



Actions by government to achieve sustainability of lobster

Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Gulf Region
July 2012



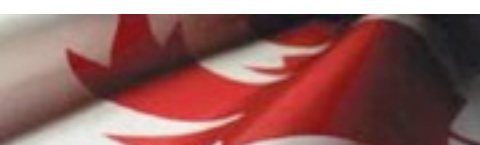
DFO Vision and mandate

- To advance sustainable aquatic ecosystems and support safe and secure Canadian waters while fostering economic prosperity across maritime sectors and fisheries.
- Through sound science, forward-looking policy, and operational and service excellence, DFO employees work collaboratively toward the following strategic outcomes:
 - Economically Prosperous Maritime Sectors and Fisheries;
 - Sustainable Aquatic Ecosystems; and
 - Safe and Secure Waters.



Fisheries and aquaculture management

- The Fisheries & Aquaculture Management Branch is responsible for management of the resource, the enforcement of the Fisheries Act, Aboriginal fisheries and recreational fisheries.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada's (DFO's) fisheries management program works to provide Canadians with a sustainable fishery resource that provides for an economically viable and diverse industry. Protection and conservation of fisheries resources are a key component of fisheries management. DFO manages fisheries according to credible, science-based, affordable and effective practices



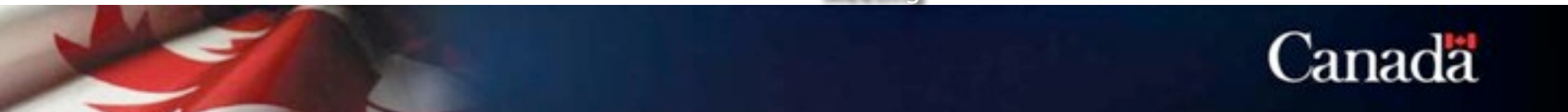
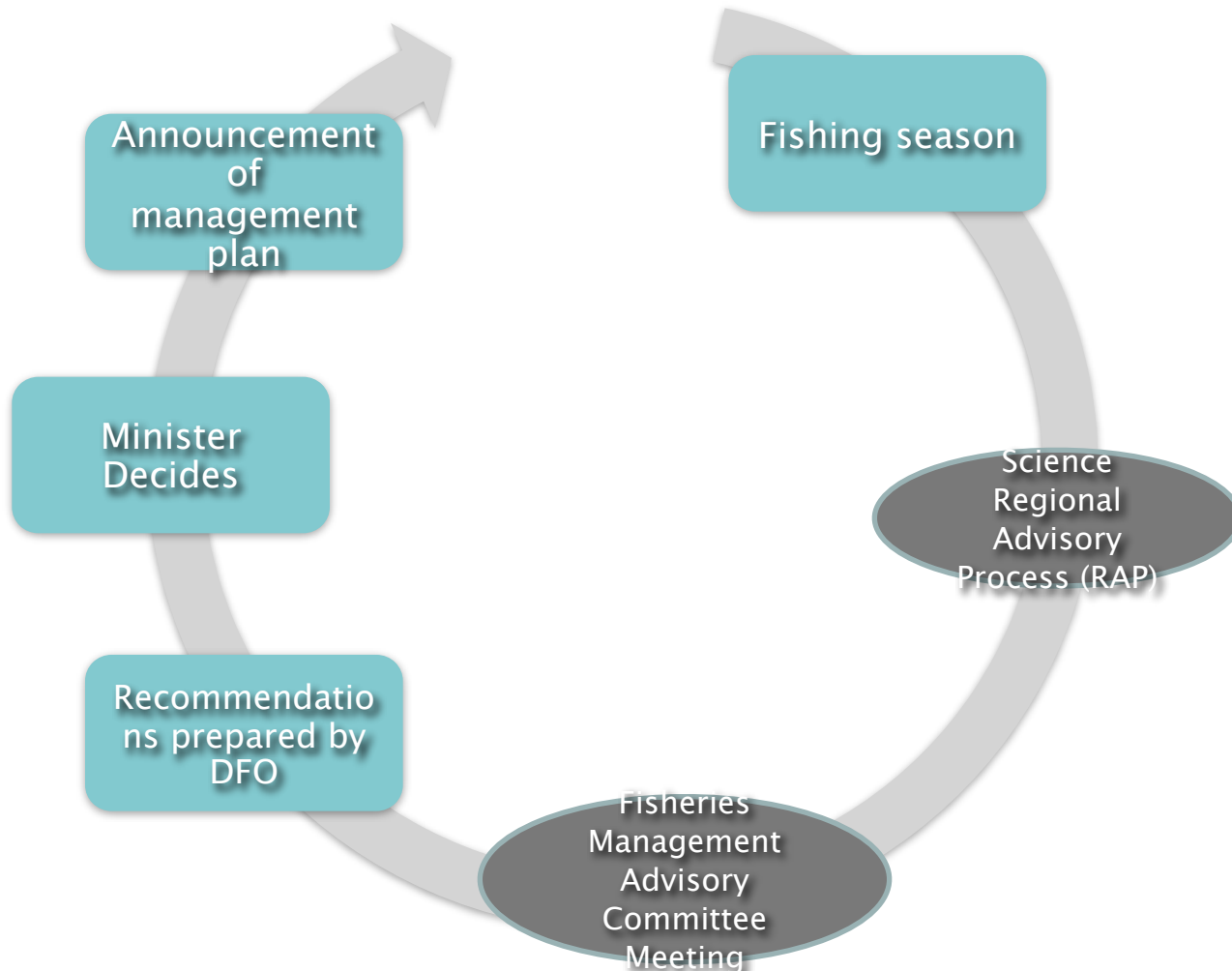


Science

- DFO Science Sector provides information on the consequences of management and policy options, and the likelihood of achieving policy objectives under alternative management strategies and tactics.
- The scope of the advisory process includes provision of all scientific advice required by operational client sectors within the Department.
- DFO's science advisory processes are managed by the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat (CSAS), which publishes Science Advisory Reports and Status Reports, and Research Documents.



Fisheries management cycle



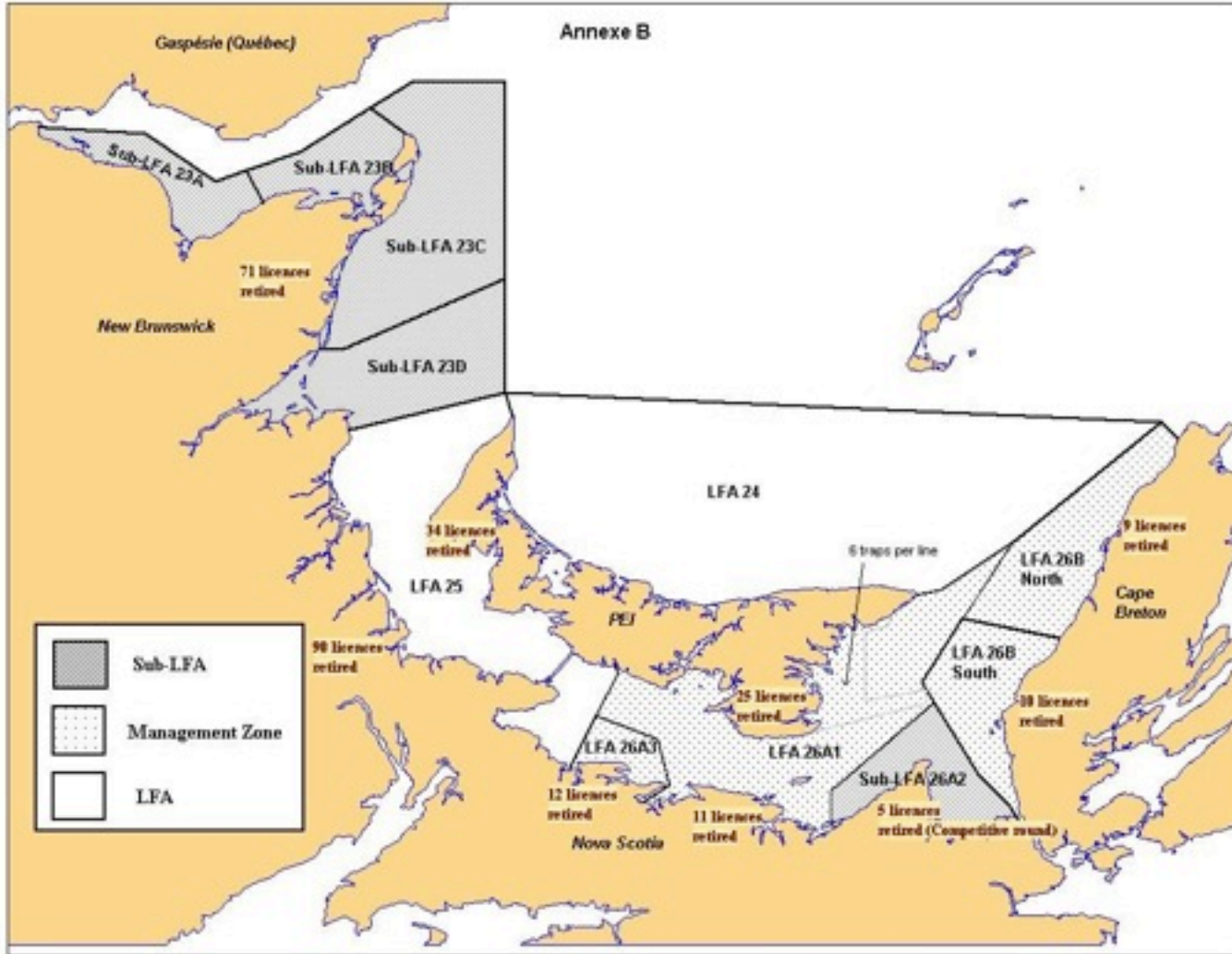


DFO - Gulf Region





Lobster Fishing Areas





Lobster fishery-Gulf Region

- The fishery grew in the mid-19th century
- Regulatory history of this fishery is one of the oldest in Canada:
 - Early 1870: protection of berried females and limit on season and minimum size
 - 1960: limited entry policy (to cap number of licences)
 - 1976: introduction of class A, B and C harvesters
 - 1977-1978: licence retirement program (600 licences)
 - 1982: Bonafide fisher policy
 - 1995: Concept of “core” fish harvesters
 - 1995: “A conservation framework for Atlantic lobster” (Fisheries Resource Conservation Council)”



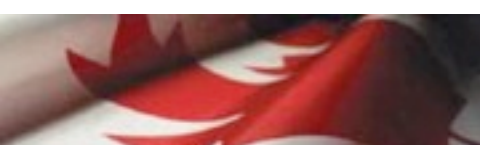
Fisheries Resource Conservation Council

- The Fisheries Resource Conservation Council (FRCC) was created in 1993 to form a partnership between scientific and academic expertise, and all sectors of the fishing industry. Together, Council members make public recommendations to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans on conservation measures for the Atlantic fishery.



Fisheries Resource Conservation Council-1995

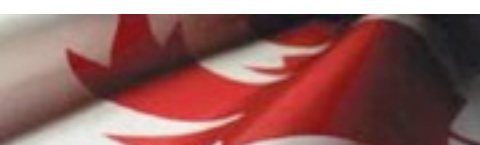
- In 1994, the Minister asked the FRCC to review the current approaches to lobster conservation and to recommend conservation strategies for Atlantic lobster.
- Although there were no signs of impending collapse of the fishery, it was recognized that the fishery was targeting exploitation rates that were too high, there were low levels of egg production and fish harvesters were taking too much and leaving too little.
- FRCC recommended that conservation measures be put in place to ensure good egg production, reasonable fishing mortality and a biomass composed of several year (size) classes.





Gulf region response to 1995 FRCC report

- Introduction of new management measures, through multi year plans, including: escape mechanisms, maximum hoop size, biodegradable panels.
- 1998-2001:
 - minimum carapace size to increase to 67.5 mm in all LFAs
 - V-notch of berried females
- 2003-2005:
 - Minimum carapace size to increase to 70 mm in all IFAs
 - Window size in all LFAs
- 2005: window size eliminated in LFA 25 in favour of maximum size for females





Fisheries Resource Conservation Council-2006

- In February 2006, Minister asked the FRCC to undertake another review of the Atlantic lobster fishery.
- While the report made many recommendations, its conclusions remained focused mainly on reaching a conservation target, reducing fishing effort and the need for fish harvesters to provide comprehensive data about their fishing activities and landings.



Gulf region response to 2007 FRCC report

- 2008: adjustments to dimension of escape mechanisms
- 2009: each LFA was asked to prepare a multi year plan to reduce exploitation rate by 10%.
 - Measures could include reduction in the number of traps, carapace size increase, reduction in number of fishing days
- 2009: DFO announced the \$65 Million Atlantic Lobster Sustainability Measures program





Atlantic Lobster Sustainability Measures

- In response to the FRCC report and industry interest, in 2009 DFO announced the \$65 Million Atlantic Lobster Sustainability Measures program which essentially provided funding to the lobster industry to improve its economic prosperity and long term sustainability.
- The Atlantic Lobster Sustainability Measures (ALSM) program (\$50 Million) includes a two-stage process:
 - LFAs submit to DFO a proposed LFA-wide Sustainability Plan that balances the need for improvement in conservation and sustainability of lobster fisheries with some flexibility to suit local conditions, including the biology of the stock and ecosystem factors.
 - Once the Sustainability Plan has been approved, commercial harvester organizations within the LFA may submit requests to DFO for partial funding of proposed projects under the ALSM which may include self-restructuring.





ALSM in Gulf Region

- Fish Harvester associations and aboriginal organizations in the Gulf region have received well over \$32 Million (out of \$50 Million) under the following funding categories:
 - Restructuring and Rationalization (e.g. licence retirement, trap reduction)
 - Conservation and Stewardship (e.g. at sea sampling, contaminants study)
 - Harvester organization governance (e.g. organizational capacity)





ALSM in Gulf Region

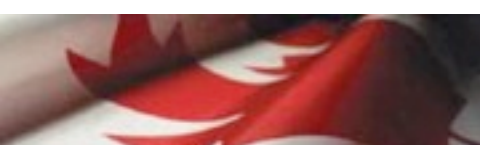
- 271 licences have been retired; this represents close to 10% of lobster licences in Gulf region/
 - LFA 23: 71 (9%)
 - LFA 25: 124 (15%)
 - LFA 26A: 56 (6%)
 - LFA 26B: 20 (8%)
- Remaining harvesters have removed 17,570 traps from the water (as of 2011 fishing season)
- Funding was also provided for science (at-sea sampling), data collection and governance.





Gulf region response

- 2011: minimum carapace size to increase to 72 mm in 2013.
- 2012:
 - announcement of modified biodegradable panels for 2013 fishing season
 - Guidelines on the creation/modification of buffer zones to protect lobster habitat
- Future initiatives:
 - Data collection program
 - Implementation of precautionary approach (reference points and harvest decision rules)





Lobster landings in Gulf region

