



Business Plan

2021–22

Fisheries and Aquaculture

**NOVA SCOTIA**

© Crown copyright, Province of Nova Scotia, 2021

Departmental Business Plans
Finance and Treasury Board
March 2021

ISBN: 978-1-77448-182-0

Contents

Minister’s Message..... 2
Mandate 4
Department Priorities..... 4
Core Functions 6
Departmental Expenses Summary..... 9

Minister's Message

Nova Scotia is known around the world for its quality seafood products, and our government is committed to continue supporting the seafood industry. We know that Nova Scotians want a clean and strong economic recovery building on our existing strengths in this important sector.

Our government will facilitate the exploration of new domestic, North American, and expanding international markets for fishers and processors. Through the Canadian Fish and Seafood Opportunities Fund, my Department supports marketing initiatives, as well as regional and national projects to increase recognition of both Nova Scotia's and Canada's fish and seafood sectors. The program provides \$38.6 million nationally over seven years, through a federal/provincial partnership.

We will continue to promote the Nova Scotia Seafood Brand and expand the Seafood Marketing Program. Priority markets include the European Union, Asia, and the United States, capitalizing on competitive advantages arising from recent international trade agreements and MOUs.

We are supporting our fisheries and aquaculture industries through strategic buy local communications and marketing. Our buy local marketing campaign will make it easier for consumers to find local products and encourage Nova Scotians to buy Nova Scotia grown and produced agri-food, seafood and beverages. As our government moves forward, we will continue to work together to keep Nova Scotians well-nourished with local foods.

Aquaculture in Nova Scotia is growing and creating good rural jobs. The Department will focus on the expansion of a sustainable aquaculture industry through a robust regulatory framework and working with other provincial and federal departments and agencies. We will work with communities to develop Aquaculture Development Areas that support economic growth, and opportunities for new entrants such as youth and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.

We continue to promote innovation in the fish and seafood sector through the Atlantic Fisheries Fund, a cost-shared partnership between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Atlantic provinces. We will invest approximately \$38 million with \$5.24 million allotted for 2021-2022. The fund will help our fisheries and aquaculture industries remain strong, prosperous, and sustainable for generations.

This year Nova Scotia's Sportfishing Development Strategy initiatives will focus on increasing the number of non-resident anglers in the province and promote sportfishing as a healthy outdoor recreational activity. The Department will build upon its new electronic licensing system, participate in the National Survey of Sportfishing in Canada, and launch a new Fish Nova Scotia website.

We are engaging students through the school system to help them understand that good jobs exist in the seafood industries. We will create and implement a Commercial Seafood School Educational Strategy to inform the development of seafood industry curriculum for Nova Scotia schools. This work, in conjunction with the Department's Seafood Student Bursary Program, will help to attract youth to careers in the seafood industries.

I will continue to promote, support, and develop the fishing, aquaculture, seafood processing, and sportfishing sectors to contribute to the economic, environmental, and social prosperity of Nova Scotia's coastal and rural communities, and all of Nova Scotia.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
The Honourable Keith Colwell, E.C.N.S.
Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture

Mandate

The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture has a legislated mandate to promote, support and develop the fishing, aquaculture, seafood processing and sportfishing industries that contribute to the economic, environmental and social prosperity of Nova Scotia's coastal and rural communities, and all of Nova Scotia.

The Minister is mandated to act on climate change, improve competitiveness, strengthen food security, and foster social equity, while continuing the development of policies and programs that encourage local food consumption, marketing and trade, and the further growth in the aquaculture and seafood industries.

The priorities and core functions of the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture are driven by five strategic themes:

- Enabling responsible economic growth
- Supporting research and innovation
- Building public trust and market acceptance
- Increasing trade and market access
- Encouraging quality initiatives and value-added opportunities

Department Priorities

The Department will undertake the following priority initiatives in 2021-22:

- Support our fisheries and aquaculture industry through strategic buy local communications and marketing, increasing the identification and availability of product through industry partnerships and focusing our efforts on supporting our suppliers through a marketing campaign. The Department will deliver a robust multifaceted promotional campaign to encourage Nova Scotians to buy local seafood. This promotion will include consumer education and outreach, retail and food service promotions, an influencer campaign, content development, advertising and a suite of marketing initiatives to sell more Nova Scotia grown and produced agri-food, seafood and beverage to Nova Scotians.
- Building on the Aquaculture Growth Strategy, focus on the continued expansion of a sustainable aquaculture industry through a robust regulatory framework and working with other provincial and federal departments and agencies. The economic growth potential will be supported through working collaboratively with interested communities to develop Aquaculture Development Areas that will create opportunities for new entrants such as youth and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. In addition, the Department will look to foster growth through innovative technologies and education.

- Promote and facilitate the utilization of the Atlantic Fisheries Fund (AFF), a seven year, 70:30 cost-shared partnership between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Atlantic provinces. Over the duration of the AFF, the Province will invest approximately \$38 million with \$5.24 million allotted for 2021-2022. The AFF supports innovation in the fish and seafood sector to increase productivity, competitiveness, quality and sustainability.
- Support proposals to the Canadian Fish and Seafood Opportunities Fund for marketing initiatives that directly benefit Nova Scotian businesses and organizations, as well as seek collaborations for regional and national projects to increase recognition of both Nova Scotia's and Canada's fish and seafood sectors. The program is a seven-year, federal/provincial 70:30 cost shared partnership.
- Promote the utilization of the NS Seafood Brand and protocols. As Canada's leading seafood exporter, Nova Scotia seafood exports were valued at a record \$2.32 billion in 2019. The Department will continue to expand on the Seafood Marketing Program that focus on international marketing promotional activities retail, foodservice, and e-commerce opportunities. Priority markets include the European Union, Asia, and the United States, capitalizing on competitive advantages arising from recent international trade agreements memorandums of understanding.
- Develop a Climate Change Readiness Framework to guide how the Department can support industry to prepare for climate change within our mandate. The seafood sector is being impacted by climate-driven environmental change and will continue to be impacted in ways that are not yet fully understood. Partnering with Perennia's Centre for Applied Marine Research, the Department will initiate a project to carry out a comprehensive fisheries climate change vulnerability assessment that will inform future decision making and adaptation strategies. To help the seafood sector increase their energy efficiency in ways that benefit their businesses and promote environmental sustainability, the Department has partnered with Efficiency Nova Scotia to hire an Onsite Energy Manager to conduct 25 energy audits for fish and seafood facilities.
- Highlight sportfishing opportunities in Nova Scotia as a healthy outdoor activity and continue working to implement the Sportfishing Development Strategy Initiatives which will focus on increasing the number of non-resident anglers in the Province. Sportfishing in Nova Scotia generates more than \$66.5 million each year. The Department will build upon the electronic licensing system that was rolled out in 2020 to include all sportfishing license types. In 2021, Nova Scotia will go live with a new Fish Nova Scotia website.

- Support youth attraction into the seafood industries by engaging students through the school system and providing them with information about the industry and the opportunities for meaningful and modern employment in their home communities. The Department is committed to the creation and implementation of a Commercial Seafood School Educational Strategy to inform the development of a seafood industry curriculum for delivery in Nova Scotia schools. This work, in conjunction with the Department's Seafood Student Bursary Program, will help to support youth attraction into the seafood industries as a career of choice.

Core Functions

Highlights of the Department's core functions and programs supporting its mandate, strategic themes and government priorities include:

- Administering approximately 800 annual provincial licenses and leases for fish buyers and processors, aquaculture and rockweed.
- Delivering in-field, regional assistance and extension services to seafood clients, including strategic guidance and advice to industry stakeholders on management issues related to commercially significant fisheries. The Department also plans, coordinates, and executes industry and Departmental initiatives that foster the sustainable development and growth of the fish and seafood sector to maximize its economic potential.
- Support organizations to keep Nova Scotia's oceans and shorelines clean through the Marine Debris Clean Up Program. Nova Scotia is known for its clean coastal and ocean environment from which our seafood comes. Marine debris harms both our environment and our economy. Our industry and communities have been undertaking efforts to clean up our shores and ocean in some areas of the Province, and we will encourage and support these efforts.
- Enhancement of handling and quality standards to increase the market value of Nova Scotia seafood. Lobster quality training initiatives will focus on best handling practices to ensure all participants in the value chain have a core understanding of lobster biology and how proper handling techniques can maintain the quality of their products.
- Partner with the Nova Scotia Salmon Association and Perennia to design a strategy for acid precipitation mitigation on trout rivers in mainland Nova Scotia and on the production of Atlantic salmon. This builds upon the 12-year liming project on the West River Sheet Harbour, where the addition of lime through helicopter-liming and the construction of two lime dosers has improved water

quality and resulted in increased salmon production. Focus will be on the restoration of eight priority watersheds in Nova Scotia.

- Through the Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board (FALB), continue to expand focus on innovation in the value-added processing sector. The FALB will continue to promote its newly formed partnership with the AFF and fisheries associations in the Province. The FALB will also continue to build on its promotional efforts to ensure it is considered a lender of choice by highlighting the advantages of sourcing financing locally.
- Working with other departments across government, to continue to champion labour issues and seek a coordinated approach to address persistent labour needs of the seafood industry and explore long-term solutions.
- In lieu of hosting the annual in-person Minister's conference in 2021, the Department will host a virtual web-series in partnership with the Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia. The web-series will provide stakeholders with specific and relevant market, sectoral and industry development information that will lead into the 23rd Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister's Conference in the winter of 2022. The overarching themes of the web-series will be market development, diversification, and innovation to support Nova Scotia's seafood industries to respond to global market and workforce pressures that became evident during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Through collaboration across multiple levels of government and industry, providing strategic analysis and program services on coastal and marine issues that impact the Department's seafood development mandate and environmental sustainability. The Department provides outreach and provincial representation on national and regional marine initiatives.
- Growing a competitive, quality-focused seafood sector by encouraging the strategic use of automation in processing and harvesting. The Department will build internal capacity to carry-out industry automation and technology research with a view to facilitating industry knowledge transfer activities in partnership with our industry clients and technology vendors.
- Supporting and promoting fishing industry organizational development and industry professionalization by administering both the *Fish Harvesters Organizational Support Act* and the *Fish Harvester Registration and Certification Board Act*.
- Focusing on strategic project development to support the sustainable growth of the aquaculture and commercial fishing industries in Nova Scotia, in partnership

with Perennia's Centre for Marine Applied Research, while fostering collaboration with the Centre for Ocean Ventures & Entrepreneurship ocean technology cluster industries. This effort includes applied research to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the impacts climate change will have for the fish and seafood sector, as well as projects that assess vulnerability and build adaptive capacity in the sector.

- As part of the Urban Stocking and Wild Replenishment Program, upgrades to the three provincial fish hatcheries will include the completion of the replacement of eight round ponds at Margaree Hatchery, and re-surfacing of raceways. The Margaree Hatchery visitors centre will be upgraded to accommodate persons with disabilities. Frasers Mills Hatchery will receive a partial re-circulation system that will reduce the dependence on surface water for operations, and McGowan Lake Hatchery facility upgrades will include replacement of the parking lot, design and installation of two new raceways, and repair work to the hatchery building.
- Continue to contain smallmouth bass in Dobson's Lake, Guysborough County and develop broader partnerships with the Federal government and non-government organizations on strategic planning to manage aquatic invasive species. Continue the post-treatment monitoring of Piper Lake after the successful eradication of invasive smallmouth bass and recover the lake to pre-treatment conditions for all fauna over the next five years.
- Managing the Sportfish Habitat Fund, which provides over \$300 thousand each year to fund sportfish habitat restoration and access projects such as boat launches and barrier-free fishing facilities.

Departmental Expenses Summary

(\$ thousands)			
<u>Programs and Services</u>	<u>2020-2021 Estimate</u>	<u>2020-2021 Forecast</u>	<u>2021-2022 Estimate</u>
Administration	666	569	559
Aquaculture	2,761	2,943	4,438
Inland Fisheries	2,527	2,592	2,680
Marine and Coastal	11,828	11,286	11,816
Total - Departmental Expenses	17,792	17,390	19,493
Ordinary Recoveries	500	500	500
<u>Funded Staff (# of FTEs)</u>			
Department Funded Staff	70.7	67.0	70.7

Note:
 For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
 For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1