

1. Background

The final report of the Independent Aquaculture Regulatory Review for Nova Scotia (“the Doelle-Lahey Panel” or “the Panel”), entitled *A New Regulatory Framework for Low-Impact/High-Value Aquaculture in Nova Scotia* (The report) concluded that the regulatory framework for aquaculture need not be prohibitive. Part of the Doelle-Lahey Panel’s core conclusions are that risks and impacts can be significantly reduced through effective regulation to allow for aquaculture to be a significant contributor to the sustainable prosperity of Nova Scotia.

The report concluded that an ongoing multi-constituency forum for the discussion of the regulation of aquaculture could enhance NSDFA’s effectiveness as a regulator. The report recommended that a Regulatory Advisory Committee be formed to allow for on-going discussions regarding the implementation and effectiveness of aquaculture regulation

The panel recommended that the process of implementing the proposed framework be regarded as the beginning of an ongoing process of continuous regulatory improvement, rather than as a one-time regulatory reform that ends with the implementation of the recommendations. This is the rationale for establishing the Aquaculture Regulatory Advisory Committee.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Regulatory Advisory Committee (NSARAC), as recommended by the Doelle-Lahey panel on Aquaculture Regulation. This TOR will describe the roles and responsibilities of committee members.

3. Objective

The main objective of the NSARAC is to facilitate a multi-constituent forum for the discussion of the regulation of the aquaculture industry and to provide an effective conduit for the exchange of information regarding the regulation of the aquaculture industry between the government, First Nations, and stakeholders.

Issues that may be addressed by the NSARAC include; but are not limited to: the implementation of aquaculture regulations, possible changes to the regulatory framework as

time progresses, significant policy issues relating to regulation as they arise, the overall effectiveness of the regulatory framework, and the discussion of emerging issues in the regulation of aquaculture or in the aquaculture industry that may call for a regulatory response.

4. Mandate

The NSARAC mandate is to:

- Advise and provide recommendations to Nova Scotia Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture with respect to aquaculture regulation to ensure a sustainable, responsive, and prosperous industry.
- Facilitate productive working relationships between government, industry, and the public.
- Promote education on existing and emerging practices in the aquaculture industry.
- Encourage engagement among all interested parties.
- Foster effective communication between government, industry, and the public regarding aquaculture regulation.

The Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture will provide the secretariat function with respect to calling meetings, developing agendas, facilitating committee discussions, and following up on meeting action items.

5. Outcomes

Outcomes of the work of the NSARAC are listed as follows:

- Recommendations to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture regarding the implementation and review of the regulatory framework for aquaculture in Nova Scotia
- Confidence in the Nova Scotia's aquaculture regulatory framework for both industry and public.
- A responsive government making well-informed decisions with respect to aquaculture.
- A comprehensive review of the aquaculture regulatory framework at five year increments.

6. Membership/Participation

Members of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Regulatory Advisory Committee will be comprised of representatives from the following areas:

- The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia
- The aquaculture industry
- The commercial fisheries
- Coastal communities
- Environmental and/or conservation groups
- Municipal and local governments
- Business, tourism, and economic development interests

Individual representatives are selected based upon the level of expertise and capacity they bring to the table for the purpose of successfully implementing the mandate as stated in this TOR. Members of the NSARAC are to participate in meetings in good-faith and not endeavor to undermine the core mandate of the Committee, which is to provide regulatory advice on a sustainable, responsive, and prosperous aquaculture industry. Members must also be open and transparent in regards to any private, commercial, or institutional interests or biases which may prejudice their participation on the Committee.

Depending upon the topic of discussion, additional individuals may be invited to meetings as guests to provide clarity and insight on specific issues/action items.

Members serve at the discretion of the Minister, and may be dismissed from time to time for failure to attend meetings, failure to uplift the objectives and mandate of the NSARAC, or for other just cause.

Members may not delegate their position on the committee or send substitutes to the meetings.

7. Chair

The Nova Scotia Aquaculture Regulatory Advisory Committee is co-chaired by Chief Terry Paul of Membertou and the Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

8. Expectations and Advance Agenda

In order to maximize efficiency, members must come to the meetings prepared to collaborate. To accommodate this, the Committee Secretariat commits to providing the meeting agenda and supporting documentation to members in advance of any meeting to ensure everyone has sufficient time to prepare for the meeting.

9. Meetings

The Nova Scotia Aquaculture Regulatory Advisory Committee will meet on an annual basis or more frequently if required. Determining a next meeting date will be the final item on each meeting agenda. This ensures all members have input into scheduling and are always aware of when the next meeting of the Committee will be held.

As a convenient central location for all Committee members, meetings will be held in Halifax.

To respect the busy schedules of Action Team members, meetings will start on time and end at the planned time of adjournment.

Face-to-face meetings are the preferred method of interaction. However, to accommodate geography, weather, and other externalities, teleconferencing will always be an available option for Committee members.

10. Reporting

An action item list will be produced following all meetings. Action item lists will be distributed to all team members within 7 days following a meeting.

11. Remuneration

Advisory Committee members will have their travel expenses reimbursed according to the Province of Nova Scotia travel rates.