crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) has been commercially harvested in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence (sGSL) since the mid-1960s. There are currently four Crab Fishing Areas (CFAs) in the sGSL: 12, 12E, 12F, and 19 (Figure 1), with CFA 12 being the largest in terms of area, number of participants, and landings.

The fishing season in CFAs 12, 12E, and 12F generally begins as soon as the sGSL is free of ice in April or May and continues until the end of June or when the area quota is reached. In CFA 19, the fishing season normally starts in July and ends in September or when the quota is reached. The number of traps per licence varies by harvester group and CFA. Conical traps are set mainly on mud or sand-mud bottoms at depths ranging from 50 to 280 m. Fishery management is based on quotas and effort controls, including trap allocations, trap dimensions, and season length. Only hard-shelled males with a carapace width (CW) of at least 95 mm are commercially harvested, and the landing of female crabs is prohibited.

There are two buffer zones within the sGSL where fishing is prohibited: one is located between the southern edge of CFA 19 and CFA 12, and another is located along the northern edge of CFA 19 and CFA 12F. A third area, a one-nautical-mile strip of CFA 12 along the western boundary of CFA 19, has a delayed opening, beginning on June 1st. During the season, the fishery is subject to local area closures to limit the bycatch of soft-shell crabs, as well as closures to mitigate the risk of entanglement of North Atlantic Right Whales (NARW) in snow crab fishing gear. Large-scale closures from either source can result in significant shifts in fleet fishing effort, particularly earlier in the fishing season.

2. METHODS

2.1. FISHERY LOGBOOK DATA

Data on reported landings and fishing effort (number of trap hauls) were obtained from fishery logbooks and dockside monitoring data and compiled by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Statistics Branches of the Quebec and Gulf Regions. Prior to 2025. these data were transmitted to DFO through dockside monitoring companies; however, beginning in 2025, harvesters must submit entries directly using an electronic (e-log) application. Science staff subsequently review these records to verify, correct, or remove erroneous records.

Post-processing included corrections to fishing dates, fishing coordinates, and reported landings through cross-validation among multiple data sources. In particular, reported fishing locations were evaluated by comparing logbook coordinates with vessel monitoring system (VMS) records. Daily catch estimates were adjusted according to the ratio of estimated landings per trip to per-trip landing records from the dockside monitoring program. When inconsistencies or errors were identified, records were corrected where possible or removed when corrections could not be reliably made.

Erroneous effort-related values (e.g., soak time) were replaced with values derived from vessel-specific median estimates where appropriate. Records were discarded entirely when issues were identified with the reported number of traps.

2.2. CATCH PER UNIT EFFORT

Empirical catch per unit effort (CPUE) values for 2025 were calculated as the ratio of reported daily catch to fishing effort (number of traps). Only logbook records with reliable effort information were retained for empirical CPUE estimation. Overall, approximately 16 % of records were discarded in 2025, an increase relative to 2024 (3 %). Dropped records were distributed across all CFA, ranging from 5 % in 12F to 28 % in CFA 12E and consisted of records with improbably low catches (< 10 kg, 33 %), or records with incomplete or missing effort details (66 %). Among records that passed the verification step, coordinate corrections (based on vessel monitoring system tracks) were made to 12 %, more than twice that of 2024 (5 %), while soak time corrections were made to 0.5 %, less than half that of 2024 (1.3 %).

Seasonal CPUE values were then calculated for each fishing area by dividing the aggregated landings and effort values from logbook records that permitted CPUE calculation. Seasonal CPUE values were subsequently used to produce a more comprehensive estimate of total effort by dividing the total annual landings (including records without reliable effort information) within each fishing area by the corresponding seasonal CPUE estimate. For comparative purposes, mid-term (2011–2025) and long-term (1998–2025) mean CPUE values were also calculated.

To assess the spatial distribution of landings, effort, and CPUE, the former two were aggregated over the season according to location (rounded to a 20th of a degree) and a localized seasonal CPUE value was calculated for each 0.05 degree grid. The resulting spatial grids were then plotted over a map of the fishing areas.

Standardized CPUE was defined as the model-predicted mean catch per trap, evaluated seven days after the opening of the fishery and at a standardized soak time of 36 hours, for an average vessel within each CFA. Day 7 was selected as the reference point to minimize the influence of elevated CPUE values typically observed immediately following fishery openings. A standard soak time of 36 hours was chosen as an intermediate value between the shorter soak times typically observed in CFA 19 (1-2 days) and the longer soak times characteristic of CFAs 12, 12E and 12F (3 days).

Nonlinear relationships were assumed between log-transformed landings and both the fishing day and soak time. Variation among fishing vessels was accounted for by including vessel identity as a random effect on the intercept, while the number of traps was included as an offset term. Formally, this statistical model was specified as:

$$\ln L_{ijz} = \alpha_z + s_f(d_{ij}) + s_f(t_{ij}) + v_j + \ln n_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ijz}$$

Where L_{ijz} is the recorded landings for fishing vessel i, logbook entry j, in CFA z. The model components include CFA-specific intercepts (α_z); smoothing splines over fishing day$\left(s_f(d_{ij})\right)$ and soak times day $\left(s_f(t_{ij})\right)$ for fishing fleet *f;* a vessel-level random effect v_j, where $v_j \sim N(0, \sigma_v^2)$; an offset term for the number of traps fished $\left(\ln n_{ij}\right)$; and a normally distributed residual error term $\varepsilon_{ij} \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$.

Two fishing fleet groupings were assumed: one comprising CFAs 12, 12E and 12F, and a second comprising CFA 19. Analyses were conducted on an annual basis using Generalized Additive Mixed Models (GAMM) implemented in R using the *mgcv* package, (version 1.9,

Wood 2017). Data collected prior to 2017 were excluded from model fitting due to data quality issues.

2.3. AT-SEA OBSERVER DATA

Since 1990, DFO has implemented an observer sampling program onboard commercial vessels to collect data on the size composition of males caught, discarding, and crab carapace hardness and condition (Hébert et al. 2021).

2.4. FISHERY CLOSURES

Newly moulted crabs, known as soft/white crabs, have low commercial value due to their lower meat content. Discarding these vulnerable crabs can result in mortality of commercial-sized soft/white-shelled crabs. No formal soft-shell protocol was enforced by DFO in 2025, instead, efforts were made among harvesters to identify and avoid areas where soft/white crabs were abundant.

Local area closures are also implemented to minimize the risk of entanglement of North Atlantic right whales (NARW) in fishing gear, a concern since 2017. With fewer than 384 NARW remaining worldwide, the Government of Canada continues to take action to protect this species (Pettis and Hamilton 2025). Since 2018, protective measures have focused on reducing entanglement risks with fishing gear as well as vessel collisions.

Protective measures for 2025 included both temporary and season-long NARW fishing area closures (DFO 2023). Upon detection of a NARW, either visually or acoustically, a region consisting of nine 10 × 10-minute grids, centered on the whale's location, was temporarily closed to non-tended fixed-gear fisheries. In the event that a NARW is detected again within days 9–15 of the temporary closure, the area switched to a seasonal closure remaining in effect until November 15, 2025. If no NARW were re-detected during a temporary closure, the area was re-opened to fishing after day 15. A minimum of two surveillance flights with no NARW detections was required before reopening a temporarily closed area to fishing.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. FLEET AND SEASON

The sGSL snow crab fishery in 2025 had a total of 433 quota allocation shares, which were fished by 417 active vessels during the season. Table 1 provides a breakdown of allocation shares, the number of vessels, and season lengths by CFA. Fishing began on April 5th in CFAs 12, 12E, and 12F, and on July 10th in CFA 19. CFAs 12, 12E, and 12F closed on June 30th, while CFA 19 closed on September 10th.

Observer sea-sampling coverage is presented in Table 2. In CFA 12, observers conducted 114 trips, sampling a total of 906 traps and measuring 31,518 crabs. Catch size composition for 2025 is shown in , where the average carapace width in CFA 12 was 104.7 mm, and sub-legal crabs accounted for 19.7 % of catches before discarding. In 2025, trap soak time in CFA 12 averaged 77 hours, which was an 8.9 % decrease compared to the 82 hours observed in 2024 and a 2.4 % increase relative to the 73 hours observed in 2023.

No at-sea observer trips were conducted within CFA 12E in 2025 due to low fishing effort levels within this fishing area. The mean trap soak time in 2025 for CFA 12E was 92 hours, a 67.7 % increase relative to 2024 (55 hours), and a 100.5 % increase compared to 2023 (46 hours).

In CFA 12F, observers covered 14 trips, sampling 100 traps and measuring 3,628 crabs. Catch size composition for 2025 is shown in , where the average carapace width was 112.4 mm, and sub-legal crabs accounted for 6.4 % of catches before discarding. In 2025, soak time in CFA 12F (83 hours) was 2.3 % lower than in 2024 (85 hours) and 2.5 % higher than in 2023 (81 hours).

Observer sea-sampling in CFA 19 consisted of 36 trips, with 131 traps sampled and 4,530 crabs measured. Catch size composition for 2025 is shown in , where the average carapace width was 108.4 mm, and sub-legal crabs accounted for 14.2 % of catches before discarding. In 2025, soak time in CFA 19 (32 hours) was 10.9 % lower than in 2024 (36 hours) and 7.0 % higher than in 2023 (30 hours).

3.2. QUOTAS AND LANDINGS

Snow crab landings from the sGSL were low in the early 1970s but increased more than threefold from 1975 to 1982. There were four periods of landings exceeding 20,000 tonnes (t): 1981 to 1986, 1994 and 1995, 2002 to 2009, and 2012 to 2024, representing the longest period in the time series (Figure 3).

The revised quota was set at 17,964 t for the 2025 fishery (Table 1), a reduction of 27 % relative to 2024. For reasons of annual quota adjustments, reconciliations, and re-distribution of the scientific quota among CFAs, the revised quota does not necessarily correspond to the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) set at the start of the fishing season. This quota includes 450 t set aside to finance stock assessment activities in 2025 (under the Section 10 agreement of the *Fisheries Act* collaborative agreement). Preliminary landings of sGSL snow crab as a whole in 2025 were 18,530 t, with 15,236 t landed in CFA 12, 269 t in CFA 12E, 1,096 t in CFA 12F, and 1,876 t in CFA 19 (Table 3).

Overall, quotas were reached prior to the end of the fishing season in all CFAs (Table 1). In CFAs 12 and 12E, the quota was reached after nine weeks (Figure 4), with fishing activities terminating by June 13th and June 8th respectively. In CFA 12F, the quota was reached after 12 weeks, from April 5th to July 1st while in CFA 19, the quota was reached after 3 weeks, on August 1st. In the case of CFAs 12, 12F, and 19, the active fishing period was among the shortest in recent years.

The spatial distribution of snow crab landings from 2021 to 2025 (Figure 5) is relatively constant from year to year with only minor shifts in the amount of crabs landed from each area among years. From 2024 to 2025, the source of landings remained spatially constant in the Baie des Chaleurs, American bank, and Shediac Valley regions. The distribution of landings from around the Bradelle bank thinned but no such pattern emerged in the Magdalen Channel. North of the Magdalen islands, in CFAs 12E and 12F, there was a slight expansion westward and eastward respectively. Landings were relatively absent from the former CFA 18, south of CFA 19, while within CFA 19, the distribution of landings was similar to previous years, with the bulk of landings occurring along the southern portion of this fishing area.

3.3. FISHING EFFORT

Total fishing effort in the sGSL in 2025 was 327,081 trap hauls (th), representing a 46.1% decrease from the record high of 606,504 th in 2020 and an 18.8% decrease from 2024 (402,947 th, Table 3). Effort was 23.0% below the long-term (1998–2025) average of 424,559 th and 22.4% below the mid-term (2011–2025) average of 421,505 th.

In CFA 12, effort ranged from 161,148 th in 2010 to 556,780 th in 2020. In 2025, 289,239 th were fished, a 22.7% decrease compared to 374,043 th in 2024. This represents a 24.1% decline relative to the long-term average (380,933 th) and a 24.9% decline relative to the mid-term average (384,883 th).

CFA 12E effort ranged from 1,825 th in 2010 to 10,074 th in 2006. Effort in 2025 was 7,437 th, a 187.4% increase over 2,588 th in 2024, 51.2% above the long-term average (4,920 th) and 81.2% above the mid-term average (4,104 th).

CFA 12F effort ranged from 4,437 th in 2002 to 23,163 th in 2014. In 2025, 13,873 th were fished, a 12.7% decrease from 15,896 th in 2024. This represents an 11.0% increase relative to the long-term average (12,496 th) and an 8.3% decrease relative to the mid-term average (15,128 th).

Effort in CFA 19 ranged from 10,420 th in 2024 to 56,517 th in 2004. In 2025, 16,532 th were fished, a 58.7% increase from 2024, but 36.9% below the long-term average (26,210 th) and 4.9% below the mid-term average (17,389 th).

The spatial distribution of fishing effort since 2021 is shown in Figure 6. Effort patterns closely matched those of landings. In the Baie des Chaleurs, effort remained relatively stable, while in the Shediac Valley it shifted slightly northward. Effort increased in the eastern Bradelle Valley but decreased south of the Magdalen Islands and along the Cape Breton Channel. As in previous years, little effort occurred in the area immediate south of CFA 19, former CFA 18.

3.4. CATCH PER UNIT EFFORT

Seasonal CPUE values by CFA are presented in Table 3 and Figure 7. In CFA 12, seasonal CPUE declined 12.7% to 52.7 kg/th in 2025 from 60.3 kg/th in 2024. This represents a 12.2% decrease relative to the mid-term average (60.0 kg/th) and a 5.3% decrease relative to the long-term average (55.6 kg/th). Within the season, empirical CPUE was below the nine-year average but aligned with recent years by the end of the active fishing period (~day 40, Figure 8).

Examining seasonal CPUE by harvester groups in CFA 12 (Table 4) shows an overall 10% decline from 2024 to 2025. Declines were largest among new entrants (-23%) and traditional area 25–26 harvesters (-21%), followed by traditional area 12 harvesters (-13%) and First Nation harvesters (-4%). In contrast, traditional area 18 harvesters experienced a 12% increase, consistent with high interannual variability in this area due to the small size of this harvester group.

In CFA 12E, seasonal CPUE declined 53.8% to 36.2 kg/th in 2025 from 78.2 kg/th in 2024. This represents a 33.7% decrease relative to the mid-term average (54.6 kg/th) and a 23.2% decrease relative to the long-term average (47.1 kg/th). Empirical CPUE remained among the lowest observed in recent years throughout the season (Figure 9).

In CFA 12F, seasonal CPUE decreased 12.2% to 79.0 kg/th in 2025 from 90.0 kg/th in 2024, but remained 32.0% above the mid-term average (59.9 kg/th) and 36.6% above the long-

term average (57.9 kg/th). Empirical CPUE in CFA 12F fell within the range observed in recent years (Figure 10).

In CFA 19, seasonal CPUE declined 16.9% to 113.5 kg/th in 2025 from 136.5 kg/th in 2024, representing a 16.3% decrease relative to the mid-term average (135.6 kg/th) but a 2.8% increase relative to the long-term average (110.4 kg/th). CPUE started below average at the beginning of the season but reached the recent-year mean by the second week (Figure 11).

Spatial patterns of seasonal CPUE from 2021 to 2025 are shown in Figure 12. In 2025, CPUE in CFA 12 was lower than in 2024, with the highest values at the northern end of the Shediac Valley and near the East Bradelle Valley. CPUE in CFA 12E was consistent with previous years, while in CFA 12F, CPUE increased in the northwest corner relative to 2024. CPUE in CFA 19 remained substantially higher than in all other areas of the sGSL, including the northern tip of Cape Breton.

Standardized CPUE generally mirrored seasonal CPUE in previous years but was lower across all CFAs in 2025 except 12E (Table 5). Differences between seasonal and standardized CPUE, particularly in CFA 19, reflect the steep decline in empirical CPUE early in the season, relatively low stock densities (Surette and Chassé 2026 [in press]), and smaller quotas. In CFA 19, fishers reached 80% of their quota within 7–10 days of opening.

Although CPUE is expected to scale to some extent with commercial crab density, CPUE indices are more sensitive to variation than fishery-independent survey indices. Empirical CPUE is not subject to standardized monitoring protocols and does not account for factors influencing catch rates (Maggs et al. 2016). While the standardization applied here adjusts for some nuisance factors, such as soak time and fishing day, other sources of variation, including changing fishing practices and spatial targeting by harvesters, were not accounted for. Consequently, interpreting commercial biomass from CPUE alone remains challenging and contributes little to survey-based biomass assessments.

3.5. FISHERY CLOSURES

Local area closures for the protection of North Atlantic Right Whales (NARW) in 2025 are shown in Figure 13. Numbers in each grid cell indicate the total number of days that areas were closed during the fishery.

Closures due to NARW began in the sixth week of the fishery, with a temporary closure in CFA 12 on May 17 in the Shediac Valley. This was followed by a temporary closure in the East Bradelle Valley (CFAs 12 and 12E) on May 20. Large portions of CFA 12 were closed for a significant portion of the season; however, because quotas were reached early, closures only affected three weeks of the active fishing period in CFA 12 and two weeks in CFA 12E.

No NARW-related closures occurred in CFAs 12F or 19. Additionally, no local area closures were implemented for soft-shelled crabs in 2025.

4. CONCLUSION

As in 2024, the 2025 snow crab fishery in the sGSL opened in early April, with quotas reached in all CFAs. The spatial distribution of landings remained similar to 2024, while CPUE values declined across all four CFAs.

CPUE for a given year may be correlated with biomass estimated from the preceding survey; however, factors unrelated to crab abundance including environmental conditions, local area closures, fishing gear, and fishing practices, can obscure this relationship.

No soft/white crab closures were issued in 2025. Local area closures to protect North Atlantic Right Whales were limited and occurred relatively late in the season, primarily in the western and northern sections of CFAs 12 and 12E.

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7. TABLES

Table 1. Number of allocation shares, number of active vessels, season opening and closing dates, last landing dates, revised quotas, and total landings of the snow crab fishery by Crab Fishing Area in the southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence in 2025.

Characteristics	CFA 12	CFA 12E	CFA 12F	CFA 19	Southern Gulf
Allocation shares	242	4	32	155	433
Active vessels	284	3	22	108	417
Season opening date	April 5	April 5	April 5	July 10	-
Season closing date	June 30	June 30	June 30	September 10	-
Last day of landings	June 13	June 8	July 1	August 1	-
Revised quota (t)[1]	14,729	259	1,100	1,876	17,964[2]
Landings (t)	15,236	269	1,096	1,876	18,530

[1] For reasons of annual quota adjustments, reconciliations, and re-distribution of the scientific quota among Crab Fishing Areas, the revised quota does not necessarily correspond to the TAC in the notice to harvesters.

[2] Quota includes 450 t set aside to finance the stock assessment activities in 2025 (under Section 10 of the *Fisheries Act*).

Table 2. Fishery characteristics and at-sea observer coverage by Crab Fishing Area in the southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence snow crab fisheries in 2025.

Characteristics	CFA 12	CFA 12E	CFA 12F	CFA 19
Fishing effort (traps hauled)	289,239	7,437	13,873	16,532
Fishing trips	1,998	22	164	869
Trips with observers	114	0	14	36
Traps sampled by observers	906	0	100	131
Crab sampled	31,518	0	3,628	4,530

Table 3. Landings, fishing effort and catch per unit effort from logbooks in the southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence snow crab, *Chionoecetes opilio*, fisheries (Crab Fishing Areas 12, 12E, 12F and 19) since 1987 (note: landings for 2025 are preliminary).

Year	Landings (t)					Effort (number of traps hauled)					Catch per unit effort (kg / trap haul)			
	12	12E	12F	19	Total	12	12E	12F	19	Total	12	12E	12F	19
1987	11,782	-	-	1,151	12,933	449,293	-	-	37,987	487,280	26	-	-	30
1988	12,355	-	-	1,337	13,692	528,844	-	-	22,794	551,638	23	-	-	59
1989	7,882	-	-	1,334	9,216	356,442	-	-	29,978	386,420	22	-	-	45
1990	6,950	-	-	1,333	8,283	254,578	-	-	28,422	283,000	27	-	-	47
1991	10,019	-	-	1,337	11,356	326,671	-	-	16,733	343,404	31	-	-	80
1992	11,235	-	-	1,678	12,913	362,967	-	-	17,140	380,107	31	-	-	98
1993	14,336	-	-	1,678	16,014	344,698	-	-	18,204	362,902	42	-	-	92
1994	19,995	-	-	1,672	21,667	390,833	-	-	24,495	415,328	51	-	-	68
1995	19,944	217	317	1,575	22,053	416,890	4,033	11,561	24,854	457,338	48	54	27	63
1996	15,978	164	238	1,342	17,722	318,796	2,714	5,604	24,583	351,697	50	60	42	55
1997	15,413	163	287	1,386	17,249	303,286	4,695	6,390	21,930	336,301	51	35	45	63
1998	11,136	161	290	1,988	13,575	243,339	5,624	6,035	31,232	286,230	46	29	48	63
1999	12,682	159	290	1,979	15,110	289,003	5,415	5,072	19,088	318,578	44	29	57	104
2000	15,046	150	291	3,225	18,712	436,782	6,528	5,136	55,977	504,423	35	23	57	64
2001	13,819	155	378	3,910	18,262	326,382	6,700	5,736	46,251	385,069	42	23	63	89
2002	21,869	165	378	3,279	25,691	544,454	2,916	4,437	43,662	595,469	40	57	85	72
2003	16,898	345	817	3,103	21,163	337,960	5,471	10,460	29,952	383,843	50	63	78	104
2004	26,626	349	806	3,894	31,675	484,991	6,277	10,775	56,517	558,560	55	56	75	69
2005	32,363	449	479	2,827	36,118	508,053	5,571	5,112	41,512	560,248	64	81	94	68
2006	25,934	411	787	1,989	29,121	402,702	10,074	14,079	23,566	450,421	64	41	56	84
2007	23,243	220	370	3,034	26,867	353,775	5,914	12,252	42,553	414,494	66	37	30	71
2008	20,911	187	431	2,929	24,458	370,762	9,232	15,504	38,388	433,886	56	20	28	76
2009	20,896	67	309	2,370	23,642	433,527	4,653	14,045	33,193	485,418	48	14	22	71
2010	7,719	50	420	1,360	9,549	161,148	1,825	14,335	11,138	188,446	48	27	29	122
2011	8,618	76	313	1,701	10,708	162,604	2,413	9,631	12,761	187,409	53	32	33	133
2012	18,159	185	706	2,906	21,956	267,044	5,623	16,890	16,317	305,874	68	33	42	178
2013	22,645	204	543	2,657	26,049	296,398	5,097	11,086	17,890	330,471	76	40	49	149
2014	19,674	178	882	3,745	24,479	317,689	3,765	23,163	25,407	370,024	62	47	38	147
2015	23,080	192	510	2,129	25,911	339,912	2,918	13,351	14,703	370,884	68	66	38	145
2016	19,499	144	381	1,701	21,725	304,624	2,796	8,667	11,937	328,024	64	52	44	143
2017	39,825	203	684	2,944	43,656	553,125	3,333	9,421	20,616	586,495	72	61	73	143
2018	20,769	260	1,183	2,048	24,260	469,887	5,579	17,120	13,120	505,706	44	47	69	156
2019	27,554	224	1,166	2,763	31,707	496,468	3,415	18,083	24,518	542,484	56	66	65	113
2020	24,554	234	1,084	2,284	28,156	556,780	5,098	22,168	22,458	606,504	44	46	45	102
2021	21,423[1]	223	592	2,241	24,479	363,136	5,314	18,612	18,384	405,446	57	56	59	121
2022	27,620[1]	197	1,173	2,671	31,661	537,820	2,509	15,240	23,690	579,259	51	79	77	113
2023	32,084[1]	291	1,329	1,700	35,404	444,480	3,678	13,718	12,088	473,964	72	79	97	141
2024	22,560	203	1,431	1,422	25,616	374,043	2,588	15,896	10,420	402,947	60	78	90	137
2025[2]	15,236	269	1,096	1,876	18,530	289,239	7,437	13,873	16,532	327,081	53	36	79	113
2011 – 2025	22,887	206	872	2,319	26,283	384,883	4,104	15,128	17,389	421,505	60	55	60	136
1998 – 2025	21,159	213	683	2,524	24,578	380,933	4,920	12,496	26,210	424,559	56	47	58	110

[1]Total landings in Crab Fishing Area 12 include landings allocated to Crab Fishing Areas 12E (2021, 2022, 2023) and 12F (2021) that were fished in Crab Fishing Area 12.

[2] Landings and effort values are preliminary.

Table 4. Catch per unit effort (kg per trap haul) in Crab Fishing Area 12 by harvester group.

Year	Traditional CFA 12	Traditional CFA 18	Traditional CFA 25-26	First Nations	New entrants
2001	43.5	-	62.7	38.8	32.3
2002	42.3	-	45.2	33.8	31.0
2003	50.5	66.0	43.6	51.4	45.6
2004	55.5	64.4	63.9	55.8	48.4
2005	66.2	70.3	80.2	64.5	50.3
2006	68.7	66.2	79.8	59.7	53.8
2007	69.4	61.4	66.2	65.8	54.4
2008	57.3	77.3	54.6	56.0	49.3
2009	46.6	76.7	48.3	49.8	48.7
2010	48.7	36.3	54.0	45.2	51.0
2011	54.3	53.3	46.6	50.9	51.6
2012	67.7	133.1	66.0	67.8	60.5
2013	77.0	114.5	71.1	75.4	69.6
2014	62.1	88.6	53.4	61.4	57.8
2015	70.1	78.9	61.6	66.0	61.1
2016	64.6	69.6	71.0	61.8	61.5
2017	77.6	77.8	76.4	65.0	65.7
2018	43.4	84.5	45.5	42.5	43.5
2019	58.2	72.8	56.3	52.5	47.1
2020	42.9	61.9	54.2	46.5	41.5
2021	60.0	60.2	76.4	52.6	51.1
2022	50.1	79.0	52.7	45.9	55.8
2023	71.8	111.5	83.4	67.7	69.8
2024	61.9	53.5	67.1	56.8	57.8
2025	53.8	60.2	53.1	54.4	44.4

Table 5. Seasonal averaged and standardized catch-per-unit-of-effort (kg / trap haul) by year and crab fishing area (CFA). Standard errors are shown in parentheses.

	CFA 12		CFA 12E		CFA 12F		CFA 19	
Year	**Average**	**Std.**	**Average**	**Std.**	**Average**	**Std.**	**Average**	**Std.**
2017	72	78.4 (2.0)	60.9	54.7 (8.3)	72.6	47.8 (3.1)	142.8	148.0 (5.5)
2018	44.2	41.6 (1.1)	46.6	45.8 (7.0)	69.1	60.4 (3.7)	156.1	140.1 (5.2)
2019	55.5	57.5 (1.3)	65.7	44.8 (7.1)	64.5	67.6 (3.9)	112.7	126.6 (4.6)
2020	44.1	42.7 (1.2)	45.9	49.6 (9.6)	45.2	46.3 (3.2)	101.7	97.1 (4.3)
2021	57.4	55.3 (1.4)	55.7	49.4 (8.2)	59.1	54.3 (3.4)	121	112.3 (4.5)
2022	51.4	56.5 (1.5)	78.5	72.0 (15.2)	76.4	70.6 (5.3)	112.6	117.0 (4.7)
2023	72.2	71.6 (1.9)	79.1	57.9 (10.5)	96.9	69.4 (5.5)	140.6	72.2 (4.0)
2024	60.3	53.6 (1.5)	78.3	65.0 (14.4)	90	73.6 (6.1)	136.5	81.9 (4.1)
2025	52.7	35.7 (1.8)	36.2	39.8 (17.6)	79	47.3 (6.9)	113.5	59.6 (4.0)

8. FIGURES

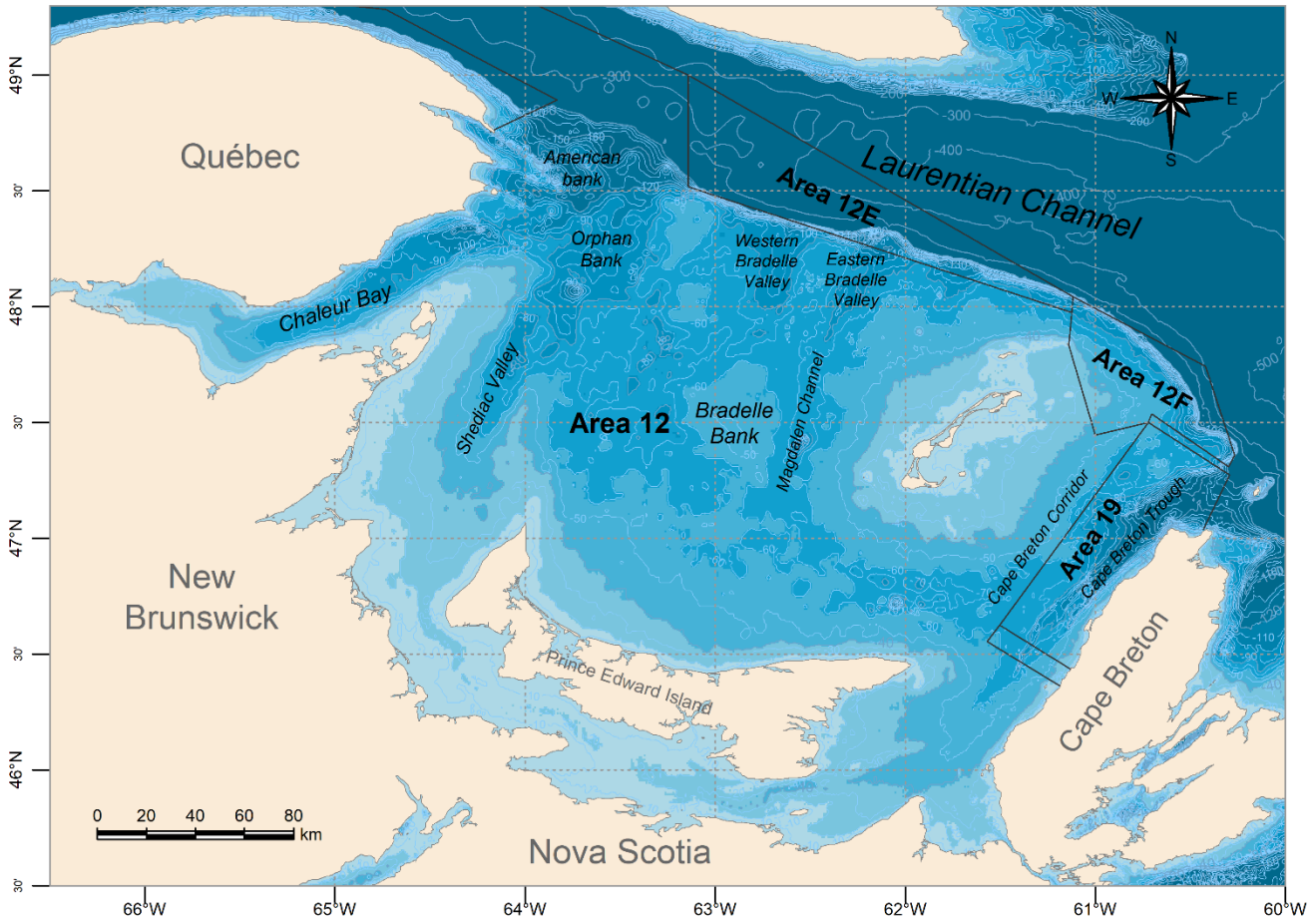

Figure 1. Location of snow crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*) fishing grounds and Crab Fishing Areas in the southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence.

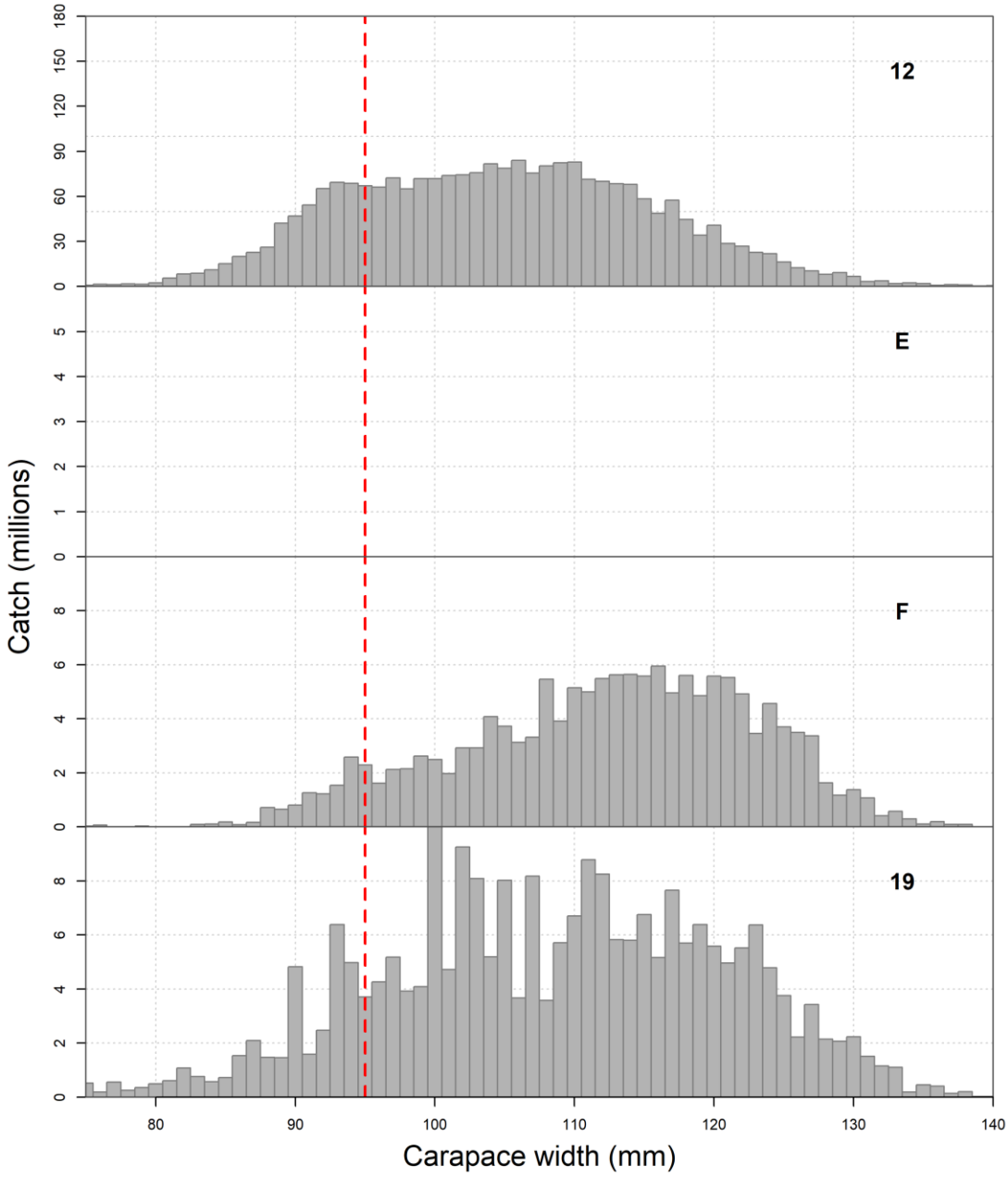

Figure 2. Size frequency distributions of all male crabs measured during the at-sea sampling (before discarding) in Crab Fishing Areas 12, 12E, 12F and 19 in 2025. The red dashed line indicates the legal size of 95 mm carapace width.

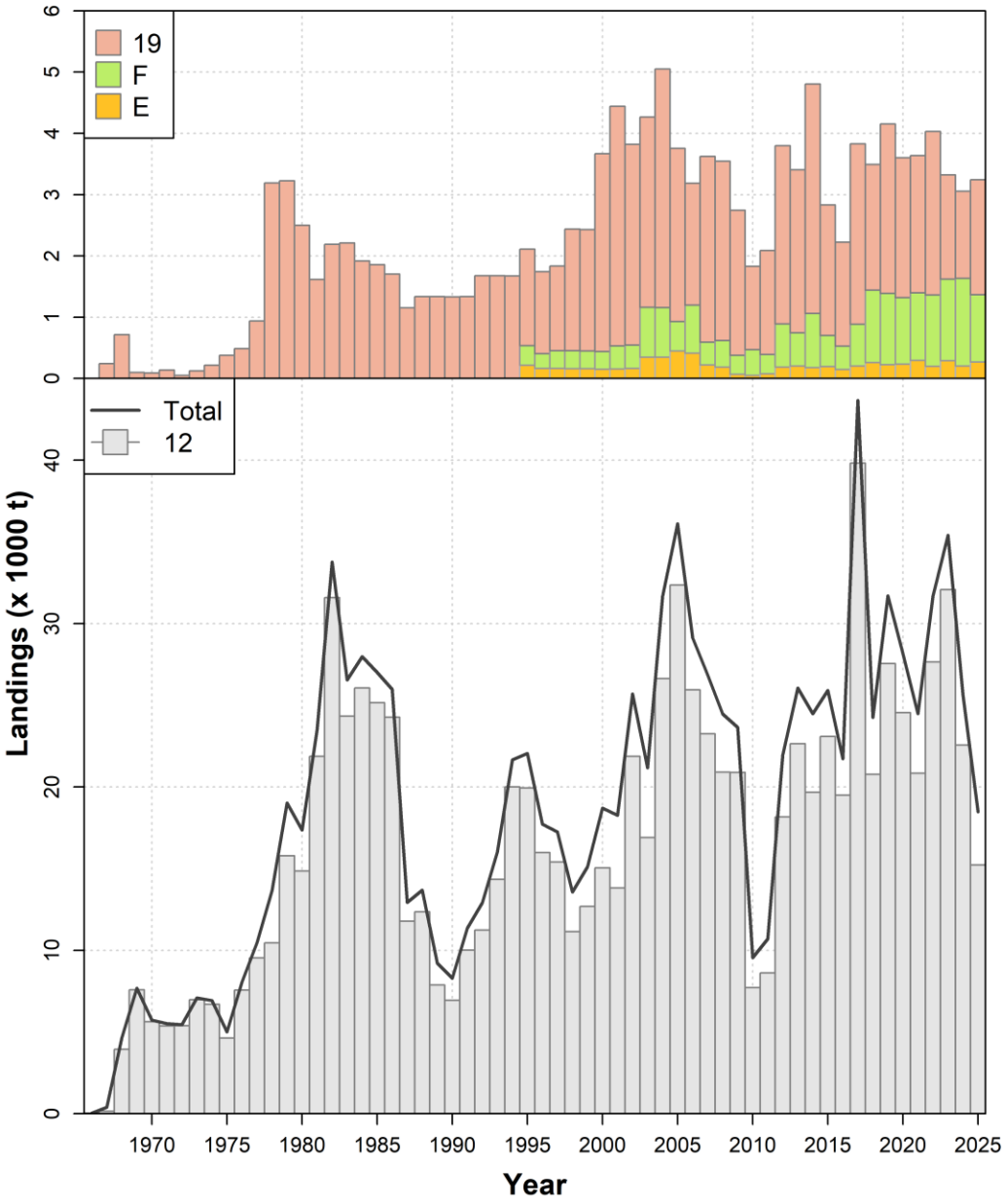

Figure 3. Snow crab landings (t) in Crab Fishing Areas 12E, 12F, and 19 (upper panel), as well as Crab Fishing Area 12 and the entire southern Gulf of St. Lawrence (lower panel).

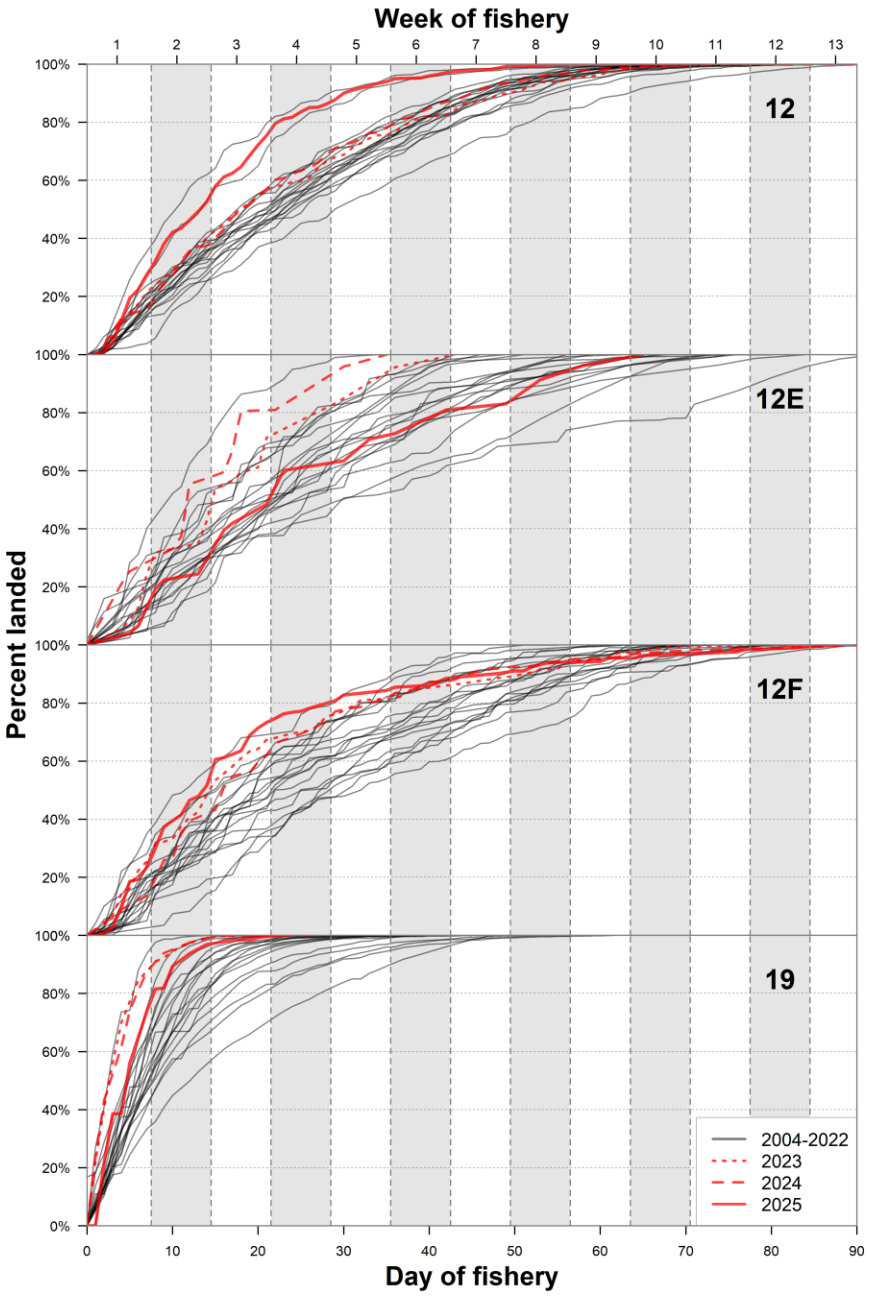

Figure 4. Cumulative landings, as a percentage of the crab fishing area's revised quota.

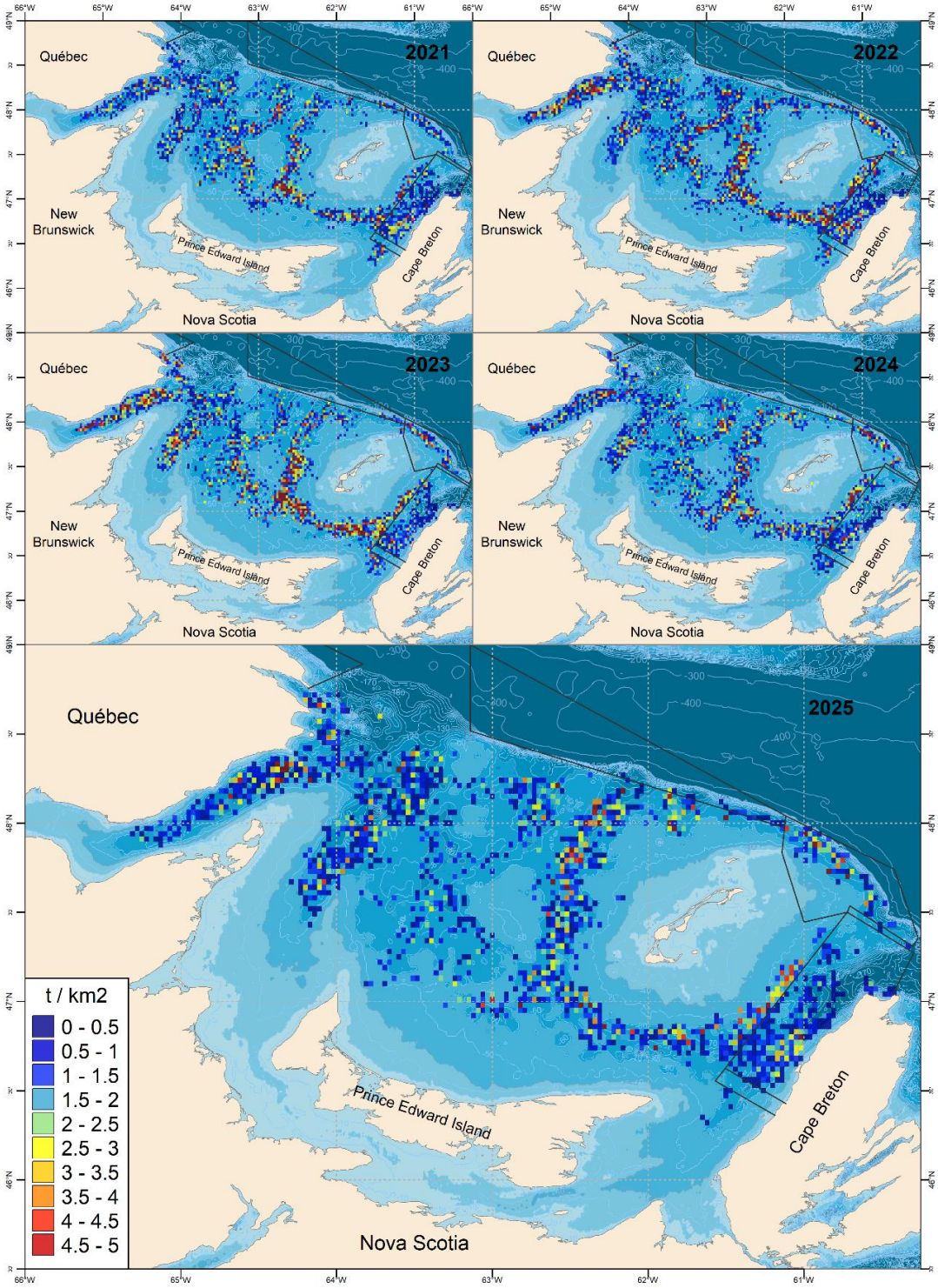

Figure 5. Spatial distribution of landings (t/km^2) in Crab Fishing Areas from the 2021-2025 fishing seasons.

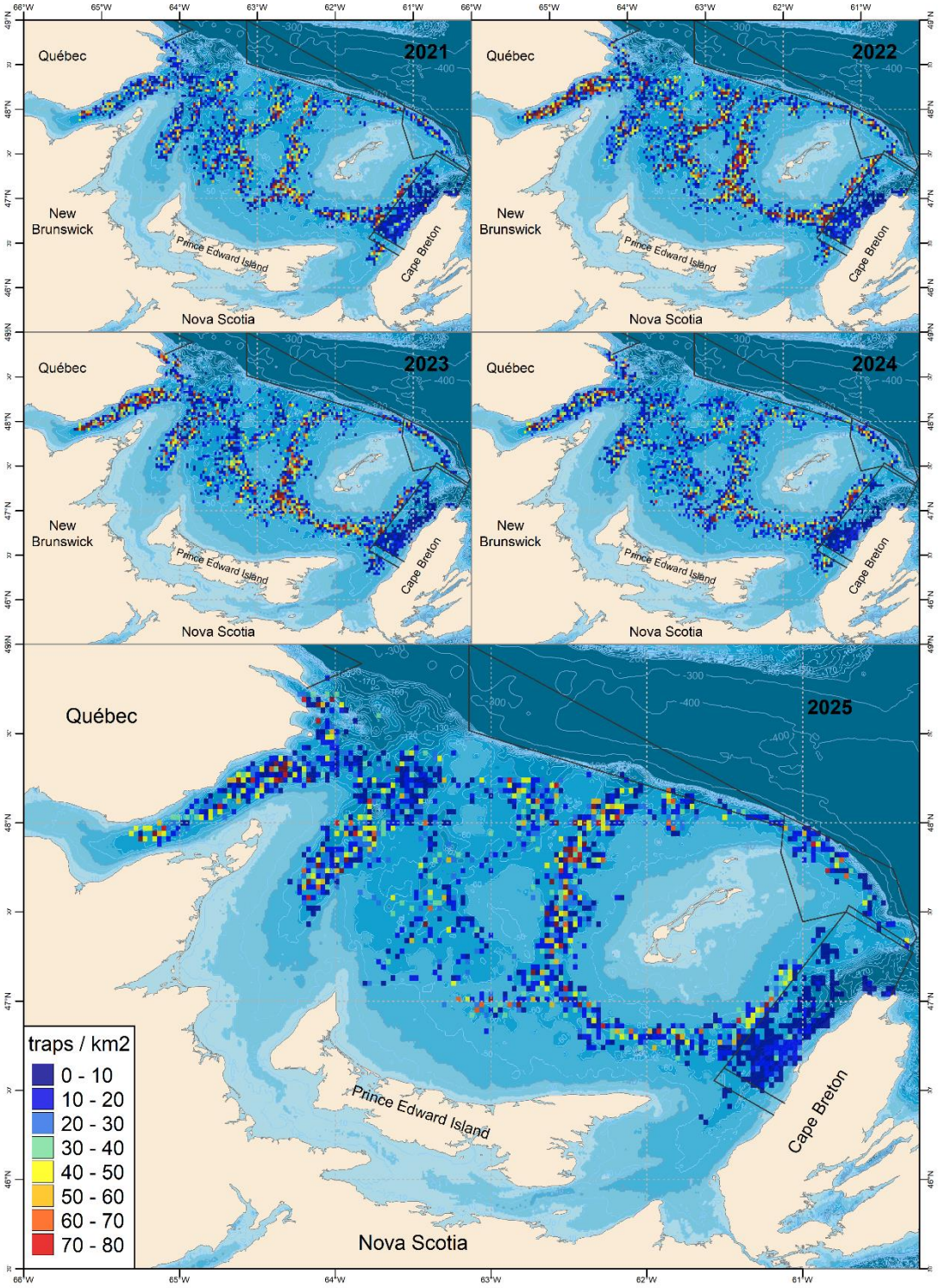

Figure 6. Spatial distribution of fishing effort (traps hauled per km^2) by Crab Fishery Area from the 2021-2025 fishing seasons.

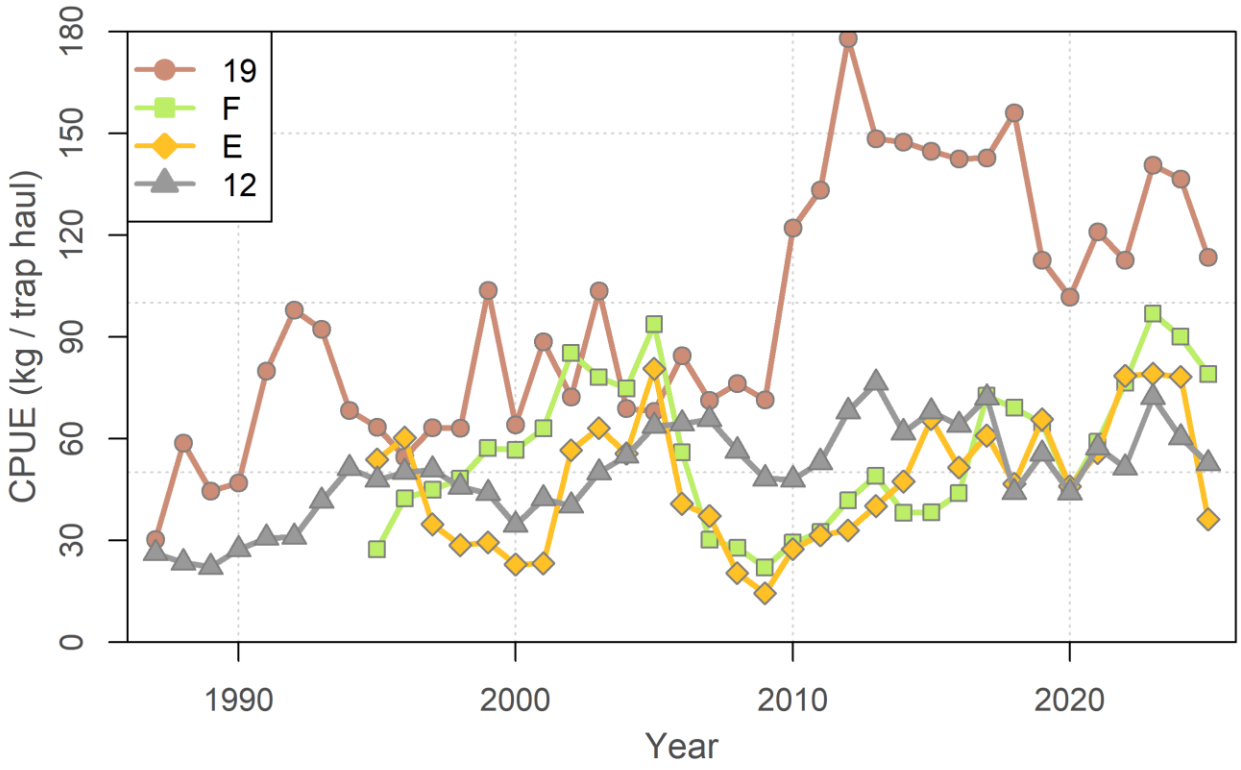

Figure 7. Catch per unit effort (kg/th) by Crab Fishing Area in the southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence based on fishery logbook data.

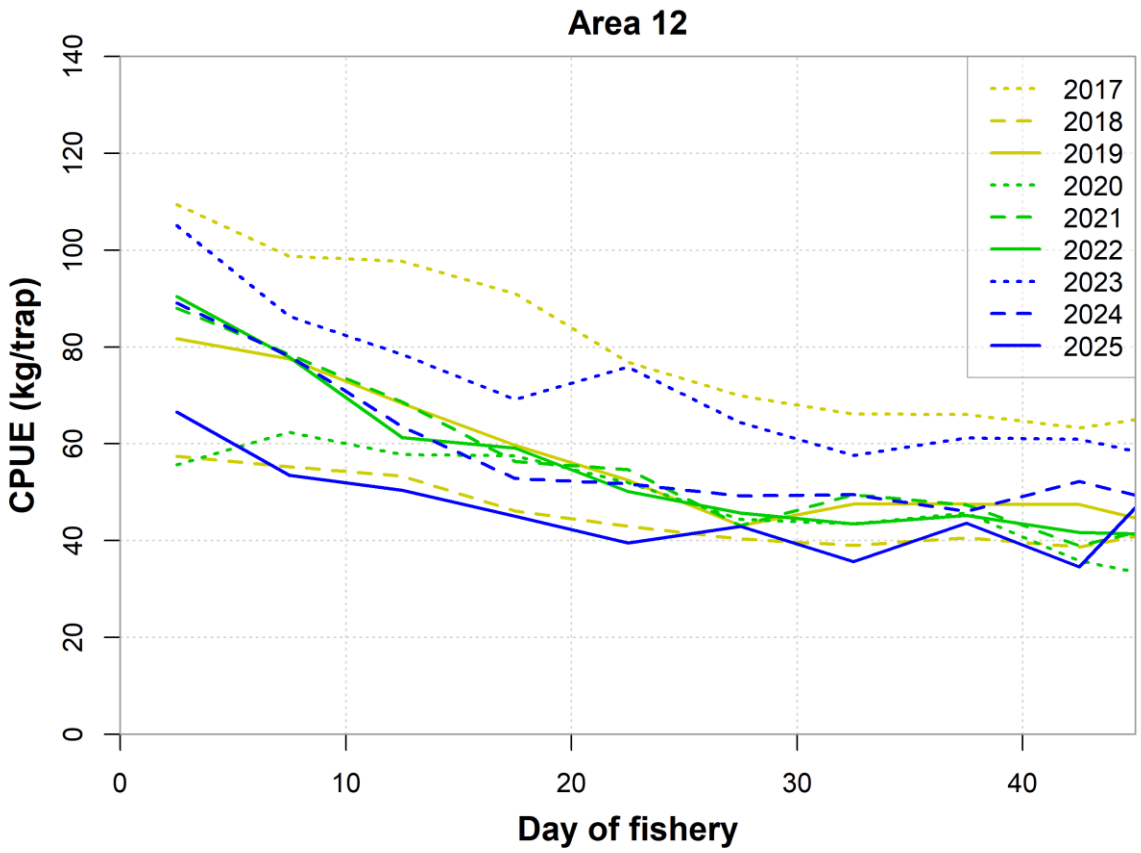

Figure 8. Weekly catch per unit effort (CPUE) for crab fishing area 12 based on fisheries logbook and landings records.

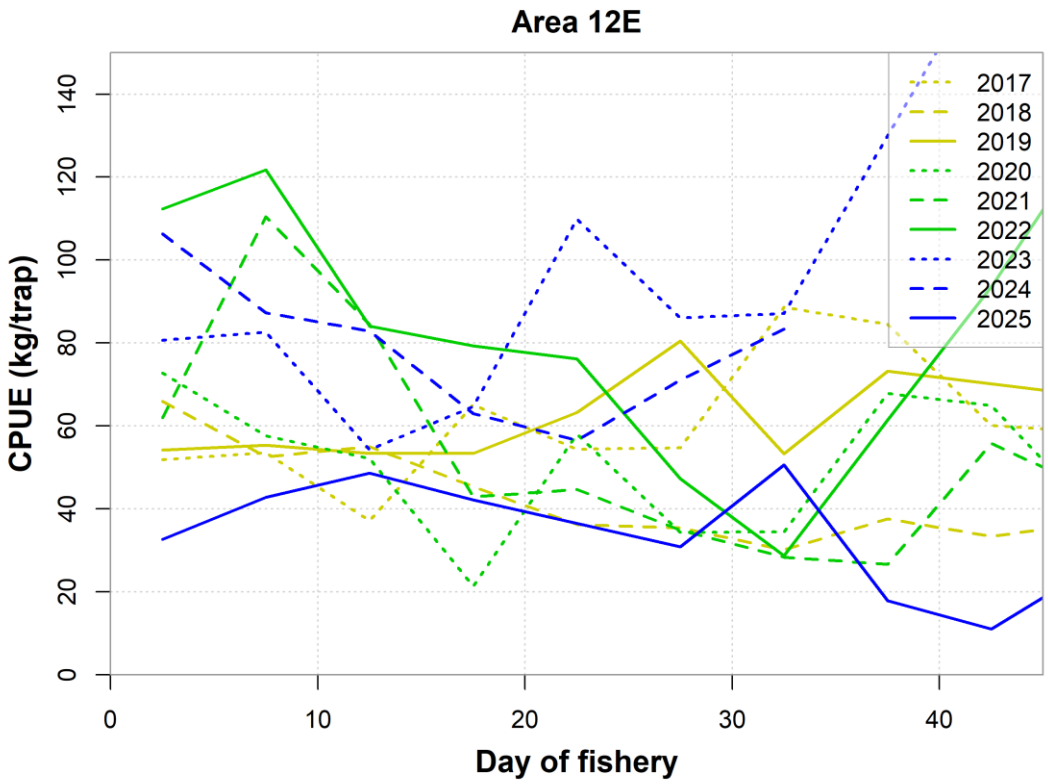

Figure 9. Weekly catch per unit effort (CPUE) for crab fishing area 12E based on fisheries logbook and landings records.

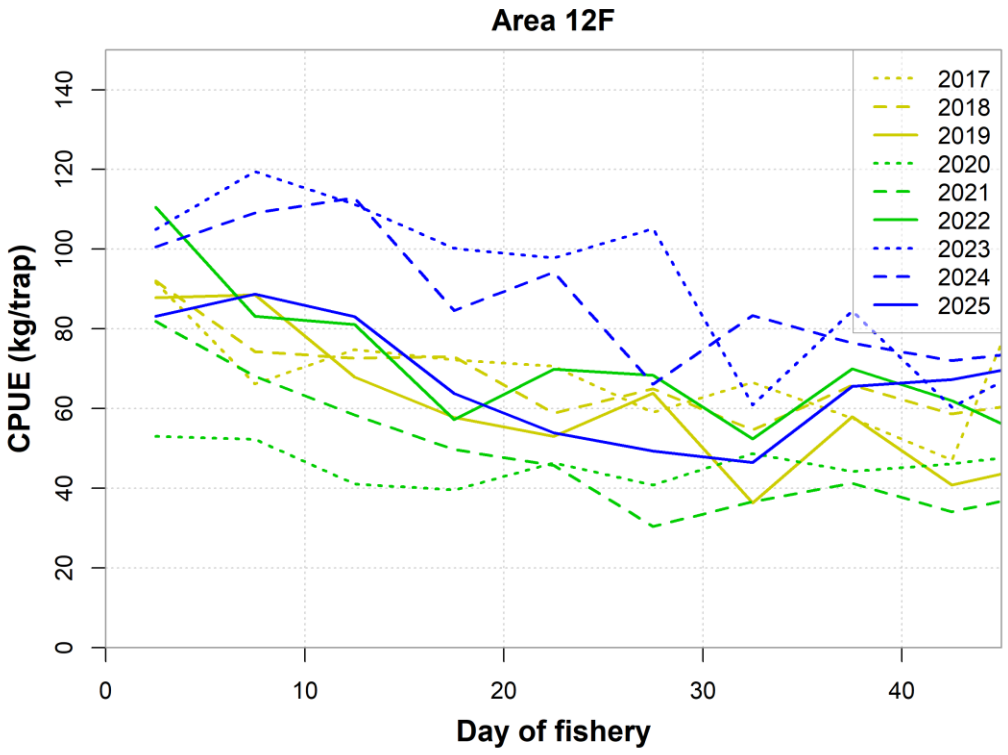

Figure 10. Weekly catch per unit effort (CPUE) for crab fishing area 12F based on fisheries logbook and landings records.

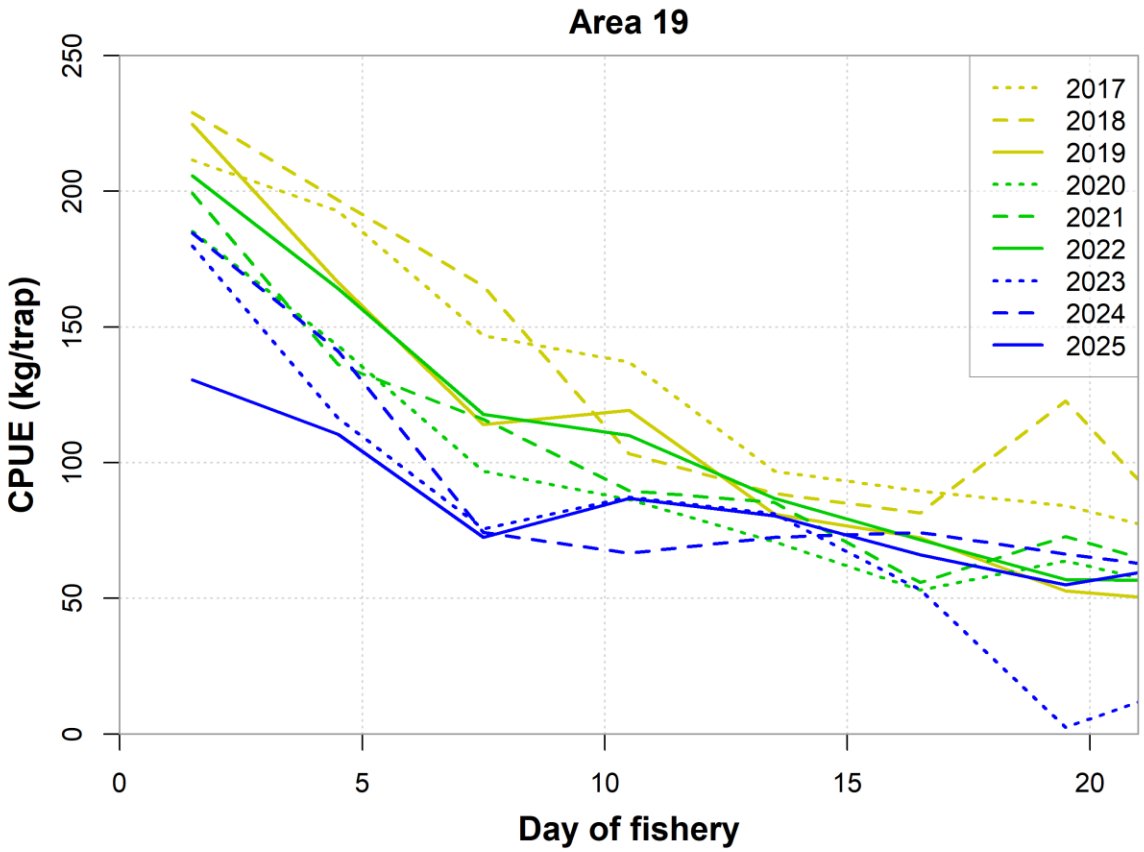

Figure 11. Weekly catch per unit effort (CPUE) for crab fishing area 19 based on fisheries logbook and landings records.

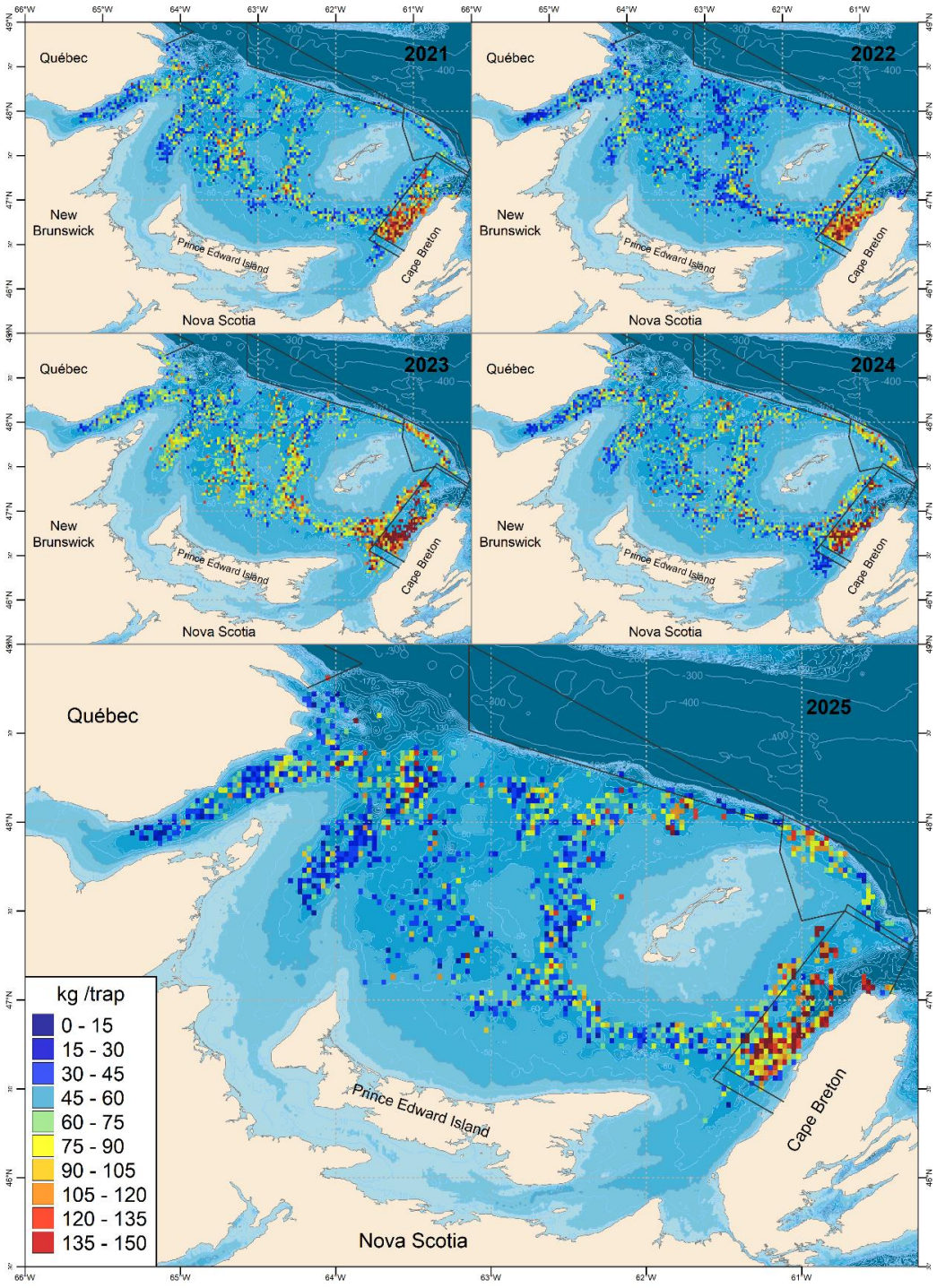

Figure 12. Spatial distribution of catch per unit effort (kg/th), in the Crab Fishing Areas from 2021-2025 fishing seasons.

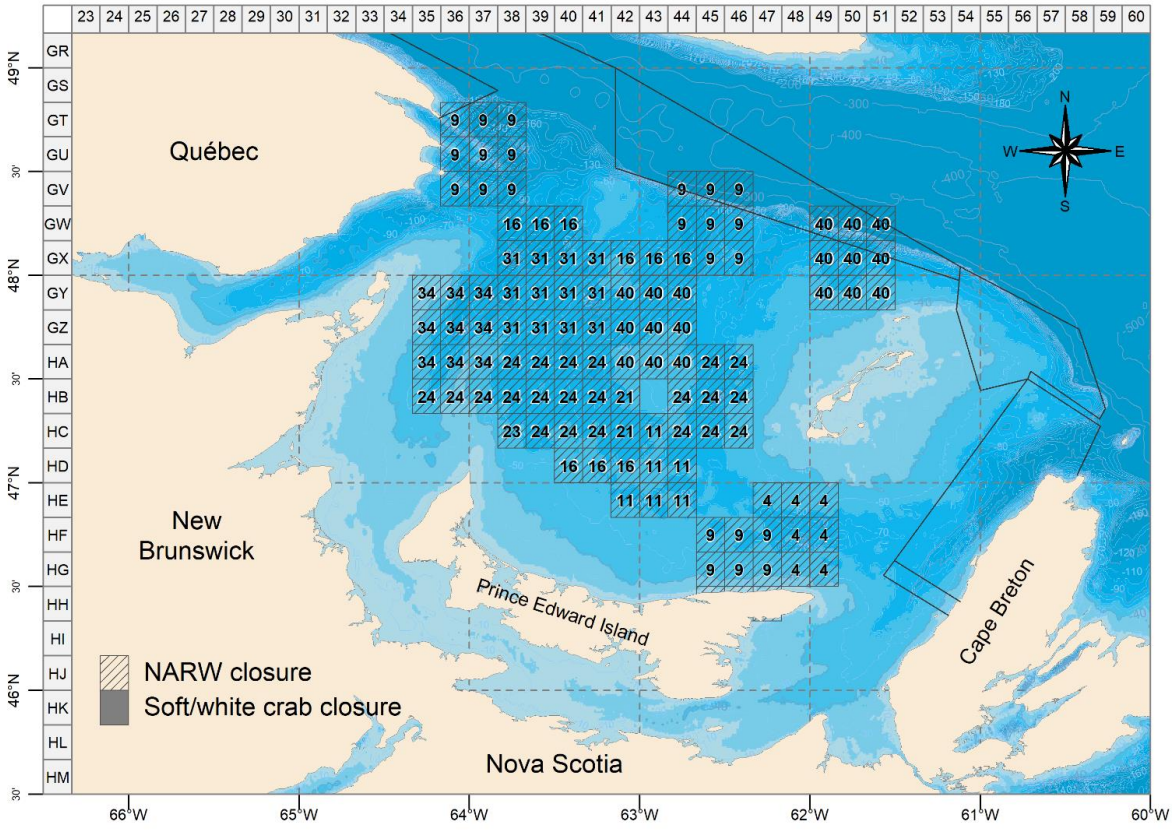

Figure 13. Local area closures of soft/white crab (solid grey area) and for the protection of North Atlantic right whales (hatched area) in 2025. Numbers represent the total number of days grids were closed during the season.