



Managing Marine Mammals in Canada's Pacific Region

AN INTEGRATIVE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Executive Summary

Overarching Management Goal

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is committed to working with Indigenous groups, other levels of government, stakeholders and coastal communities to protect marine mammal populations for the benefit of current and future generations of Canadians — balancing the conservation of marine life while providing important economic opportunities.

Key Challenge and Intent of This Framework

The overarching goal also represents a key management challenge: balancing the conservation and protection of marine mammals and their habitat with opportunities for a thriving blue economy. Managing this challenge involves making complex decisions with a wide network of people who share this goal. Featured throughout this Framework are some of our key challenges and the discoveries and advances we are making as we work collaboratively toward our goal.

The overarching intent for this Integrated Management Framework is to guide current and future marine management actions that will sustain vibrant marine mammal populations in British Columbia today, and into the future. This Framework also reflects Fisheries and Oceans Canada's commitment to an ecosystem-based approach which recognizes the complexity of ecosystems and the interconnections among component parts. As such, the tools inside the framework aim to support an adaptable and integrative approach to allow managers across environmental management systems to consider the biological, geographical and functional importance that marine mammals hold for our marine environment as a whole.

Translating Objectives into Action Over Time

The conservation and protection of marine mammals and the support of sustainable marine activities is a shared responsibility by all in this region. Marine mammal management is an ongoing process to ensure the objectives of this framework are upheld conserving marine mammals for current and future generations.



Key Messages

We are seeing increasing human-caused impacts on oceans and their resources where marine mammals spend all or a substantial portion of their life. While Indigenous fishing and marine transportation continue to be of prime importance, they are now joined by other uses, such as aquaculture development, recreational and commercial fishing, and eco-tourism.

Canada's oceans are integral to Canada's social and cultural identity. However, many of the habitats used by marine mammals overlap with coastal communities, leading to a variety of interactions and impacts. Threats to marine mammals include limited prey availability, physical and acoustic disturbance, environmental contamination, vessel strikes, and fishing gear entanglements.

Managing impacts to marine mammals is complex. As apex predators, marine mammals are impacted by their food web, the ocean environment, climate-related changes and human activities.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has a responsibility to conserve and protect marine mammal species in Canadian waters. DFO practices the precautionary approach and works with a variety of partners to develop measures to manage impacts from human activities, including strategies to support the recovery of species that are at risk.

DFO's commitment to integrative management is reflected in our collaborative approach. We work with multi-jurisdictional government agencies, Indigenous groups, stakeholders and coastal communities across a wide range of marine interests, activities and issues throughout British Columbia. This collaborative effort involves the coordination and integration of science-based data and Indigenous knowledge which informs decision-making processes in support of our overarching goal and key challenge: balancing the conservation of healthy marine mammal populations with a vibrant and sustainable blue economy.

This Framework explains the integrative approach we are taking to prevent, minimize and mitigate threats to marine mammal populations in our waters, and identifies how we are addressing socio-economic concerns.

Five Objectives to Move Us Toward the Overarching Management Goal

INTEGRATE



Collect scientific, economic and socio-cultural data and indigenous knowledge on marine mammals.

CONSERVE



Maintain healthy marine mammal populations.

PROTECT



Minimize threats to marine mammals and their habitat.

SUPPORT



Support Indigenous involvement in marine mammal management, including access for Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) purposes.

SUSTAIN



Sustain marine economic sectors for Canadians, Indigenous and coastal communities while balancing the conservation and protection of marine mammals.

LEGAL NOTICE: Framework and management measures can be modified at any time and do not fetter the Minister's discretionary powers set out in the *Fisheries Act*. The Minister can, for reasons of conservation or for any other valid reasons, modify any provision of the Framework in accordance with the powers granted pursuant to the *Fisheries Act*. This Framework is not a specified requirement under the *Fisheries Act*, the *Species at Risk Act*, or other Federal legislation referenced in this document. Rather, it is intended to serve as an overarching document for all marine mammals in Canadian Pacific waters, that sets out the context in which management actions are considered. Where DFO is responsible for implementing obligations under land claims agreements, the Framework will be implemented in a manner consistent with these obligations. In the event that the Framework is inconsistent with obligations under land claims agreements, the provisions of the land claims agreements will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.