

Newsletter

Aboriginal Aquaculture Association

DFO holds 2nd Shellfish Aquaculture Management Advisory Meeting

On January 29, 2014, the Aboriginal Aquaculture Association participated in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) 2nd meeting of the Shellfish Aquaculture Management Advisory Committee (SF-AMAC) in Courtenay, British Columbia.

The AMAC process provides an opportunity for input into the Draft Shellfish Integrated Management of Aquaculture Plan (SF-IMAP).

IMAPs provide an overview of DFO's management approach for marine finfish and shellfish aquaculture activities within the Pacific Region. IMAPs, and the advisory committee process, facilitate discussions about ecosystem approaches, and outline how governments, First Nations, industry and stakeholders work together to foster and support industry while protecting the environment and upholding and the obligations of government.

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Glossary

Integrated Management of Aquaculture Plan IMAP:

A collaborative way of making decisions based on consideration of affected stakeholders.

Conditions of License:

Site specific conditions that need to be met by the aquaculture operator to be in compliance with the license.



Direction provided on management of the resource

The purpose of the SF-IMAP is to identify the main objectives and requirements for the management of shellfish aquaculture and the management measures that will be used to meet these objectives.

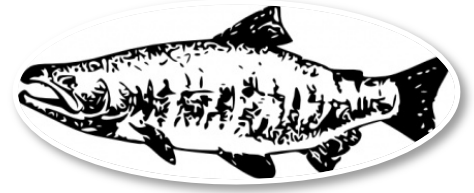
Participants of the committee included representatives from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, First Nations, the shellfish industry, environmental groups and academia.

Highlights of the meeting:

- The Geoduck Framework has been drafted and is awaiting approval within DFO before it can be shared with stakeholders. Once the draft is released there will be a period of consultation.
- The first draft of a sea cucumber framework should be ready soon.
- The Province of British Columbia's Ministry of Forest, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations did not have representation at the meeting. Another invitation to them from DFO will be issued.
- Comments about the draft Shellfish Integrated Management of Aquaculture Plan document included:
 - First Nation Treaty Land owners need to be included as decision makers within the Plan
 - More efficient timelines needed for I&T process (introductions and transfers).
 - Need access to wild stock and approved harvest plans.
 - Longer term licenses are required.
 - DFO had received comments about area based management approaches for shellfish aquaculture – they will be looking at this and will be seeking input.
 - There is no reference to DFO science projects that have been completed in the management plan.
 - It was discussed that DFO should host a workshop to demonstrate the science that has been done to date and how those studies influence policy.
 - Concerns were raised about the physical size of the conditions of license and having to have them on site in the event of inspection. A request was made to reduce the size or come up with a different means of remaining in compliance to prevent having to have so much paperwork on site.
 - Concerns were raised about the length of time and the additional cost of amending production or structures on site. Farmers should be allowed to make the required changes (that occur frequently) without having to go through the full referral process and paying additional fees.
- Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program (CSSP) is being modernized. The agencies involved with the CSSP (DFO, Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Environment Canada) will be meeting on February 25th to learn about the changes. Once this is complete industry will be updated to the changes in the program.
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Full meeting notes will be available on the DFO web-site: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/aquaculture/index-eng.html>

Federal Government's Vision on Aquaculture in B.C.



Aquaculture is the fastest growing food production sector worldwide, now supplying over 50 percent of the global demand for fish and seafood. In Canada, aquaculture is worth over \$2 billion annually and employs more than 14,000 Canadians.

With the global demand for seafood expected to increase by 7% every year, it's clear that aquaculture has great economic potential. Our Government supports aquaculture development that is both economically sound and environmentally responsible. Canada has a transparent regulatory system – one of the most rigorous in the world – to ensure that the industry is ecologically sustainable and protects our marine resources

In 2011, our Government made the decision not to allow expansion of aquaculture production until the Cohen Commission had reported its findings. What we are doing now is absolutely consistent with Justice Cohen's recommendations on aquaculture: we are maintaining the moratorium on new developments in the Discovery Islands area, and are further investing in science.

Economic Action Plan 2013 included three major measures that directly respond to Justice Cohen's recommendations. Our Government committed \$54 million that will help bolster our environmental protection in the aquaculture sector through science, an enhanced regulatory regime, and improved reporting.

We also introduced a new program to support recreational fisheries conservation activities through partnerships with community groups. Twenty-eight projects related to Pacific salmon in B.C., totalling \$1.8 million, were approved in the first round of the program.

In addition, we are dedicating all revenue collected

from the Salmon Conservation Stamp to the Pacific Salmon Foundation, which will mean approximately \$1 million more every year to support the Foundation's great work.

All of these initiatives are in addition to our Government's annual investments related to Pacific salmon. Currently we invest more than \$65 million per year, of which about \$20 million is directly related to Fraser River sockeye.

Let's keep in mind that after the very low returns in 2009, more than 30 million sockeye returned to the Fraser River in 2010—the most in almost a century. In 2013, the sockeye runs were above average and 26 million pink salmon returned, more than double what was expected. Other rivers saw similarly encouraging results.

Our Government has recently decided to resume the review of applications for new aquaculture sites and amendments to existing sites in British Columbia, outside of the Discovery Islands area. I want to stress, however, that all applications that are received will continue to be carefully evaluated through the lens of environmental sustainability.

Our Government is committed to protecting Pacific salmon, including Fraser River sockeye. We are confident that we can achieve that while allowing the aquaculture industry to thrive and create much needed jobs in rural areas and Aboriginal communities.

The Honourable Gail Shea Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Randy Kamp MP for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Contact Information

Aboriginal Aquaculture Association

1400B Drake Road, Campbell River, BC V9W 7K6

Phone: 250-286-9939

info@aboriginalaquaculture.com

www.aboriginalaquaculture.com



Did you know?

- An approved lifejacket for each person is mandatory on all commercial vessels.
- Anyone who operates VHF equipment must have a Restricted Operator's Certificate – Maritime.
- One person on board a small vessel must be designated to provide first aid. This person is required to hold a valid First Aid training certificate.
- For vessels operating in sheltered waters or engaged on a near coastal voyage, class 2: the designated person on board the vessel that is to provide first aid must hold at least a Marine Basic First Aid Training certificate or a 2-day First Aid course approved by a province or territories.

To learn more

North Island College is offering a Marine Emergency Duties Small Vessel Safety (MED A2) Course from Feb. 24-27, 2014. Registration is \$595 for 4 classes.

North Island College is also offering a Small Vessel Operator Proficiency (SVOP) Training Course offered from Mar. 10-13, 2014. Registration is \$500 for 4 classes.

For more information call: 250-923-9750 or visit www.nic.bc.ca/continuingeducation