

EVALUATION OF THE OCEANS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

The evaluation was conducted in 2017 and gathered evidence from a document review; literature review and international comparison; financial and administrative data analysis; 63 interviews; 3 site visits; a Rapid Impact Evaluation approach; an internal survey to 170 people; and an external survey to 250 people.

77% of external survey respondents said there are **issues in the oceans** that **need to be addressed** by a federal program

The **Oceans Act** outlines the following tools that the program can use to manage oceans. Some tools, such as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), have been used more than others, such as developing Marine Environmental Quality guidelines.



The program **supports** the Government of Canada's **marine conservation target** to protect 10% of Canada's oceans by 2020. The percentage of ocean space that is protected increased from **less than 1% in 2015** to **over 5% in 2017**.

 **5%**
ACHIEVED IN
2017



 **10%**
IN PROGRESS
FOR 2020

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The *Oceans Act* provides tools for the Oceans Management program to **collaborate** with diverse partners and stakeholders and to **address challenges facing Canada's oceans**, such as ecosystem health, marine habitat loss, declining biodiversity and **growing and competing demands for oceans space and resources**.

Canada is a maritime nation:

It has over **240,000 km** of coastline – the longest in the world – and over **7 million Canadians** live in coastal areas

KEY FINDINGS

There is a need for oceans management. **Temporary funding has facilitated** the establishment of marine protected areas, **but a lack of stable funding** to support other core aspects of the program is **limiting its ability to advance comprehensive oceans management** and foster the sustainable development of Canada's marine environments.

Eleven Oceans Act MPAs have been designated to date. Each MPA has **unique conservation objectives** that determine **permitted activities**

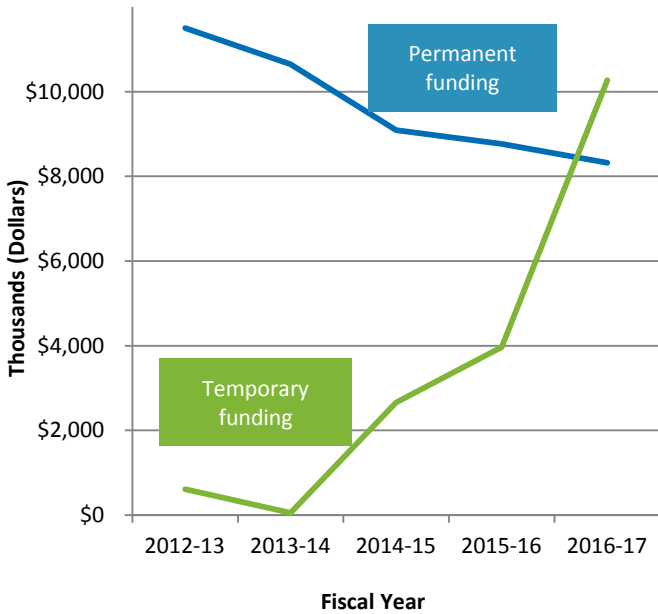
Turn the page to see the recommendations

For the full evaluation, visit the DFO Evaluation website:
<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ae-ve/evaluations-eng.htm>



There is a trend of **increasing temporary** funding and **declining permanent** funding

Total Actual Expenditures, by Fiscal Year



Temporary funding **surpassed** permanent funding in 2016-17

Integrated Oceans Management plans have been **developed** but have not been substantively **implemented**

31%

of internal survey respondents said the program leads the **development** of integrated oceans management plans to a **considerable extent**

45%

of internal survey respondents said the program has made progress on **implementing** integrated oceans management plans to a **limited extent**

Oceans issues are **complex**: **collaboration** is key!



RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Enhance the long-term sustainability of the program by: building upon previous planning processes; making clear linkages between Marine Protected Areas, MPA networks, Marine Environmental Quality guidelines and broader oceans planning and management; articulating realistic deliverables; and improving communication, both internally and externally, on program processes, activities, and progress supporting integrated oceans management.

2

Advance data collection activities to gather baseline and ongoing information about the marine environment to support decision-making, including for marine spatial plans, Marine Environmental Quality guidelines, and Marine Protected Areas. In particular, consistent data collection and ecological monitoring activities for MPAs are needed to: provide evidence of their effectiveness in achieving conservation objectives; support their adaptive management; and ensure compliance with their respective regulations.

3

Examine the constraints that DFO administrative regions place on the program's ability to advance an ecosystem-based approach to oceans management by exploring options that would facilitate decision-making based on marine bioregions.