

# IPR Implementation Scorecard -

**2021-2022**



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

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The COVID-19 pandemic caused an operational disruption for DFO & CCG, as well as for all Indigenous communities participating in the programs subject to this scorecard review. Nevertheless, we saw notable and pioneer progress on several fronts, which are described below. We present this, the 3<sup>rd</sup> IPR Scorecard to DFO with the recognition that significant progress was made in the implementation of the Indigenous Program Review (IPR) recommendations.

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 DFO/CCG. From the findings of the 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.

The Indigenous Program Review was launched in May 2017, guided by principles of co-development, co-design, and co-delivery at the technical and operational levels. In response 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**

The 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 of 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 led directly 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 its efforts to advance the priorities outlined in its broader reconciliation strategy.

The recommendations themselves correlate with 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 more than four 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, is a dynamic process. We continue to engage Indigenous people, communities, groups and businesses, for information that helps us conduct meaningful evaluations of progress at the regional and local level. Our guiding principles during this process will remain grounded in clear communication, respect, openness, inclusion, and the collaborative approach: co-development, co-design and co-delivery of Indigenous programs.

COVID has certainly affected aspects of the implementation of the IPR. We cannot fully quantify the impacts of COVID at this stage; however, the inability of DFO and Indigenous partners to meet face to face to resolve disagreements regarding direction, process of implementation, or program structure likely contributed to the indefinite delay of the AFG program. This is addressed further in a short section at the end of the report overview (see page 11).

**NIFI is always listening**

The 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 IPR 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

John G. Paul ∷ The Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew OC ∷ Jeffrey Maurice ∷ Okalik Eegeesiak  
Angie Gillis ∷ Lina Condo ∷ Robert Chamberlin ∷ Deborah Price ∷ Stuart Barnes

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## Progress Tracking

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Started with initial progress made	
Started with notable progress made	
Progress continues	
Complete	
Program Launch Delayed – No Score	



## DEMONSTRATE THE RENEWED RELATIONSHIP

The IPR recommendations lead with the need to renew the relationship between DFO and Indigenous peoples. This renewal underpins the future in terms of a collaborative relationship based on trust, which is necessary for progressive and targeted programs to be developed and implemented. Seen another way, without this element, program initiatives can fail to launch; AFG provides us with this teachable moment.

Programs blanketed under labels such as *reconciliation* or *treaty adhesions*, or initiatives under labels such as Oceans Protection Programs, speak to the relationship but do not renew it. These type of programs and initiatives are transitory – the DFO program suite reviewed under the IPR are permanent. Permanent programs are sometimes supplanted by transitory initiatives that have political objectives.

DFO & CCG core programs remain anchored to the commitment to long-term relationship change. This change is instrumental to a progressive future, and DFO and CCG are to be acknowledged for the steadiness of their commitment to implementing IPR recommendations.

<b>2021-22 STATUS: Started with notable progress made</b>	
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<b>Last report status: Started with initial progress made</b>	
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### **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 and understand that implementation is the largest and most important part of any program or initiative intended to support Indigenous communities.



## 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 the creation of fishing plans for resources that are so critical to community well-being and specifically protected in the Constitution. To be successful, “co-management” requires truly willing partners on both sides of the fence.

Where this commitment does not exist, collaborative programs cannot proceed. The AFG program illustrates the lack of commitment to this critical principle by C&P, simply stated. The reader is to note that the AFG program delay/failure to launch has not been included in the IPR score - except as noted - because that program represents an anomaly.

<b>2021-22 STATUS: Started with notable progress made</b>	
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<b>Last Report Status: Started with initial progress made</b>	
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### Shared capacity is code for “co-co-co” program delivery.

The reader is reminded that “co-co-co” is about balancing the relationship between the program participants and the program authority so that both parties feel that they have input into control, design of delivery and administration while also ensuring that balanced respect can be seen in all aspects of program administration. Achieving “co-co-co” is a challenge but attainable. It is this element that sets DFO & CCG apart from all other federal departments offering or delivering program to Indigenous communities.



## 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 the need for improved communication on funding matters, and an emphasis on client service. Prioritizing support to Indigenous organizations will demonstrate a commitment to their success.

<b>2021-22 STATUS: Started with notable progress made</b>	
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<b>Last Report Status: Started with initial progress made</b>	
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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.<sup>1</sup> 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 the need for consistent and reasonable service standards. A noteworthy example is a marked improvement in administrative processing during the pandemic response as well as movement to employ multi-year agreements which reduce the reporting burden on Indigenous communities. 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 OF THE CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT MODEL AND STANDARDIZE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The standardization of all funding agreements has clear benefits at the community level, allowing for more systematic 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 resources are conveyed is the best place to start.

<b>2021-22 STATUS: Started with notable progress made</b>	
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<b>Last Report Status: Started with initial progress made</b>	
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**The ability to standardize fundamental administrative policies and processes will be a tangible and recognizable example to communities;** demonstrating a 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.

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, communities, and to other departments and levels of government.

Other offerings in the DFO Indigenous Programs suite that use the same method to flow resources include:

1. PSSI
2. CEBP
3. IPOD
4. Aquaculture support programs

All these programs benefit from the smoother flow of resources due to standardized processes.



## ALIGN PERFORMANCE METRICS TO INDIGENOUS DEFINITIONS OF SUCCESS – INTRODUCTION OF THE ITSD

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 factor in 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 offer a more complete assessment of how programming aligns with the values, lives, and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples.

NIFI has been working with DFO Indigenous Programs Unit to put a truly national training program and framework into place. This is due for roll out at the end of the current fiscal year. The Indigenous Training and Skills Development program is the culmination of more than 30 years of effort to tie training directly to program, as well as directly to stated community needs. The importance of this cannot be overstated.

<b>2021-22 STATUS: Progress continues</b>	
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<b>Last Report Status: Under development</b>	
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Indigenous 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 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 & CCG RECONCILIATION HUB

DFO and CCG are working toward the development of a *Reconciliation Hub*, where elements of programs relating to reconciliation and other high level political initiatives can be tracked. This is seen in the same spirit as this scorecard of IPR implementation.

The *Reconciliation Hub* is a joint venture between DFO and CCG and the substantive nature of which is now under truly collaborative development. The product of the collaboration will be seen in draft form at the end of the current fiscal year.

We are confident this will lead to the development and implementation “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.

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.

<b>2021-22 STATUS: Started with notable progress made</b>	
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<b>Last Report Status: Under development</b>	
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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. The Department maintains 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.



## EMBEDDING TRAINING WITH DFO INDIGENOUS PROGRAMS: ITSD - CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT - RMOT

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 that training opportunities are relevant to community aspirations and economic plans.

ITSD coordinates and standardizes training; capacity development supports training in the field and works to help communities retain their skilled people. RMOT further enhances these capacity and training initiatives by focusing on supporting technical personnel in the field in their home communities.

**2021-22 STATUS: Progress continues**

**Last Report Status: Started with notable progress made**

As we have stated in previous Scorecard reports, 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 is taking place within Indigenous communities, and by Indigenous groups, to fill these gaps and advance Indigenous-set employment objectives.

recommendation, as well as other capacity-related recommendations.<sup>1</sup> 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.

## 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.

COVID has slowed down the progress we had hoped for in this area. We will be looking closely to see if the procurement initiative will revitalize in the post-pandemic environment.

NIFI remains very interested in working with DFO to produce a platform from which procurement opportunities can be directed toward Indigenous firms and service providers. This development of such a project is reaching its 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.

<b>2021-22 STATUS: Started with initial progress made</b>	
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<b>Last Report Status: Started with notable progress made</b>	
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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, the engagement of Indigenous groups and businesses 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.<sup>1</sup> The assurance of procurement integrity, regarding proposals submitted to the Department, should be included in this action area.



## MAXIMIZE DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLABORATIONS TO HELP INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES BUILD AND SUSTAIN TECHNICAL CAPACITY

The Capacity Development Team program is part of an ongoing multifaceted initiative that includes ITSD (training) and RMOT (the replacement of the AFG program that has not been launched).

This clearly demonstrates DFO’s commitment to moving the program suite forward in alignment with the IPR recommendations even in the face of COVID and other challenges.

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.

<b>2021-22 STATUS: Started with notable progress made</b>	
<b>Last Report Status: Started with notable progress made</b>	

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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

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.



## DELAY OF THE RELAUNCH OF THE AFG PROGRAM

The Aboriginal Fisheries Guardian program was extensively reviewed under the IPR and series of detailed recommendations were made. The IPR report was formally accepted and adopted by DFO, and that acceptance forms the basis of the Scorecard.

The AFG program is a key program in the development and maintenance of practical relationships between Indigenous communities and DFO. This was widely reported by NIFI in the IPR report. The report also highlighted that the AFG program was spotty and inconsistent from region to region (and area to area) both in terms of its scope, structure and application. The full report can be found at:

<https://bit.ly/3AU7VqS>

The redevelopment of the AFG program was the subject of much protracted discussion between the various business lines of DFO and Indigenous executives serving as advisors to the process of IPR implementation. This advisory function lasted for more than a calendar year. Much of this discussion focused on the method of implementing the IPR recommendations in the redevelopment of the AFG program, so as to produce a nationally standardized program; and structured around a professionalized career path that included standardized training, personnel development, and the development of a robust co-co-co relationship between indigenous communities, C&P, and the rest of the DFO.

The redeveloped AFG program has not been relaunched at the time of writing. The RMOT program has, however, moved forward to fill some of the gap while the AFG program redevelopment is revisited once again by C&P.

This means that the “old AFG” program, where it exists, is still in the field. To quote the IPR report:

“...what we learned through program review is that the Aboriginal Fishery Guardian program continues to lack intent and is not meeting the objectives of Indigenous communities to:

- manage and protect fish and other resources in their territories
- ensure an enforcement presence in territorial waterways with recognized authority
- receive respect and recognition for the fishery guardian role and position
- be sufficiently funded to create and retain meaningful employment with career path options

The program also lacks national consistency and full backing of the Department’s Conservation and Protection Directorate, despite the efforts and example of two regions to support robust fishery guardian programs...”

<b>2021-22 STATUS: DELAYED - NO SCORE</b>	
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<b>Last Report Status: Started with initial progress made</b>	
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The delay in re-launching the AFG program is a lost opportunity that needs to be addressed, perhaps through a new lens that embraces the “co-co-co” principle in a much more overt, transparent and inclusive program framework as per the overall IPR recommendations.

## CONCLUSION

Overall score for fiscal year 2021-2022: **Good to Very Good**

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 mechanism 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.

**2021-22 STATUS: Progress Continues**

**Last Report Status: Underway in most areas with notable progress made**



## 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