

IPR Implementation Scorecard

2020-2021



NATIONAL INDIGENOUS FISHERIES INSTITUTE
INSTITUT NATIONAL DES PÊCHES AUTOCHTONES
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Message from the Institute

The review of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Indigenous programs was a collaborative activity, led by the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute and in partnership with the Department. From the findings of Indigenous Program Review, we set out to develop a joint vision for the future of these programs; one that would maximize benefit to Indigenous communities, and advance co-management of fish, fish habitat and other marine and aquatic resources.

Indigenous Program Review (IPR) was launched in May 2017, guided by principles of co-development, co-design, and co-delivery at the technical and operational levels. It has been three years since the completion of that landmark review, and the Department has undertaken an Action Plan for the *Renewal and Expansion of DFO's Indigenous Programs*.

The purpose of this scorecard is to jointly evaluate progress made in the implementation of IPR recommendations, and the efforts being made to bring meaningful, transformative change to the Department's relationship with Indigenous peoples.

The Catalyst for Change: Indigenous Program Review

Indigenous Program Review was conducted in two phases, and involved extensive engagement during the assessment of the Atlantic and Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiatives, and the Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program (Phase I); and the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, and its Aboriginal Fishery Guardian Program component (Phase II).

Three reports were published based on the findings of the Indigenous Program Review; each containing recommendations based on direction and input received from Indigenous communities, groups, and businesses during our engagement sessions. Communities which were previously ineligible for the Atlantic and Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiatives were also engaged through IPR. Findings from this engagement directly led to the development of the Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (NICFI).

All three of our reports and their recommendations were formally accepted by the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard on May 24, 2019. On June 21, 2019, the Minister announced that DFO-CCG was adopting a long-term, whole-of-department and -agency approach to meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in the areas of fisheries, oceans, aquaculture, aquatic habitat, and marine waterways.

The Department has since adopted our Indigenous Program Review *Ignite a Culture Change* message and logo to drive this plan of action, and to help employees understand how and why their day-to-day work contributes to effective reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. On September 6, 2019, the Minister also formally announced a DFO-CCG action plan to track and report on its implementation of IPR recommendations, and efforts to advance the priorities outlined in its broader reconciliation strategy.

The recommendations themselves are correlated to the three core messages to DFO–CCG:

1. **Take practical steps** to address issues of a structural or technical nature impeding the efficient administration of programs and practises.
2. **Ignite a culture change** by approaching the renewal of programs and day-to-day operations and interactions with Indigenous groups and communities through the lens of truth and reconciliation—and the long-term goal of balanced relationships.
3. **Reconcile resource management** to respect the Constitutionally protected rights of Indigenous people in programs, practises, and policies.

It has now been almost three years since we published our Program Review phase one report.

During that time, the Department has undertaken an action plan to implement our recommendations. We feel that it is important to track progress collaboratively and offer insight into IPR implementation activities and challenges.

This scorecard, and IPR implementation tracking in general, will not be a static process. We will continue to engage Indigenous people, communities, groups and businesses, and conduct future evaluations of progress at the regional and local level. Our guiding principles during this process will remain grounded in clear communications, respect, openness, inclusion, and the collaborative approach – co-development, co-design and co-delivery of Indigenous programs.

NIFI is always listening

Indigenous Program Review must make a difference in the lives of our people and communities across Canada. That was the promise we made to you throughout Program Review and we intend to keep it. This commitment includes tracking and publicly reporting on the Department's progress, as assessed against Indigenous definitions of success.

We appreciate your continued support and welcome your ongoing participation in our work.

National Indigenous Fisheries Institute Board of Directors

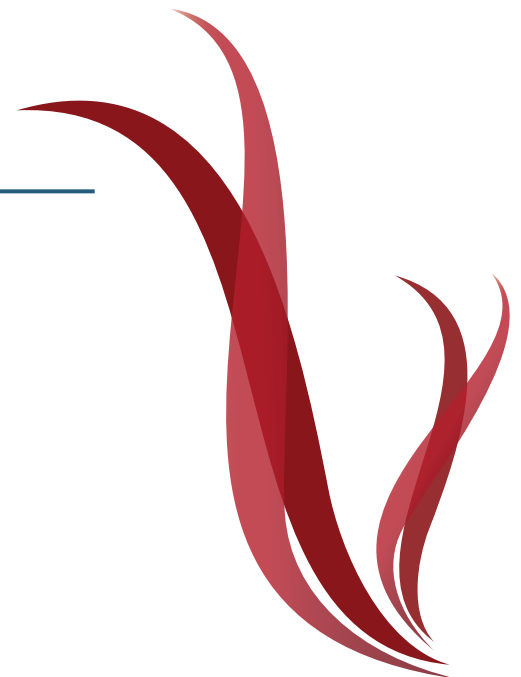
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Progress Tracking

Under development	
Started with initial progress made	
Started with notable progress made	
Complete	



Demonstrate the Renewed Relationship

Renewal of the relationship between the Department and Indigenous peoples is the foundational recommendation from Indigenous Program Review (IPR), with all actions and recommendations contributing to the achievement of this aim.

Reconciliation initiatives, treaty processes, opportunities for procurement and economic participation, as well as collaborative management initiatives, and efforts to implement “Indigenous 101” training to DFO-CCG employees are some examples of the development of renewed relationships. DFO-CCG is encouraged to keep the momentum going, and to work with NIFI to ensure that this change and progress is both captured and communicated.

STATUS: Started with initial progress made

Our assessment of the implementation of IPR recommendations

agency-wide is encouraging. We are encouraged by examples of officials and executives who consistently work to improve the lives of Indigenous peoples.

This is indicative of real progress being made, such as the leadership and collaboration of the Kwilmu’kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office and the Department’s Maritimes Region to create the Nova Scotia Mi’kmaq-DFO Internship program. This program helps strengthen the working relationship between DFO and Mi’kmaq communities, while equipping participants with knowledge, skills and experience. It has also led to the creation of a similar internship for First Nations in New Brunswick and the Department’s Gulf Region.

The creation of stand-alone Arctic Regions for both Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard is another positive example, as is the reorganization of a ‘Reconciliation and Partnership’ branch in Pacific Region mentioned above. The efforts of Strategic Policy to link the DFO-CCG Reconciliation Strategy within the Departmental Results Framework is key to ensuring accountability.



Shift to a Shared Capacity Model

The integration of management and field effort – a good definition of collaboration – continues to progress. NIFI recognizes that integration of effort, rather than operating with an “us and them” dyad, is a challenge in terms of change management within a complex organization.

“Co-management” can be defined as truly shared decision making, in relation to challenging resource access issues, as well as service delivery to people and to the resource. Much of the praxis of the implementation of IPR is about the various aspects of shared decision making; whether in program administration, or in the setting of fishing plans for resources that are so critical to community well-being, and specifically protected in terms of the Constitution. To be successful, “co-management” requires truly willing partners on both sides of the fence.

STATUS: Started with initial progress made

We noted in our IPR Phase Two report, the Department already had some service contracts with Indigenous groups and communities. We encouraged DFO–CCG to build on these experiences, as they took steps to adopt an Indigenous procurement policy.

The DFO–CCG Reconciliation Strategy features several procurement-related actions to advance economic opportunities to Indigenous communities, groups, and businesses. This includes both helping to build the capacity to deliver goods and services through procurement mechanisms, and identifying solutions to existing barriers that prevent the Department from contracting Indigenous services.¹

The Big Bar landslide is a relevant example of such efforts within DFO. The remediation project will occur on the traditional territories of the Secwepemc Nation - specifically, High Bar First Nation and Stswecem’c Xgat’tem First Nation - and the contract includes an Indigenous Benefits Plan. This will provide socio-economic benefits to these two First Nations, such as training, employment, and sub-contracting.²



Ensure Timely Funding, Annual Planning Cycles and Consistent Reporting

Organizations delivering DFO programs, whether stand alone or embedded in other service provision agencies, must have predictable, timely, and consistent funding cycles. It must be further recognized that variations in any aspect of administration outside of the control of Indigenous resource management agencies, places additional stress on personnel, systems and programming.

An extension of this recommendation is a need for improved communication on funding matters, and an emphasis of client service. Making support to Indigenous organizations a priority will serve as a demonstration of a commitment to their success.

STATUS: Started with initial progress made

The most important and practical step that Fisheries and Oceans Canada can take to improve its programs is to provide Contribution Agreement payments in the first quarter of the fiscal year. Indigenous groups and communities do not operate on a 'for-profit' basis, and do not have access to funding reserves/credit to pay salaries, rent, or other expenses for extended periods while waiting for Q1 funding to be issued.

The Department's *Evaluation of Aboriginal Programs: Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS)* and *Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management (AAROM)* report also found inconsistencies in the administration and management of Contribution Agreements between regions.³ These findings are in line with those found by the Institute during engagement with communities and organizations.

DFO efforts to identify these administrative challenges are encouraging and suggest an awareness of this need for consistent and reasonable service standards. A noteworthy example is a marked improvement in administrative processing during the pandemic response. Government officials have demonstrated that they can issue contribution- and transfer payments in a timely manner and under challenging circumstances. Efforts adopted during the COVID-19 period should set the standard for the payment of Indigenous-directed contribution agreement funding in the future.



Use a Contribution Agreement Model and Standardize Terms and Conditions

The standardization of all funding agreements has clear benefits at the community level; allowing for more systematized administration and reporting which supports the timely flow of resources.

NIFI recognizes the challenges the Department may face with this at a national level. However, IPR is about national standardization and comparability, and standardizing the means by which funding and resources are conveyed is the best place to start.

STATUS: Started with initial progress made

The ability to standardize fundamental administrative policies and processes will be a tangible, and recognizable example to communities of the broader calibration of program objectives and contents. This is not meant to be a restrictive exercise, but rather one that will lead to efficiencies in program delivery and to help program development.

This applies to financial policies and processes as well. Standardized, agreed-to financial and reporting methods - used by both government and Indigenous management - would create significant efficiencies, and reduce stress and possible contention between parties. The advantages of normalizing administrative processes - eliminating ambiguity and variation - cannot be understated. This will build trust and confidence between parties and allow greater focus on core objectives.

Many of the issues related to this recommendation are being undertaken through the national AAROM process and through IPR implementation committee work. Typically (outside of COVID/public health restrictions), there is more natural interaction between NIFI and other program participants which is where much of the qualitative information relating to administrative processes is gleaned. NIFI will monitor the national AAROM process and the IPR implementation process to determine progress made and report back accordingly.

Additionally, application of the findings relating to Indigenous skills and training will allow the Institute to demonstrate the benefits of national standardization. Consistency, through mutually agreed upon and standardized terms/measures, will translate to operational efficiencies and clarity when analyzing data and results. This offers equal benefit to the Department, to communities, and to other departments and levels of government.



Align Performance Metrics to Indigenous Definitions of Success

Indigenous program participants have very clear goals and objectives for these programs, as expressed throughout the IPR process. Long-standing performance metrics only assessed the successful delivery of program elements. They did not take into account the much more holistic and quantitative measures of success held by Indigenous communities and organizations.

Adjusting program objectives and performance metrics to reflect the desired outcomes of Indigenous participants would demonstrate collaboration, co-design, and mutual respect. This would further offer a more complete assessment of how programming aligns with the values, lives, and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples.

STATUS: Under Development	
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Community definitions need to be paired with – or reconciled against – DFO and government measures of success, to ensure relevance and agreement with Indigenous communities. Indigenous definitions of success are found in all three IPR final reports should directly influence this undertaking.

Indigenous communities, groups, and businesses want these programs to benefit their people and promote sustainable management of resources. They have been extremely clear on the elements they deem essential measures of program success: healthy fish stocks, co-management, meaningful employment, food security, and respect for Indigenous science, knowledge, jurisdiction and authority.

DFO has implemented, or is in progress of implementing, several initiatives to align such measures of success with program outcomes. These efforts are focused at the AAROM and ICFI-level (AICFI/PICFI/NICFI); ranging from the establishment of Indigenous-led management committees to the tracking of enterprise annual reports to their communities. These actions are excellent steps toward greater collaboration, and a more holistic approach to program design and delivery. It is recommended that the national AAROM process be engaged to help develop these success variables or measures; ensuring their ongoing applicability and relevance.



IND 101: Building DFO-CCG’s Relationship with Indigenous Peoples

DFO is working to develop “Indigenous 101” training, which is meant to be an orientation to Indigenous issues and history, presented to all levels of management and field operators within DFO-CCG. The course is designed by Indigenous professionals, and is meant to orient Departmental personnel to the reconciliatory process, heighten their understanding of the rights and circumstances of Indigenous communities, and to help government employees understand the nature and intent of the programs they are administering.

Consistency of standards and offerings across DFO-CCG programming requires a commitment to a common understanding throughout the organization. This is essential to avoid regionalized approaches to programs and initiatives that need to be delivered from a national perspective.

STATUS: Under Development

One of the DFO-CCG Reconciliation Strategy’s actions is focused on enhancing internal capacity to deliver on reconciliation through various efforts to change corporate culture: increasing employee awareness and knowledge of Indigenous peoples and history, improving the tone of communication with Indigenous peoples, reviewing operational practices, and ensuring Indigenous engagement becomes part of how every sector operates. At the time of this report, it is unclear how the Department intends to evaluate or score increases in employee awareness, or measure improvements in the tone of communication with Indigenous peoples.

The Department does maintain an intranet site dedicated to reconciliation-related activities, and there are clear examples of engagement with Indigenous groups and communities by various departmental sectors and regions on new initiatives. The reorganization of the DFO Pacific Region to include a *Reconciliation and Partnerships* branch is a significant demonstration of structural change necessary to advance reconciliation efforts. This should ensure that fisheries, and other issues that matter to Indigenous communities and organizations across British Columbia and the Yukon, are addressed in a timely and coordinated manner.

These activities are a good start to meet the internal investment needed to achieve this recommendation, but more work is required to address its training and succession planning elements.



Embedding training with DFO indigenous programs

NIFI has been working with DFO and other government agencies to develop, fund, and implement a training program that is related directly to DFO Indigenous program offerings. This initiative is well underway and will report out to DFO during this fiscal year.

NIFI has come to realize that the specificity of training required, and now identified and detailed through this initiative, brings the potential program full circle. DFO can collaborate with other federal agencies on this, but ultimately, the Department and its partner organizations (such as NIFI) will be best able to direct this training. This will ensure uptake at a community level, and to best ensure training opportunities are relevant to community aspirations and economic plans.

STATUS: Started with notable progress made

DFO programs have a proven track record of creating long-term employment at the community level:

- Commercial programs
- Co-management programs
- On-going capacity development, retention, and professionalization
- Procurement and program co-co-co

Training and skills development are critical components of this continued success, but funding for these activities is only one aspect of what the programs are designed to support. This is part of a broad-based, all-of-government response to economic reconciliation.

The Department is supporting a national Indigenous training and skills development project that will begin addressing this key recommendation, as well as other capacity-related recommendations.⁴ This initiative is documenting DFO-CCG current investment in Indigenous training and skills development, along with the investments of other departments and agencies, to determine gaps and redundancies. It is also uncovering what is taking place within Indigenous communities, and by Indigenous groups, to fill these gaps and advance Indigenous-set employment objectives.

At the conclusion of this initiative, NIFI will be able to recommend to DFO and its federal partners the best way forward to support applicable, long-term training opportunities and skills development. NIFI and DFO-CCG will work collaboratively to assemble and action the program, based on identified and stated community priorities. This approach will be consistent with IPR, and offer performance metrics that will allow for the creation of a longitudinal database; integrating Indigenous measures of success in the evaluation of performance and continuation of program offerings.



Recognizing and Supporting Indigenous Procurement Opportunities

Part of the broader development of a shared capacity model is to maximize the ability of Indigenous organizations and enterprises to access DFO-CCG procurement opportunities.

NIFI is working closely with DFO to produce a platform from which procurement opportunities can be directed toward Indigenous firms and services providers. This project is coming to a conclusion, and a series of recommendations are being drafted that will support the further inclusion of Indigenous suppliers and agencies – both locally and nationally – into DFO-CCG efforts and increase procurement offerings to 5% of annual goods/services requirements.

STATUS: Started with notable progress made

As noted in our IPR Phase Two report, the Department does hold service contracts with Indigenous groups and communities, and we encouraged DFO-CCG to build on these experiences as they took steps to adopt an Indigenous procurement policy. The Institute met with procurement personnel during IPR and has since engaged them in ongoing dialogue throughout the year to work on means of increasing the percentage of goods and services contracts awarded to Indigenous groups and businesses. To achieve this, how Indigenous groups and businesses are engaged must be considered, as part of the process to design a department and agency-wide Indigenous procurement policy.

The DFO-CCG Reconciliation Strategy features several procurement-related actions to advance economic opportunities for Indigenous communities, groups, and businesses. This includes identifying and supporting solutions to barriers preventing the Department from contracting Indigenous services.⁵ The assurance of procurement integrity, regarding proposals submitted to the Department, should be included in this action area.

The Big Bar landslide is a relevant procurement example involving DFO. As the remediation project will occur on the traditional territories of the Secwepemc Nation; specifically, High Bar First Nation and Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation, the contract includes an Indigenous Benefits Plan to provide socio-economic benefits to these two First Nations through training, employment, and sub-contracting.⁶



Maximize Departmental and Other Federal Government Collaborations to Help Indigenous Communities Build and Sustain Technical Capacity

DFO has taken this to heart and has worked strategically to bring other federal agencies along the IPR route, as evidenced by the ongoing DFO-CCG Procurement Project.

It is important that gains made to date, and clear momentum found in the whole of Department acceptance of the IPR recommendations, be allowed to carry on. Resistors within DFO and CCG need to be encouraged to embrace the “co-co-co” message and participate earnestly in IPR implementation reviews and reports.

STATUS: Started with notable progress made

The Department has done a great deal of work to implement those IPR recommendations designed to improve the AAROM Program; employing an organized, methodical, and national approach in doing so.

In addition to the development of a National AAROM Network and an AAROM Program Management Committee, the Department has enabled the co-development and hosting of an AAROM hub website.⁷ The website showcases the technical capacities, skills, and expertise of each AAROM group and a map showing the AAROM network coverage across Canada. It also has a section to document the annual national AAROM meetings, which is a forum for Directors to network and collaborate on projects and shared solutions.

Some DFO-CCG sectors and regions have made real efforts to inform AAROM groups and Indigenous communities about other funding programs. This is reflected in the number of groups and communities that are participants in Coastal Restoration Fund and Oceans Protection Plan projects; the creation of new Indigenous-specific funding programs such as the Indigenous Habitat Participation Program, and; by the efforts of some sectors to assess the technical capacity of AAROM groups and communities to be involved in their initiatives (e.g. Integrated Oceans Management’s Marine Spatial Planning team).

While recipients of the *Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk* and the *Habitat Stewardship Program for Aquatic Species at Risk* have yet to be published, we expect some AAROMs and Indigenous communities will be among them.



Conclusion

Overall score for fiscal year 2020-2021: **Good to Very Good**

We expect that the Department will continue to report on IPR implementation progress through its annual action plan update, as well as reconciliation strategy activities. We also are looking for IPR recommendations being realized in the day-to-day operations of commercial fishing enterprises, aquatic resource and oceans management groups, and the fisheries and aquatic resource departments of Indigenous communities across Canada.

Inasmuch as DFO-CCG wants to track the performance of its renewed Indigenous programs and the overall progress it makes to implement each IPR recommendation and the DFO-CCG Reconciliation Strategy. The Department's IPR Implementation Action Plan and its Reconciliation Strategy are publicly accessible to ensure that this happens. The development of this annual scorecard is meant to continue to encourage progress across DFO-CCG sectors and regions.

This scorecard is important to maintain beneficial progress in the implementation of the IPR recommendations. The scorecard will be an ongoing feature of the DFO-NIFI relationship.

STATUS: Started with notable progress made	
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The Department has made real progress in addressing the IPR recommendations. As is often the case in complex and bureaucratic organizations, change is difficult to introduce and difficult to manage to an efficient outcome.

DFO-CCG is to be commended; most other government agencies do not collaborate with external agencies such as NIFI to develop an evaluative mechanisms to track beneficial change in the Department or in its program offerings.

NIFI will continue to work with DFO on this scorecard initiative and other projects which are critical to the Department's response to the Government of Canada's Indigenous Reconciliation agenda.

Resources

Indigenous Program Review Reports:

<http://indigenousfisheries.ca/en/resources/>

- Phase One Final Report (May 22, 2018)
- Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative Final Report (March 2019)
- Phase Two Final Report (May 22, 2019)

Tracking the Progress of Indigenous Program Review Implementation:

<http://indigenousfisheries.ca/en/indigenous-program-review/tracking-progress/>

- Background
- Department- and Agency-wide Recommendations
- Tailored Reports

Endnotes

¹ <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/aboriginal-autochtones/documents/DFO-CCG-reconciliationstrateg-reconciliation-MPO-GCC-eng.pdf>

² <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pacific-smon-pacifique/big-bar-landslide-eboulement/index-eng.html>

³ <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ae-ve/evaluations/18-19/AP-Evaluation-eng.html#4.4.2>

⁴ <http://indigenousfisheries.ca/en/projects/training/>

⁵ <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/aboriginal-autochtones/documents/DFO-CCG-reconciliationstrateg-reconciliation-MPO-GCC-eng.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pacific-smon-pacifique/big-bar-landslide-eboulement/index-eng.html>

⁷ www.aarom.ca

