

# Introducing an aquaculture coastal classification system

Aquaculture, the farming of fish, shellfish and marine plants, is an important part of Nova Scotia's future.

To guide planning for responsible and sustainable aquaculture development, the Nova Scotia Government is creating an aquaculture coastal classification system. This is a new online mapping tool that will screen coastal waters to find areas that may be suitable for different types of aquaculture development.

The screening assessments are not decision-making assessments. Aquaculture site approvals will still be decided based on the requirements and steps set out in the [Aquaculture License and Lease Regulations](#).

The insights gained from the aquaculture coastal classification system will be used to inform and improve future planning. For example, the information can help focus attention on specific coastal areas for further study.

This planning tool will be publicly available online. It will provide easier access to science-based information about aquaculture and will help everyone understand where aquaculture may or may not be possible in our coastal waters.

## Aquaculture Quick Facts

- Aquaculture generates about **\$120 million each year** for the provincial economy.
- The top species farmed in Nova Scotia are **salmon, trout, oysters and mussels**.
- Aquaculture is one of the **fastest growing food production sectors** in the world.
- Aquaculture provides more than **50% of the seafood** people eat worldwide.

# Mapping Tool Development Steps

To create the screening tool, the following steps are being taken:

- 1. Select species:** Determine which types of farmed species will be included in the tool.
- 2. Review restrictions and considerations:** Identify the types of information used when selecting aquaculture sites and during the licensing and leasing process.
- 3. Compile a list of criteria:** Determine the specific considerations and restrictions (known as the criteria) that can be included in the mapping tool. Share the list with the [Nova Scotia Aquaculture Science Advisory Committee](#) for expert review and advice.
- 4. Share list and invite public feedback:** Publish a report to share the list of selected criteria (like water depth, water temperature, etc.) and invite feedback through an online survey.
- 5. Summarize feedback and changes:** Release a report summarizing the feedback and how it was used to improve the mapping tool.
- 6. Complete the screening assessments:** Combine the data using the new mapping tool. Share details of the process with the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Science Advisory Committee for expert review and advice.
- 7. Launch mapping tool:** Finalize the tool and make it available online.
- 8. Publish a final report:** Share a report detailing the entire process.

## Stay Informed

More information can be found at <https://novascotia.ca/coastal-classification-system-engagement/>

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