



OVERVIEW:

# NOVA SCOTIA SEAFOOD SECTOR STRATEGY

2026–2029



The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture has developed the *Nova Scotia Seafood Sector Strategy* to respond to the key challenges and opportunities shaping our seafood sector. The Strategy charts a path for sector growth from 2026 to 2029.

Nova Scotia's seafood sector is the core economic engine for our province. It supports thousands of jobs, anchors coastal and rural livelihoods and communities, generates billions in exports, contributes to provincial Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and carries a world-class reputation for quality seafood. Now, more than ever, the seafood sector is changing. That is why the Strategy matters.

The Strategy and its actions are informed by the *State of the Nova Scotia Seafood Sector Analysis* (MRSB 2025), which provided the evidence base for this work. That analysis drew on research, key informant interviews, regional focus groups, and sector surveys conducted in 2025. The analysis provided a snapshot of the sector's current state, challenges, and opportunities.

**See the full version of the *Nova Scotia Seafood Sector Strategy 2026–2029* here:**

<https://novascotia.ca/seafood-sector-strategy/docs/seafood-sector-strategy-2026-29.pdf>

## OUR VISION

THE STRATEGY SETS OUT A CLEAR VISION FOR GROWTH IN NOVA SCOTIA'S SEAFOOD SECTOR:

Nova Scotia seafood will be recognized globally for premium quality products, innovation, and driving strong and sustainable economic growth for the province.

Nova Scotia's seafood sector will deliver increasing contributions to the provincial economy through exports, tax revenue, and employment, supported by diversified species, markets, and product forms.

The sector will be diversified, efficient, resilient, technology-enabled, and supported by predictable regulatory frameworks that enable profitable, competitive businesses to reinvest and grow in Nova Scotia.

## To deliver on this vision, the Strategy aims to:

- **Accelerate innovation and value-added processing** to ensure the seafood sector keeps pace with global leaders and generates more economic output from the resources.
- **Increase aquaculture production** to support sector growth and generate more economic output to meet growing demand for seafood at home and around the globe.
- **Strengthen export resilience and earnings** by diversifying markets and expanding product ranges shifting toward higher-value, consumer-ready products produced in Nova Scotia.
- **Increase sector productivity and economic impact** through modern, predictable regulatory systems, improved licence and site utilization, and stronger compliance and enforcement.
- **Improve collaboration, communication, and resilience** to unlock investment, support sustained economic growth and be better prepared for future challenges and opportunities

The actions under the Strategy are organised into 4 Pillars, each with actions that Government will undertake and opportunities for sector to contribute.

Success will require leadership from both Government and industry. Together, we can lead the sector towards a strong and prosperous future.



REDFISH



LOBSTER



ATLANTIC SALMON



SWORDFISH



SILVER HAKE



SNOW CRAB

## PILLAR 1 | INDUSTRY GROWTH & INNOVATION

Fostering growth and innovation across harvesting, aquaculture, processing, and distribution by enabling investment and technology adoption to raise productivity and value-added output.

### Actions Government will take ...

- Launch the **Seafood Sector Innovation Hub** to accelerate applied research and commercialization
- Strengthen extension, technical advisory, and knowledge transfer services
- Support investments: automation, advanced processing, full resource utilization
- Support growth in the aquaculture sector (increase productivity, site reallocation, utilization)
- Deliver funding programs and financing tools to de-risk innovation and growth projects
- Support energy efficient and climate resilient innovation to reduce costs and risks

### Industry opportunities ...

- Invest in automation, digital tools, and advanced processing technologies
- Expand value-added product lines and pursue full utilization of species
- Engage with the Innovation Hub to advance product and process innovation
- Invest in R&D and collaborative innovation partnerships
- Adopt energy efficient and climate resilient practices
- Build workforce skills and technical capacity to support innovation

## PILLAR 2 | MARKET AND PRODUCT DIVERSIFICATION

Strengthening the resilience of Nova Scotia's seafood sector by expanding its presence in national and international markets through diversified sales distribution channels, expanded product offerings, and destination markets.

### Actions Government will take ...

- Deliver the **\$4M Seafood and Agrifood Market Diversification** funding program to expand market diversification programming and export readiness supports
- Deliver intelligence driven trade missions in priority and emerging markets
- Strengthen in-market presence and post mission follow-up
- Advance strategic domestic seafood market development
- Improve tracking of market pipelines, readiness, and outcomes

### Industry opportunities ...

- Pursue diversified export markets informed by market intelligence
- Align products and formats with global buyer demand
- Collaborate on consolidated shipments and co-packing opportunities
- Improve consistency of supply and quality
- Maintain consistent presence in priority international markets

## PILLAR 3 | OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Optimizing processes, tools, workflows, and services to support efficiency, traceability, compliance, and growth in the seafood sector.

### Actions Government will take ...

- Accelerate and streamline aquaculture licensing decisions
- Implement qualified entry licensing framework for buyers and processors
- Strengthen regulatory compliance and enforcement capacity
- Improve utilization of buyer/processor licences and aquaculture sites
- Facilitate data traceability and data integration
- Improve business support functions

### Industry opportunities ...

- Submit complete, high quality applications to support efficient decisions
- Improve utilization of existing licences, sites, and facilities
- Adopt digital traceability and compliance tools
- Collaborate to optimize site and asset use
- Maintain strong compliance to support market confidence

## PILLAR 4 | COMMUNICATIONS & COLLABORATION

Communication and collaboration within the sector and with other marine users, while elevating the profile of Nova Scotia seafood globally.

### Actions Government will take ...

- Improve clarity and communication of government services and supports
- Strengthen cross government and partner coordination for industry engagement
- Develop a funding placemat outlining federal, provincial and other funding sources relevant to the sector
- Build public confidence through science based communications
- Expand structured sector engagement and knowledge mobilization
- Advance climate resilience planning
- Advocate for seafood sector interests in key areas e.g., labour, tariffs, regulatory red tape, and access to fisheries resources

### Industry opportunities ...

- Engage consistently in sector communications and information sharing
- Support storytelling that builds public confidence in fisheries and aquaculture
- Collaborate across the value chain and with other marine users
- Apply climate adaptation tools and best practices
- Advance unified, association led advocacy on sector priorities