

# Indigenous Program Review

## PHASE ONE FINAL REPORT

Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative  
Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative  
Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and  
Oceans Management Program



**NATIONAL INDIGENOUS  
FISHERIES INSTITUTE**  
Indigenous Program Review

**INSTITUT NATIONAL DES  
PÊCHES AUTOCHTONES**  
Examen des programmes autochtones

[indigenousfisheries.ca](http://indigenousfisheries.ca)

# Message from the Institute

The review of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Indigenous programs is a collaborative activity being led by the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute in partnership with the Department.

We are on a mission to develop a joint vision for the future of these programs so that they maximize participation in fisheries and aquaculture and the management of aquatic and oceans resources.

## This is being achieved taking a co-development, co-design, and co-delivery approach.

Our work is divided into two phases. The first phase took place between June 2017 and March 2018. It started with a desktop review of more than 150 evaluations, audits, reviews and reports completed over that past 25 years related to one or more of the following programs:

- The Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy Program
- The Aboriginal Fishery Guardian Program
- The Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program
- The Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative
- The Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

We also researched a number of Indigenous-related fisheries, aquaculture, and oceans-related activities and plans in northern and other regions of Canada to inform the development of a Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative.

As a result of this desktop review, we prepared seven discussion papers and invited Indigenous groups and communities – and any interested Canadians – to give us their feedback. We also launched a series of engagement sessions to hear directly from people and groups about their experiences participating in the Atlantic and Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiatives and the Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management program. We especially wanted to hear their views about what was working, and what was not, and how these programs could be improved to best benefit people and communities in the future.

In total, we held 10 workshops and four plenaries with more than 200 participants between October 2017 and February 2018. We also interviewed six program participants who could not attend an engagement session and received formal submissions from eight groups. In the end, more than 75 per cent of aquatic resource and oceans management groups and commercial fishing enterprises in the Pacific took part, along with close to 70 per cent of commercial fishing enterprises in the Atlantic. We also had the opportunity to hold 10 interactive sessions related to the Northern commercial fisheries program with 85 representatives of interested communities and groups.

Along the way, the Institute prepared 17 *What We Heard* reports and more than 25 graphic recordings. These were posted on our website following each event to ensure full transparency. Engagement materials such as agendas, presentations and workshops were also web-posted.

What we heard from people, communities, technical groups, and fishing enterprises about the regional commercial fisheries programs and the aquatic resource and oceans management program form the basis of the recommendations made in this report. We divided recommendations into two categories – those of a structural or technical nature which deal with the efficient administration of programs – and those that require a parallel shift in the relationship between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Indigenous people and groups in Canada.

## Our rationale is as follows.

First, we were privileged to have so many people share their experiences and successes with us and tell us how programs could be made better. This includes learning from the wisdom of Elders and getting instructions from Chiefs and other leaders in communities. We want to ensure that this insight and direction is communicated in both practical and pivotal ways.

Second, we want to respect the unique and historic opportunity that is before us today with a government that is willing to change its programs for, and its relationship with, Indigenous people. We recognize the significance of being invited to work with the Government of Canada to co-design and co-develop programs for the future. Once again, we think this can be best achieved by taking both practical and pivotal actions.

Third, in our view, the practical recommendations are achievable and fall within the stated priorities of the Department. At the same time, the timing is optimal for a cultural change to begin by approaching the renewal of these programs through the lens of truth and reconciliation – and the long-term goal of a balanced relationship between the Government of Canada and Indigenous Nations.

## Indigenous Program Review reflects this collaboration.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada has already begun to make changes to the commercial programs to reflect the feedback of participants in this review. Several of the Department's sectors have also taken the time to meet with the Institute to discuss and advance elements of change that will need to happen to fully realize all of the recommendations of this report – and those that will follow once phase two of the review is completed.

Phase two is just getting underway. We will be meeting communities across Canada to talk about the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy and the Aboriginal Fishery Guardian programs. We will also continue to engage communities and groups that are eligible for the Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative so that we have heard from all potential participants about how this new program can best serve their commercial fishing needs and aspirations.

This is an exciting time for First Nations, Inuit and Métis people and communities across Canada who are involved in fisheries, aquaculture, habitat protection, oceans management, and related activities and businesses. We have listened to your advice thus far and identified some ways that the Department can use it to advance improvements and overall change to their programs. And, we look forward to hearing your views over the coming months.

**Thank you for your continued support and participation in our work.**

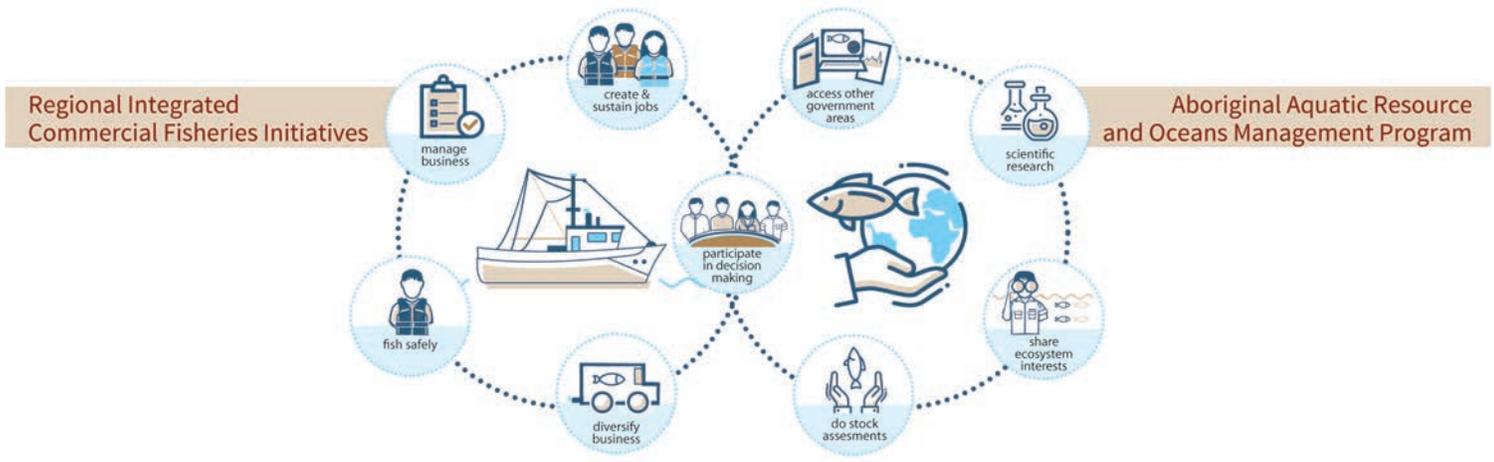
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# Executive Summary

A national program review is an opportunity for participants to reflect on their successes and share their ideas and suggestions for improvement. It is also a chance to raise any concerns that they may have with one or more programs that are under review.

On October 4, 2017, the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute began seeking the input of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, communities, and groups – and any interested Canadian – on the suite of Indigenous programs administered by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Input could be shared by answering one or more of the questions posed in the online discussion papers. It could also be made via Facebook or Twitter.

At the same time, the Institute began its first phase of in-person sessions to engage program participants in the Atlantic and Pacific

Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiatives and the Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management program. It also met with potential participants in the Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative. After each session, the Institute prepared a *What We Heard* report and made it publicly accessible on the website. This phase of in-person sessions ended in February 2018.

The Panel carefully assessed all of the feedback we have received to date so we could make practical recommendations for the Department and co-delivery partners to implement. We also looked for new ideas that would reflect the Government of Canada's commitment to a renewed relationship with Indigenous peoples based on the recognition of rights, respect, co operation, and partnership.

This report contains a number of recommendations for the Department to implement in order to improve each of the three programs that we engaged on in-person during phase one.

**We also found that there were a number of improvements and changes that could be made by the Department that would benefit all of its programs department-wide. These include:**

## 1. Demonstrate the Renewed Relationship:

The commitment and support of community leadership and senior executives at the Department (across all sectors) is fundamental to change the relationship between the Government of Canada and Indigenous peoples. Many of the recommendations in this report, especially those related to co-management, need to be driven at the highest levels and across all regions and sectors.

## 2. Shift to a Shared Capacity Model:

The Department stands to benefit by ending the duplication of services that are best delivered by Indigenous people in their communities. This is especially apparent when it comes to 'in the field' research, data collection, and scientific activities. This can be achieved, in part, by adopting a department-wide Indigenous procurement policy. It will also require co-development of data-sharing agreements and parameters. In addition, the Department should begin allocating A-base funding for knowledge and science.

## 3. Ensure Timely Funding, Annual Planning Cycles, and Consistent Reporting:

The Department and program participants need to adjust their planning and funding cycles so that work plans and project proposals are approved, and funding begins, in the first quarter of the fiscal year. The Department and program participants should also adjust reporting requirements so they are aligned to the reports that communities, groups and enterprises are already giving to their Chiefs, Council, and community members. Joint-training should also be held during FY2018-19, where appropriate, and at regular intervals thereafter so that program administrators and participants understand clearly what is required in Schedules 5 and 7 of their contribution agreements.

#### 4. Use a Contribution Agreement Model and Standardize Terms and Conditions:

The Department should adopt a standardized contribution agreement across its sectors to reduce the time groups and enterprises spend on applications and reporting. This contribution agreement should draw on the Indigenous program model. At the same time, the Department should use consistent terms and conditions in its contribution agreements to make funding programs predictable for recipients and to reflect recent federal commitments, such as the Principles respecting the Government of Canada's relationships with Indigenous peoples. For example, a new clause could be added to reflect local Indigenous languages so groups could submit information to, or receive materials from, the Department in their own language or the Department could start integrating some phrases and concepts into its correspondence and reports. The meaning and objectives of certain terms should also be standardized across all programs and mutually accepted in order to ease relationship-building between the Department and Indigenous groups. This includes standardized definitions of co-management, co-delivery, co-development and co-design – and other definitions contained in Schedule 1 of contribution agreements.

#### 5. Align Performance Metrics to Indigenous Definitions of Success:

Program participants have very clear goals and objectives for these programs. Adjusting program objectives and performance metrics to reflect these desired outcomes, while retaining the overall consistency of performance metrics for the program, would demonstrate collaboration, co-design, and mutual respect.

#### 6. Invest in Relationship-building through Internal Human Resource Strategies and Succession Planning:

The Department should return to its former staff structure of serving groups by geographic area within each region, rather than by program, to better serve communities and to help build closer relationships. These personnel could also serve as a conduit for contribution opportunities being offered by other sectors. They would still need to adhere to national standards and administrative consistency. The Department must also invest in human resource strategies, succession planning, and internal training to retain knowledgeable staff who will demonstrate the Crown's commitment to advance its new relationship with Indigenous peoples.

#### 7. Secure Long-term Source of Training Funds:

Fisheries and Oceans Canada's suite of Indigenous programs have a proven track record of creating long-term employment. Funding for training and skills development along career progression paths should be made available through a long-term partnership with Employment and Social Development Canada. This is fundamental to the future success of all programs and is based on the best practices of governments and businesses which invest in ongoing training and continuous improvement.

The Indigenous Program Review is intended to improve and enhance Fisheries and Oceans Canada programs to maximize the benefits to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and communities across Canada. We therefore ask that the Department respond to the recommendations in this report and report back annually to Indigenous peoples and Canadians on the continuing progress being made.



#### Co-delivery vs. Co-management

Collaborating to deliver a program or to manage the delivery of a program is co-delivery. Co-management is specifically reserved for the resource: co-management of fish, fish stocks and /or fish habitat, oceans, species at risk, and other aquatic resources.

# Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

The Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative began in 2007 to help Mi'kmaq and Maliseet First Nations develop and operate successful commercial fishing enterprises and have a more effective voice in fisheries co-management.

This program has been very successful. While participation is voluntary, 34 of the 35 eligible First Nations now take part; benefitting 40,000 people and the local economy. Over the past decade, commercial fishing enterprises have also built and are implementing their strategic business plans. Today, these enterprises generate \$110 million in annual gross revenues and support 1,675 local jobs.

The program's innovative delivery components, such as the independent-from-government business development team, set an example for other Indigenous programming. And, like all good programs,

the administrators are open to new ideas and ongoing improvements to ensure that the program remains relevant and continues to meet the needs of its participants.

At the start of the Indigenous Program Review, the Panel was able to discuss and analyze the results of a special program renewal planning session of the program's co-delivery partners. We were also able to draw from the experiences of regional program administrators at Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

This initial input informed the development of our discussion paper for the Atlantic commercial fisheries program and the topics we covered during our workshop with program participants in Moncton. These topics were organized into four main areas: program design, success and performance measurement, partnerships, and training.

## **What we heard and learned through this engagement process is that program participants agree that the program could benefit from a few adjustments. For example:**

### 1. Program Design:

Participants support continued flexibility in program funding envelopes so the program meets the differing needs of enterprises at all levels. They also support more contact and stronger relationship-building between the business development team and communities – and between the Department and communities.

### 2. Performance Measurement:

Participants want transparent criteria for program milestones. They are also clear about how program success is defined by communities and over the long-term for their commercial fishing enterprises.

### 3. Partnerships:

Participants support opportunities for partnerships to address enterprise priorities for marketing and business diversification along the value chain. They would also like the program to better leverage these types of opportunities.

### 4. Training:

Participants advise that to meet their ongoing training needs more efficiently, the program needs to align training to specific skills development and career paths. They also saw value in more program support for succession planning.

The Panel carefully assessed this feedback so it could make practical recommendations for the Department and co-delivery partners to implement. We also looked for new ideas that would reflect the Government of Canada's commitment to a renewed relationship with Indigenous peoples.

What we found is that the Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative is recognized by the Government of Canada and First Nations communities as a successful economic development program that has helped communities build capacity to be viable participants in commercial fisheries, aquaculture, and supply chain businesses. The program is also aligned to support Indigenous aspirations for sustained community employment across the fisheries and aquaculture sector and a 100 per cent Indigenous-prosecuted fishery with demonstrated benefits at the community level.

The program becomes complicated, however, in component 3, which is centered on fisheries co-management capacity-building. During our workshops, Atlantic commercial fishing enterprises expressed their preference to be involved in fisheries management advisory meetings with the Department before these meetings included other resource users.

This is a reflection of the desire for co-management of the resource at the nation-to-nation level. It is also the point of intersection between Indigenous commercial fisheries programming and the nation-based Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy. In some cases, it also intersects with the community-based Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program.

A common theme that came out of all of our Indigenous program review workshops, and the submissions we received, is that Indigenous groups and communities want 'true' co-management of the resource. They also want co-management of the resource to reflect a holistic approach – not just management of individual fish stocks for the purpose of fishing on any given year – but management of fish and fish habitat in the context of healthy waterways, the impact of fisheries and other industries and uses, and with a view for long-term sustainability.

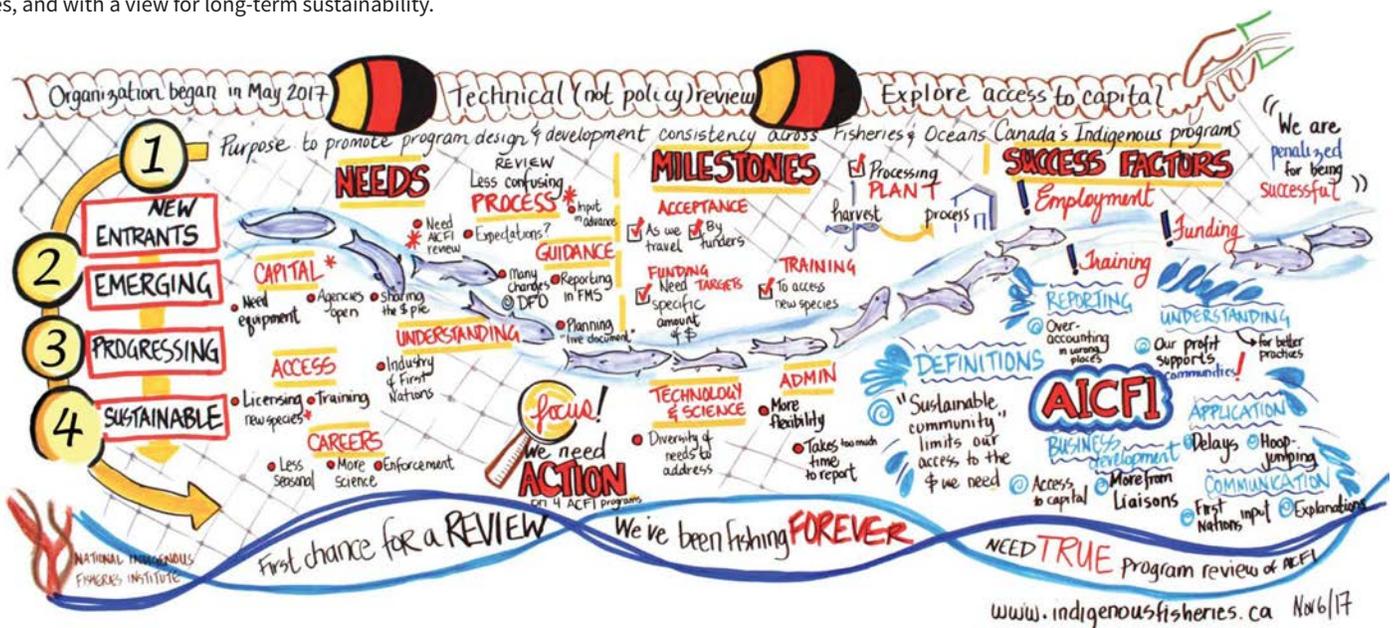
This is *Netukulimk*. The environment, natural resources, and waterways provide all of the necessities of life and you take only what is needed.

It is also a shift from the way the commercial fishery has largely functioned across Canada; from being solely based on profits, to one that is based on ecology, research, multiple users, and the specific life-cycle needs of species.

The Panel has come to the conclusion that the best way for Indigenous groups and governments to achieve co-management of the resource is to keep this objective within the collaborative and nation-led Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy and for applicable groups in the Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program. We also assert that co-management is an organic process that will require constant attention over the long term.

Focusing the Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative, and its Pacific counterpart, on socio-economic capacity-building activities will ensure commercial fishing enterprises have more funding to build business management capacity. As is recommended elsewhere in this report, the role of the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy fisheries manager and, in some cases, aquatic resource and oceans management group technical advisors could be one of support to commercial enterprises when they participate in advisory committee activities.

Mi'kmaq and Maliseet commercial fishing enterprises support jobs in their communities and benefit the economies of Atlantic provinces and Canada as a whole. Continuing to build and improve on this program's success will only increase the social and economic benefits.



## Vision of Atlantic Commercial Fishing Enterprises

*“We want to create opportunities for employment through this business. We want to use the profits to diversify, to give back to the community, and to buy more licences to be able to create more employment, and continue this cycle.”*

### Indigenous Definitions of Success

Benefitting Communities and Resources

Healthy fish  
stocks

Community  
employment

True  
co-management

Fishing all licences  
(no leasing)

### Goal

First Nations manage and control fishing, processing and marketing

Ownership

Employment

Diversification

Local markets

Exports

## Indigenous Program Review Panel Recommendations

### Take practical steps to advance enterprise growth, diversification and training

#### 1. Maximize departmental and other federal government collaborations

- Help commercial fishing enterprises access program funding from aquaculture and other business or economic development funding programs, such as the Atlantic Fisheries Fund
- Use the strategic partnerships initiative to advance marketing activities with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and certain infrastructure priorities with appropriate agencies, such as processing or retail facilities or new gear or fishing technologies

#### 2. Continue to strengthen program administration

- Annually update and make accessible clear and consistent program guidance materials including transparent criteria for the program milestones identified for new, emerging, progressing and sustainable enterprises

#### 3. Ensure the program structure meets enterprise needs and aspirations at all stages

- Promote business development team service offerings and continue to build expertise in areas such as emerging fisheries
- Continue to support flexible funding eligibilities and opportunities to expand and diversify
- Continue to allow multi-year funding options for larger acquisitions
- Support enterprises in the pursuit of industry information, including market, value-added and supply chain intelligence
- Ensure training flexibility to increase community employment opportunities in value-added businesses, management, and new fisheries
- Enable groups that want to transition into larger capital and export companies
- Continue to modernize and improve the electronic fisheries management system database

#### 4. Support succession planning

- Leverage best practice of linking Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy community fishing activities with commercial enterprise succession planning
- Support community outreach programs that align training, accreditation, professionalization, and career progression paths to employment in all aspects of the fishery
- Hold workshops to help enterprises learn how to develop and implement a succession plan

### Ignite a culture change that reflects truth and reconciliation

#### 1. Invest in relationship-building

- Encourage regular networking opportunities for departmental program administrators, the business development team, and enterprise managers to continue to build knowledge about the communities they serve and their fisheries
- Support synergies and collaborations between enterprises and aquatic resource and oceans management groups; especially, activities related to co-management of fisheries
- Help enterprises address issues with other fishery participants at advisory committee and other decision-making tables by holding more joint Indigenous and non-Indigenous commercial fish harvester activities

#### 2. Continue to build Indigenous co-management capacity within the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy and Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management programs

- Hold the Department's resource management and science fisheries advisory meetings with First Nations governments (Tier 2) prior to engaging stakeholder resource users
- Hold annual decision-making workshops for First Nations and department staff in resource management and science

#### 3. Reflect Indigenous definitions of success in the desired outcomes of the program

- Track and regularly report on program success at the community level by drawing from the annual reports that enterprises develop and give to their communities



#### Best Practice

Tjipogtotjg (Buctouche) MicMac Band links their Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy activities to their commercial fishing enterprise succession plan.

Younger community members get out on fishing vessels to learn about conservation measures (good stewardship practices), the rules of the fishery, and how to fish. Using this practise, younger people 'graduate' up the line until they are ready to participate in commercial fisheries.



#### Best Practice

In October 2014, the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag formed a project management action team that meets monthly to discuss various fishery-related issues.

The team consists of the Chief, Director General of Economic Development, a fisheries consultant, Business development team person, Assistant of Fisheries, and Director of Fisheries. The team works together on possible projects, maintains focus on the progress of the lobster hut and wholesale operations, and overall operations in the fisheries. They also work closely with their aquatic resource and oceans management group, *Association de gestion halieutique autochtone Mi'kmaq et Malécite*, when required.

# Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

The Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative began in 2007 to reinvigorate and diversify the involvement of First Nations in British Columbia in commercial fisheries by helping communities develop sustainable fishing enterprises and participate in fisheries management decision-making processes. The program built on the fisheries reform work which was undertaken by Fisheries and Oceans Canada in 2004 to respond to recommendations made by the Joint Task Group on Post-treaty Fisheries and the First Nations Panel on Fisheries. It also leveraged other investments made by the Department toward economic programs in the 1990's.

The Pacific commercial fisheries program has achieved some success. There are presently 25 commercial fishing enterprises, which involve 97 Indigenous groups. These enterprises have demonstrated their capacity to develop and implement business plans and business cases for new investment. Today, they generate \$40.2 million in annual gross revenues and support 1,100 local jobs.

There is still room for improvement. There are 202 First Nations in British Columbia – and many communities have not been able to participate in

the program because it did not have stable funding until 2017. Licensing rules and allocation realities in the Pacific fishery, the state of some fish stocks, and the impacts of other industries have also prevented some First Nations commercial fishing aspirations from being fully realized. This includes any impacts of open-pen fish farms and an undocumented recreational sportfishery catch.

When the Indigenous Program Review began, the Panel brought decades of knowledge and expertise working in coastal and inland fisheries in the Pacific. We were also able to draw from the experiences of regional program administrators at Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

This initial input informed the development of our discussion paper for the Pacific commercial fisheries program and the topics we covered during our workshops with program participants in Kamloops, Nanaimo, and Vancouver. These topics were organized into four main areas: program design, success and performance measurement, partnerships, and training.

**What we heard and learned through this engagement process is that program participants would like to continue to improve and expand the program. They would also like to address some pervasive issues, including those which are beyond the scope of the Program Review. For example:**

## 1. Program Design:

Participants support continued flexibility in program funding envelopes so the program meets the differing preferences, needs, and aspirations of enterprises at all levels. They also support more contact and stronger relationship-building between the Department and communities – and between the business development team and communities.

## 2. Performance Measurement:

Participants want transparent criteria for program milestones, decision-making and eligibilities, as well as accessible program guidance materials. They are also clear about how program success is defined by communities and over the long-term for their commercial fishing enterprises.

## 3. Partnerships:

Participants support opportunities for First Nation-to-First Nation partnerships to address enterprise priorities for local marketing and business diversification along the value chain. They would also like the program to better leverage these types of opportunities.

#### 4. Training:

Participants prefer locally based training and have aligned training programs to local colleges and training centers. To meet ongoing training needs, participants support the alignment of program training funding to specific skills development and career paths. They also see value in more program support for succession planning.

#### 5. Pervasive issues:

While participants understand the technical nature of this review, they contend that licensing and allocation policies, and the lack of access to high-economic value fisheries, prevent the program from achieving maximum success. They also support action to address the impacts of open-pen fish farms on wild fish stocks and to require recreational sportfishery data to be reflected in fisheries management plans.

The Panel carefully assessed this feedback so it could make practical recommendations for the Department and co-delivery partners to implement. We also looked for new ideas that would reflect the Government of Canada's commitment to a renewed relationship with Indigenous peoples.

The Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative is recognized by the Government of Canada and First Nations communities as a successful economic development program that is helping communities rebuild their capacity to participate in commercial fisheries – an industry in which Nations have been involved since before European contact.

Like its counterpart in the Atlantic, the program is aligned to support Indigenous aspirations for sustained community employment and a 100 per cent Indigenous-prosecuted fishery with demonstrated benefits at the community level. Unlike the Atlantic program, however, the Pacific program functions with fisheries that operate under very different licensing and allocation policies. Commercial fishing enterprises in British Columbia are also largely aggregated partnerships involving a number of First Nations, rather than one per community. These differences must be taken into account when making recommendations to improve the program and to measure its success over the long run.

For example, we were reminded in every workshop, and in several submissions, that program participants base the success of this program on the benefits realized in the community. Participants do not want to be pressured to lease licences and quota at the expense of community jobs or to satisfy large-scale commercial business models. Instead, they want the program to encourage more enterprise networking so communities can collaborate with one another and form unique partnerships with other First Nations across the Province.

In addition, as we heard in the Atlantic, program participants want healthy fish stocks and 'true' co-management of the resource. This means management that reflects a holistic approach and embraces the interconnection of fish, fish habitat, water, nature, and society (and more). It also means managing fish and fish habitat beyond annual,

bi-annual or other cyclical fish stock returns for a fishery and in the context of waterways, the impact of other industries and uses, and with a view for long-term sustainability.

There are many ways to express this concept in British Columbia. This includes *Hishukish Tsa'walk*: everything is one. There are also groups that conduct hard science today in this manner: science that is dictated by Aboriginal traditional law.

The focus on 'true' co-management is at the nation-to-nation level. It is also the point of intersection between Indigenous commercial fisheries programming and the community-based Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy and Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program. The Panel has made several recommendations elsewhere in this report to achieve success in this area. It has also identified those areas that are out of scope of the Program Review to encourage other parts of Fisheries and Oceans Canada to take the steps necessary to eliminate barriers to additional and long-term success.

Commercial fishing enterprises in British Columbia are supporting jobs in First Nations communities and benefitting the economy of the Province and Canada as a whole. Continuing to build and improve on this program's success, removing barriers and including more communities, will only increase the social and economic benefits.



## Vision of Pacific Commercial Fishing Enterprises

*"We will know that we are successful when we see the benefits to the community."*

### Indigenous Definitions of Success

Benefitting Communities and Resources

Healthy fish  
stocks

Community  
employment

True  
co-management

Fishing all licences  
(no leasing)

### Goal

First Nations manage fisheries, fisheries sustain livelihoods,  
and enterprise profits support the community

Access

Ownership

Employment

Diverse products

Local markets

## Indigenous Program Review Panel Recommendations

**Take practical steps to increase access and new enterprises and to advance enterprise growth, diversification and training**

### 1. Maximize departmental and other federal government collaborations

- Help commercial fishing enterprises access program funding from aquaculture and other business or economic development funding programs
- Use the strategic partnerships initiative to advance locally desired marketing activities with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, more landing sites with Small Craft Harbours, and new processing or retail facilities with appropriate agencies.

### 2. Continue to strengthen program administration

- Annually update and make accessible clear and consistent program guidance materials including transparent criteria for the program milestones identified for new, emerging, progressing and sustainable enterprises and criteria used in decision-making

### 3. Ensure the program structure meets enterprise needs and aspirations at all stages

- Promote business development team service offerings and continue to build expertise in inland and coastal Pacific fisheries-related businesses
- Continue to support flexible funding eligibilities and opportunities to expand and diversify
- Continue to allow multi-year funding options for larger acquisitions
- Pilot a licence bank for interested participants to pool resources together in order to increase their buying power to gain access to high-economic value quota and licences
- Ensure training flexibility to increase community employment opportunities in value-added businesses, management, and marketing
- Maintain options for practical, hands-on and locally delivered training
- Enable groups that want to pursue collaborations with other First Nations enterprises

#### 4. Support succession planning

- Support community outreach programs that align training, accreditation, professionalization, and career progression paths to employment in all aspects of the fishery
- Hold workshops to help enterprises learn how to develop and implement a succession plan

### Ignite a culture change that reflects truth and reconciliation

#### 1. Invest in relationship-building

- Develop a program to “up ramp” departmental staff to learn files more quickly and respond with confidence to First Nations and internally within the Department and with other agencies
- Encourage regular networking opportunities for departmental program administrators, the business development team, and enterprise managers to continue to build knowledge about the communities they serve and their fisheries
- Support synergies and collaborations between enterprises and aquatic resource and oceans management groups; especially, activities related to co-management of fisheries

#### 2. Continue to build Indigenous co-management capacity within the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy and Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management programs

- Hold the Department’s resource management and science fisheries advisory meetings with First Nations governments (Tier 2) prior to engaging stakeholder resource users
- Hold annual decision-making workshops for First Nations and department staff in resource management and science

#### 3. Reflect Indigenous definitions of success in the desired outcomes of the program

- Track and regularly report on program success at the community level by drawing from the annual reports that enterprises develop and give to their communities

#### 4. Tackle the difficult issues

- Deal with access and licensing issues to increase First Nations participation in the fishery
- Strengthen the management of all federally regulated recreational fisheries to ensure reliable catch estimates, improved stock assessments, and fully informed decision-making
- Focus aquaculture efforts on building knowledge about what species and technologies are viable on land or in water





### Best Practice

Organic Ocean is a community of seafood producers who share a common goal of sustainable use and protection of productive capacity.

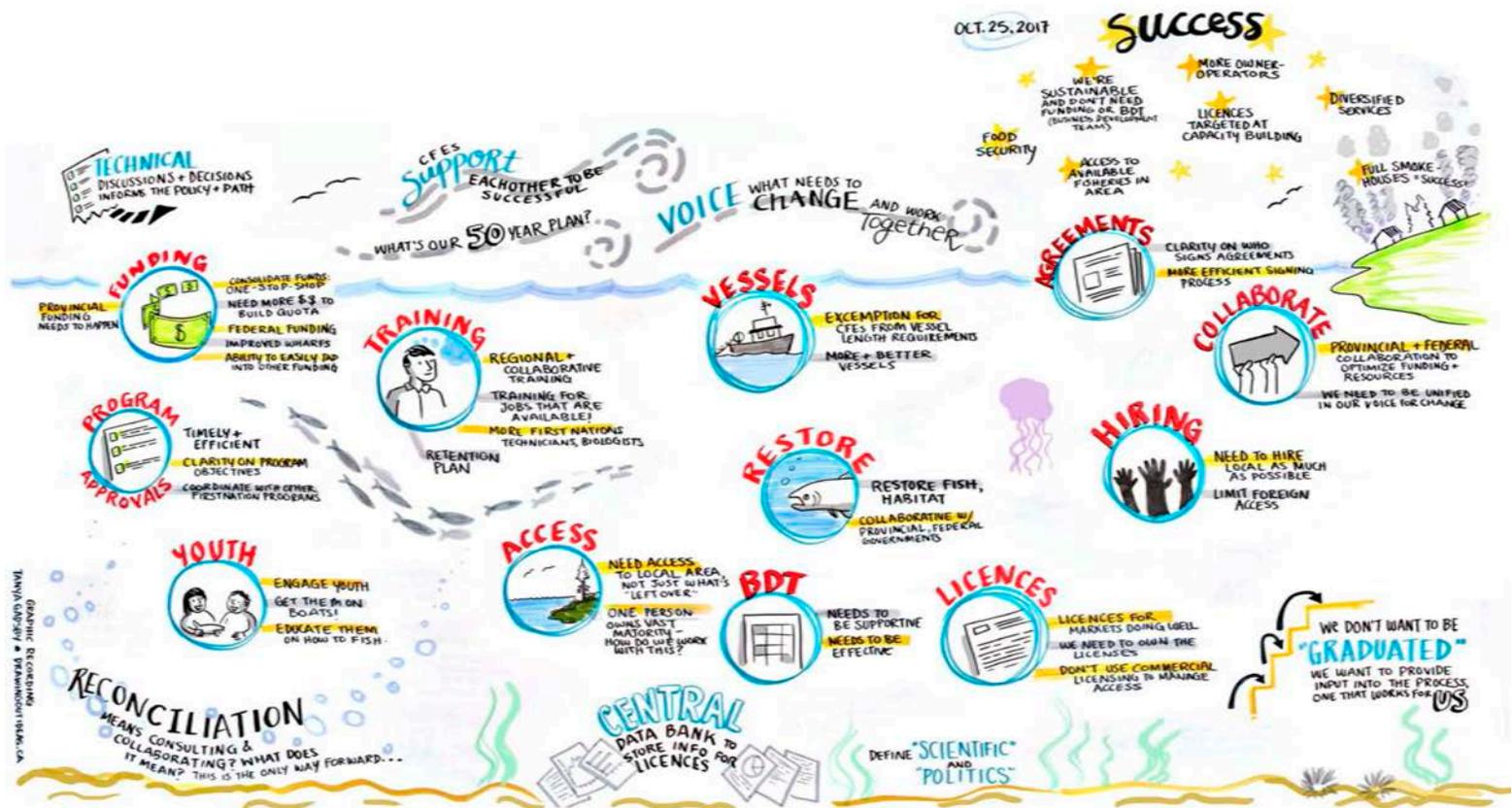
A co-operative of First Nations commercial fishing enterprises has partnered with Organic Ocean to sell their product. This collaboration promotes environmental stewardship and rewards enhanced harvesting, handling, and processing methods.



### Best Practice

The high-tech industry develops “up ramping” tools to prepare new hires and newly assigned people so that they learn their jobs quickly and efficiently.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Government of Canada, should emulate these approaches and develop an “up ramp” program for Indigenous program managers.



# Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program

The Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program was set up in 2004 to build the technical capacity of First Nations so that they could work together in aggregated groups along a watershed or ecosystem to achieve more of their priorities for managing aquatic resources and oceans than they could achieve as individual nations. The program was also put in place to advance collaborative management of fish and other aquatic resources, as well oceans and waterways. In addition, bringing communities together into groups made it easier for Fisheries and Oceans Canada to engage First Nations on matters related to the management of fish, habitat, and oceans.

There are presently 35 groups across Canada: 18 in British Columbia, 10 in Atlantic Canada/southern Quebec, five in northern parts of Canada (Northwest Territories and northern Quebec), and two national.

During our desktop review, the Panel identified six key issues for groups and communities to consider when proposing ways to improve this program. These issues were organized into four main topics to discuss during our engagement sessions: services and service delivery potential, relationships and knowledge, success and performance reporting, and skills development and training.

**What we heard and learned through this engagement process is that regardless of their location – inland or coastal, west coast or east coast, northern or southern – groups share common views when it comes to the importance of healthy and productive oceans, inland waterways, fish, fish habitat, as well as other aquatic species. For example:**

## 1. Services and Service Delivery Potential:

Participants are actively engaged in scientific and technical research, monitoring and data collection, as well as stock assessments. Lack of program funding and access to other sources of funding are the main barriers to taking on more resource-related activities. Participants would like to be more involved in oceans management, first response, habitat and species at risk activities, and the study of cumulative effects and contaminants in their territories.

## 2. Relationships and Knowledge:

Participants have varying relationships with staff at Fisheries and Oceans Canada. This is largely due to high staff turnover and inconsistent communication and coordination. There is also a notable gap in the relationship with the science sector and rarely is Indigenous knowledge, science, and data reflected in decision-making or management reports or processes. There are closer links between groups and their member communities and commercial fishing enterprises. Participants would also like more networking and collaborative opportunities among groups participating in the program.

## 3. Success and Performance Reporting:

Participants want fair and standard processes of reporting that reflect their strategic plans and objectives for healthy fish stocks and ecosystems. They also want to fill the technical data gaps, have a real and meaningful role in management decision-making, and decisions that are informed by both Indigenous knowledge and western science.

## 4. Skills Development and Training:

Participants support community outreach programs which align education and career progression paths to science, technical 'field' activities, and management. Some groups already have active youth-education programs, which are viewed as a model for other groups.

The Panel carefully assessed all of the feedback it received from aquatic resource and oceans management groups. What we learned at the outset is that there are different aquatic resource and oceans management service models, and some groups exhibit more than one of these models:

### 1. Coordination:

Key regional and national groups which serve a large-scale coordination function to enable the achievement of broad objectives.

### 2. Core:

Groups with fewer staff members which coordinate the technical work conducted by community members and/or facilitate the exchange of fisheries and resource management information through Tier 1 and Tier 2 forums.

### 3. Project:

Technical collective groups with biologists, field technicians and other expertise who regularly engage in stock assessments, research projects, and other studies to gain specific data and knowledge for their member communities.

Project groups have succeeded or are succeeding in building their technical capacity to serve the scientific and technical needs of their member nations. Most groups have one biologist – and many have more than one. They also have field technicians, community monitors, data collectors, and other technical staff and equipment. The activities, skill sets and service offerings of these groups are limited only by program funding and funds secured from other sources.

While the technical capacity of groups is clear, their involvement in co-management is less so. We heard that data and research results are largely unused by the Department rather than informing integrated fisheries management plans and other management reports and processes. This includes the results of stock assessments, biological research, marine use planning, cumulative effects, creel surveys, and data collection – along with a wealth of Indigenous knowledge.

A common theme that came out of all of our Indigenous program review workshops, and the submissions we received, is that groups and communities want ‘true’ co-management of the resource. This means management that respects Indigenous knowledge and science. They also want co-management of the resource to reflect a holistic approach: management of fish and the habitat and waterways that sustain them, and which considers the cumulative impacts of all users and uses.

As noted elsewhere in this report, the Panel has come to the conclusion that the best way for groups and governments to achieve co-management of the resource is to keep this objective within the collaborative and nation-led Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy and applicable project groups in the Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program.

Some project groups are already bringing scientific and technical advice to co-management tables based on the results of their scientific, research and Indigenous knowledge activities. Other groups are equipped to do so. While this has been a slow process, some groups told us that they are starting to see examples of their data and knowledge being reflected in the Department’s materials.



We believe that the Department has created the ideal opportunity through this program to have partners literally ‘in the field’ across Canada in the majority of the areas where it has a core, mandated responsibility to protect, conserve and manage aquatic resources, habitat, oceans and freshwater sources. They have just yet to unlock the value of this resource network.

The Panel has concluded that this requires a change in the relationship; especially, the science-to-science relationship which develops in the field.

It also requires promotion of the aquatic resource and oceans management network within the Department and with other federal departments and agencies. This should begin with the project groups that are ready to deliver additional services – but it should also prepare to be available to other groups as they build more capacity to deliver new and expanded services.

Adding an Indigenous procurement policy within the Department is another key step. This would allow the science sector (and other areas of the Department) to directly procure the science, Indigenous knowledge, and technical services of project groups by using a mechanism similar in intent to the Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business.

We recognize that change in the relationship will take time and effort. It will also require the development of processes to set data-sharing parameters and strict protocols for the Department’s use of Indigenous knowledge.

While the Indigenous Program Review is only beginning its in-person engagement directly with communities on the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy program, we believe that the Department’s efforts to change its relationship from the science, technical and resource management ends will open the door for closer relationships to be developed with communities.

This can also be achieved by enabling more communities to become involved in the Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program. We heard on multiple occasions that communities were left out of the program because they did not have the capacity to organize such a group when the program began. As the program did not receive increased funding until the 2017 Budget, there have been few opportunities to include these communities since then. It is time to do so.

The Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program is a valuable and largely ‘untapped’ resource for Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Its network of groups has the expertise and capacity to deliver ‘in the field’ science and technical services across Canada’s marine and fish-bearing waterways that will inform better decision-making and forge closer relationships between the Department and Indigenous peoples and communities.



## Vision of Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Groups

*“Success is when we achieve an agreement with Fisheries and Oceans Canada that ensures a meaningful role for us in management decision-making.”*

### Indigenous Definitions of Success

Sustainable Resources and Communities

Healthy fish  
stocks

Holistic  
management

True  
co-management

Respect for Indigenous  
knowledge and science

Groups connected to  
communities

Community food and  
employment security

### Goal

Technical expertise across Canada’s marine and fish-bearing waterways

Science and  
Indigenous knowledge

Monitoring

Data collection

First response

## Indigenous Program Review Panel Recommendations

### Take practical steps to add more groups, services, and expertise

1. Ensure program structure meets the preferences, needs and aspirations of all groups
  - Expand the network to geographic areas that are not served by a group
  - Support flexible group models and a menu of service offerings adaptable to watershed, geography, and involved communities
  - Offer organizational capacity-building to new entrants, technical capacity-building to core groups, and funding security for current service offerings to project groups
  - Increase marine science capacity-building opportunities
  - Recognize groups that are ready to perform third-party contracts by enabling them to pursue procurement opportunities outside of program funding
2. Maximize departmental and other federal government collaborations
  - Connect groups to habitat, restoration, ocean, species at risk, science, and any other technically relevant funding programs, including at the Canadian Coast Guard
  - Raise awareness and promote the group services and network \*
3. Support succession planning
  - Continue to support community outreach programs which align education and career progression paths for science, technical ‘field’ activities, and management

*\* This recommendation also applies to aquatic resource and oceans management groups*

## Ignite a culture change that reflects truth and reconciliation

### 1. Invest in relationship-building

- Enable science-to-science ‘field’ partnerships, access to labs, and equipment sharing through collaborative agreements
- Fund group networking opportunities to advance collaborations and information-sharing
- Increase support for communications and information-sharing between groups and communities
- Help groups address issues with other users on the water through inclusion at inter-regional and international tables and other opportunities for joint activities

### 2. Continue to build Indigenous co-management capacity

- Use the science, data, and knowledge generated by groups in decision-making and management planning processes for fisheries, aquaculture, habitat and oceans
- Invest in Indigenous knowledge systems and enable networking opportunities among groups to learn from best practices
- Establish data-sharing agreements and parameters with resource management, science and other sectors of the Department
- Build on examples where traditional ecological knowledge has been properly reflected in decision-making

### 3. Reflect Indigenous definitions of success in the desired outcomes of the program

- Link reporting to performance metrics that are aligned to Indigenous success factors
- Establish an Indigenous-led management committee similar to those used in the commercial programs to oversee project proposals, program delivery, and reporting

### 4. Tackle the difficult issues

- Enable groups to implement restoration plans for culturally significant aquatic species by aligning them with habitat, oceans protection plan (coastal restoration), and species at risk programs
- Enable groups to undertake technical research activities to address local concerns impacting section 35.1 food security



#### Best Practice

Uu-a-thluk provides Nuu-chah-nulth post-secondary students enrolled in science programs with hands-on learning through summer internships lasting up to four months.

**Tomorrow's Leaders** gives youth and others a chance to work and gain experience under the guidance of supportive role models. Since 2006, Uu-a-thluk staff and contractors have provided mentorship opportunities in aquatic biology, shellfish aquaculture, capacity development, communications, and conference planning.

# Summary of Indigenous Program Review Phase One Recommendations

## 1. Take practical steps to:

- a. **Immediately improve all Fisheries and Oceans Canada programs**
  - Ensure timely funding, annual planning cycles and consistent reporting
  - Standardize contribution agreements and their terms and conditions
  - Secure long-term source of training funds
  - Invest in relationship-building through internal human resource strategies and succession planning
  - Align performance metrics to Indigenous definitions of success
- b. **Advance commercial fishing enterprise growth, diversification and training**
  - Maximize departmental and other federal government collaborations
  - Continue to strengthen program administration
  - Ensure program structures meets enterprise needs and aspirations at all stages
  - Support succession planning
- c. **Increase aquatic resource and oceans management groups, services and expertise**
  - Ensure program structure meets preferences, needs and aspirations of all groups
  - Maximize departmental and other federal government collaborations
  - Promote the network across the Department and the Government of Canada
  - Support succession planning

## 2. Ignite a culture change as a mission of Government:

- a. **Demonstrate the renewed relationship**
  - Address these recommendations at the highest levels and across all regions and sectors
  - Invest in relationship-building
  - Reflect Indigenous definitions of success in the desired outcomes of programs
  - Tackle the difficult issues
- b. **Shift to a shared capacity model**
  - Recognize that Indigenous groups and communities are best placed to deliver technical services
  - Adopt an Indigenous procurement policy across the Department
  - Co-develop data-sharing agreements and parameters
  - Begin allocating A-base funding for Indigenous knowledge and science
  - Continue to build co-management capacity, including by:
    - Investing in Indigenous knowledge systems
    - Using aquatic resource and oceans management group science, data and knowledge
- c. **Report on progress**
  - Respond to the recommendations in this report and report back annually on continuing progress being made



# Indigenous Program Review Phase Two

Between September 2017 and January 2018, the Institute engaged Indigenous people across Canada's North to begin co-developing the new Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative. We will continue to engage communities over the summer months of 2018 to ensure that we have reached all eligible communities.

The Institute is also beginning to engage communities across Canada on Fisheries and Oceans Canada's oldest Indigenous programs: the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy and the Aboriginal Fishery Guardian programs. Workshops and plenary sessions will be held across Canada beginning in April and will continue through at least November.

Our engagement schedule will be posted on the Institute's website, along with agendas and *What We Heard* reports.



## Indigenous Program Review Phase Two Timeline



# Resources

## Workshop Materials and *What we heard* Reports

<http://indigenousfisheries.ca/en/engagement-materials/>

## Discussion Paper Submissions

<http://indigenousfisheries.ca/en/discussion-materials/>

## Program Participants

### **Commercial Fishing Enterprises in the Atlantic**

- Abegweit First Nation Fishery
- Annapolis Valley First Nation
- Buctouche/Tjipogtotjg Mic Mac Band
- Crane Cove Seafoods
- Eel River Bar First Nation
- Elsipogtog Commercial Fisheries
- Esgenoôpetitj Commercial Fisheries
- Fisherman's Pride Incorporated
- Fort Folly First Nation
- Glooscap First Nation Economic Development Corporation
- Indian Island First Nation
- Kespuwick Resources Inc.
- Les Pêcheries Malécites
- L'sitkuk Fisheries
- Micmacs of Gesgapegiag Band
- Natuaqanek Commercial Fishery Cooperative Inc.
- Nation Micmac de Gespeg
- Kingsclear First Nation
- Listuguj Mi'gmaq Government
- Madawaska Maliseet First Nation
- Membertou Commercial Fisheries
- Metepenagiag Commercial Fishery
- Millbrook Fisheries
- Oromocto First Nation's Fisheries
- Pabineau First Nation Fisheries Program
- Paq'tnkek First Nation
- Peskotomuhkati Nation
- Potlotek First Nation Commercial Fisheries
- Pictou Landing First Nation
- Sipekne'katik Fisheries
- Sitansisk Fisheries
- Tobique First Nation Commercial Fisheries
- Wagmatcook Commercial Fishery
- Waycobah (We'koqma'q) Commercial Fisheries
- Woodstock First Nation

### **Commercial Fishing Enterprises in the Pacific**

- Ahousaht Fishing Corporation
- A'Tlegay Fisheries Limited Partnership
- Central Coast Commercial Fisheries Limited Partnership
- Gwabal Fisheries Group
- Harrison Salmon Producers Limited Partnership
- Hayu Fishing Limited Partnership
- Hul'q'umi'num Fisheries Limited Partnership
- Kwakiutl Nation Development Corporation
- Lax Kw'alaams Fishing Enterprises Limited
- Mama'omas Limited Partnership
- Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw Fisheries Group
- North Coast-Skeena CFE Limited Partnership
- Nuu-chah-nulth Seafood Development Corporation
- Okanagan Nation Aquatic Enterprises
- Quw'utsun Kw'atl'kwa Enterprises Limited
- Salish Seas Fisheries Limited Partnership
- Salish Strait Seafoods Limited
- SalPac Fisheries (GP) Limited
- Sechelt Fishing Limited Partnership
- Secretariat of the Haida Nation
- Shuswap Nation Tribal Council (Secwepemc Fisheries Commission)
- Talok Fisheries Limited Partnership
- TFN Seafoods Limited Partnership
- Tseshaht and Hupacasath CFE
- Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance

### ***Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management groups***

- Aboriginal Aquaculture Association
- Agence Mamu Innu Kaikusseht
- Akaitcho Territorial Government
- Assembly of First Nations
- Association pour la gestion halieutique autochtone Mi'kmaq et Malecite
- Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs
- A-Tlegay Fisheries Society
- Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission
- Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance
- Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- Dehcho First Nations
- First Nations Fisheries Council of British Columbia
- First Nations Fisheries Society on behalf of Pacific Salmon Commission
- Gespe'gewaq Mi'gmaq Resource Council
- Island Marine Aquatic Working Group Society
- Kativik Regional Government
- Maliseet Nation Conservation Council
- Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council
- Mi'kmaq Alsumk Mowimsikik Koqoey Association
- Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI
- National Indigenous Fisheries Institute
- Nicola Tribal Association on behalf of Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat
- Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council
- North Coast Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society
- North Shore Micmac District Council
- Northwest Territories Métis Nation
- Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
- Okanagan Nation Alliance
- Q'ul'Ihnumutsun Aquatic Resources Society
- Secretariat of the Haida Nation
- Skeena Fisheries Commission
- Sto:lo Nation
- Sumas on behalf of Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance
- Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources
- Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance



# Outreach Statistics

October 4, 2017 to February 7, 2018

## Discussion Materials:

- Guide to Indigenous Program Review
- History of DFO's Indigenous Programs
- Desktop Review Bibliography
- Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy Program
- Aboriginal Fishery Guardian Program
- Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program
- Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative
- Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative
- Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative
- Access to Capital

## Thorough Review:

- 166 evaluations, audits, reviews and other reports over past 25 years

## Full Transparency:

- Agendas, presentations and handouts web-posted

## Sharing Input:

- 17 *What we Heard* reports
- 27 Illustrations
- Submissions web-posted

## Workshops, Plenaries, and Interviews:

### Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program

- Six workshops, two plenaries, and one interview
- 27 of 35 aquatic resource and oceans management groups (77%)
- Total number of participants: 128

## Presentations and Interactive Sessions:

### Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

- One workshop, one plenary, and two interviews
- 22 of 33 commercial fishing enterprises (67%)
- Total number of participants: 45

### Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

- 10 presentation/interactive sessions
- Total number of participants: 85

### Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

- Three workshops, one plenary, and three interviews
- 19 of 25 commercial fishing enterprises (76%)
- Total number of participants: 71

## Institute-DFO Collaboration:

- Ongoing information-sharing with Regions
- Nine initial sessions in Dec. 2017
- 13 follow-up information exchanges
- Four working sessions in Feb./Mar. 2018

## Discussion Paper Submissions:

### Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program

- Central Coastal Indigenous Resource Alliance
- Mi'kmaw Conservation Group
- Island Marine Aquatic Working Group

### Meetings/Exchanges with DFO-CCG

### Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

- Pacific CFE Steering Committee (seven signatories)
- Pacific CFE-Tsu-ma-uss
- Coastal Region CFEs (nine signatories)
- Salish Seas
- TFN Seafoods

- Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation
- Aquaculture
- Small Craft Harbours
- Ecosystems Management
- Oceans Management
- Resource Management
- Ecosystems and Oceans Science
- Conservation and Protection
- Canadian Coast Guard