

**REPORT OF QUALITATIVE FINDINGS FROM FOCUS
GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON THE COMMUNICATION
OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA'S
STRATEGIC PLAN AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

February 2005

Report Prepared for:
Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)



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I. Executive Summary

A. Highlights of Findings

- The following findings are from a series of six (6) focus groups conducted with members of the Canadian general population. Participants in Winnipeg, MB, Montreal, QC, Corner Brook, NFLD, Victoria, BC, Miramichi, NB and Sydney, NS were recruited for two-hour discussions. Evaluations of DFO's new Strategic Plan were captured through group discussion and through worksheet analysis.
- Participants in all groups had difficulty thinking beyond fish when considering resources associated with DFO and its mandate. There were very few mentions of oil or other off-shore resources currently under the purview of the department. When prompted in the East, groups felt that oil represents the future of resources in that region, as hope for the fishing industry is waning in the area;

How are they going to do it all? Too broad a picture – who has the power?

- There was widespread agreement in all groups that the work of Fisheries and Oceans is, in fact, important, regardless of region.
- The appropriateness of the new DFO vision was especially strong among East coast participants, where there was a sense that the new vision was, in fact, long overdue, especially as fish stocks have become depleted.

That is what they should have been doing all along. Why didn't they do that 15 years ago?

- The concept of sustainable development is a positive and acceptable one for most participants, regardless of their level of understanding or familiarity with the term. It did, however, raise questions for some who felt that it is an unquantifiable goal for the DFO. Participants on both the East and West coasts expressed a concern over the ability for the DFO to evaluate the success of such a mandate, as well as predict or anticipate what kind of a balance needed to be struck to achieve a long-term outcome;

I'm measuring it by plant closings and licenses being lost. Someone else might measure it by quality of fish and how much is being shipped out. I'm looking at the job aspect, the people aspect.

- Many participants acknowledged the need for 'balance' which is inherent to the concept of sustainable development, suggesting that while conservation and protection should be a priority, development should not be ignored or overlooked. Participants in Victoria, however, felt the emphasis was most appropriately placed on the protective role of the concept (to the point of ensuring it comes first in the ordering of words in a sentence), and that previous grievances against the environment necessitated shifting the focus away from development;

It's all about finding a balance – there will always be development. Development is going to proceed but need to find balance between protecting resources and using resources. I think that is what sustainable development is.

- Along with enforcement of the rules and regulations, many participants also were concerned about how enforcement would be carried-over to the concept of sustainable development.

DFO's Strategic Plan needs to consider not just fish but economic considerations, international considerations, national considerations, local considerations and all need to be brought together under an umbrella management – a body that has the power to manage the resources accurately over the long-term.

- Participants in most groups reacted well to the messages in the supporting materials, however, they expressed concern over perceived government inaction on similar matters in the past. Participants in the East, in particular, were skeptical about government plans. They wanted indications of more action;

It seems like the light just went on – after 400 years the light comes on that this is what we should be doing – after we have no Cod, now they say what the should have done.

It is a good concept. Show me the plan. Make it work.

- While participants appreciated the number of components and strategies associated with departmental plans all groups expressed a concern about a lack of detail pertaining to the enforcement of the policies and regulations associated with a sustainable development mandate. Participants in the East felt strongly that enforcement is currently lacking in matters related to fishing and resources, and believed it to be a significant oversight for future plans;

- Many groups expressed confusion regarding jurisdiction when it came to “waters” and related resources. While most understood that the oceans and coast lines were under the purview of the federal department, jurisdiction over issues like freshwater and water safety were unclear to participants. The exception occurred in the East coast groups where participants were more familiar with jurisdictions and stakeholders, and felt that the Department’s plans represented an overlapping with other stakeholder areas, therefore partnerships were ever more important to ensure real action;
- While radio is popular on the East coast, and the internet was mentioned by a few participants in each group, television is the method by which most participants reported that they would come in contact with information related to the DFO and the departmental plans, as presented in the group discussions.
- It was interesting to note that when references were made to more background information provided on the website, they were reassured. It suggested that participants did not necessarily want to review all the detail, but wanted to know it was readily accessible should they want to find answers.

B. Recommendations

Recommendations emerging from the research include:

- Canadians are buoyed by the messaging of the Strategic Plan and its mandate of sustainable development. Publicizing this initiative could have a significant impact on Canadians' confidence in DFO and its stewardship role in Canadian waters;
- DFO must standardize and repeat its definition of sustainable development to make this concept widely familiar to Canadians.
- It is important to reassure Canadians that the Department is taking a balanced approach and to provide them with evidence that the sustainable development mandate is leading to measurable results;
- Messaging should avoid the use of vague terms such as "stakeholder" or "partners" where possible. The public prefers transparent communications that provide a clear idea of who is working in partnership with DFO;
- Where possible, messaging should clarify jurisdictional implications of DFO's mandate. In other words, Canadians are unclear as to which level of government is responsible for the management of certain bodies of water and related responsibilities. Clarification of this issue will dispel concerns that bureaucratic duplication is occurring and provide Canadians with a better understanding of DFO's mandate and mission.
- Canadians receive most of their news through television, therefore DFO should seek to maximize positive local television coverage where possible.
- It is important to have information about the Strategic Plan and sustainable development strategy available to Canadians through the DFO website. Canadians have a strong appetite for information, and they feel better knowing that the information is publicly available and easily accessible even if they do not always want or need the information;
- As a corollary, all instances of communicating the Strategic Plan, whether in part or as a whole, should be accompanied by website contact information so Canadian audiences can be assured of an accurate and immediate information resource;

- All groups expressed a concern about a lack of detail pertaining to the enforcement of the policies and regulations associated with a sustainable development mandate. Any opportunities to emphasize or draw attention to the enforcement measures implicit in the Strategic Plan will assist in boosting Canadians' confidence in its components and in DFO (the presumed enforcer) overall. Such details could be provided in backgrounders or annexes.

II. Introduction

POLLARA is pleased to present to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), the following report of qualitative research findings based on focus groups conducted across the country with participants from the general population. The purpose of the focus groups was to investigate Canadians' awareness of and attitudes towards the communication of sustainable development and the department's new Strategic Plan, which, with the concept of sustainable development at its core, provides a five-year framework for the delivery of its mandate. As well, the groups were also asked to evaluate various DFO communications messaging pertaining to the Strategic Plan and its February 2005 launch.

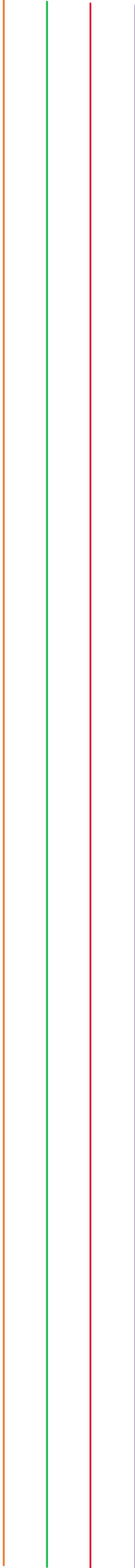
III. Methodology

The following section outlines the methodology followed by POLLARA in conducting this study. In total eight (8) focus groups were held with members of the general public in eight (8) separate centers across the country. DFO provided the list of locations based on a series of criteria, which included prevalence of media activity, representation of each departmental Region, and a mix of smaller fishing communities and major urban centers. The table below outlines the locations of the groups and the language in which they were conducted.

Table A
Schedule of Focus Groups

Location	Date	Language
Winnipeg, MB	January 17, 2005	English
Montreal, QC	January 17, 2005	French
Corner brook, NL	January 18, 2005	English
Victoria, BC	January 18, 2005	English
Miramichi, NB	January 19, 2005	French
Sydney, NS	January 19, 2005	English

Participants were recruited from among the general population and were given an incentive of \$50 each for their cooperation. Discussions lasted approximately two hours each. The moderators' guide for the discussions was developed by POLLARA's senior researchers in cooperation with DFO representatives.



The findings from this research are highlighted throughout this document with the use of participant verbatim comments. These comments originated through either group discussion (and were captured through a review of taped discussions) or through written worksheet exercises. Where possible, comments have been modified to reflect correct grammar.

IV. Detailed Findings

A. Overview of Fisheries and Oceans

For most participants, top-of-mind issues pertaining to Canada's fisheries and oceans involved, almost exclusively, fisheries and fish stocks. The most common mention was the decline of fish stocks and the jobs that the fishing industry has historically provided for Canadians. Respondents across the country were familiar with the fishing moratorium on the East coast and its effect on the lives of Atlantic Canadians.

Participants in Atlantic Canada had very specific ideas on the causes of the depletion of the fish stocks. They provided reasons such as overfishing by factory ships and referred to images of large trawlers scooping up nets of fish.

In addition to the issues related to the East coast industry, participants on the West coast also mentioned issues such as the depletion of the BC wild salmon and concerns regarding "fish farming" and its effect on the environment.

Across the country, a number of participants discussed the role of the government in regulating and managing the oceans and fisheries. In addition to the direct relations to the federal DFO, there was a sense from many participants of the conflicts between levels of governments, between the politicians and scientists and between fishermen and aboriginal groups.

Participants described government in oceans and fisheries as:

{DFO}Appears to be poorly managed.. [There is a] Lack of direction in solving resource issues."

While thoughts of fish were the most likely top-of-mind answer, a small number of participants mentioned that DFO was probably responsible for other natural resources such as oil and gas, as well the tourist industry. These mentions were primarily raised in East coast focus groups.

B. Sustainable Development

i. Understanding the Concept

The concept of sustainable development was a positive and acceptable one for most participants, regardless of their level of understanding or familiarity with the term.

In general, sustainable development was understood to involve looking toward the future instead of concentrating on the present. A key component for many participants was articulated as the development of a strategic plan on how to, at a minimum, maintain resources at their current level. Participant definitions of sustainable development included:

[A] strategy used to achieve long-term preservation of specific resources.

[Setting] quotas, not exploiting resources too much,[it has to be a] long term plan.

[It means] looking forward 100 years – make changes now instead of when things deteriorate. stop crisis management and start planning [sic]. Some participants pointed to the forestry industry as a current example of a sustainable development plan already in place in a natural resource environment. Specifically, participants referred to the practice of planting two or three trees for each one that is harvested.

[It is] parallel to forestry management, [it involves] the ability to balance harvest with new growth.

ii. Achieving Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development, however, raised questions for some who felt that it is a goal for the DFO that cannot be adequately measured. For some, measuring the success of sustainable development involved its direct effect on individual Canadians, while others felt that success should be based, not on human results, but on the effect on the resources, such as the fish stock.

I'm measuring it by plant closings and licenses being lost. Someone else might measure it by quality of fish and how much is being shipped out. I'm looking at the job aspect, the people aspect.

Participants on both the East and West coasts expressed a concern regarding DFO's ability to predict or anticipate how to balance future needs to achieve a successful long-term outcome.

What are the needs? How do you measure that?

How does it meet the needs now or in the future?

I'd like to see a clearer cut definition of need. Is it cultural need, environmental need? Needs change.

iii. Sustainable Development and Balance

Many participants acknowledged the need for 'balance' that is inherent to the concept of sustainable development, suggesting that while conservation and protection should be a priority, development should not be ignored or overlooked.

It's all about finding a balance – there will always be development. Development is going to proceed but need to find balance between protecting resources and using resources. I think that is what sustainable development is.

Balance vs. protection is the end game of sustainable development

Participants in Victoria, however, felt the emphasis was most appropriately placed on the protective role of the concept, and that previous grievances by society against the environment necessitated shifting the focus away from development and more towards preservation.

We have screwed up so badly environmentally that we need to spend the next 20, 50 years whatever, just trying to preserve things so we can get back to where we were 50 years ago.

We need to go to the opposite end of the spectrum – we need to let it regain before going at it again.

[They are] incompatible terms – sustain and development.

Science based [sic] – That's been the whole problem of why we are in the situation that we are in – [we] should take the indigenous view into consideration – for thousands of years they have lived the balance thing.

C. Perception of Previous Government Action

Participants in most groups expressed concern over perceived government inaction on similar matters in the past, creating a sense of cynicism regarding any new government program in this jurisdiction.

Government getting their hands into everything – government has blown too much stuff.

Concept has been bounced around for years. We've been hearing about the idea for a long time.

We've heard this for years about maintaining, maybe not sustain, but maintain.

Participants in the East, in particular, were skeptical about government plans. They wanted indications of more action.

It seems like the light just went on – after 400 years the light comes on that this is what we should be doing – after we have no Cod, now they say what the should have done.

Government is not proactive, they haven't really done anything to prevent [the loss of the fisheries]. Only reacted until after . . . The fish didn't disappear overnight.

Nothing about protection – they're going to talk to us all about it, but are they going to do anything about it?

Action speaks louder than words – start doing something.

It is a good concept. Show me the plan. Make it work.

D. DFO: Its Mandate and Vision

Participants in all groups had difficulty thinking beyond fish when considering resources associated with DFO and its mandate. There were very few mentions of oil or other off-shore resources currently under the purview of the department. When prompted participants in the East felt that oil represents the future of resources in that region, as hope for the fishing industry is waning in the area.

How are they going to do it? Too broad a picture – who has the power?

The appropriateness of the new DFO vision was especially strong among East coast participants, where there was a sense that the new vision was, in fact, long overdue, especially as fish stocks have become depleted.

If that is the new vision – what in God was their old one? That is what they should have been doing all along. Why didn't they do that 15 years ago?

Participants on both the East and West Coasts emphasized that the most important role that DFO could play is one of enforcement. It was felt, specifically on the East Coast, that enforcement by DFO has been lacking regarding issues such as overfishing and poaching. Any future plan must include significant overseeing of the industry.

Policing the fisheries – watching what's going on, but from what I've seen, they could be watching a hell of a lot more.

They need to be the chief regulation officer.

I don't want to hear[that they're] "address[ing] the problem" – I want to hear that they're doing something!!

Along with enforcement of the rules and regulations, many participants also were concerned about how enforcement would be carried-over to the concept of sustainable development. In other words, participants wanted to know how DFO planned to ensure the achievement of this goal and who would be responsible for its achievement.

Keep on eye on them – make sure someone is keeping an eye on them.

Some kind of group has to be able to oversee . . .so you know things will be done on a continuous basis.

Plan needs to consider not just fish but economic considerations, international considerations, national considerations, local considerations and all need to be brought together under an umbrella management – a

body that has the power to manage the resources accurately over the long-term.

There was also a concern raised that, while the DFO vision may be appropriate, it may only be temporary and could be altered by a change in government.

Will the mission statement change with the government?

Federal/provincial governments change every 4 years – will sustainable development project get lost in the politics?

E. Communications Materials

Participants were asked to evaluate a number of communications messages using a technique whereby they underline words and phrases they consider to be problematic in red (negative from a comprehensive or substantive standpoint) and use a green pen to underline those words and phrases which they consider to be positive (in either a comprehensive or substantive way).

The following pages include an aggregate representation of participant markings, based on worksheets and discussion. Substantiations of these markings are included with the statements evaluated. For the purposes of black and white printing, red markings are also noted in italics, while green markings are highlighted with an underline¹. While participants appreciated the number of components and strategies associated with the Strategic Plan and the release of the Sustainable Development Strategy (and outlined in the media release) all groups expressed a concern about a lack of detail pertaining to the enforcement of the policies and regulations associated with a sustainable development mandate.

¹ Similar analysis of French materials is also available.

i. Handout # 1

*The work of Fisheries and Oceans Canada is important to Canadians. As a department, we ensure Canada's fisheries, freshwater and oceans are sustainable resources *for the benefit of generations to come*. We do this by keeping our oceans and freshwater healthy and full of aquatic life, by managing fisheries to be sustainable resources, and by maintaining the waterways so they are safe and accessible for the use of mariners and all Canadians. Our work also reflects key Government of Canada commitments like implementing the Oceans Action Plan and delivering on federal responsibilities to Aboriginal communities.*

There was widespread agreement in all groups that the work of Fisheries and Oceans is, in fact, important, regardless of region. Furthermore, participants appreciated the aspirational tone of “generations to come”.

Important goal, even if bar is high – better to have things there – better to have a goal than not.

Clarification of DFO mandate was generally accepted and appreciated by participants. However, statements about government commitments like the Oceans Action Plan lacked familiarity and substance for participants.

Sustainable development – sounds good but . . . Ocean Action Plan – don't know what it means?

In most communities (with the exception of Victoria), specific mention of Aboriginal communities was considered exclusive. Participants felt that, instead, policies should be focused on “all Canadians”.

It should be for humanity in general. It's 2005 – we are always compensating for the past. Creating new mistakes.

Aboriginal – Why is the DFO responsible to the Aboriginal community?

ii. Handout # 2

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is managing our fishery resources for Canadians today while caring for and protecting them for tomorrow.

Through the sustainable development of our fishery and aquaculture resources, *DFO is helping to ensure a balance between conservation and economic development.*

The sustainable development of Canada's fishery and aquaculture resources depends on governments, industry and stakeholders working together.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is a *science-based department*, using research to develop Canada's aquatic resources in a sustainable way.

Very few participants expressed concern over the word “managing” – most felt this was an appropriate way to describe DFO mandate. It should be noted, however, that participants on the East Coast were somewhat more cynical than those in other centers regarding the role of “managing” and the extent to which DFO had carried out this role.

They have to be better managers.

References to “balance” helped to clarify the goal of sustainable development for participants, but East Coast participants questioned the extent to which DFO is “helping” to achieve this goal.

You don't see anything, you don't hear anything, you don't see them. How are we to know if they are doing it?

I remember cooked books and the DFO doing nothing.

Some of the fines for foreign boats [caught overfishing] are extremely low for the damage they do.

Unspecific “stakeholder” reference raised a great deal of concern. Participants in each group wanted to know specifically who these stakeholders are and whether they are Canadian. Furthermore, some participants expressed the belief that the “stakeholder” reference was not inclusive of the people of Canada.

Stakeholders – negative connotation and vague – are they talking about the general population or business?

'Stakeholder' has a corporate feel.

Stakeholders – it is not just those three, it's everybody.

While some felt “research” and “science-based” references had a cold feel, most believed that a scientific approach is one that is appropriate to this Department.

It's probably the first time they listened to scientists in a 100 years or 400 years.

I think we need regulation – should be based on science.

Say science-based, but it is not what is done – they've proved that.

Sound science and new technology – but if just preserving fish, so it can be poached.

iii. Handout # 3

Ensuring the sustainable development of Canada's waters means making sure that we can continue to benefit from what our waters have to offer – *today and for all generations to come.*

DFO is working with Canadians to keep our oceans, lakes and rivers healthy, productive and sustainable.

We are finding new and better ways of working with provinces and territories and other partners to ensure strong and consistent environmental rules and standards.

Under the Oceans Action Plan, Fisheries and Oceans Canada is *taking a global approach to our oceans*; an approach that is about working together, basing our decisions on sound science, and *taking advantage of and developing new technologies.*

The “other partners” reference raised concerns among many due to lack of specificity. Under these circumstances, participants seemed almost suspicious of unnamed “partners” and “stakeholders”. Participants from the East Coast were concerned about overlapping jurisdictions.

*Are they going to take over occupational health and safety on the boats?
It's too broad.*

Participants were mostly in agreement that ocean and resource management is “global” issue in which Canada can only play a small role.

World – It is not just Canada's problem.

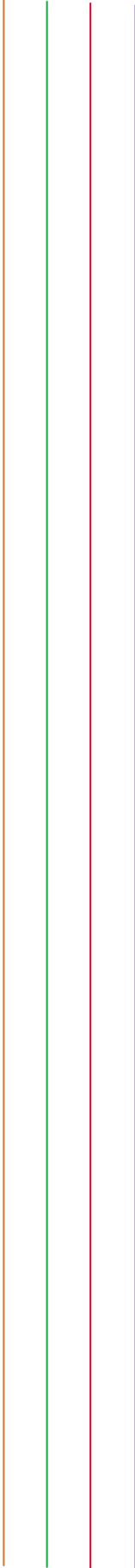
We can't exclude ourselves from the rest of the world.

More emphasis of global view – I like it.

The issue of fish go far beyond our borders. We are just a small player on the world stage.

Need an international component. Need more lobbying. It's no good without international co-operation.

It's easy being a leader if you're the only person doing something – there is no one else following ..



“Developing and new technologies” are consistent with science messages well-received by participants in previous exercises. Participants felt this tone is very appropriate for the mandate and the Department.

Finding new ways to develop so resources sustained.

iv. Handout # 4

DFO provides services to ensure that our waterways remain *open and safe to travel for the benefit of all Canadians*.

DFO, through the Canadian Coast Guard, is helping to keep our waters safe and accessible for mariners and all Canadians.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is committed to keeping key harbours *open, safe and in good repair* and ensuring the safe navigation of Canada's waterways.

In general, participants were confused about the connection between water safety and travel and the larger goal of sustainable development. Many were also confused about the Canadian Coast Guard and its jurisdiction (is it part of the DFO? Is it a separate entity? Do the jurisdictions and activities overlap?).

Seems disjointed – sounds like passing the buck to another department – to the Coast Guard.

Sounds like trying to protect everybody – but that is not their job.

Seems like they are getting into other areas – what about the Coast Guard?

Problem – if they don't have the power, they can't do anything. Need power to enforce the rules and regulations.

Many participants were unfamiliar with the term “mariner”.

Participants on the East Coast were concerned about references to ‘key harbours’ – fearing this is an exclusive term.

v. Draft Media Release

Regan announces new action plan for sustainable development

OTTAWA — The Honourable Geoff Regan, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) today announced the tabling in parliament of the new Fisheries and Oceans Sustainable Development Strategy for 2005-2006.

“Sustainable development is at the heart of what we do as a department,” Minister Regan said. “Canadians, especially in coastal communities, realize this and count on us for leadership, science expertise, and a collaborative approach to program delivery so that we *strike the right balance between economic development and preserving clean, safe and productive aquatic ecosystems for future generations.*”

The action plan which forms the centerpiece of DFO’s 2004-2006 Sustainable Development Strategy lays out a comprehensive list of commitments, such as:

- *A Federal Marine Protected Areas strategy to conserve and protect a range of fishery resources, marine mammals and their habitats;*
- *Marine navigation modernization to support marine safety;*
- *Improving aquaculture regulatory processes in collaboration with provinces and territories;*
- A comprehensive strategy to address overfishing outside the 200 mile limit on the East Coast;
- Completion of the Wild Salmon Policy on the West Coast;
- *A science-based, risk management framework to protect fish habitat under the Environmental Process Modernization Plan (EPMP);*
- *Early announcement of fishing plans and management measures to increase stability in Atlantic Fisheries;*
- Initiatives to support Aboriginal involvement in fisheries resource management;
- A Strategic Environmental Assessment system to ensure that socio-economic analysis and environmental considerations are fully applied in new policy and program decisions; and
- Environmental Management Programs to ‘green’ DFO’s daily operations.

“Sustainable development and the safe use of Canadian waters is the essence of our service to Canadians and DFO’s aim is to fully integrate sustainability into our program decisions and daily operations,” Minister Regan stated.

DFO has fulfilled the commitment it made last year to table its new Sustainable Development Strategy in 2005, instead of in February 2004 as did the rest of the federal government. This enabled DFO to complete a department-wide project to assess expenditures and program priorities that gave rise to a new departmental Vision and Strategic Plan released in February 2005 and enabled DFO to better integrate sustainability into its planning.

As a result, DFO’s 2004-2006 Sustainable Development Strategy addresses current priorities in a timely and relevant manner and the department is well positioned for the next update of all federal sustainable development strategies due in December 2006.

DFO’s 2004-2006 Sustainable Development Strategy is accessible on the department’s website at: www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

The DFO Vision and Strategic Plan are also available on this web site

Generally, reaction to the release was positive. With specific examples provided, participants inferred a tone of 'action', bolstered by positive references to sustainable development and how the Department plans to achieve this goal.

I like action plan – gives outline of what they're going to do.

I like environmental assessment and economic analysis.

It's a step in the right direction. It's what we would be looking for. It's hitting all the key points.

While jargon heavy in some areas, participants liked the listing of the various commitments encompassing the Action Plan. The jargon was felt to be both expected and appropriate from the government, if somewhat unclear.

Plan names don't mean anything to me.

In a more general context, many groups expressed confusion regarding jurisdiction when it came to "waters" and related resources. While most understood that the oceans and coastlines were under the purview of the federal department, jurisdiction over issues like freshwater and water safety were unclear to participants.

Is it freshwater or just oceans?

The exception occurred in the East coast groups where participants were more familiar with jurisdictions and stakeholders, and felt that the Strategy represented an overlapping with other stakeholder areas.

You may have two jurisdictions – federal and provincial. So for something as important as fisheries, there should be one jurisdiction – can't have one government fighting another – nothing gets done.

How can they keep the harbour safe, when it is the jurisdiction of Transportation. DFO has nothing to do with harbours.

Also specific to that region, participants in the East believed a "comprehensive" strategy to address overfishing (particularly from international offenders) is unachievable.

Overfishing outside waters – But what can they do about it – its outside our jurisdiction.

Don't see any world enforcement.

Should concentrate on what is done within the 200- mile limit. They can't control what's beyond that.

Participants in the Western part of the country wanted more specifics on the "Wild Salmon" policy.

Many participants were confused by the reference to "greening" DFO operations – they were unclear on what this entailed.

"Green operations"?? Not clear what that means!

As suggested in earlier communications exercises, references to Aboriginal issues caused many participants to take issue with the 'exclusive' nature of the policy and its focus.

Aboriginal – Making them special again.

Not just aboriginals, but for everyone. It should be the same for all the people.

Aboriginals – it's the only time they are specific.

In general, participants wanted more information about the various commitments and strategies outlined in the release. While not possible or appropriate for a press release, they were reassured by the Website resource for additional information.

Many participants were unfamiliar with the DFO's Minister Regan, suggesting instead the headline should contain a reference to the department.

References to timelines to fulfill commitments and table the Sustainable Development Strategy were considered confusing and suggested that the government is, in fact, behind in its timeline.

F. Information Sources

In general, participants living in communities with little connection to the fishing industry expressed the feeling that they are not likely to notice or pursue information pertaining to the DFO or related policy announcements (in particular, Montreal and Winnipeg). Residents of both coasts, however, were more likely to notice DFO-related information in the popular media.

Television is the method most participants reported that they receive their news and would come in contact with information related to the DFO and the Action Plan. However, a number of participants did mention they would likely look up information on the Internet, either through media sites or directly on the DFO web site.

Of particular note, is the number of participants on the East Coast who specifically mentioned the listening to the radio in the morning to find out about school closings.

V. Conclusion

The concept of sustainable development is a positive and acceptable one for most participants, regardless of their level of understanding or familiarity with the term. It did, however, raise questions for some who felt that it is an unquantifiable goal for the DFO.

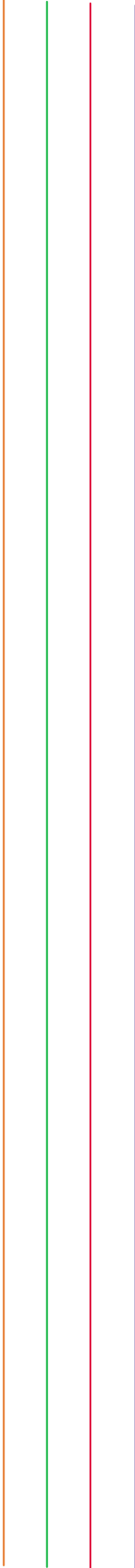
Many participants acknowledged the need for 'balance' that is inherent to the concept of sustainable development, suggesting that while conservation and protection should be a priority, development should not be ignored or overlooked. Participants in Victoria, however, felt the emphasis was most appropriately placed on the protective role of the concept, and that previous grievances against the environment necessitated shifting the focus away from development.

Participants in most groups reacted well to the messages in the supporting materials, however, they expressed concern over perceived government inaction on similar matters in the past. Participants in the East, in particular, were skeptical about government plans. They wanted indications of more action.

While participants appreciated the number of components and strategies associated with the Sustainable Development Action Plan (and outlined in the press release) all groups expressed a concern about a lack of detail pertaining to the enforcement of the policies and regulations associated with a sustainable development mandate. Participants in the East felt strongly that enforcement is currently lacking in matters related to fishing and resources, and believed it to be a significant oversight for future plans.

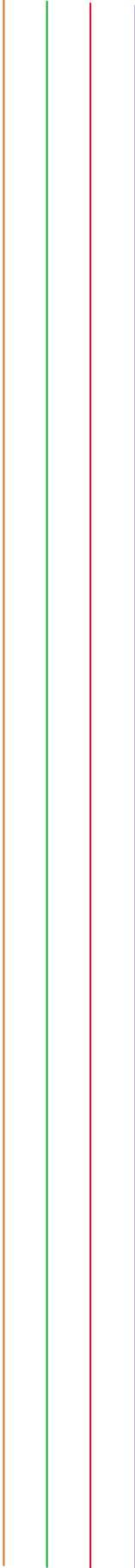
Participants in all groups had difficulty thinking beyond fish when considering resources associated with DFO and its mandate. There were very few mentions of oil or other off-shore resources currently under the purview of the department. When prompted in the East, groups felt that oil represents the future of resources in that region, as hope for the fishing industry is waning in the area.

Many groups expressed confusion regarding jurisdiction when it came to "waters" and related resources. While most understood that the oceans and coastlines were under the purview of the federal department, jurisdiction over issues like freshwater and water safety were unclear to participants. The exception occurred in the East coast groups where participants were more familiar with jurisdictions and stakeholders, and felt that the Action Plan represented an overlapping with other stakeholder



areas, therefore contributing to the difficulty of realizing many of the policies and strategies therein.

Most participants receive their news through television, making it the most effective medium for delivering information about DFO's mandate and priorities, including sustainable development.



Technical Appendix: Recruitment Screener and Moderator's Guide

Recruitment Screener – DFO #2953

Winnipeg, MB – January 17, 2005 @ 6:00PM
Montreal, QC – January 17, 2005 @ 6:00PM
Corner brook, NL – January 18, 2005 @ 6:00PM
Victoria, BC – January 18, 2005 @ 6:00PM
Miramichi, NB – January 19, 2005 @ 6:00PM
Sydney, NS – January 19, 2005 @ 6:00PM

Good afternoon/ evening. My name is _____, and I am calling from POLLARA, a national public opinion research firm. May I speak to a person in the household who is over the age of 18?

IF THAT PERSON - Continue

IF OTHER PERSON - Reintroduce self and company and continue

IF NO - When is a better time to call back?

IF REFUSED - Thank and Terminate

I would like to invite you to attend a discussion group on (DATE & TIME) to discuss current issues. You will be joined by several other people like yourself and asked to share your opinions. If you qualify and attend this group you will receive a **\$50.00** participation fee.

Are you familiar with the concept of a discussion group or focus group?

YES- CONTINUE

NO- EXPLAIN *“a focus group consists of eight to twelve participants and one moderator. During a two hour session, participants will be asked to discuss a wide range of issues related to the topic being examined.”*

Would you be interested in attending this session?

IF YES- I would like to ask you a few brief questions to see if you qualify. Your responses will remain confidential.

1. RECORD GENDER:

Male
Female

(ENSURE A GOOD MIX)

2. Have you ever participated in a focus group for which you received a sum of money?

Yes (CONTINUE)
No (GO TO Q4)

3. (IF YES IN Q2) How long ago was it?

Record length of time _____ **(TERMINATE IF LESS THAN 6 MONTHS)**

4. This discussion group may require participants to read some materials. Do you have any reading or vision problems which may prevent you from doing this?

Yes (THANK AND TERMINATE)
No

5. Have you or has any member of your household ever worked or volunteered for any of the following organizations? (READ LIST, - **IF YES TO ANY, THANK AND TERMINATE**)

Marketing Research Firm
The Media
Public Relations Firm
The Federal Government

6. Which one of the following best describes your employment situation? (READ LIST)

Employed Full-Time For Pay
Employed Part-Time For Pay
Self-employed
Retired
Other

(ENSURE A GOOD MIX)

7. Do you, or does anyone in your household, currently work in the fishing industry?

Yes - Me
Yes – Member of household
Yes – Both me and member of household
No
Don't know/refused (TERMINATE)

(ENSURE A MIX)

8. Within the past year, have you done any of the following (READ LIST):

Made a public speech
Written a published article

Written a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine
Served as an officer for a club or organization
Called a radio or TV talk show

Yes – ANY
No – None

9. How often do you try to convince people, outside of your immediate family, of your own point of view?

Often
Rarely
Never
Don't know/refused

*(IF AT LEAST ONE OUT OF FIVE AT Q8 **AND** "OFTEN" IN Q9, THEN RESPONDENT IS "OPINION LEADER". PLEASE ENSURE AT LEAST 2-3 OPINION LEADERS PER GROUP.)*

10. What is the highest level of schooling that you have completed? (READ)

Elementary School
High School
Community College
Some University
Completed University
Don't know/refused (DO NOT READ – TERMINATE)

(ENSURE A GOOD MIX)

11. Which age group do you fall into? (NOTE – 21 IS YOUNGEST AGE FOR CONSIDERATION)

21-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65+

(ENSURE A GOOD MIX)

12. In addition to being Canadian, what is your main ancestry or ethnic group, that is, what country did you or your ancestors come from? (IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS CANADIAN, AMERICAN, OR EUROPEAN, PROBE FOR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN)

(IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS INDIAN, ASK: ARE YOU NORTH AMERICAN (First Nations) OR EAST INDIAN?)

(DO NOT READ LIST)

Aboriginal/First Nations
Black
British
Chinese
East European
East Indian
French
Irish
Italian
Japanese
Korean
South Asian
South East Asian
Vietnamese
West/North European
DK/Refused

(* AS RECRUITING TIME PERMITS, PLEASE ENSURE ABORIGINAL/FIRST NATIONS CANADIANS ARE REPRESENTED IN EACH GROUP)

I would like to invite you to attend the session on (DATE & TIME). If you attend, you will receive a participation fee of \$50. Sandwiches and beverages will be provided.

The discussion will be held at:

WINNIPEG LOCATION

MONTREAL LOCATION

CORNERBROOK LOCATION

VICTORIA LOCATION

MIRAMICHI LOCATION

SYDNEY LOCATION

The discussion will commence on: (DATE) at 6:00 pm, and will last approximately 2 hours. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to this time for registration.

Could I please have your name and phone number:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Bus./Cell No. _____

Group Specs:

- Mix of genders (Q1)
- Mix of employment status (Q6)
- At least 2-3 "opinion leaders" per group (Q7-Q8)
- Mix of education level (Q9)
- Mix of ages (Q10)
- Mix of workers in fishing industry (Q11)
- Mix of ethnicity, with Aboriginal/First Nations represented in each group (Q12)

DISCUSSION GUIDE – DRAFT 2
POLLARA
FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA
FOCUS GROUPS

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO PROCEDURES (5 MINUTES)

Introduction to focus group procedures.

We want your opinion.

You will be reviewing some materials, marking up documents and discussing a range of issues.

Feel free to agree or disagree and express your views freely.

You are being audio and videotaped and observed.

Your individual comments will not be linked to you.

The receptionist will pay you at the end of the session.

2.0 INTRODUCTION TO PARTICIPANTS (5 MINUTES)

Let's go around the table so that each of you can tell us your first name, something about yourself such as what you do for a living, what you like to do for fun and also where you tend to get your news from (i.e.: TV, radio, newspapers, Internet).

3.0 PAIRED EXERCISE (15 MINUTES)

We are going to be discussing issues that relate to fishery and ocean resources (emphasis on resources – may specify with terminology of “waters”). I mean the environment in and around Canada's waters and the fishing industry which in turn has an impact on the economy on the environment on people's ways of life, etc...

I'd like to begin by asking you to take the piece of paper in front of you and ask you to write down on your own what comes to mind when we talk about fisheries and oceans – what do you know about oceans and fisheries and what is it about this area that you would like most to learn more about.

Once activity completed, go around the table and solicit responses from participants.

Probe: What does 'waters' mean? What does it encompass?

4.0 AWARENESS AND IMPRESSIONS (10 MINUTES)

So – how important do you think our oceans and fisheries resources are to Canada? How do they affect us even if we don't live by the sea or work in fishing?

As far as you know, how well are our governments dealing with oceans and fisheries related issues, particularly the federal government?

What kinds of things have you been hearing about fisheries and oceans in Canada and in your community and government dealings with these issues?

What is your impression of how the government has been dealing with policies and issues in this area recently? Is it an improvement or a worsening of what you previously knew/ over the past few years?

Make note if term 'sustainable development' arises at this point in the discussion.

5.0 ROLE OF DFO – INITIAL IMPRESSIONS (10 MINUTES)

As it turns out Fisheries and Oceans Canada (a.k.a. Department of Fisheries and Oceans or DFO) is responsible for fisheries and oceans issues within the federal department.

How familiar are you with DFO? Did you know anything about what it does before tonight?

How would you describe the role or mission of the department of fisheries and oceans? What should it be?

Probe: It recently introduced a renewed vision– *Excellence in service to Canadians to ensure the sustainable development and safe use of Canadian waters*. It's mission is to deliver to Canadians Safe and Accessible Waterways, Healthy and Productive Aquatic Ecosystems, and Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Based on what I have described for you, is this consistent with what you expect from the DFO? If so, how, if not, what is missing?

6.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – INITIAL IMPRESSIONS (20 MINUTES)

I want to focus a bit more specifically on “sustainable development”.

I would like you to go back to your worksheets and write down what words come to mind when I say “sustainable development” – what does it mean to you and what does it make you think about? You can use words or

pictures to express what you know about this term or concept– Discuss with table

DFO uses the definition “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present generation without undermining the capacity of future generations to meet their needs.”

Is that clear? Does it make sense to you? Is it consistent with what you think sustainable development means? If not, why not? What is missing?

Be sure to probe on concept of balance – i.e., do participants understand that sustainable development means a balance of industry and protection, or are they focused on the protection aspect of the concept?

DFO describes itself as a national and international leader in marine safety and the management of oceans and freshwater resources. The Department’s activities and presence on Canadian waters help to ensure the safe movement of people and goods. As a sustainable development department, DFO integrates environmental, economic and social perspectives to ensure our oceans and freshwater resources meet our needs today and those of generations to come.

Round table to discuss brainstorm – probe concepts of balance - protection of resources with economic development, trade-offs – part of sustainable development definition discussion...

7.0 REACTION TO BACKGROUND INFORMATION (20 MINUTES)

I’m going to give you each a sheet with some information about sustainable development of Canada’s waters and DFO’s role. It’s a short paragraph and some messages.

I’d like you to underline with a green pen all of the words, phrases or terms that you like – they make sense and say something that you’d like to hear.

I’d like to you underline in red all of the words, phrases or terms that you don’t like. They’re unclear or say things that you don’t want to hear.

Circulate message sheets.

So, what stood out the most to you? Were there any points that surprised you? Why?

Note: on first statement, probe on use of term “managing” – is that the right word? What does it mean? What would be better?

Based on your understanding of the information, is sustainable development a large part of the management of Canada’s water and fishery resources? Is it too focal, not enough...probe: why did you say that?

What are the benefits of focusing on sustainable development?
What are the drawbacks, if any, of focusing on this concept?

8.0 DFO’S ROLE (15 MINUTES)

DFO is about to launch a new sustainable development strategy. I want you to look at the news release they’ve drafted to tell their story.

Circulate media release “Regan announces new action plan for sustainable development”

From a communications standpoint – which lines jump out at you as being particularly effective? Do you think anything particularly troubling? Is it clear and easy to understand? Is the tone the right one to take? Red pen/green pen again...

Do you like what the Minister is saying and how he is saying it?

They have included a list of commitments from the action plan. What do you think of them? Do you think that these are the actions are a step in the right direction?

Probe on: do they understand what each of the priorities mean? Are the any that are confusing? Ask specifically about “science-based risk management framework” and “strategic environmental assessment...”

Are they what you’d expect to see? Want to see? If not, what would you like to hear about?

What is the most likely way that you would come into contact with this information? What is the best way to reach you with this information?
Probe: newspaper, television...

If you saw this printed in your paper or read on the news would it tell you that DFO is a department that is committed to the sustainable development of Canada’s waters and fishery resources? Why/why not?

9.0 PRIORITIES FOR ACTION (10 MINUTES)

What would “success” in the sustainable development of our waters and fishery resources look like to you? Have you heard it articulated here today?

Do you think DFO’s role, as it has been described today, is an appropriate one?

What about us, as Canadians, is there a role for us? Probe – how can sustainable development impact on your personal behaviour, if at all? May include: consumption, fishing...For coastal communities that depend on fish for their livelihood?

In what ways do you think this concept and the priorities to implement it might have an impact on you personally? Do you think it would be a positive impact or negative? Why did you say that?

10.0 END OF DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

Now that we have discussed a range of issues, challenges related to DFO, I would like to know...

What type of information about DFO would you like to hear more about, where you want to get it from and who should be the source?

Is there anything you’d like to add to the discussion, parting comments (go around)

Is there anything you might do personally on this issue?

Thank you very much for your participation.

