

PAGE 1, SUBCLAUSE 1(3), PROPOSED SUBSECTION 48(4) - delete "one" in the first line and substitute "three".

PAGE 1, CLAUSE 2, PROPOSED SECTION 49A -

(a) add "is" immediately after "panel" in the first line; and

(b) delete "is composed of more than one member" in the second line.

CHANGES RECOMMENDED TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON BILLS
 BY THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act (amended)
Bill #24

CARRIED

We were hopeful that this new government would be different from past provincial governments and would consult with coastal communities when it came to economic development and use of our harbours. It is stated in the mandate letter from the Premier to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture that this government is "committed to listen to and respect all Nova Scotians."

I am writing on behalf of the residents, businesses and fishers of the Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia who since 2012 have spoken up and organized against Open Net Pen FISH Farms. Our organization, the Association for the Preservation of the Eastern Shore (hereafter known as APES) is a founding member of the Healthy Bays Network (HBN) which is a provincial organization that advocates for healthy marine and coastal ecosystems and communities.

Association for the Preservation of the Eastern Shore Submission to
Law Amendments Committee for
Bill 24
Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act
October 24, 2021



It was also stated in the mandate letter that the Minister should "engage with key stakeholders regarding the open pen aquaculture licensing process. As coastal communities, we consider ourselves to be key stakeholders. This bill is being pushed through without the government ever having spoken to any of our organizations. This, despite both the APES and HBN asking for a meeting with the Minister as soon as possible after the election. Two days notice to present before the Law Amendments committee is not consultation.

It is stated in the mandate letter to the Minister of the Environment that in the "first legislative sitting to introduce new environmental legislation which will guide Nova Scotians towards a cleaner, healthier environment in the coming decade and will further encourage growth of the sustainable and green economy and the sustainability of traditional industries." We want to be part of that discussion. We know first hand that it is the sustainable wild catch fishery and tourism that sustain our communities. Clean harbours are vital to the survival of these traditional industries. We want to discuss alternatives to dirty, polluting, industries.

Our organizations have been clear about our opposition to open net pen Finnish farms. Hundreds of Nova Scotians all around the province came out to community meetings to tell Cernaq that we did not support their license proposals for our harbours. Cernaq finally came to understand that they would not be welcome in our communities. Why has the provincial government not understood this? We see a future where Nova Scotia can be a leader in a sustainable seafood and tourism industry and a greener economy. It is stated in the mandate letters to both the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture and the Minister of the Environment that "this government supports low impact, sustainable aquaculture by implementing a proper licensing process that places much weight on environmental considerations..." Our organizations support the development of this type of aquaculture which includes shellfish aquaculture. Finnish farming, however, is NOT low impact.

We believe that this amendment to Bill 24 should not be accepted as:

1. coastal communities have not been consulted.
2. piecemeal changes should not be made to the Act when an overall review of the regulations is overdue.
3. this proposal could lead to a very inconsistent and unbalanced approach to licensing decisions.
4. there could be multiple hearings taking place giving coastal communities less time and ability to fully participate in the process

Wendy Watson Smith, President
Association for the Preservation of the Eastern Shore and member of
Healthy Bays Network



We thank you for the opportunity to speak to Bill 24 and raise a series of concerns with the current draft for your consideration.

As noted, we are members of the Minister's Advisory Committee for aquaculture regulations along with others in the seafood, fisheries, and aquaculture industry, Rights holders, and stakeholders. Revisions to regulations are typically discussed within this Committee to ensure expert input can be heard by the Minister. We are concerned that this process did not take place prior to the introduction of this Bill, much less any option for general public consultation and input.

Indeed, we were pleased to see the new government campaign on a promise to consult widely with Nova Scotians on the future of aquaculture in our province, and we hope to see that promise upheld prior to any changes to the ARB. In this case, one of the key reasons we are concerned by the lack of consultation and the haste of this Bill is that the **mandatory 5-year aquaculture regulatory review process under the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act (FCRA) has not yet taken place.**

Under the FCRA, the government is legally required to conduct a full-scale review of the Act and regulations every five years, and we are now more than a full year overdue. This regulatory review was established so that all parties with a stake in Nova Scotia's aquaculture policy could provide

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Ecology Action Centre (EAC). The EAC is Atlantic Canada's largest environmental charity, and we have been advocating for the health of the marine ecosystems that sustain our ocean economy for more than two decades now.

We have also been involved in evidence-based advocacy work surrounding aquaculture for more than 10 years in Nova Scotia, supporting communities working to protect their local bays, keep their home waters clean, and build thriving local economies. We were invited contributors to the 2014 Doelle-Lahay Commission report focused on the development of low-impact, high-value aquaculture in Nova Scotia. It was this Commission that provided the basis for the 2015 regulatory system now in place, including the establishment of an Aquaculture Regulatory Advisory Committee to the Minister, of which we are a member.

Dear Legislators,

Simon Ryder-Burbridge
Marine Conservation Campaigner
Ecology Action Centre

Low Amendment, Monday Oct. 25, 2021

Ecology Action Centre Submission on Bill No. 24 Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act (amended)

feedback on the workings of the current regulatory system. This review is the most appropriate forum through which to discuss changes to the ARB process, and we urge its completion prior to the establishment of any amendments to aquaculture law. If the Bill goes forward first, the credibility of the regulatory review process and future consultation efforts by this government may be undermined in the public eye.

While we ultimately hope to see Bill 24 held until formal consultation outside of law amendments can take place, following are several other concerns related to the ARB revisions now proposed.

Our first major concern with Bill 24 is that the effort to speed through ARB hearings may limit the ability of experts, community members, stakeholders, and Rights holders to participate in the process. While we sympathize with the intent to address the backlog of sites now requiring an ARB hearing, the solution to this backlog is not to impede the opportunity for public participation by conducting multiple ARB hearings at a time. Some coastal communities are currently facing several aquaculture proposals at once.

Second, the current process for intervention as a member of the public is very involved, and requires significant amounts of both time and resources, if not legal or institutional assistance. First to make one's case for intervention, and then to prepare oneself for the multi-day hearing, call witnesses, gather evidence, build arguments and deal with both provincial and industry lawyers. Even as a long-standing contributor to aquaculture policy in Nova Scotia and a member of the Minister's Advisory Committee, the EAC was denied intervenor status for an upcoming hearing. Indeed, the bar for ARB intervention is high, and if local residents are faced with multiple hearings at once, we are almost certain to see participation rates plunge with the time and effort now required. This will stifle the Board's ability to appropriately evaluate a particular proposal, as they will not hear all of the relevant evidence necessary to make the best decision possible. In this scenario, the ARB process will render little value beyond a veneer of fair judgement.

We are also troubled by the potential for inconsistency that may come into play with proposed changes. The three-person Board was established to ensure balance and consistency in decision-making. While appointing more Board members may help with capacity, allowing a single Board member to make a decision could make the consistent application of decision criteria much more difficult. With three Board members overseeing a decision, each can act as a check on the other, vetting judgements and reducing the potential for bias. In that same spirit, allowing the Chair to rule with finality in the case of a split Board will allocate a significant power to the position and further reduce balance.

We recognize the potential need for a process that is "right-sized" for low-impact projects like appropriately-scaled shellfish and seaweed aquaculture operations. But we do not think that this stand-alone Bill is right way to achieve that outcome. As an alternative, we strongly encourage you

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2705 Fern Ln., Halifax, NS
Kijpukuk, Mi'kmaw Territory
Marine Campaign Coordinator
Simon Ryder-Buridge

Sincerely,

We thank you very much for the opportunity to present this case today. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any follow-up questions that you may have.

through formal consultation processes prior to the implementation of these amendments or others. development in this province, and we simply ask for a chance to make that perspective available Minister should know about the perspective of coastal communities in relation to aquaculture changes to the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act now before you. There is much that our new and policy as a member of the Healthy Bays Network, and we ask you to hold off on the proposed In conclusion, we stand with the coastal communities most impacted by changes to aquaculture law the system going forward.

large-scale finfish proposals. These concepts could all be on the table through the regulatory review process, and a more collaborative approach to Bill 24 should ensure a higher level of confidence in aquaculture projects with a low ecological risk profile face a reduced licensing burden relative to type and scale; or a "fit-for-scale" application amendment through which shellfish and seaweed alleviate pressure on the current Board – for example: a risk-based system looking at species, farm adjudicative process in meaningful ways. We have yet to discuss other options that could help of the current regulatory system, and will provide opportunities to refine the entire ARB and voices can make contributions. This more holistic review would allow for a much deeper assessment to bring these amendments into the larger, mandatory regulatory review process where important

25 October, 2021

Derek Purcell:

- BSc in Fuels and Materials Engineering – Chemistry (Royal Military College 1982)
- 36 years as a Naval Officer in the Royal Canadian Navy – retired in 2016
- Supporter and senior volunteer with the Healthy Bays Network and the Twin Bays Coalition.

Twin Bays Coalition:

- Concerned citizens in the St. Margaret's Bay and Mahone Bay areas
- Believe in a locally driven ocean economy that does not put our waters at risk

Point # 1: This Bill should not be passed because it goes well beyond what the Aquaculture

Review Board (ARB) asked for.

needs

So much so, it sacrifices consistency for expediency. How can multiple Panels with different Chairpersons be expected to interpret the Regulations and conduct Hearings in a consistent fashion? There has only been one ARB Hearing held to date and it went smoothly. The justification to change the composition and authorities of the Board so significantly appears to be coming entirely from industry. I respect that industry has been waiting years for these hearings. They want to get on with them and have lobbied Government to make that happen. While they wait, however, many finfish sites are already operating outside of their approved leases. Recent imagery confirming this statement is included at the end of this submission. These finfish aquaculture sites are operating in contravention of the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act and the Aquaculture Licence and Lease Regulations. These laws and regulations are already being broken with the knowledge and permission of Government. Therefore, in many cases, industry is not being adversely affected and there is no need for the ridiculous degree of expediency facilitated by the Bill. Taken to extreme, up to ten Hearings could be conducted simultaneously! A law that is written as loosely as this, should NOT be enacted.

It would, however, be much more appropriate to word the Bill so that it addresses the ARB concerns rather than those of industry. You should provide the ARB with the human resources necessary to deliver reasonably scheduled, consistent Hearings, populated with Board Members as appropriate to the application being heard.

Point # 2: This Bill should not be passed because as introduced, the Bill clearly favours industry.

The Minister's comments at Second Reading focused on the economic benefits provided by industry. There was no mention of the industry's negative effects on local communities, existing fisheries and the environment. The Minister for Economic Development stated that failure to pass this Bill would "kneecap" this significant investment in our Province. No mention on her part of any other potentially negative impacts associated with such a significant investment. Minister Craig's press release statement

Twin Bays Coalition: <https://www.twinbays.ca/>

[Redacted]
Pleasantville, N.S. [Redacted]

Derek Purcell

Thank you.

In conclusion, as written, this Bill is pro-industry and downplays, or worse, handcuffs local community efforts to fully participate in the ARB Hearings. We are optimistic that if you are, or become more knowledgeable about the ARB process, then you will also conclude that this Bill should NOT be passed as written. What is needed is a Bill that delivers what the ARB has ~~requested~~ ^{needs} – nothing more, nothing less.

Conclusion

If you don't know what an intervenor does as a party to the ARB process, or if you have never applied to become an intervenor at an ARB hearing, we strongly urge you to become familiar with the application process and the conduct of an ARB hearing BEFORE you consider approving this Bill for Third Reading. Details may be found at the ARB website at: <https://arb.novascotia.ca/rules-procedure-and-policies>. This is relevant because the way the Hearing is structured, it demands significant research, administrative and legal assistance to prepare and execute the intervenor function effectively. In most cases, these demands are well beyond the financial and time constraints of local groups. They turn to organizations such as Ecojustice, East Coast Environmental Law or the Ecology Action Centre for help. The Minister has clearly stated his support for multiple Hearings to clear the backlog of applications. Doing so would quickly overwhelm the limited options and resources available to help local communities qualify for and execute the role of intervenor. In effect, this Bill will effectively constrain local voices from becoming meaningful participants in the ARB process. Multiple Hearings conducted simultaneously or shortly after one another will clearly be of advantage to industry.

By that we mean obtaining and exercising full participation rights and privileges as an intervenor. I can personally speak with authority on this as I prepared and applied for intervenor status on behalf of the Healthy Bays Network in the Rating Beach Hearing coming up in November. That application was rejected by the ARB as we did not constitute a local voice and were obliquely referred to as "mere busybodies" in our rejection letter.

Point # 3: This Bill should not be passed because it further restricts the ability of local communities to become parties to the ARB Hearing.

that he already has people in mind for these additional ARB positions after only 50 days in the job is unsettling as well. He has yet to meet, as far as we know, with organizations representing local and environmental concerns. Therefore, the people he has in mind, could very well be those who were on his doorstep the day after he was appointed as Minister. The bottom line to all this – advantage clearly appears to go to industry.

Google Earth Imagery – the circles are the outline of the approved lease boundaries. the extent of the approved lease boundaries.

Approved Lease Boundaries – Site AQ# 1039 Rattling Beach





SUBMISSION TO NOVA SCOTIA STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW AMENDMENTS REGARDING BILL 24

October 25th, 2021

Geoff Le Boutillier



<http://healthybays.ca>

Thank you for agreeing to hear our thoughts on Bill 24, proposed amendments to the Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Act.

My name is Geoffrey LeBoutillier. I live at 680 Indian Point Road in Eskekekekakik, Glen Haven in HRM, Kijipuktuk on the shore of St. Margaret's Bay. My ancestors settled there in 1780.

I have had a hand in many community and environmental organizations and causes over the years, but today I come before you as founding member and past Chair of the Healthy Bays Network through which six community organizations, and four large NGOs collaborate to protect Nova Scotia's coasts. We are eager to help government develop policies and legislation which will benefit our and future generations. Netukulmk.

I want to take just a minute to describe the scope of our incorporated alliance, the Healthy Bays Network.

In addition to the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, and the Ecology Action Centre, all of which I'm sure you know something about, the community organizations which currently comprise our growing membership are as follows:

- the Association for the Preservation of the Eastern Shore,
- the Twin Bays Coalition representing St. Margaret's and Mahone Bays,
- the St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association and the Friends of Nature,
- Protect Liverpool Bay where current applications before the Aquaculture Review Board propose doubling the number of fish grown there to a whopping 2 million fish producing fecal matter equivalent to a city of 650,000 people,

- and the St. Mary's Bay Protectors where fish farms are also in expansion mode. St. Mary's Bay, you will remember, was one of the front line sites for the Stockholm-based Mitsubishi subsidiary Cernaq before they, in no small part due to our efforts, decided they were not welcome in Nova Scotia.

So, scope, our combined membership is well in excess of 10,000 souls, strong and determined to see our province's aquaculture policy transition to a more enlightened future. We include lawyers and scientists and investors, luminaries and workers in the seafood industry, retirees and shoreline landowners, people from all walks of life, urban, rural, including notably the growing ranks of those serious about what they eat (pleased to report that chemical and anti-biotic free land-based closed containment farmed salmon is now available at competitive prices throughout HRM at one of our major grocery store chains).

So, it won't surprise you that the Nova Scotia NDP has the following official party policy:

"...BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Nova Scotia NDP commit to rejecting any new licensing of open-net fish farms in our waters and to developing a transition plan to phase out all existing open-net fish farms by 2025 and to supporting the further development of land-based closed containment aquaculture technology."

No wonder also that Federal Conservative MP for South Shore-St. Margaret's Rick Perkins, who defeated the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans at least partially due to his strong position on open-net pens, and Chester-St. Margaret's provincial PC MLA Danielle Barkhouse ran this past summer in open opposition to open-net pens, and no wonder the Nova Scotia Progressive Conservative Party itself featured the following in its official platform:

"A Tim Houston PC government will stop fish farm expansion projects and put them through an independent, rigorous approval process based on science... effectiveness, transparency, and safety... Every safeguard will be in place so that local residents can have confidence in the process... The economy benefits from certainty and communities benefit from the comfort of knowing that independent experts are the ones determining the environmental viability of applications before them."

So, HBN has considerable scope, a wealth of like-minded influencers, and the political environment I think you will agree is ripe for a change of direction when it comes to open-net pen aquaculture.

Six days ago, Tuesday, October 19th, NS Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister Steve Craig introduced Bill 24 proposing significant amendments to the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act, specifically fundamental changes to the composition of the Aquaculture Review Board. Ostensibly to fast track the approval process and ensure Board members' availability for hearings, the number of commissioners the Minister can appoint would be increased from 3 to 10. Further, if I understand the wording correctly, the Board Chair, at her discretion, can now empower as few as a single commissioner to hear and approve multiple applications. The Bill passed Second Reading last week with very little debate and is now here before you, Law Amendments, barely 6 days after its introduction. The public has barely had time to catch its breath.

Minister Craig's mandate letter from Premier Houston charged him with the task of, and I quote, consulting 'key stakeholders regarding the open-net pen aquaculture licensing process.' I guess the Healthy Bays Network and its member organizations are not key stakeholders because what did we hear from the Minister regarding Bill 24's radical proposed changes? Nothing.

Let me ask you this: What could be more central to the licence approval process than the structure of the Board itself? Is this an indicator of how the Minister and his department intends to deal with community stakeholders going forward? We certainly hope not.

Over and above the changes proposed in Bill 24, the Healthy Bays Network questions other aspects of the licensing process.

For example, we question the factors used to determine how the Board grants or denies intervenor status in its hearings. None of our member groups were accepted as intervenors in the sole Finnish license hearing so far scheduled (and repeatedly postponed) by the ARB.

Here's another question: The HBN wonders how the Board can in good conscience hear applications for license expansions which have been fait accompli for years in clear contravention of regulatory procedures. And when you read the applications, their claim to legitimacy is largely based on stats from inappropriately licensed operations.

Here's another: We question the composition of the Board itself. Maybe in the appointment of up to 7 new commissioners some of these shortcomings might be addressed. But then again, maybe not. No guarantees, especially when decision making authority can be delegated to as few as a single person. Are we stakeholders to be adequately represented on the ameliorated ARB? Will the Board have the necessary expertise to evaluate impacts on endangered species like, for example, populations of Atlantic salmon? Will the current highly localized and therefore blinkered factors used to screen potential intervenors prevent the Board from seeing the big picture? Now is the time, the HBN suggests, is the perfect opportunity to correct some of these serious shortcomings which seem to benefit short term profits at the expense of future generations.

Lastly, HBN questions the haste for Bill 24's changes when, despite the dramatic increase in the size of the Board, there is a total lack of provisions to ensure consistency in its decisions. The Act is due for a comprehensive legislative review of the aquaculture provisions introduced in 2015. We wonder, why the big rush now?

Perhaps a more reasonable solution would be to slow down. Stop. Think about this. Perform the promised consultation. Put in place a process in which Nova Scotians can, as promised, have confidence. We do not have confidence in Bill 24.

In closing, I'd like to remind you of a few basic tenets of the Act itself. It was designed to, quote: "...provide a predictable and efficient regulatory environment for business and public confidence", and it is to, quote: "...ensure that members of the public have access to information with respect to the regulatory process and an opportunity to participate in the process."

So, at the very least, we should do what we said we were going to do, and what we agreed we should and must do, by law. Don't rush into the creation of a law which is doomed to abuse.

Thank you.

Good Evening Honorable Members, it is my pleasure to present to you on Bill No.24, which if passed will amend section 48 of the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act.

My name is Lisa Mitchell, I am the Executive Director and Senior Lawyer with the East Coast Environmental Law Association. East Coast Environmental Law is a public interest environmental law charity that advocates for the fair application of innovative and effective environmental laws in Atlantic Canada through education, collaboration and legal action.

Although our office is located in the Schulich School of Law, our 3 lawyers are based in locations across the province, one here in Halifax, one in Cape Breton, and one in the Annapolis Valley. Given the distribution of our staff across the province we appreciate the recent decision to continue with opportunities for virtual presentation to this committee. Not only does it enhance public engagement, it enables us to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by avoiding unnecessary travel.

Very briefly on my personal qualifications, I am practicing member of the Nova Scotia Baristers' Society. I have a Masters of Environmental Studies from Dalhousie's School for Resource and Environmental Studies. I have been practicing exclusively environmental law for more than 25 years, including drafting legislation for federal and provincial governments.

Turning to the topic at hand, East Coast Environmental Law was actively engaged in the development of the current regulatory framework for aquaculture in Nova Scotia. In 2013 we published Aquaculture Regulation in Nova Scotia: Overview of the Regulatory Framework and Considerations for Regulatory Reform. In 2014 we completed three comprehensive regulatory reviews of aquaculture regulation in Canada and the United States at the request of the Independent Aquaculture Regulatory Review Panel (aka the Doelle-Lahay Panel) and in 2015 we published Aquaculture Regulation in the Post Doelle-Lahay Era: An Analysis of Nova Scotia's New Regulatory Framework.

In addition we provide ongoing legal information and advice to individuals, organizations and coastal community groups who have concerns about commercial aquaculture activities or seek to participate in the aquaculture review process. Most recently we represented the Ecology Action Centre in their failed application for intervenor status before the Aquaculture Review Board in the upcoming ARB hearing on the lease expansion proposal at Rattling Beach in the Annapolis Basin.

In this context, I will speak to the simple and yet significant amendments proposed to the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act through Bill 24.

As you know, the proposed changes will amend section 48 of the Act and add a new section, section 49A, to the Act. The amendment to subsection 48(1) will increase the size of the Aquaculture Review Board from 3 members to a maximum of 10 members and enable the Minister to set terms for Board members. The amendment to subsection 48(2) will create a position of Vice-chair of the Board.

We have no specific concerns with those proposed amendments although we would like to see criteria in place to guide the Minister in selecting Review Board members.

We do, however, have concerns with the repeal of subsection 48(4) and the proposal to replace that provision with

48(4) The Chair of the Review Board shall assign one or more of its members to constitute a panel to hear an application before the Review Board.

48(4A) The Chair of the Review Board shall determine a quorum of the Review Board or of a hearing panel

We understand that the goal of these amendments is to facilitate a more timely and efficient process for upcoming applications. We understand that concern and we are not opposed to the creation of hearing panels per se, but rather to the creation of a 1-person hearing panel.

We recommend the proposed subsection 48(4) require the Chair of the Review Board to assign 3 of its members to constitute a panel.

(4) The Chair of the Review Board shall assign ~~one or more~~ **three** of its members to constitute a panel to hear an application before the Review Board.

Further we recommend that the proposed subsection 48(4A) require a majority of the members of the Review Board or a hearing panel constitute quorum.

~~(4A) A majority of the members of the Chair of the Review Board or a panel of the Review Board shall determine a quorum of the Review Board or of a hearing panel~~

In somewhat broad strokes, the adjudicative process under the FCRA is already quite limited and only applies to a new marine license or lease, an expansion to an existing marine license or lease or the addition of fish species to an existing marine license or lease. All other applications under the Act including amendments and renewals are addressed via the administrative process, where the decisions are made by a single administrator.

To be perfectly honest, given the Bill passed second reading on Friday afternoon and I am here presenting to you on Monday evening, I have not had the opportunity to look at every conceivable application that might come before the Board to determine if certain applications are so straightforward and uncontroversial that a decision by a single board member would be appropriate. However, I would argue that if such is the case it should be considered in the context of the upcoming comprehensive regulatory review rather than through this amendment.

For the most part, the aquaculture applications that are subject to the adjudicative process are interdisciplinary and complex. The adjudicative process before the 3 member ARB was created to ensure that there is a robust evaluation of the application, with full opportunities to bring differing perspectives and expertise to the decision-makers and to have among those decision-makers differing perspectives and expertise. I am not suggesting that a hearing panel made up of one person is not due process, but there is value in recognizing that justice must not only be done but be seen to be done.

I specifically recommend that the all hearing panels be made up of 3 board members for the following reasons:

- (1) This should assist in addressing the need for more timely processing of applications while at the same time minimizes the change to the current regulatory process.
- (2) There has been no indication from the Minister that having 3 panel members is a problem.
- (3) A 1-person panel will have to completely re-start if the panel member, for any reason, leaves the board or can no longer conduct their duties.
- (4) Accommodation could be made to allow a panel to continue with 2 persons if one of the 3 panel members leaves the board or can no longer conduct their duties.
- (5) Apprehension of bias is more likely with a 1-person panel, than a 3 person panel.

The long-term success of the aquaculture industry in Nova Scotia requires social license from those in the communities most directly affected and from Nova Scotians generally. The road to the current aquaculture regulatory framework was long and challenging. The process is imperfect and certainly will benefit from the comprehensive regulatory review that was recommended by the Doelle-Lahay Panel and I understand has been committed to by the Minister.

We look forward to participating in that process, as I am sure many other Nova Scotians do and some of the issues raised by Bill No.24 may be considered in that process. Recognizing that the Minister has identified challenges with the timeliness of the current ARB process and seeks to address them by way of Bill No. 24, we ask only that any changes made before the regulatory review be kept to a minimum. There is a need for reasonable timelines and there is a equally a need for reasonable process.

In closing, I will mention that the Minister has indicated that expanding the Review Board membership will enable multiple hearing panels to take place simultaneously. At this point, it is unclear what that might mean. In making a decision to have multiple hearings running at the same time, I ask that the Minister and the Board consider how this will impact the ability for community members, coastal community groups and other interested members of the public to effectively participate in hearings. Public participation and engagement brings valuable information, expertise and local experience to the hearing process for consideration by the Review Board and robust public engagement will help the Board make better decisions. In an effort to accelerate applications, we ask members to not lose sight of the important role of the public interest in the decision-making process.

BLUEPRINT FOR SAVING WILD SALMON STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023

RETURNING NORTH AMERICA'S WILD ATLANTIC SALMON TO ABUNDANCE



Reduce the effects of open net-pen salmon aquaculture



Remove barriers & restore healthy rivers



Ensure sustainable Atlantic salmon fisheries & engaged fishers and anglers



Determine what's killing wild Atlantic salmon at sea, and offer solutions





President's Message

ASF's president emeritus, Wilfred Carter, once called wild Atlantic salmon "the fisherman's canary." Their presence or absence tells us if a river is clean or polluted, wild or dammed. When there are plenty of salmon, all life is thriving. This is ASF's vision: healthy and resilient watersheds, abundant salmon, and enduring community benefits.

Based on ASF's 70-years of conservation experience and the most recent science, our strategic plan offers the best hope for stemming decline and restoring North America's wild Atlantic salmon to abundance. It's an audacious goal, and this is an aggressive plan that requires working constructively with governments, indigenous groups, and other NGO partners.

We will break from past thinking which has diluted conservation efforts. Too much has been expended on populations made up of a few individual salmon. Instead, ASF will work to ensure healthy wild Atlantic salmon populations are not exposed to the pressures which have led to extinctions elsewhere and will only focus on depleted populations where there is a high likelihood of recovery.

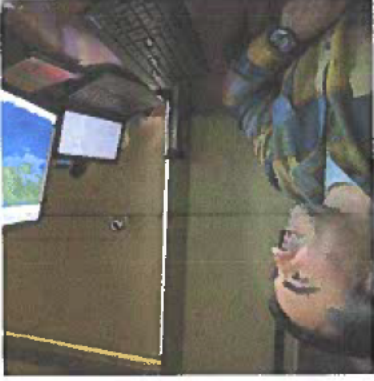
After the closure of Canada's Atlantic salmon commercial fisheries in the 1990s, North American populations stabilized, but emerging threats like climate change, open net-salmon aquaculture, and a persistent Greenland fishery prevented a full recovery.

By diligently studying causes of decline and reducing the negative effects of overfishing, and other industries, we will give wild Atlantic salmon a real chance to recover and thrive.

Sincerely,

Bill Taylor, President, Atlantic Salmon Federation

“
ASF'S PRESIDENT EMERITUS,
WILFRED CARTER, ONCE CALLED
WILD ATLANTIC SALMON
"THE FISHERMAN'S CANARY."
”



Ensure sustainable Atlantic salmon fisheries & engaged fishers and anglers



Fisheries for North American wild Atlantic salmon take place throughout Canada and off the coast of Greenland. Although the global harvest of wild Atlantic salmon has decreased drastically since the 1970s, unsustainable fisheries still occur in some areas. ASF recognizes the cultural and recreational value people derive from fishing for Atlantic salmon. In return, we believe everyone who benefits should be engaged in wild salmon conservation. **We will:**

1 Negotiate agreements to suspend commercial fishing for North American wild Atlantic salmon at Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

2 Engage anglers and indigenous communities to share knowledge and cooperate in research, advocacy, and conservation activities.

3 Advocate for management decisions that ensure no fishery continually pushes a population below sustainable levels.

Determine what's killing wild Atlantic salmon at sea, and offer solutions

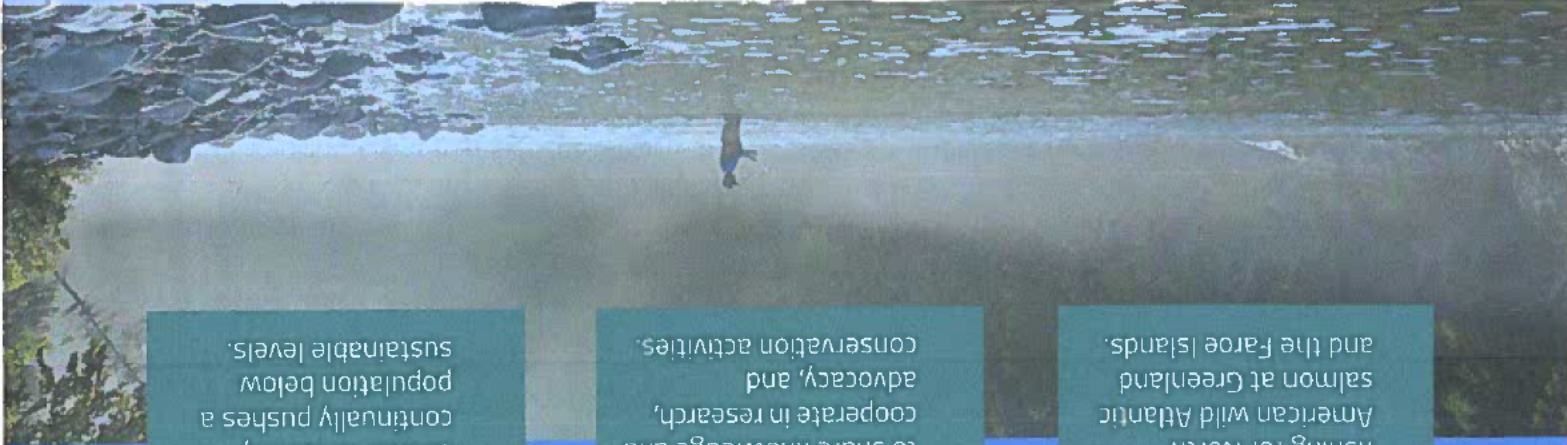


In the early 1990's, oceanographic conditions shifted in the North Atlantic. Prey species like calorie-rich capelin changed their distributions and declined in abundance. At the same time, predator populations like striped bass and seals have grown remarkably. The result is previously unseen rates of marine mortality for wild Atlantic salmon. ASF is determined to find where salmon are dying in high numbers, what's killing them, and offer solutions to mitigate these effects. **We will:**

1 Expand the number of salmon tagged and locations for our ocean tracking research to enhance knowledge of migration routes and identify mortality trends.

2 Link our ocean tracking data to research about climate change and shifting ocean conditions to predict future movement and threats.

3 Advocate for evidence-based measures to counter and reduce marine mortality.





1 Employ ASF's Freshwater Recovery Strategy as a guide for regional councils, affiliates, and other interested conservation groups to address the primary limiting factors to salmon recovery and productivity in rivers.

2 Fund and manage dam removals throughout the historic range of wild Atlantic salmon.

3 Advocate for policies that reduce human impact on watersheds and eradicate invasive species.



Remove barriers & restore healthy rivers

Open net-pen salmon aquaculture is a high-level marine threat to wild Atlantic salmon. Diseases and parasites are transferred from sea-cages to wild species. Aquaculture fish escape then breed and compete with wild Atlantic salmon, contributing to population collapse. Where ever open net-pen salmon aquaculture exists in eastern North America, wild salmon populations are threatened or endangered. As new land-based containment methods of salmon aquaculture begin to supplant sea-cages, ASF is committed to preventing further harm from the existing marine based industry. **We will:**



Reduce the effects of open net-pen salmon aquaculture

1 Advocate for regulatory reform of the existing open net-pen salmon aquaculture industry to reduce escapes, increase transparency, and hold companies accountable.

2 Challenge expansion to areas where wild Atlantic salmon are present and industry is not.

3 Ensure new open net-pen salmon aquaculture projects are subjected to a rigorous screening and environmental review process that fairly considers effects on wild species and the environment.

Wild Atlantic salmon and other species of sea-run fish need free flowing, clean rivers to complete their life cycle. Centuries of dam building, forestry, acid rain, and other human development have altered entire watersheds. Unobstructed, clean rivers are imperative for successful recovery efforts. Productive watersheds that send large numbers of juvenile salmon to sea also help mitigate the effects of high marine mortality. ASF is committed to restoring and conserving wild salmon rivers in North America. **We will:**

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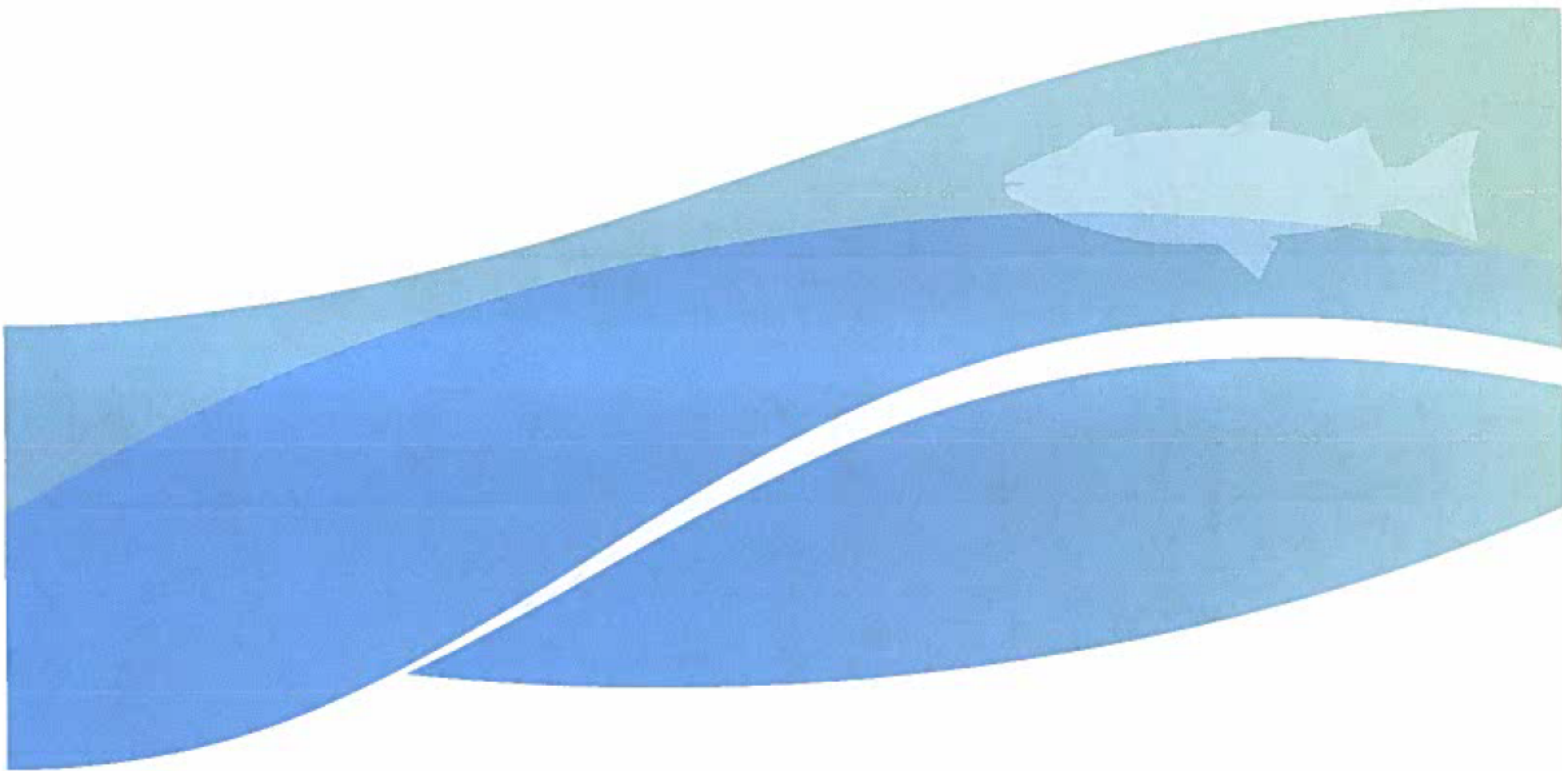


ASF's mission is to conserve and restore wild Atlantic salmon and their ecosystems. Your support of ASF's *Blueprint for Saving Wild Atlantic Salmon* is needed to bring back healthy salmon runs for the years and decades ahead.

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