

**British Columbia Aquaculture Regulatory Regime:  
A Sustainable Aquaculture Fisheries Framework  
June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

As lead regulatory of aquaculture in British Columbia (BC), the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) has committed to developing a policy framework in support of transparent delivery of its new responsibilities. The 2002 Aquaculture Policy Framework (APF) states that, as the lead federal agency for aquaculture development, DFO is “committed to creating policy conditions that increase both the public’s confidence that aquaculture is being developed in a sustainable manner and the aquaculture industry’s competitiveness in global markets.” DFO has also made a commitment to lead on a Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (CCFAM) initiative to put in place a more cohesive federal-provincial/territorial (F-P/T) approach to aquaculture environmental management, as part of its 2008 New Aquaculture Initiative (Sustainable Aquaculture Program).

The Sustainable Aquaculture Fisheries Framework (SAFF) would form the basis for decision-making in Canadian aquaculture in areas of DFO responsibility, including its broad responsibilities in British Columbia, and the narrower ones in the rest of Canada. The presence of a Sustainable Aquaculture Fisheries Framework (SAFF) would strengthen DFO’s national leadership on aquaculture management and ensure consistency with other fisheries and with DFO directions and policies overall.

The proposed SAFF, outlined here, largely parallels the Sustainable Fisheries Framework (SFF), adapting SFF approaches to reflect aquaculture specificities. The intent is to integrate the frameworks over time, as well as to integrate all fisheries approaches with the broader departmental ecosystem-based initiatives.

#### **FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS**

It is proposed that the Sustainable Aquaculture Fisheries Framework include the following elements:

1. Conservation, ecosystem and sustainable use policies;
2. Economic and Governance policies;
3. Planning, processes and regime performance monitoring tools;
4. Operational implementation.

#### **Element 1: Conservation, Ecosystem and Sustainable Use Policies**

- Application of an Ecosystem-Based Approach to Aquaculture Fisheries Management
- Application of the Precautionary Approach to Aquaculture Fisheries Management
- Policies with Respect to Management of Environmental Matters:
  - Management of Feed Related Organics
  - Management of Non-Feed Related Organics
  - Management of Fish Health
  - Management of Sea Lice

- Management of Light Affecting Aquatic Ecosystems
- Management of Noise Affecting Aquatic Ecosystems
- Management of the Transfer, Removal, & Production of Fish
- Management of Access to Wild Fish Stocks for Aquaculture Purposes
- Management of Chemicals
- Approaches with respect to consideration and management of cumulative effects
- Approach to Identifying, Assessing and Managing Impacts of Aquaculture Activities (Ecological Risk Assessment and Management Framework)
- Approaches with respect to Species at Risk and SARA
- Identification and Management of Environmental Impacts Under the British Columbia Aquaculture Regulatory Regime

#### **Element 2: Economic and Governance Policies**

- Licensing Approach
- Policy on Public Reporting of Regulatory Information
- Decision Making Authority Matrix
- Approach to Use of Observers and Third Parties for Aquaculture Operations
- Verification of Certification and Technical Qualifications
- Use and Approvals of Licence-holder Management Plans
- Traceability Approach
- Ocean-to-Plate Approach to Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Approach to Collaborative Arrangements
- Limitation of access of non-licence holders to aquaculture sites
- Compliance Approaches and Objectives
- First Nations Engagement Policy
- National Policy on Access to Aquatic Resources including Fish and Space (update)
- Sustainable Development of Aquaculture Policy (update)
- Licence Fees

#### **Element 3: Planning and monitoring**

- Integrated Management of Aquaculture Plan Guidelines (Table of Contents and Process Guidelines)
- Aquaculture Management Performance Checklist
- Risk management processes and Science/Management Interface:
  - Ecological Risk Management Process for Aquaculture
  - A Framework for Socio-Economic Analysis to Inform Integrated Management Planning, Site Access and Expansion Decisions
  - Consideration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Decision-making

#### **Element 4: Operational Implementation**

- Integrated Management of Aquaculture Plans: Marine Finfish, Shellfish, Freshwater.

- Supporting Regulatory Field and Other Operational Protocols
  - For DFO Staff (e.g. Biosecurity Procedures, Inspection checklists, etc.)
  - For Licencees (e.g. Reporting templates, Management Plan table of contents, etc.)
- Operational Plans (annual)
  - Licensing Plan
  - Compliance and Enforcement Plan
  - Public Reporting Plan
  - Plans for Environmental Surveillance and Audits (e.g. fish health, sea lice, benthic)

## Signatures

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Susan Farlinger  
Regional Director General

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Kevin Stringer, Assistant Deputy Minister  
Program Policy

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David Balfour, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister  
Ecosystems and Fisheries Management