



AQUACULTURE MANAGEMENT

**Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
Shellfish Aquaculture Management Advisory Committee (AMAC)
Meeting notes**

Meeting Date:	October 28 2020, 9:00am – 4:00 pm
Location:	Zoom
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on shellfish Aquaculture management

Participants:

Facilitator: Saul Milne

Shellfish AMAC members:

Industry Licence-Holders

- Keith Reid, Odyssey Shellfish Ltd.
- J.P. Hastey, Nova Harvest Ltd
- Alex Munro, Taylor Shellfish Canada (Fanny Bay Oysters) and Raincoast Sea Farms Inc.
- Ken Hanuse, Cortes Island Shellfish Growers **(New Member)**

Industry Associations

- Jim Russel, BC Shellfish Growers Association **(New Member)**
- Marguerite Parker, Aboriginal Aquaculture Association

First Nations

- Jennifer Woodland – Nuuchah-Nulth Seafood LP **(New Member)**
- Grace Adams – Tla’amin Nation, Tla’amin Management Services LP **(New Member)**
- Noah Plonka – Toquaht First Nation, Barkley Sound Shellfish **(New Member)**
- Daniel Rabu – We Wai Kai Nation, Pacific Coastal Shellfish Ltd **(New Member)**
- Frank Dragon – Kyoquot First Nation **(New Member)**

Conservation and Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS)

- Bill Heath – Watershed Society of Comox Valley **(New Member)**
- Capt Josh Temple – Coastal Restoration Society **(New Member)**

Local Government

- Daniel Arbour - Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) – Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) South Coast Delegate (Electoral Area A, Baynes Sound / Denman & Hornby Islands, Comox Valley Regional District)
- Dannielle Alan - North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA) North Coast Delegate (Area H Director Regional District of Fraser Fort George) **(New Member)**

Observers:

- Brian Kip – BCSGA designated alternate
- Tina Wesley - Klahoose First Nation
- Barbara Mills - Alternative Aquaculture Practices committee for the Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel Ecosystem Forum, and a director on the board of the Association for Denman Island



Marine Stewards

Ex-officio:

Fisheries & Oceans Canada (DFO):

Allison Webb, Director, Aquaculture Management Division
Reagan Newcomb, Manager, Aquaculture Resource Management
Gabrielle Kosmider, Senior Coordinator, Aquaculture Resource Management
Chris Marrie, A/Senior Biologist, Aquaculture Environmental Operations
Kirsty Walde, Senior Compliance Program Officer, Conservation and Protection
Trevor Gray, Chief, Aquaculture Unit, Conservation and Protection
Melinda Scott, Senior Coordinator, Aquaculture Resource Management
Janice Mattu, Coordinator, Aquaculture Resource Management
Michelle Manning, Senior Coordinator, Aquaculture Resource Management
Adrienne Paylor, Manager, Aquaculture Environmental Operations
Connor Robinson, Manager, Aquaculture Policy (Ottawa)
Lucia Guererro, Policy Analyst, Aquaculture Policy (Ottawa)

British Columbia (BC):

Myron Roth, Ministry of Agriculture
Alex Clancy, Ministry of Agriculture
Kevin Romanin, Ministry of Agriculture

Regrets:

Joe Tarnowski, Baynes Sound Oysters **(New Member)**
Kathleen Nicholls, Limberis Seafood Processing Ltd. **(New Member)**
Ken Thomas – Penelakut Tribe Designated Alternate: Josh James **(New Member)**

Materials distributed:

Distributed via dropbox: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/51x56873dy7e9b1/AACHTidjuuAXR8UYqjj2WFn0a?dl=0>

1. Shellfish AMAC Meeting Agenda
2. Zoom Basics
3. Shellfish AMAC Terms of Reference
4. November 13 and 14, 2019 Shellfish AMAC Meeting Summary
5. Shellfish AMAC Recommendation & Response supporting documents (7)
 - A. A235 Science Updates
 - B. A237 WWF Report_Towards Integrated Management in Baynes Sound
 - C. A240 Sutherland et al 2019 FN Clam Garden
 - D. A242 DFO Science Presentation Chris Pearce AMAC 2019
 - E. A243 Fishery Notice (FN) 1169 Correction to FN 1157 Preventing Loss Gear
 - F. A244 BC SRIF Update
 - G. A249 AMD Priority Tasks for SF-2019
6. Presentation on Aquaculture Act
7. Fishery Notice 0842 Aquaculture Act Engagement 19Aug2002
8. Shellfish Conditions of Licence & documents supporting rationale for change (6)
 - A. DFO Shellfish Entanglements
 - B. Engagement letter to Aquaculture Stakeholders 3 Sept 2020
 - C. Fishery Notice 102 Sea lions and debris
 - D. Shellfish raft debris brochure
 - E. SMC Shellfish Plastics Overview
 - F. Sonnevera Shellfish Plastics Recommendations
9. Documents supporting rationale for change (6)

10. CSSP Bivalve Traceability presentation April 2019 AMAC
11. Fishery Notices (2) on vibrio and paralytic shellfish poisoning risks
12. DFO update supporting information
 - A. Fishery Notice on Multi-party licences
 - B. Fishery Notices on fee extension
 - C. Letter regarding suspension of oyster spat licences

Distributed Post-Meeting through Dropbox:

13. Presentation on Shellfish COLs & Breakout Rooms
14. Presentation on Bivalve Traceability Initiative
15. Coastal Restoration Society (CRS) presentation
16. Fishery Notice on Shellfish fees

Meeting proceedings:

Welcome, Introductions (Saul Milne)

- Saul called the meeting to order and acknowledged 13 new Shellfish AMAC members who gave brief introductions.

Terms of Reference Review (Saul Milne)

- The terms of reference and expectations for the meeting were reviewed.

Overview of Agenda (Saul Milne)

- Saul gave an overview of the agenda
- Discussion/overview of breakout groups.

Review of Notes and Action Items from last meeting (Michelle Manning)

- Michelle reviewed notes from previous meeting in November and asked for corrections, amendments or clarification to the notes.
- Recommendations and Action log was reviewed and updates provided on all ongoing action items.

ACTION: BCSGA (Jim) to provide a summary of results from the industry meeting on debris and provide feedback.

Aquaculture Act (Connor Robinson, Lucia Guerrero)

- Connor Robinson and Lucia Guerrero gave a presentation on the proposed federal Aquaculture Act.
- Participants were advised of a November 13, 2020 engagement session to discuss the Aquaculture Act tailored to the shellfish sector. Participants were encouraged to attend the session.
- The online portal to provide feedback is open until January 15, 2021.
- AMAC Member feedback:
 - Marine Plants Jurisdiction: Connor noted that jurisdictional lines are important and the Act should not take over jurisdiction from another agency. Marine plants is not an area that is being discussed in the Aquaculture Act at this time however, through further engagement, he expects to hear more.
 - Area Based Aquaculture Management (ABAM): Connor noted that the existing ABAM authorities in the *Fisheries Act* would be replicated in the Aquaculture Act.
 - Local Government Engagement: There are a series of dedicated industry engagement sessions planned and local government are welcome to be included or if local governments wish to have a dedicated session, DFO is open to that.
 - There was support expressed for ticketable offenses.
 - Concerns were expressed regarding protecting the private property rights of farmed product.
 - Concerns were also expressed regarding the application processing timelines and an interest in seeing service standards be part of the Act.

- Connor noted that today's session is part of ongoing engagement. All input will be noted and considered during legislative development.

Shellfish Conditions of Licence Changes (Melinda Scott, Gabrielle Kosmider, Chris Marrie)

- Shellfish Conditions of Licence were due to expire April 30, 2025 however, DFO can amend licences early for concerns related to conservation and protection of wild fish.
- Key gaps are related to bivalve traceability, updates to fish transfers and aquatic invasive species (AIS), and compliance concerns related to fish and fish habitat protection were presented.
- DFO requested that feedback to be sent to the Aquaculture Shellfish inbox Shellfish.Aquaculture@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.
- AMAC Member feedback:
 - There was general support for improving the conditions of licence, removing redundancies and improving DFO's ability to address non-compliance.
 - Concerns expressed over the potential economic impacts to farmers and a recommendation that DFO allow flexibility in how farmers can meet the requirements.
 - Coastal Restoration Society noted their experience with aquatic invasive species (AIS) and offered to contact DFO to further discuss AIS on the aquaculture side.
 - Concerns expressed over how DFO will be able to allocate the necessary resources (Fishery Officers) for education and enforcement.

Shellfish Conditions of Licence Break-out Groups

- Participants were broken into one of three breakout rooms: 1) Fish and Fish Habitat 2) Traceability 3) Fish Transfers and Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).

Fish and Fish Habitat Break-Out Group (Chris Marrie)

- Chris shared a higher level presentation of the specific Conditions of Licence being proposed to address Fish and Fish Habitat concerns.
- AMAC Member feedback:
 - Foam containment:
 - ENGOs noted that rigid plastic also breaks apart. Air-filled floats was proposed as an alternative to foam filled containment
 - Gear Marking:
 - ENGOs hopeful that gear marking would enable identification and tracing of debris. Language in this condition should be clear and enforceable.
 - Sensitive Habitats:
 - ENGOs noted that the 2021 conditions of licence should not allow aquaculture activities in eelgrass, or salt marsh and should have a 10 meter buffer unless approved by DFO. The licence currently references sensitive habitats in the appendix and it should be included in the main part of the licence.
 - Industry questioned whether DFO is looking to put restrictions on how close aquaculture activities can be to sensitive habitats (buffers). Chris noted that there was some uncertainty as to whether buffers could be included as a condition of licence.
 - Debris:
 - Extension of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Clean Technology Adoption Program (FACTAP) program would be helpful in decreasing the foam found in water.
 - Marine Mammal Mitigation:
 - Some licence holders have already created/installed effective marine mammal mitigation measures and hopes the proposed conditions of licence will not limit them to certain techniques.

ACTION: DFO to look into on how prescriptive shellfish condition of licence can be regarding proximity to sensitive habitats.

ACTION: Chris Marrie to follow up with Bill Heath via email regarding additional concerns on Fish and Fish Habitat that were forwarded via Zoom chat - COMPLETE

Fish Transfers and AIS (Melinda Scott)

- Melinda shared a higher level presentation on the specific Conditions of Licence being proposed to address Fish Transfers and AIS.
- AMAC Member feedback
 - Industry wanted clarification on intent of the term “Non-Indigenous Species (NIS)”. Requests that NIS be clearly defined in COLs as it could be interpreted as any species including cultured bivalves (i.e. cultured bivalve not native to BC such as the Pacific oyster).
 - Industry wanted clarification on proposed condition allowing harvest of adult clams.
 - Industry would like access to the current Science advice guiding the increased requirements throughout all of BC instead of specific areas i.e. such as all growers now need to inspect and rinse product.
 - Industry on the West Coast of Vancouver Island (Zone 5) would like COLs updated for seed transfers. Currently growers in Zone 5 can only import seed from out of the Country where there are no restrictions on out planting. Propose COLs be updated to allow low risk seed movements (FLUPSY) between zones as low risk for AIS species.

ACTION: DFO to provide Alex Munro an update on the AIS requirements once Science advice has been included in a final draft of COLs.

ACTION: Melinda to forward Zone 5 seed transfer questions to Introductions and Transfer Committee for potential input into 2021 Conditions.

Traceability Break-Out Group (Gabrielle Kosmider & Kirsty Walde)

- Delivered slides with traceability COLs two times to accommodate those switching rooms
- AMAC Member Feedback:
 - Communication:
 - How is the information on bivalve traceability and risks being communicated beyond aquaculture and into the communities (i.e. community harvesting, etc.)? DFO noted that there will be broader engagement on this issue, but communities are encouraged to reach out and we will help put them in touch with the right people to provide information and outreach. Resource Management is staffing a dedicated position focused on the Bivalve Traceability Initiative to support engagement.
 - Size limit on aquaculture clams:
 - The shellfish industry members in attendance are strongly opposed to this, as they feel that their product is private property, having to sort and return undersized product to the substrate is unnecessarily burdensome and other proposed controls (i.e. tagging, elimination of aquaculture product) should address the issues without a size limit.
 - Elimination of aquaculture buyers/receivers, not representing a plant
 - Well received by industry, supported by BCSGA board.
 - Will only apply to aquaculture buyers, as they are not regulated under Provincial Fish and Seafood Act, not wild buyers.
 - Increased oversight on wild clam fishery
 - DFO needs to establish contact and control of the wild clam fishery and be monitoring the landing sites to verify catch.
 - The Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance and the First Nations Fishery Council would like to have ongoing dialogue on CSSP and an update on program renewal and expansion.

Sector Check-Ins

First Nations:

- We Wai Kai First Nation is revitalizing their scallop aquaculture enterprise and with continued success will look to expand into other aquaculture possibilities.
- Tla’amin Management Services are looking to potentially diversify their aquaculture operations and are exploring kelp opportunities.
- Challenges noted with getting young people to participate in the industry.

Local Government

- Noted the support for Area Based Aquaculture Management.
- At the local government level, there has been additional interest in aquaculture in relation to food security due to COVID-19. Work is needed to improve social licence with regards to marine debris.

Industry Associations

BC Shellfish Growers Association (BCSGA)

- COVID-19 has been a challenging time for shellfish farmers, with the closure of restaurants and market uncertainty. Other issues facing the industry include: sudden mortality syndrome, trends in water quality, and timeliness of application processing.
- Concerns expressed around additional costs to industry associated with the new proposed Conditions of Licence.
- Industry is working hard to improve their environmental footprint. Funding opportunities like FACTAP and the ghost gear program are important.

Aboriginal Aquaculture Association (AAA)

- Encouraged all First Nations to attend this meeting. There is value in participation, information exchange and networking.
- The past few months have seen challenges and successes. Aquaculture's designation as an essential service was encouraging.
- Access to labour continues to be a challenge for the industry
- Looking forward to engaging with First Nations on the Aquaculture Act.

ENGOS:

- Pleased to see progress on issues of environmental protection and believes shellfish aquaculture can be done in sustainable way that addresses economic and environmental goals.
- Language in the new shellfish Conditions of Licence will be important to ensure enforceability.
- Josh Temple provided a presentation on the Coastal Restoration Society's environmental stewardship and invasive aquatic species control mandate.

Industry:

- Industry hopes that DFO will carefully consider how the conditions of licence will impact day to day farmers including the costs to business and impacts on viability.
- Regulators need to keep in mind that shellfish aquaculture is a diverse industry and sometimes one size does not fit all. There needs to be flexibility for farms who do something different to achieve common goals.
- Concerns expressed about the oyster spat closures in Pendrell Sound.

BC Update (Myron Roth)

- Oyster Recovery Fund was announced in 2018 and concluded in 2019 to support seed sales to industry. 108 farmers received funding.
- BC funding was also allocated towards a communication campaign, research into Norovirus and Vibrio, and research into new tools for real time monitoring of sewage pollution.
- Federal funding supports are available to farmers who are struggling due to COVID-19 and Myron encouraged farmers who need help to reach out to him for assistance.
- Myron provided an update on FACTAP funding which is almost over and will be closed at the end of fiscal.
- Myron provided an update on British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Funding (BCSRIF), BC Traceability Value Change Program, and PICFI funding.
- The BC Seafood Expo is scheduled for November 17-18, 2020 at Crown Isle in Comox BC.

CSSP/Bivalve Traceability Initiative (Gabrielle Kosmider)

- Gabrielle Kosmider and Kirsty Walde gave a presentation on the Bivalve Traceability Initiative (BTI) where a number of human health concerns related to traceability were identified.
- AMAC Member Feedback:
 - Suggestion made that shellfish harvesters be required to obtain a licence

- Questions raised around whether wild shellfish fisheries will have the same conditions as aquaculture. Gabrielle noted that the wild fishery has its own conditions of licence. The two sectors will try to align conditions of licence where appropriate.

DFO Regional and National Update (Allison Webb)

- Allison introduced herself and welcomed new members. She recognized the challenging times many are working under due to COVID-19.
- General Engagement:
 - Allison gave an update on aquaculture initiatives currently underway such as shellfish conditions of licence renewal, finfish condition of licence renewal, aquaculture act consultations, ABAM, and the transition plan for finfish aquaculture as part of the mandate commitment for 2025.
 - For shellfish aquaculture the priority is traceability of harvested bivalve due to the concerns to human health. Debris is another priority as DFO continues to receive concerns from the public however she recognizes the work that has been done so far to raise the environmental bar.
- Indigenous and Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Body (IMAB) & Technical Working Groups:
 - Three technical working groups (TWG) were struck to provide advice to the IMAB. The TWG of most interest to the shellfish industry is likely the area based management technical working group. The IMAB is finalizing its report which should be available online soon. Once available, DFO will distribute the link to the AMAC members.
- Emerging Species:
 - DFO has committed resources to work on a new and emerging species policy. As this is in the early stages, an update can be provided at the next meeting.
- Operational Updates:
 - Allison provided a brief update on administrative changes such as the elimination of multi-party licences, and the requirement to pay all outstanding fees by the end of the calendar year for licence issuance in 2021.
- Oyster Spat Collection:
 - Allison noted that at this time DFO will be suspending collection of oyster spat due to environmental concerns.
- Application Processing:
 - Allison recognized that a number of concerns were expressed around timeframes and service standards and noted that DFO does have service standards in place. She recognized the difficulty and uncertainty of not having applications reviewed in a timely manner.
- AMAC Member Feedback:
 - Request that DFO consider forming a working group for the new and emerging species framework development.
 - Request that Transport Canada advertising requirements be harmonized with BC's advertisement process.
 - Question regarding estimated timeline to complete Area Based Aquaculture Management. Allison noted that DFO is in the early stages. Movement on ABAM will take until spring or fall of 2021.

ACTION: Add new and emerging species policy to next AMAC agenda.

ACTION: As BC will need to be engaged on the issue of timelines for application review, DFO will bring the issue of application review timelines forward at the next Harmonized working group meeting.

ACTION: Allison noted that DFO is open to engagement in a meaningful way and will consider the suggestion to form a working group for new species management and think about how to move it forward.

ACTION: Reagan Newcomb will bring the question of harmonizing site advertising requirements between BC and TC at the next Harmonized working group meeting.

Summary Roundtable and next meeting date (Saul Milne)

- Meeting format: the preference for 2 half days vs 1 full day was mixed with 6 participants preferring 2 half days and 5 participants preferring 1 full day.
- Technology: Most participants are familiar with zoom and felt comfortable with the technology.
- Overall participants found the meeting informative. The presentations and discussions were well received and comments were positive.

Next Meeting:

Summary of action items:

- 1) BCSGA to provide a summary of results from the industry meeting on debris and provide feedback.
- 2) DFO to reach out to Department of Justice to inquire on how prescriptive shellfish condition of licence can be regarding proximity to sensitive habitats.
- 3) DFO to follow up with the Watershed Society of the Comox Valley via email regarding additional concerns on Fish and Fish Habitat that were forwarded via Zoom chat.
- 4) DFO to add new species policy to next AMAC agenda.
- 5) DFO to bring the issue of application review timelines forward at the next Harmonized working group meeting.
- 6) DFO to will consider the suggestion to form a working group for new species management and think about how to move it forward.
- 7) DFO to bring the question of harmonizing site advertising requirements between BC and TC at the next Harmonized working group meeting.

Summary of recommendations:

No formal recommendations were brought forward from the SF-AMAC body as a whole, but a number of recommendations were noted in the minutes.