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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT  
**EVALUATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM**

PROJECT NUMBER 6D015

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EVALUATION DIRECTORATE  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER SECTOR  
FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## ACRONYMS

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AAFC	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
CCG	Canadian Coast Guard
CFIA	Canadian Food Inspection Agency
CMAPS	Certification and Market Access Program for Seals
DFO	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
DPR	Departmental Performance Report
EOS	Ecosystems and Oceans Science
EU	European Union
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GNAB	Global and Northern Affairs Bureau
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
IE Program	International Engagement Program
IGS	International Governance Strategy Science Program
IUU fishing	Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
TIMAD	Trade and International Market Access Directorate

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Introduction

The evaluation of the International Engagement (IE) Program was conducted by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)'s Evaluation Directorate in accordance with the *Policy on Results*. It covers fiscal years 2010–2011 through to 2016–2017; and focuses on the years after 2012–2013, when the IE Program became a distinct program in the Department's framework. The evaluation report also includes the results of an exploratory survey of international activities, which occur across DFO and the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG).

### Program Profile

Activities of the IE Program are delivered by directorates located in the following three DFO sectors: Fisheries and Harbour Management; Strategic Policy; and Ecosystems and Oceans Science. The Program ensures access for Canadians to fish resources that are managed internationally; promotes sustainable fisheries management and healthy global marine ecosystems with the support of scientific research; and contributes to a stable international trade regime for Canadian fish and seafood products. The Program advances its goals via multilateral and bilateral engagements, and coordinated strategies with international partners.

### Evaluation Methodology

The approach and design for the evaluation were determined after considering the results of a previous evaluation, the needs of DFO and CCG senior management, and the new flexibility of the *Policy on Results*. In order to ensure that the evaluation would yield the most useful information to support decision making, the evaluation was calibrated to focus on:

- the need for, effectiveness and efficiency of the IE Program; and
- building an inventory of the full breadth of international activities occurring across DFO and the CCG.

Multiple lines of evidence were analyzed, including reviews of internal and external documents; scoping interviews with personnel from DFO and CCG; key informant interviews with personnel from DFO and IE Program partners; and an analysis of the *Survey of International Activities occurring across DFO and CCG*.

### Evaluation Findings

Evidence confirmed that the IE Program continues to directly support DFO's international priorities and to ensure that international agreements, policies, standards and decisions reflect Canada's interests. International cooperation in fisheries management continues to be vitally important to ensure the sustainability of straddling stocks; to counter illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and seafood fraud; and to encourage the growth of market access for

Canadian fish and seafood products. Key informants noted that, since 2015, there has been renewed emphasis upon international collaboration and that Government of Canada and departmental priorities have created a need for the IE Program to continue to represent Canadian interests in fisheries, oceans, and Arctic issues. Furthermore, there is an ongoing need for DFO delegations to attend and participate in both bilateral and multilateral meetings, because not participating would result in a loss of influence and missed opportunities for DFO representatives to guide international discussions and decisions.

The *Survey of International Activities across DFO and CCG* confirmed that many other international activities are being undertaken across DFO and CCG, in addition to those performed by the IE Program. And while the majority of key informants agreed that it was more manageable to have a separate IE Program for reporting purposes, the evaluation found that there is an opportunity for the Department to communicate in a more comprehensive way the variety and scope of all international activities undertaken across DFO and CCG.

Overall, there is evidence that the IE Program is reaching its expected outcomes. However, many key informants noted that the renewed emphasis on international collaboration and the resulting work have had an impact upon the Program's ability to deliver on the increased expectations. Despite additional resources expected by several groups, the majority of key informants doubted that the IE Program has the required resources to perform proactively and be present at international engagements on par with other countries.

Performance measurement has been challenging for the IE Program, particularly measuring gains in influence and relationship-building activities, using outputs such as concluded agreements. Key informants were concerned that these types of activities can take many years to yield results and are not fully within the Program's means of influence. Other federal departments with similar international agendas have experienced similar challenges measuring gains in influence and relationship-building activities. Despite these challenges, evaluators are hopeful that the Program's recent re-assessment of its expected results and indicators positions it well for the future.

#### *Opportunities to Increase Efficiencies*

The success of the IE Program rests heavily upon strong leadership at international fora. Partners and key informants praised much of the Program's work, particularly in support of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) and the Arctic Council, as well as its negotiations that have increased market access for Canadian fish and seafood products. In addition, respondents lauded the work of DFO researchers, who provided the scientific advice necessary to support Canada's engagement in these international activities.

However, key informants and survey respondents also expressed their concerns that existing coordination and collaboration efforts between the DFO sectors responsible for the Program's bilateral and multilateral engagements have been largely ad hoc. Respondents believed that a

more formal process was needed to in order to engage in a cycle of information sharing and strengthened communication. Such a process would better support pre-planning (e.g., research and briefings prior to meetings) as well as the sharing of post-meeting lessons learned. Similar concerns were also raised about the lack of formal connections between the IE Program and the other programs engaged in international activities across DFO and CCG. In order to increase coordination, key informants and survey respondents underscored the need for a more sophisticated understanding of the various international activities taking place in the Department and for the development of a mechanism with which to coordinate these activities.

### *Development of a Department-Wide Vision*

In the absence of a department-wide vision to guide the coordination of international activities across DFO and CCG, the Department is vulnerable to issues ranging from potential conflicts in its messaging to missed opportunities for increased efficiencies. And, although several attempts have been made to coordinate international activities within the Department (e.g., the Directors-General International Committee and the DFO Travel and Events Plans process), these efforts have not endured. It is anticipated that the development of a department-wide vision for international activities and its implementation will increase efficiencies by leading not only to better sharing of knowledge and expertise, but also to the creation of a mechanism under which all programs throughout DFO and CCG can coordinate their resources for international activities.

### **Recommendations**

From the above evidence and findings, the following three recommendations are being made for the International Engagement Program:

**Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbours Management Sector and the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector jointly develop and implement a process to improve existing coordination and collaboration efforts, with regards to their respective bilateral and multilateral activities under the International Engagement Program.

**Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbours Management Sector and the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector initiate a department-wide process aimed at establishing a strategic vision, based on shared priorities and goals, for all international activities taking place across DFO and CCG.

**Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbours Management Sector and the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector establish a process to support the implementation of a department-wide strategic vision for the Department's international work.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

This report presents the results of the evaluation of the IE Program. The evaluation was conducted by the Evaluation Directorate within Fisheries and Oceans Canada, in accordance with Treasury Board's *Policy on Results*. The main objective of the evaluation was to measure and evaluate the Program's performance, using the resulting information to manage and improve the Program.

### 1.2 Evaluation Scope and Context

The evaluation was conducted between February 2017 and February 2018. The evaluation covered seven fiscal years (2010–2011 to 2016–2017), but focused on the years after 2012–2013, when the IE Program became a distinct program under the Department's *Program Alignment Architecture*. Currently, the IE Program continues to be recognized as a distinct program within the *Departmental Results Framework and Program Inventory* and supports the Department's core responsibility of *Fisheries*.

Based on planning interviews, the scope of the evaluation was calibrated to include not only the activities delivered by the IE Program, but also an exploratory survey of all international activities being delivered by other program areas across DFO and CCG.

## 2.0 PROGRAM PROFILE

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### 2.1 Program Context

Responsibilities for the IE Program reside within the following three DFO Sectors and their associated directorates:

- Fisheries and Harbour Management (*International Fisheries Management Directorate*);
- Strategic Policy (*Global and Northern Affairs Bureau* and *Trade and International Market Access Directorate*); and
- Ecosystems and Oceans Science (*International Governance Strategy Science Program*, which is under the *Ecosystem Science Directorate*).

The IE Program ensures access for Canadians to fish resources that are managed internationally; promotes sustainable fisheries management and healthy global marine ecosystems; and contributes to a stable international trade regime for Canadian fish and seafood products. The Program advances its goals via multilateral and bilateral engagements, and coordinated strategies with international partners.

*International Fisheries Management Directorate*

The International Fisheries Management Directorate (IFM)'s mandate is to lead Canada's participation within a number of treaty-based bilateral and multilateral organisations (e.g., Regional Management Fisheries Organizations); and to lead DFO's bilateral relations with other countries. The IFM group reaches out to relevant sectors across the Department when preparing for bilateral meetings.

*Global and Northern Affairs Bureau and Trade and International Market Access Directorate*

The second core group contributing to the IE Program includes two teams from Strategic Policy's External Relations: the Global and Northern Affairs Bureau (GNAB) and the Trade and International Market Access Directorate (TIMAD). GNAB leads delegations for all DFO multilateral relations, including those related to the Arctic Council. As such, GNAB is responsible for files that involve various bodies including the United Nations, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the North Atlantic Fisheries Ministers Meeting.

TIMAD's international activities are organized in three streams. The first stream consists of providing expertise for free trade agreements, dealing with trade irritants and market barriers and engaging in fisheries policy development within multilateral organizations. The second stream involves preparing Canada's participation at international seafood trade shows. The third stream consists of the Certification and Market Access Program for Seals (CMAPS).<sup>1</sup> This program was not included in the scope of this evaluation, because it was initiated too recently for the evaluation team to evaluate its results.

*International Governance Strategy Science Program<sup>2</sup>*

The third core group, the International Governance Strategy (IGS) Science Program, provides funding to support scientific research, which is targeted exclusively for the IE Program. This group helps to ensure that IE Program representatives at bilateral and multilateral meetings or negotiations have access to credible and robust science information that can be used to advance the management and policy interests of both DFO and the Government of Canada. IGS benefits from a well-established governance structure, which includes science representatives from regional offices, headquarters and the IE Program. This structure is used to allocate funding, while taking into account year-to-year changes in research priorities.

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<sup>1</sup> CMAPS is a \$5.7 million, five-year initiative that runs until fiscal year 2019–2020. Financial support for the CMAPS initiative originates from several DFO Transfer Payment Programs. Any future evaluation of the CMAPS initiative would be conducted according to the timelines of the Departmental Evaluation Plan and in accordance with the Treasury Board's *Policy on Results*.

<sup>2</sup> Initially launched in 2005–2006 as a three-year sunset program entitled the "International Fisheries and Oceans Governance Strategy," it was renamed to IGS in 2008–2009, when it received permanent funding. It became a tracked component of the IE Program in 2011–2012.



## 2.2 Other International Activities across DFO and CCG

A range of other international activities are undertaken across the Department, which are sometimes coordinated through the IE Program, but are often led by the individual sectors possessing the subject-matter expertise. The department-wide *Survey of International Activities occurring across DFO and CCG* provided evaluators with a greater understanding of the extent and breadth of these other international activities; the survey was integrated as a line of evidence into the report.

## 2.3 Partners

### *Partners*

The DFO Conservation and Protection Program is a major partner to the IE Program; it leads or sits on many RFMO sub-committees related to enforcement. Other federal partners include Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The Canadian fish and seafood sector exports approximately 75% of production. The responsibility for the fish and seafood industry is split between DFO, which regulates and manages the production of wild or farmed fish when they are in the water and AAFC, which provides market-development and traceability support. CFIA sets the policies, requirements and inspection standards for the industry. GAC and DFO work closely with fisheries, oceans, and foreign affairs officials from other nations on a range of international issues, including policy development and scientific research, in order to improve global management of fish stocks and oceans ecosystems. GAC and DFO also work with staff at Canada's embassies and consulates in fishing nations to ensure that they have appropriate information about Canada's position on international fishing and oceans issues, and to coordinate international meetings.

The IE Program is also engaged in building stronger relationships with other important partners such as Provinces and Territories, Indigenous peoples, industry and environmental non-governmental organizations. By maintaining strong relationships, the IE Program ensures that DFO's federal leadership role is recognized, and that there is support from and consistency among these partners in their international activities.

## 2.4 Program Resources

In 2016–2017, the IE Program's actual expenditures were \$16.6 million and the Program employed 51 full-time equivalents (FTEs) (Table 1).

During the course of the evaluation period (between 2010–2011 and 2016–2017) actual expenditures increased by \$3.3 million. In this same time period, FTEs increased by two; however, there were 14.5 fewer FTEs than at its peak in 2011–2012. Overall fluctuations in

FTEs during the course of the evaluation period can be ascribed to federal reduction exercises (e.g., the Deficit Reduction Action Plan and the Strategic Operating Review).

Table 1: International Engagement Program Resources: Actual Financial and Human Resources, FY 2010-2011 to 2016-2017.<sup>3</sup>

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
<b>Expenditures</b>	\$13.3	\$14.8	\$14.0	\$14.4	\$14.8	\$14.2	\$16.6
<b>FTEs</b>	49	64	63	56	45	53	51

Source: Main Estimates, DPRs, RPPs. Figures for 2016-2017 from InfoBase

### 3.0 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

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#### 3.1 Evaluation Approach and Design

Evaluators determined the approach and design of the evaluation after considering the results of a previous evaluation and the needs of senior management.<sup>4</sup> This method was used to ensure that the evaluation would yield the most useful information to support decision making.

The detailed evaluation matrix is provided in Annex A. The evaluation questions were determined subsequent to an initial planning phase that included discussions with senior management. Scoping interviews also revealed that there was a need to better understand the full breadth of international activities occurring across both DFO and the CCG, by surveying the Department and building an inventory.

#### 3.2 Data Sources

The evaluation used existing administrative and financial data and the following data sources:

- internal documents;
- previous DFO evaluations and audits, and other federal government and external sources;
- 13 scoping interviews, which included both DFO and CCG interviewees;
- 25 key informant interviews, including 17 from DFO (NHQ and all Regions) and 8 partners; and
- responses from the exploratory *Survey of International Activities occurring across DFO and CCG*.

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<sup>3</sup> The increase in total actual expenditures of \$2.4 million in 2016–2017 is partially accounted for by the implementation of the Certification and Market Access Program for Seals.

<sup>4</sup> DFO, *International Fisheries Conservation Evaluation*, September 2010: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ae-ve/evaluations/10-11/6b121-eng.htm>

### 3.3 Methodological Limitation and Mitigation Strategy

In order to demonstrate the reliability and validity of the overall findings and to ensure that conclusions and recommendations were based on objective and documented evidence, the data was triangulated across multiple lines of evidence.

Many of the performance indicators in place during the evaluation period were only in use for between one and three years; this made tracking the Program's progress over time challenging. To mitigate this limitation, the Program's performance was measured using a combination of proxy indicators and the opinions of key informants.

## 4.0 FINDINGS

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### 4.1 Need for International Engagement

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**Key Finding:** There is a continued need for the International Engagement Program.

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#### *The government's mandate has placed renewed emphasis on international collaboration and oceans-related work*

Beginning in 2015, the government's mandate and investments have placed a renewed emphasis on the importance of international collaboration both within the Department and across the Government of Canada as a whole. A scan of internal documents between 2015 and 2017 revealed a significant increase in discussions about international activities within programs across DFO and CCG; likewise, the survey confirmed that many DFO and CCG programs outside of the IE Program are also engaged in international activities. Investments like the Oceans Protection Plan have created an ongoing and increasing need for the IE Program's work in negotiations and trade agreements, and for the Ecosystems and Oceans Science sector's scientific information and advice concerning environmental measures as they relate to fisheries management and the sustainability of oceans ecosystems.

#### *The IE Program continues to support the Department's international priorities*

The evaluation confirmed, through a document review and key informant interviews, that there is a continued need for the activities undertaken by the IE Program.

The Program's activities directly support DFO's international priorities:

- international fisheries management
- a stable international trade regime for Canadian fish and seafood products
- scientific expertise and best management practices for fisheries management decisions and policy development
- positive relations and collaboration with international and domestic partners

In 2017, the Program's core groups continued to further much of the work that it was created to support. They continue to support RFMOs and trade-related priorities, which were reasons for the Program's initial development as the International Fisheries Conservation Program.<sup>5</sup> The Program's core groups have also been involved in negotiating and administering treaties and trade agreements, and encouraging the use of an ecosystems-based approach.

The document review confirmed that international cooperation in fisheries management continues to be vitally important to ensure the sustainability of highly migratory, straddling and transboundary stocks; to counter IUU fishing and seafood fraud; and to encourage the growth of Canadian fish and seafood product market access. The Arctic's rise in importance in the international sphere also suggests that there is a need for the IE Program to continue to represent Canadian interests in the North and to ensure that the Arctic's fish stocks and marine environment are protected.

Canada shares three oceans, so effective relations with international, regional and domestic partners are essential to addressing fisheries and ecosystem challenges and to ensuring that international standards, agreements and management decisions reflect Canadian approaches.<sup>6</sup>

***Strong representation and relationships are key components for influencing international decisions***

The evaluation also confirmed that there is an ongoing need for DFO delegations to attend and participate in both bilateral and multilateral meetings. Representation at international fora is an important factor in successfully influencing the development of agreements and ensuring that decisions taken are aligned with Canada's ecosystems-based approach, and Canadian trade and market access interests.

Maintaining relationships is also a key requirement for building DFO's influence. According to key informants face-to-face meetings are preferred and consulting with other delegations/nations prior to and during negotiations contributes to favourable policy outcomes (e.g., the Canada-European Union Trade Agreement). Similarly, key informants noted that successful and strong relationships made at the bilateral level can facilitate communications in multilateral fora by creating allies before attending international discussions, and vice-versa<sup>7</sup>. Lastly, key informants believed that greater knowledge sharing and support between the groups engaged in bilateral and multilateral work would enhance the IE Program's efficiency.

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<sup>5</sup> The International Fisheries Conservation (IFC) Program was originally created to initiate reforms in international fisheries management by strengthening RFMOs to combat overfishing and to support trade. DFO, Evaluation of the International Fisheries Conservation Program, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> DFO, Corporate Business Plan, 2014-2015

<sup>7</sup>In some instances, the individuals or groups from other countries on the other end of the discussion are the same groups in both bilateral and multilateral engagements.

### ***The IE Program should remain a stand-alone program in the Departmental Results Framework***

Over the course of the evaluation period, the Program underwent a merger and a separation of its core groups; these changes have required adaptation. Many key informants provided both pros and cons for these changes, with some stating these changes have had an impact on the Program's efficiency. Several internal and external partners noted that the separation of bilateral and multilateral activities has created some confusion (e.g., it may not be evident with whom they should communicate). These comments and concerns illustrate the importance of achieving greater coordination within the IE Program and throughout DFO and CCG with regards to international activities. However, overall, the majority of key informants agreed that it was more manageable to have a separate IE Program for reporting purposes, given the amount of international work occurring throughout the Department. Strengthening the coordination of international activities would help to ensure that the Department presents consistent messaging and a coordinated approach in its engagements with external partners and countries.

### ***Risks to not having an IE Program***

The impact of not having the IE Program remains similar to what was stated in the 2010 DFO evaluation: that not "...participating in international fora would result in a loss of influence over international treaties and agreements" and this would result in a "...cascading effect of a negative impact on Canada's economic opportunities, trade relationships and the value of exports."<sup>8</sup> A loss of influence may not lead to such impacts in the short term, but it may result in missed opportunities and an increased workload in the long term, especially if Canada needs to align its domestic regulations with new international norms/laws that it did not adequately influence. Given the increased attention and expectations surrounding international engagement activities, the need for the Program's activities as well as the risks to insufficient attendance at international fora, have increased.

## **4.2 Extent of International Work occurring across the Department**

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**Key Finding:** There is an opportunity for the Department to communicate, thematically, the extent and diversity of international work undertaken across DFO and CCG.

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The evaluation found that the Department's public reporting on the results of the IE Program has been too narrowly focused upon fisheries management and trade activities, while not clearly articulating those of the Global and Northern Affairs Bureau. The majority of key informants agreed that public reporting on the IE Program could be more reflective of the Program's full range of activities, particularly given the increased attention to oceans work in recent years and

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<sup>8</sup> DFO, International Fisheries Conservation Evaluation, September 2010: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ae-ve/evaluations/10-11/6b121-eng.htm>

the expansion of the Program's activity in multilateral fora, including the Arctic Council. Further, key informants and survey respondents confirmed that there are many other programs across DFO and CCG (e.g., Aquaculture Management, Fisheries Protection, and CCG National Strategies) that are also engaged in international activities. These international activities are reported on within their own programs; however, there is an opportunity at the department level to provide a comprehensive, thematic picture of all the international activities undertaken within DFO and CCG every fiscal year.

Figure 1 presents a word cloud, which illustrates the words used by survey respondents to describe the many different international activities undertaken across DFO and CCG<sup>9</sup>. The words used with greater frequency are denoted by larger-sized fonts.

Figure 1: Word Cloud Survey of International Activities undertaken across DFO and CCG, 2016–2017



A thematic department-wide approach to reporting on international work would be particularly useful to highlight the work of DFO's science sector (EOS), which provides research advice and support to many other programs within the Department, and whose advice cannot always be directly ascribed to the programs that use it. For example, the evaluation learned that EOS has provided science advice to the IE Program that was not funded by IGS (and thus, not reported on through the IE Program): domestic science information in support of TIMAD and direct support from science representatives during international meetings, neither of which is funded by IGS. If

<sup>9</sup> Includes only the responses provided by individuals located in the other programs across DFO and CCG delivering international activities (i.e., do not include responses from the IE Program).

the Department decides to report more thematically on its international work, this should not duplicate or replace the separate reporting that is currently undertaken for the IE Program or for any other program that is engaged in international activities at DFO or CCG.

### 4.3 Performance Highlights

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**Key Finding:** The International Engagement Program is reaching its expected outcomes.

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Overall, the IE Program is reaching its expected outcomes. During the evaluation period, the Program:

- allowed for sustainable international fisheries management;
- allowed for effective bilateral relations, including international scientific collaboration, to achieve Canada's outcomes;
- allowed for decisions that reflect Canadian goals in Arctic and Global Marine Affairs;
- decreased IUU fishing activity in zones of international waters that DFO is responsible for patrolling;
- allowed for effective governance of internationally managed marine ecosystems; and
- allowed for market access for Canadian fish and seafood products.

#### *International Fisheries Management Directorate*

Examples of IFM's achievements during the evaluation period include that 100% of quotas/allocations of high seas fish stocks managed by RFMOs, of which Canada is a member, were set with scientific advice; and an increase in IFM's number of ad hoc and/or annual bilateral meetings from 32 to 41.<sup>10</sup>

Other performance highlights include IFM's work on a number of RFMOs, such as the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), where IFM advocated for the rebuilding of some fish stocks (e.g., porbeagle shark) and for the precautionary management of ICCAT-managed species such as Bluefin Tuna.<sup>11</sup> Canadian interests in incorporating an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management were also furthered by the amended version of the NAFO, which came into force in May 2017.<sup>12</sup> With respect to NAFO, key informants stated that there is a strong Canadian Head of Delegation; that Canada presents a united front (federal government, provincial governments, industry, etc.); and that the consultation and engagement process is very effective (i.e., input from consultations is

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<sup>10</sup> One exception occurred in 2011–2012, when the Program achieved 90% of its 100% target.

<sup>11</sup> OECD, "OECD Review of Fisheries: Policies and Summary Statistics," 2013: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/agriculture-and-food/oecd-review-of-fisheries-2013\\_rev\\_fish-2013-en;jsessionid=w8q5o2ma73e4.x-oecd-live-03](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/agriculture-and-food/oecd-review-of-fisheries-2013_rev_fish-2013-en;jsessionid=w8q5o2ma73e4.x-oecd-live-03); DFO, "International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas," November 2015: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/international/tuna-thon/iccat-cicta-eng.htm>

<sup>12</sup> NAFO, "NAFO meets for the first time under modernized convention," September 22, 2017: <https://www.nafo.int/Portals/0/PDFs/press/pressept17.pdf?ver=2017-09-22-123009-703>

meaningfully considered and well integrated). Other examples of effective bilateral engagements given by key informants and confirmed by the recent DFO *Evaluation of the Fisheries Protection Program and its Aquatic Invasive Species Component* (2016) were the Great Lakes Sea Lamprey Control Program and the Asian Carp program.

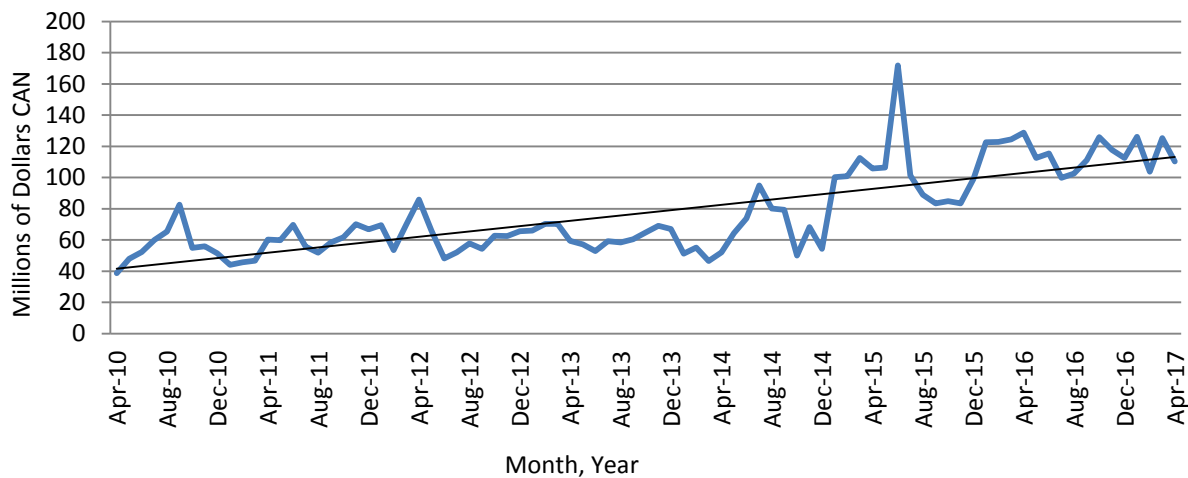
*Global and Northern Affairs Bureau*

GNAB allowed for decisions that reflect Canadian goals in the Arctic and in multilateral negotiations. The group led Canada’s participation in Arctic Council marine/ocean work, including the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment working group. The group’s work on the Arctic Council was praised by external key informants. GNAB also led Canada’s participation in the development of the *Declaration Concerning the Prevention of High Seas Fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean*. The group continues to pursue Canada’s ratification of the international *Port State Measures Agreement*, an act that entered into force in 2016 and has required the amendment of Canada’s *Coastal Fisheries Protection Act* and its Regulations.<sup>13</sup>

*Trade and International Market Access Directorate*

The TIMAD group continued to work towards greater access to international markets for Canadian fish and seafood products. Graph 1 shows that exports minus imports have continued to increase year over year. The group also contributed to reversing the European Union’s invasive species ban on live lobster imports in 2016, saving \$75 million in exports.

Graph 1: Canadian Net Balance of Payments for Fish, Shellfish and other Fishery Products<sup>14</sup>



Source: Based upon Statistics Canada, Table 228-0059.

<sup>13</sup> DFO, “United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization’s Port State Measures,” May 2016: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/international/isu-iuu-09a-eng.htm>

<sup>14</sup> April 2010 to April 2017



*International Governance Strategy Science Program*

Ecosystems and Oceans Science's IGS Science Program directly supported IE Program priorities and information needs by providing scientific research and findings in support of international fisheries management decisions (e.g., input into stock assessment advice for species managed by RFMOs, such as Atlantic Bluefin Tuna, north Pacific Albacore Tuna, Northern Cod in the NAFO regulatory area, and Atlantic Salmon). The IGS Science Program has also played an important role in supporting research that has identified and described Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems and Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas in the NAFO Convention Area and the North Pacific Fisheries Commission Area of Application. This research has enabled Canada to play a leadership role on these issues in NAFO. In addition, as mentioned above, EOS has supported the IE Program outside of the IGS Science Program, by providing domestic science and research to support TIMAD in countering the EU's live lobster ban. Outside of the IGS Science Program, EOS also provides research advice and support to the many other programs within the Department delivering international activities.

*Resourcing Challenges*

The IE Program has continued to meet its objectives; however, some key informants noted that increased expectations and work have had an impact upon the Program's delivery. Since 2012–2013, the Program has gone through three separate resourcing reviews, the most recent of which was undertaken in 2016–2017. Speaking of their experiences up to 2017, some key informants gave examples of ways in which leaner resources had meant changes to program delivery. These included program staff not participating in certain meetings (e.g., North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission) or reducing their delegations at international fora (e.g., NAFO), due to insufficient time and resources. Key informants also stated that there had been a reduced ability to do proper networking, and that networking was currently being done on an ad hoc basis, alongside challenging timelines. A similar story emerged from interviews with EOS employees, who stated that the demand for scientific information and advice through the IGS Science Program is much greater than its capacity to respond to research needs. Although several of the groups within the IE Program expect new FTEs and budget dollars, the majority of key informants doubted that the Program has the required resources to perform proactively and be present at international engagements on par with other countries.

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**Key Finding:** The Program is using the best available indicators to measure its progress.

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Throughout the evaluation period, the IE Program has been actively involved in trying to develop useful and reflective indicators and outcomes. While IFM and TIMAD have more tangible outcomes, several key informants indicated that measuring the impact of relationship-building activities engaged in by IFM and GNAB, such as the influence exerted by Canada upon bilateral and multilateral agreements and committees, has been much less straightforward. Key informants commented that international agreements often take many years to conclude, making

it challenging to show progress year-over-year. Furthermore, key informants believed that it was not reasonable to use outcomes that are often contingent upon the actions of other partners and/or countries, such as the concluding of multilateral agreements.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, it was challenging to measure the impact of the support provided by the IGS Science Program. Indicators included proxy measures, such as the number of publications in each fiscal year, in lieu of measuring the influence scientific advice has had upon preparations for negotiations.

At the request of senior management, the evaluation reached out to other federal departments with similar international agendas, to explore best practices and strategies for performance measurement. Evaluators found that DFO's counterparts have experienced similar challenges in measuring relationship-building activities.

Due to the Program's challenges in measuring its less tangible activities, and the fact that many indicators did not provide for measurement over time, the evaluation corroborated the Program's performance over the full evaluation period by information extracted from key informant interviews and the document review.

### *Going Forward*

In 2016–2017, during the Department's implementation of the *Policy on Results*, the IE Program participated in a process to re-evaluate its expected results and indicators. Going forward, the Program has retained three of its six indicators:

1. Result: Department is funded to meet RFMO membership obligations
  - **Indicator: % of RFMO membership fees paid without impacts to other programs**
  - Target: 100%
2. Result: Canada is represented in mission-critical fora
  - **Indicator: % of mission critical fora attended**
  - Target: 95%
3. Result: Canadian negotiating positions at international fora are well substantiated by the best available evidence and analysis
  - **Indicator: % of international fora supported by evidence-based negotiating positions**
  - Target: 100%

These targets are not incremental, making it challenging to demonstrate progress over time; however, all three indicators address key issues that emerged during the course of the evaluation. All indicators are achievable by the Program, none rely upon other countries and none are bound

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<sup>15</sup> Examples of such indicators include: "Percentage of international quota decisions reflecting Canadian goals," for IFM (DPR 2015-2016); "Percentage of ongoing trade negotiations and/or newly completed free trade agreements that incorporate DFO positions/suggested text," for the TIMAD group (DPRs 2014-2015 and 2015-2016).

by long timelines. Going forward, the Program's performance measurement should be more helpful for decision making.

#### **4.4 Opportunities for Increased Efficiencies by Strengthening Coordination and Collaboration**

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**Key Finding: Program-Level:** The current informal, ad hoc approach to coordination and collaboration used by the IE Program does not sufficiently support the needs of the Program.

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The Program's objectives rest heavily upon strong leadership for Canada at international fora, to protect the country's interests in fish and seafood products, trade and the management of straddling stocks fisheries. In some arenas, such as the Arctic, Canadian delegations were praised by partners for their strong leadership. Processes for international engagements that are more predictable (e.g., annual meetings, cyclical engagements) are also functioning well. And key informants believed that the Program and its partners – both internal and external – have strong working relationships overall. But in other instances, insufficient coordination and collaboration has had a negative impact; especially in the context of bilateral and multilateral files, where the issues are complex and the DFO groups involved would benefit from more opportunities to connect back with each other in order to share updates on the results of their international work.

In the context of resourcing challenges and increased expectations and workload; where there is no indication that the volume of work will stabilize, only that it's likely to increase, there may be opportunities to increase the efficiency of the Program by strengthening the coordination and collaboration efforts of its core groups. Key informants acknowledged that the Program has been successful in achieving its objectives to date; however, they noted that ad hoc coordination and collaboration efforts created vulnerabilities for the Program and recommended increasing coordination between the Program's principal core groups responsible for bilateral and multilateral engagements.

The evaluation found that, beginning in the early 2000s, international activities were discussed within a Director-General International Committee and a DFO Travel and Events Plans process, both of which are no longer active.<sup>16</sup> In 2014, the Program was encouraged to develop a formal mechanism for information sharing and strengthened communication between IFM and External Relations, to improve coherence in reporting.<sup>17</sup> As of 2017, coordination and collaboration for international activities continues to be ad hoc and informal although a DFO Communications Committee currently devotes a portion of its time to discussing international activities.<sup>18</sup> The

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<sup>16</sup> The DFO Travel and Events Plans process is no longer required, because all international travel now goes through a specific screening process that was previously provided by this committee.

<sup>17</sup> DFO, *Corporate Business Plan*, 2014-2015.

<sup>18</sup> As of summer 2017, the Canadian Coast Guard was also involved in this committee.

increasing expectations placed upon international activities suggest that a more formal approach may alleviate some challenges.

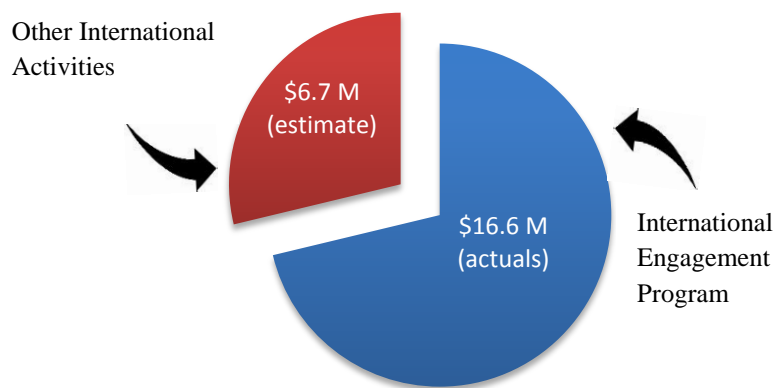
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**Key Finding: Departmental-Level:** There is a pressing need for the Department to establish an overall vision for its international activities with clear linkages to both Departmental and Government priorities.

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Both key informants and survey respondents also spoke of the need for greater coordination and collaboration across the Department as a whole. Responses across both these lines of evidence commonly noted that there was a lack of formal connection between international activities across the Department and the IE Program; a lack of clarity around what international activities are occurring across DFO and CCG; a need to ensure consistent messaging; and no overall departmental strategy for international activities to guide the prioritization of resources within the IE Program and across the Department. Graph 2 compares the actual expenditures of the IE Program to the estimated expenses for all other international activities taking place across DFO and CCG.

Graph 2: Estimated Expenditures for all International Activities, 2016–2017



Source: Other International Activities (estimate), *Survey of International Activities occurring across DFO and CCG, 2016-2017*; International Engagement Program (actual), DFO InfoBase

The evaluation recognizes the challenge of initiating work to develop a department-wide vision for international activities and a more formal coordination mechanism; however, it is believed that this work will increase efficiencies and give the Department an opportunity to more accurately reflect the amount of international work being done across DFO and CCG, by reporting on these activities thematically at a department level.

## **5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **5.1 Conclusions**

The current context of increased investment in and expectations for international engagement demonstrates that there is an ongoing and growing need for the international activities undertaken by the Department. The evaluation also reaffirmed the need to have a stand-alone International Engagement Program in the Departmental Results Framework. Moreover, the evaluation confirmed that a wide variety of other international activities are being undertaken across DFO and CCG, and this presents the Department with an opportunity to report thematically on the full range of international work in which it is engaged.

Performance measurement has been an ongoing challenge for the IE Program, particularly in measuring bilateral and multilateral engagement activities, because relationship-building and concluding agreements often take many years and are dependent upon the actions of another country/partner, which is not under the Program's immediate control. The Program has met its objectives – performance was assessed using supplementary information from key informants and the document review.

The current approach to coordination and collaboration for bilateral and multilateral work does not efficiently support the needs of the IE Program. The IE Program relies too heavily on informal efforts, which leave the Program vulnerable to changing circumstances. While there is evidence that collaboration is occurring, there is a need for increased, systemic coordination of international activities both within the IE Program and across the Department.

The Department does not have a department-wide vision for international activities nor is there a process with which to coordinate international activities across DFO and CCG. The development of a vision, and a plan with which to implement that vision, will position the IE Program and other programs throughout the Department to better prioritize their resources, and may achieve greater efficiencies.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

Three recommendations are being made and are intended to ensure that the Department has sufficient processes in place to coordinate and prioritize its international activities. Annex B presents the Management Action Plan and identifies how the IE Program will address the recommendations.

The recommendations acknowledge that there have been previous attempts to coordinate international activities and that additional resources might be required to establish and implement the recommendations. However, the growing importance placed on international activities by both the Department and the Government of Canada, and the fact that the Department was

previously encouraged to develop more formal mechanisms for information sharing and strengthened communication, suggests the need for further action.<sup>19</sup>

Any responses to recommendations should be developed collaboratively with all sectors involved in international activities across DFO and CCG.

**Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbours Management Sector and the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector jointly develop and implement a process to improve existing coordination and collaboration efforts, with regards to their respective bilateral and multilateral activities under the International Engagement Program.

**Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbours Management Sector and the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector initiate a department-wide process aimed at establishing a strategic vision, based on shared priorities and goals, for all international activities taking place across DFO and CCG.

**Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbours Management Sector and the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector establish a process to support the implementation of a department-wide strategic vision for the Department's international work.

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<sup>19</sup> DFO *Corporate Business Plan 2014-2015*.

**ANNEX A: EVALUATION MATRIX**

Evaluation Questions	Judgment Criteria	Indicators	Document Review	Review of Administrative and Performance Data	Key Informant Interviews	Survey
<b>Relevance</b>						
1. Where, if at all, is the International Engagement Program best situated in the Core Responsibilities of DFO's Departmental Results Framework?	Exploring the placement of and rationale for an International Engagement Program in the DFO Program Inventory	1.1 Chart significant international activities across DFO & CCG and understand how they have evolved between 2012-13 and 2016-17	X		X	X
<b>Effectiveness</b>						
22. To what extent has the International Engagement Program achieved its expected outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustainable international fisheries management</li> <li>▪ International community combats illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing</li> <li>▪ International management rooted in ecosystem based management</li> <li>▪ Addressing Arctic Marine and global environmental pressures and trends</li> <li>▪ Market access opportunities for Canadian seafood and related products</li> </ul>	International Engagement has maintained effective governance for internationally managed fisheries	ECOSYSTEMS AND FISHERIES MANAGEMENT— INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (RFMOs)				
		2.1.1 Percentage of international quota decisions reflecting Canadian goals	X	X	X	
		2.1.2 Percentage of quotas/allocations for high seas fish stocks managed by RFMO's of which Canada is a member that are set within scientific advice	X	X	X	
	International Engagement has maintained effective bilateral relations	ECOSYSTEMS AND FISHERIES MANAGEMENT— INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (BILATERAL RELATIONS)				
		2.2.1 Number of ad hoc and/or annual bilateral meetings held within the International Engagement Program.	X	X		
		2.2.2 Extent that the International Engagement Program has allowed for effective bilateral relations to achieve Canada's outcomes.	X		X	
	Decrease of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activity in zones of international waters for which DFO is responsible for patrolling	ECOSYSTEMS AND FISHERIES MANAGEMENT — CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION				
		2.3.1 Number of suspected illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities detected in zones of international waters that DFO C&E patrols	X	X	X	
		2.3.2 Evidence that the International Engagement Program has decreased illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activity in zones of international waters for which DFO is responsible for patrolling	X		X	
	International Engagement has maintained an effective governance for internationally managed marine ecosystems	ECOSYSTEMS AND OCEANS SCIENCE				
2.4.1 Number of science projects completed to identify ecologically and biologically significant areas and vulnerable marine ecosystems in international waters		X	X	X		

Evaluation Questions	Judgment Criteria	Indicators	Document Review	Review of Administrative and Performance Data	Key Informant Interviews	Survey	
		2.4.2 Extent that the International Engagement Program has contributed to the effective governance of internationally managed marine ecosystems	X		X		
	DFO has an influence in Arctic and global marine affairs which allows for decisions that reflect Canadian goals	EXTERNAL RELATIONS — GLOBAL AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS BUREAU (including multilateral relations other than RFMOs)					
		2.5.1 Percentage of international resolutions and decisions (other than RFMOs e.g. United Nations organizations, Arctic Council etc...) which are adopted through consensus which reflect Canada’s policy position	X	X	X		
		2.5.2 Evidence that the International Engagement Program has allowed for decisions that reflect Canadian goals in Arctic and Global marine Affairs	X		X		
	International Engagement Program has improved market access for Canadian fish and seafood products.	EXTERNAL RELATIONS — TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL MARKET ACCESS					
		2.6.1 Percentage of flagship fish and seafood shows attended		X			
		2.6.2 Percentage of trade negotiations that include Canada’s policy position	X	X	X		
2.6.3 Evidence that the International Engagement Program has supported market access for Canadian fish and seafood products		X		X			
3. To what extent are the program’s performance indicators appropriate to support decision making?	Performance measurement information is available for reporting and assists with decision making	3.1 Effectiveness of performance measurement tools for program reporting and decision making		X	X		
<b>Efficiency and Economy</b>							
4. How well positioned is the International Engagement Program to deliver on its activities?	Gaps, if any, are identified in the program’s resources, strategic direction and that the governance structure are appropriate to support the	4.1 Views regarding the extent to which the program has adequate and/or appropriately distributed resources		X	X		



Evaluation Questions	Judgment Criteria	Indicators	Document Review	Review of Administrative and Performance Data	Key Informant Interviews	Survey
	achievement of results	4.2 Percentage of the number of high priority files set aside or events not attended due to budget pressures and/or competing priorities	X	X	X	
		4.3 Assessment of the organizational framework (e.g. governance, proactive planning) and decision-making structures supporting the prioritization of activities	X	X	X	
5. Could the efficiency of the International Engagement Program be improved?	Weaknesses, if any, in program's design and delivery are identified	5.1 Assessment of integration and cooperation with program partners	X		X	
		5.2 Barriers and/or challenges to efficiency as well as key factors enabling efficiency of the International Engagement Program	X		X	

**ANNEX B: MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN**

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**RECOMMENDATION 1**

**Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbours Management Sector and the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector jointly develop and implement a process to improve existing coordination and collaboration efforts, with regards to their respective bilateral and multilateral activities under the International Engagement Program.

This process should allow the two sectors to engage in a cycle of information sharing and strengthened communication directed toward pre-planning (e.g., research and briefings); and communicating post-meeting lessons learned, particularly for bilateral and multilateral engagements.

**Rationale:** The current approach to coordination and collaboration for bilateral and multilateral work does not efficiently support the needs of the IE Program. According to key informants, the IE Program relies too heavily on informal efforts, based largely on personal working relationships. These informal coordination and collaboration efforts leave the Program vulnerable to changing circumstances (e.g., should the departure of staff result in a loss of corporate knowledge or should the volume of work increase). The IE Program was previously encouraged to develop a formal mechanism for information sharing and strengthened communication (DFO Corporate Business Plan, 2014–2015).

The International Fisheries Management Directorate, the Global and Northern Affairs Bureau and the Trade and International Market Access Directorate engage in multilateral and bilateral activities (e.g., meetings, negotiations, policy development) to ensure access for Canadians to fish resources managed internationally, promote and influence sustainable regional fisheries management and healthy global marine ecosystems, and contribute to a stable international trade regime for Canadian fish and seafood products.

**STRATEGY**

Establish a DG-level International Engagement Management Working Group (IEM-WG) to improve existing coordination and collaboration efforts with regards to bilateral and multilateral activities under the International Engagement Program. The IEM-WG would meet monthly and be comprised of the Director General, Directors and Managers of Fisheries Resource Management and External Relations.

<b>Management Actions</b>	<b>Due Date (by end of month)</b>	<b>Status Update: Completed / On Target / Reason for Change in Due Date</b>	<b>Output</b>
Establish the DG-level IEM-WG	February 2018		
Monthly meeting of the working group	Ongoing starting February 2018		
Status update provided to the department-wide International Committee created under Recommendation #2	Quarterly starting July 2018		

<b>RECOMMENDATION 2</b>			
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbours Management Sector and the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector initiate a department-wide process aimed at establishing a strategic vision, based on shared priorities and goals, for all international activities taking place across DFO and CCG.</p>			
<p><b>Rationale:</b> There is currently no such mechanism in place in the Department. Key informants and survey respondents confirmed there is a pressing need for the Department to establish an overall vision for its international activities with clear linkages to both Departmental and Government priorities. Such a process should also outline opportunities for collaboration and enable the Department to achieve greater efficiencies. This recommendation recognizes that all areas across DFO and CCG delivering international activities should be consulted and that additional resources might be required to establish and implement this process. The process could take the form of either a new mechanism created specifically for this purpose or adding it as a standing agenda item to an existing process.</p>			
<b>STRATEGY</b>			
<p>Establish a DG-level departmental-wide International Committee to develop a strategic vision for all international activities taking place across DFO and CCG. The Committee will be comprised of DGs from Aquatic Ecosystem, Fisheries and Harbour Management, Ecosystems and Oceans Science, Strategic Policy sectors as well as the Canadian Coast Guard.</p>			
<b>MANAGEMENT ACTIONS</b>	<b>DUE DATE (BY END OF MONTH)</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE: COMPLETED / ON TARGET / REASON FOR CHANGE IN DUE DATE</b>	<b>OUTPUT</b>
<p>Establish a department-wide International Committee. Develop terms of reference, including</p>	<p>April–May 2018</p>		

membership, objective, deliverables and timelines			
Kick start meeting to review/agree on the ToR. The meeting will also serve to take stock and discuss all international activities within DFO and CCG as well as linkage to OGDs and stakeholders.	June 2018		
Develop a strategic vision based on shared priorities and goals for all international activities taking place across DFO and CCG	Quarterly meeting of the Committee July-December 2018		
Draft vision statement for approval by ADMs	December 2018		

<b>RECOMMENDATION 3</b>			
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> It is recommended that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbours Management Sector and the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Sector establish a process to support the implementation of a department-wide strategic vision for the Department’s international work.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The implementation plan is necessary in order to turn the Department’s international activities into actions that support its strategic vision. The plan should set the direction for the Department’s international activities and also support coordination and collaboration efforts. All sectors should be consulted during the development of this process, especially the Ecosystems and Oceans Science Sector and the Canadian Coast Guard.</p>			
<b>STRATEGY</b>			
<p>The “process to support the implementation of a department-wide strategic vision for the Department’s international work” should be carried out under the leadership of the DG-level department-wide International Committee that is to be created under Recommendation 2. The Committee will set the direction for the Department’s international activities and also support coordination and collaboration efforts and shall include Strategic Policy, Fisheries and Harbour Management; and Ecosystems and Oceans Science sectors, as well as the Canadian Coast Guard.</p>			
<b>MANAGEMENT ACTIONS</b>	<b>DUE DATE (BY END OF MONTH)</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE: COMPLETED / ON TARGET / REASON FOR CHANGE IN DUE DATE</b>	<b>OUTPUT</b>
The Committee established under recommendation #2 will continue to meet quarterly to develop an Action Plan supporting the implementation of the department-wide international strategic	January to March 2019		

<p>vision. The Action Plan should set the direction for the Department’s international activities and support coordination and collaboration efforts.</p>			
<p>ADMs approval of the draft Action Plan</p>	<p>March 2019</p>		
<p>Implementation of the Action Plan</p>	<p>April 2019 and ongoing</p>		