

POR Registration Number: 058-23

Oceans Protection Plan - Canadians' Confidence in Marine Safety 2024

Public Opinion Research Report

Prepared for Transport Canada

Supplier name: Pollara Strategic Insights Inc.

Contract number: CW2332068

Contract value: 168,768.89

Award date: October 4, 2023

Delivery date: March 27, 2024

For more information on this report, please contact Transport Canada at TC.PublicOpinion-OpinionPublique.TC@tc.gc.ca

Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français.



Canada

Oceans Protection Plan - Canadians' Confidence in Marine Safety 2024

Public Opinion Research Report

Prepared for Transport Canada

Supplier Name: Pollara Strategic Insights Inc.

Date: March 2024

This public opinion research report presents the results of an online and telephone survey with 3,100 Canadians conducted by Pollara Strategic Insights Inc. on behalf of Transport Canada. In-depth interviews with Indigenous partners and marine stakeholders were also conducted during the same time.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Plan de protection des océans – la confiance des Canadiens à l'égard de la sécurité maritime 2024.

Transport Canada grants permission to copy and/or reproduce the contents of this publication for personal and public non-commercial use. Users must reproduce the materials accurately, identify Transport Canada as the source and not present theirs as an official version, or as having been produced with the help or the endorsement of Transport Canada.

To request permission to reproduce materials from this publication for commercial purposes, please complete the following web form: www.tc.gc.ca/eng/crown-copyright-request-614.html

Or contact TCcopyright-droitdauteurTC@tc.gc.ca

Catalogue Number: T29-173/2024E-PDF

International Standard Book Number (ISBN): 978-0-660-70820-1

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Transport, 2024

The logo for the word "Canada" in a large, black, serif font. A small red and white Canadian flag is positioned above the letter 'a'.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	4
List of Charts	4
Executive Summary.....	5
A. Research Background and Objectives	5
B. Brief methodology	5
C. Summary of Key Findings	6
D. Note to Readers	11
E. Political Neutrality Certificate.....	11
Detailed Findings	12
A. Findings from The Quantitative Survey	12
1. Perceptions of Canada's Marine Safety System	13
2. Perceptions of the Oceans Protection Plan (Oceans Protection Plan).....	24
3. Roles in Developing and Addressing Marine Safety	33
4. Extent and Importance of Involvement in Canada's Marine Safety System.....	35
5. Sources of Information about GoC's Programs & Initiatives on Marine Safety	40
6. Participation in Engagement Sessions.....	42
B. Findings from Indigenous Partners Interviews	43
C. Findings from Marine Stakeholder Participant Interviews	50
Appendix	56
Appendix A: Quantitative Research Methodology Report	56
Appendix B: Qualitative Research Methodology Report	59
Appendix C: Online Survey Questionnaire.....	61
Appendix D: In-Depth Interview Discussion Guide	73

List of Tables

- Table 1: Awareness of Marine Safety Issues: General population
 Table 2: Awareness of Marine Safety Issues: Coastal Communities
 Table 3: Awareness of Marine Safety Issues: Indigenous Peoples
 Table 4: Importance of Marine Safety: General Population
 Table 5: Importance of Marine Safety: Coastal Communities
 Table 6: Importance of Marine Safety: Indigenous Peoples
 Table 7: Confidence in Canada's Marine Safety System
 Table 8: Reasons for High Confidence in Canada's Marine Safety System
 Table 9: Reasons for No Confidence in Canada's Marine Safety System
 Table 10: Awareness of Specific GoC Programs, Regulations and/or Activities (1/3)
 Table 11: Awareness of Specific GoC Programs, Regulations and/or Activities (2/3)
 Table 12: Awareness of Specific GoC Programs, Regulations and/or Activities (3/3)
 Table 13: Confidence in Canada's Marine Oil Spill Response System
 Table 14: Familiarity with the Oceans Protection Plan: By Region
 Table 15: Recall for the Oceans Protection Plan in the Past Year
 Table 16: Specifics of Messages Recalled for the Oceans Protection Plan
 Table 17: Sources of Hearing about the Oceans Protection Plan
 Table 18: Importance of Aspects of the Oceans Protection Plan
 Table 19: Importance of Aspects of the Oceans Protection Plan: Comparison between General Population, Coastal Communities, and Indigenous Peoples
 Table 20: Impact of the Oceans Protection Plan
 Table 21: Impact of the Oceans Protection Plan: Comparison between General Population, Coastal Communities, and Indigenous Peoples
 Table 22: Incidence of Searching for Information about Marine Safety
 Table 23: Importance of Government Providing Information on Marine Safety
 Table 24: Importance of Government Providing Information on Marine Safety: Comparison between General Population, Coastal Communities, and Indigenous Peoples
 Table 25: Primary Sources of Information to look for Goc Programs & Initiatives on Marine Safety
 Table 26: Incidence of Participation in Engagement Sessions
 Table 27: Recall of Engagement Sessions Organizer

List of Charts

- Chart 1: Confidence in Marine Habitat and Species being Protected in Canada
 Chart 2: Confidence in Canada's Marine Oil Spill Response System
 Chart 3: Familiarity with the Government of Canada's Ocean Protection Plan
 Chart 4: Roles in Developing Marine Safety
 Chart 5: Roles in Addressing Marine Safety
 Chart 6: Level of Involvement in Canada's Marine Safety System
 Chart 7: Importance of Providing Input on Decisions on Marine Safety

Executive Summary

A. Research Background and Objectives

The Oceans Protection Plan is the largest investment ever made to protect Canada's coasts and waterways. It provides world-leading marine safety that creates economic opportunities for Canadians today, while protecting our coastlines for generations to come.

The Oceans Protection Plan brings together Transport Canada, Indigenous partners, coastal communities, the marine industry and other stakeholders to develop and improve Canada's marine safety system. It falls under Transport Canada's mandate. Transport Canada has been regularly conducting public opinion research to measure Canadians' awareness of issues and level of confidence surrounding marine safety, ecosystems protections, and the Oceans Protection Plan. This research measured awareness and confidence in Canada's marine safety system, the awareness, importance and impact of the Oceans Protection Plan, and the roles played by government and other organizations in developing and addressing marine safety.

This research will inform communications planning, outreach, and engagement in marine safety, as well as serve to measure improvement in relationships with Indigenous Peoples, coastal communities, Indigenous partners, and marine stakeholders.

B. Brief methodology

To meet the research objectives, Pollara designed a quantitative and qualitative component of research.

For the quantitative component, Pollara conducted a survey with n=3,100 Canadians. Though a margin of error cannot be assigned to online surveys, a probability sample of this size would have a margin of error of $\pm 1.8\%$, 19 times out of 20. This sample included n=624 surveys with Indigenous Peoples and n=1,656 surveys with residents living in coastal communities in Canada. Most of the completed surveys (n=3,076) were collected through an online panel, with n=40 completed surveys across the territories collected through telephonic interviews conducted by a team of trained, bilingual interviewers. The survey was conducted between December 5, 2023, and January 16, 2024, in English and French.

Findings are reported separately for the general population, Indigenous Peoples, and Canadians residing in coastal communities. Where possible, the results have been tracked against a 2018 baseline survey of n=3,407 (n=2,168 public and n=1,239 Indigenous Peoples), a 2020 survey of n=2,702 (n=2,141 public and n=561 Indigenous Peoples), and a 2022 survey of n=2,791 (n=2,224 public and n=600 Indigenous Peoples).

For the qualitative component, in-depth interviews were conducted by telephone with 25 Indigenous partners and 27 Marine stakeholders. These interviews were conducted between December 2023 and January 2024 in English and French.

The process for collection is described separately in Appendix A (Quantitative Methodology) and Appendix B (Qualitative Methodology). Appendix C presents the survey questionnaire and Appendix D presents the interview guide for Indigenous partners and Marine Stakeholders in-depth interviews.

C. Summary of Key Findings

Perceptions of Canada's Marine Safety System

Canadians have limited top-of-mind awareness of general marine safety issues. While 32% to 43% demonstrate at least a moderate degree of awareness, only 7% to 11% say they are very aware of marine safety issues such as safe shipping practices, steps taken to protect the marine environment, responding to offshore spills and maintaining the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain. These awareness levels have been trending down since 2018. Despite Canadians exhibiting low awareness of marine safety concerns, they largely believe that addressing these issues is highly important to them, particularly responding to offshore spills and accidents and protecting the marine ecosystem.

There is moderate awareness of programs and initiatives set up by the Government of Canada to respond to, prevent and monitor oil spills and incidents. Public confidence in Canada's marine oil spill response system is also modest. Specifically, 72% express at least moderate confidence in the system's ability to prepare for and respond in a timely manner to oil spills, and 59% express a similar degree of confidence in the system's ability to prevent oil spills and hold polluters accountable for covering the costs associated with spill clean ups.

Seven in ten (69%) have some degree of confidence in Canada's marine safety system and that marine habitats and species are protected in Canada. Notably, Canadians continue to express modest confidence in the marine safety system, with confidence levels higher than 2022, and similar to levels seen in 2018 and 2020. These positive to modest perceptions are primarily due to the public believing that Canada has laws, regulations, and policies in place with a reputation of being environmentally active and aware.

Residents in coastal communities are somewhat more aware of the broader aspects of Canada's marine safety system as well as the specific programs and initiatives set up by the Government of Canada. They place a higher importance on responding to offshore spills, incidents and emergencies, protecting the marine environment and maintaining the reliability and strength of the supply chain. This cohort exhibits marginally higher confidence in the capabilities of Canada's marine oil spill response system compared to the public.

Indigenous Peoples report slightly higher levels of awareness and give slightly higher importance to marine safety aspects than the general population. They are less likely to feel confident in Canada's marine safety system and the ability to protect the marine ecosystem but are similar to the public when it comes to feeling confident about Canada's marine oil spill response system. Notably, Indigenous Peoples residing in coastal regions are much more likely to be aware of marine safety issues in general and the specific initiatives and programs set up by the government. These issues are much more important to them, and they express higher degrees of confidence in the government's ability to protect the waterways and marine habitat in Canada.

These findings align with the views of Indigenous partners who emphasize the cultural and traditional significance of oceans and waterways, and that they depend on these for survival as well as recreation. While expressing concerns about marine shipping, pollution, impacts on the aquatic ecosystem and the impacts on human safety, they also appreciate the efforts taken by the government.

Marine stakeholders express similar views to Indigenous partners. They also mention the utilitarian role that Canada's oceans and waterways play (especially among those on the east coast). They emphasize the economic significance of shipping, tourism, and fisheries, while reinstating the importance of marine safety including sustainable management and conservation efforts that are crucial for future generations.

Perceptions of the Oceans Protection Plan (Oceans Protection Plan)

Given Canadians are not very engaged on marine safety related issues, it is not surprising that few are familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan. While a slight majority report some degree of familiarity with the Oceans Protection Plan, only 12% are very or somewhat familiar with the plan. Among those with some degree of familiarity, only 6% have seen, read, or heard about the plan in the past year. Those who have seen, read, or heard something recall the primary action points of the Oceans Protection Plan such as increasing protection of the oceans and waterways and protecting the marine ecosystem and habitat. Key sources of information on the Oceans Protection Plan are television and newspapers, with some mentions of radio, social media, and Transport Canada or other government websites.

Despite having low awareness of the Oceans Protection Plan, a large majority of Canadians still believe the regulations, initiatives and actions of the Oceans Protection Plan are important. Canadians especially believe that timely response to and management of factors that impact marine pollution, as well as protection and restoration of the marine environment are important. Other aspects of the plan involving marine safety, scientific research, and collaboration with multiple cohorts of Canadians on marine safety initiatives are important to 61% to 67% of Canadians.

Between one-third to half (35% to 50%) of the public perceive a positive impact of the Oceans Protection Plan in improving marine safety and safeguarding the marine environment. However,

many (35% to 42%) do not know enough to provide a rating. Expectedly, higher familiarity with the Oceans Protection Plan elicits a distinctly elevated perceived positive impact of the Oceans Protection Plan on various marine safety aspects compared to those who are less familiar or unaware.

Coastal communities in Canada exhibit somewhat higher levels of familiarity with the Oceans Protection Plan than non-coastal communities. Likewise, they are somewhat more likely to consider all the aspects of the Oceans Protection Plan tested to be important. Between 37% to 52% of people in coastal communities are more likely to observe positive impacts of the plan on the various aspects of marine safety and environmental rehabilitation.

Indigenous Peoples are more likely to report being very or somewhat familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan than the public. This is primarily driven by a notably higher degree of familiarity with the plan among Indigenous coastal communities. Indigenous Peoples who have seen, read, or heard about the plan in the past year cite television as their primary source and are much more likely to receive information from social media than the public, especially YouTube. Their views on the importance of most aspects of the Oceans Protection Plan resemble those of the public. However, they are notably more invested in enhancing marine safety in the Arctic and including more meaningful participation from their community, as well as other Canadians than the public. Furthermore, this cohort is somewhat more likely to observe positive impacts of the Oceans Protection Plan.

Indigenous partners interviewed also express varying levels of understanding of the Oceans Protection Plan, with some finding it challenging to grasp its overarching objectives. In line with the perceived positive impacts of the Oceans Protection Plan among Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous partners also view the Oceans Protection Plan favorably overall, due to its funding levels and efforts made towards essential areas like safety and involvement of Indigenous communities. However, they underscore the necessity for enhancement in various aspects, specifically, the need for the plan to establish clear, cohesive, and measurable objectives, streamline and simplify processes, reduce consultation time, tackle turnover in government personnel and sustainable engagement.

Marine stakeholders have a basic understanding of the Oceans Protection Plan, seeing it as a broad set of funding initiatives to enhance marine safety, protect the environment, and promote economic development. They recognize Indigenous partnerships as essential components of the Oceans Protection Plan, with a focus on collaboration and inclusion. While stakeholders praise the Oceans Protection Plan's commitment and investment in marine safety, like Indigenous partners they too criticize the lack of clear strategic objectives and slow implementation. Suggestions for improvement include strengthening engagement with communities, making the engagement process more effective, investing in technology, and being more transparent.

Roles in Developing and Addressing Marine Safety

The majority of Canadians desire strong involvement from the Government of Canada and their provincial or territorial government in developing marine safety. There is a significantly higher expectation – from about 76% of the public – for the federal government to play a much larger and pivotal role in marine safety. However, the proportion of Canadians (37%) who believe the federal government has significantly contributed to addressing marine safety in recent years falls significantly short of the public's expectation.

Similarly, 59% prefer their provincial or territorial government to assume a larger role in marine safety but only 23% believe they have played a substantial role. 45% prefer Indigenous governments to play a significant role. To note, this was expressed more strongly by 61% of Indigenous Peoples. However, only 19% of the public and 32% of Indigenous Peoples feel Indigenous governments have made a substantial contribution. In contrast, only 34% expect a substantial role to be played by their municipal or local government.

Similar to views expressed by marine stakeholders and Indigenous partners, coastal communities also feel somewhat more positively about the Government of Canada's contribution in addressing marine safety. Indigenous coastal communities are more likely to feel all levels of governments, including the shipping industry, have made at least somewhat substantial contributions.

Extent and Importance of Involvement in Canada's Marine Safety System

A large majority of Canadians claim to not be actively involved with marine safety. This is not surprising given the low awareness of the marine safety systems, including the Oceans Protection Plan. That said, despite limited engagement, Canadians prove themselves to be environmental advocates – they feel strongly about marine safety giving it high importance, and feel it is important to receive information as well as provide input on marine safety issues in Canada.

Approximately one in five (19%) Canadians claim they are at least somewhat actively involved in Canada's marine safety system, with 34% of Indigenous Peoples residing in coastal areas reporting active involvement.

The proportion of Canadians searching for information on marine safety has declined from 19% to 24% in previous years to 13% at present. This offers a partial explanation for the declining level of familiarity with marine safety issues. Although coastal Indigenous communities have more interest in this topic, their likelihood to search for information on marine safety is also declining.

Despite very few searching for information about marine safety, the majority of Canadians believe it is highly important for the Government of Canada to provide information on aspects of marine safety, with interest highest on the incidence of accidents/spills and the record of cleaning up spills. It is noteworthy that those who are less familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan are more likely to be interested in these pieces of information.

Along with receiving information, Canadians also feel that providing input on decisions the government makes with regards to marine safety is important to them. Indigenous Peoples, and especially those in coastal areas, are much more likely to feel it is important. This sentiment is reinforced by Indigenous partners, as they expect the government to increase and maintain consultations with Indigenous communities.

Sources of Information about GoC's Programs & Initiatives on Marine Safety

The majority of respondents prefer searching the internet (78%), with a significant portion also relying on Government of Canada websites (49%) for information on government programs and initiatives on marine safety. Only a few mention seeking information from other sources like non-government organizations, individuals working in the marine transportation or shipping industries and social media. Coastal communities and Indigenous Peoples have similar source preferences as the public.

Participation in Engagement Sessions

Few Canadians actively search for information or are involved with marine safety. Consistent with these findings, only 4% of Canadians report participating in an engagement session on marine safety or the Oceans Protection Plan. These results are consistent with results from previous years. Most who participated say these sessions were organized by the Government of Canada, with some mentioning other organizers like environmental groups and their provincial or local governments.

Notably, participation by coastal communities (5%) and Indigenous Peoples (5%) in these sessions is almost similar to the public's and slightly lower than reported in previous years. Among Indigenous Peoples, it is primarily only those residing in coastal areas who say they have participated.

Indigenous partners and marine stakeholders hold very similar opinions regarding consultation preferences. Both groups largely prefer in-person meetings or sessions because it helps foster trust, increase engagement, and allows the amount of overwhelming information on marine safety and the Oceans Protection Plan to be distilled down through dialogue and discussions. That said, ultimately for marine stakeholders the quality of the interaction is deemed more important than the method of consultation, with a call for more engaging and purposeful discussions.

Indigenous partners suggest that the government should increase community engagement and follow up to show how this community input is being incorporated in decisions on marine safety and in the Oceans Protection Plan. There should be assurances of long-term commitment to the Oceans Protection Plan, which involves providing summaries of the Oceans Protection Plan projects, and clarifying that the Oceans Protection Plan is not exclusive to coastal communities.

D. Note to Readers

Detailed findings are presented in the sections that follow. Overall results for the 2024 survey are presented in the main portion of the narrative and are typically supported by graphic or tabular presentation of results and labelled as “2024”. Results are compared, where applicable, with the 2022, 2020 and 2018 survey findings, and are presented in tables under the heading “2022”, “2020” and “2018”. Where there are significant differences between the public, Indigenous Peoples and coastal communities, these differences are described in the main paragraph.

Bulleted text is used to point out any statistically and substantively significant differences between sub-groups. If differences are not noted in the report, it can be assumed that they are either not statistically significant* in their variation from the overall or that the difference was deemed to be substantively too small to be noteworthy.

Results may not total to 100% due to rounding.

**Chi-square and standard t-tests were applied as applicable. Differences noted were significant at the 95 % level.*

E. Political Neutrality Certificate

Supplier name: Pollara Strategic Insights Inc.

Contract number: CW2332068

Contract value: \$168,768.89

Award date: October 4, 2023

Delivery date: March 27, 2024

I hereby certify as a representative of Pollara Strategic Insights Inc. that the final deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signed:

Date: March 27, 2024



Dan Arnold, Chief Strategy officer
Pollara Strategic Insights

Detailed Findings

A. Findings from The Quantitative Survey

The following section contains detailed analysis of the quantitative findings of this research project. It is divided into 6 sub-sections:

1. Perceptions of Canada's Marine Safety System
 - General Awareness of Marine Safety Issues
 - Importance of Marine Safety
 - Confidence in Canada's Marine Safety System and Habitat Protection
 - Awareness of Government of Canada's Programs and Regulations
 - Confidence in Canada's Marine Oil Spill Response System
2. Perceptions of the Oceans Protection Plan
 - Awareness of the Oceans Protection Plan
 - Importance of the Oceans Protection Plan
 - Impact of the Oceans Protection Plan
3. Roles in Developing and Addressing Marine Safety
 - Preferred Roles in Developing Marine Safety
 - Perceived Roles in Addressing Marine Safety
4. Extent and Importance of Involvement in Canada's Marine Safety System
 - Level of Active Involvement in Canada's Marine Safety System
 - Incidence of Searching for Information on Marine Safety
 - Importance of Receiving Information on Marine Safety Incidents and Protections
 - Importance of Providing Input into Decisions about Marine Safety
5. Sources of Information about GoC's Programs & Initiatives on Marine Safety
6. Participation in Engagement Sessions

1. Perceptions of Canada's Marine Safety System

General Awareness of Marine Safety Issues

Canadians demonstrate only a limited degree of awareness of marine safety related issues. Four in ten are at least moderately aware (rate 3, 4 or 5 out of 5) of the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain (43%), the steps taken to protect the marine environment (39%), and the marine response to offshore spills and incidents (37%). One in three (32%) say they are at least moderately aware of marine safety issues including safe shipping practices.

Between 54% to 65% are not aware (rate 1 or 2 out of 5) of these marine safety issues.

Only 7% to 11% are highly aware of these aspects related to marine safety. Levels of high awareness of marine safety including shipping practices and steps taken to protect the marine environment are similar to the levels seen in 2022 (9% and 10% respectively), and lower than those seen in 2018 and 2020 (between 14% to 18% high awareness).

- Awareness is higher in coastal provinces, with about half of British Columbia (51% both) and Atlantic Canada (48%; 46% respectively) residents reporting some level of awareness of the steps taken to protect the marine environment and respond to offshore spills and incidents. In the territories, fewer compared to the former provinces say they are aware of the steps taken towards marine environmental protection (45%) and of the responses to offshore spills (38%).
- Awareness of safe shipping practices is also higher among British Columbia (41%), Atlantic Canada (40%) and the territories (35%) residents compared to other regions.
- Minor variations in awareness levels are seen among age groups, with both Canadians under 35 and 65 and over being slightly more likely to claim awareness of these marine safety aspects than 35-64 year olds.

TABLE 1 – Q1. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all aware” and 5 is “very aware”, how would you characterize your level of awareness (e.g., the degree you feel informed) about each of the following in Canada? Base: General Population (N=3,100)

General Population	Aware (4-5)	Moderately Aware (3)	Not Aware (1-2)	Aware (4-5)		
	2024			2022	2020	2018
Marine safety issues including safe shipping practices	7%	25%	65%	9%	14%	17%
Steps taken to protect the marine environment	9%	30%	59%	10%	16%	18%
Marine response to offshore spills, incidents, and emergencies	9%	28%	60%	-	-	-
The reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	11%	32%	54%	-	-	-

Residents in coastal communities are somewhat more likely to say they are at least moderately aware of these marine issues compared to the public. Among this group as well, awareness levels have decreased over time.

TABLE 2 – Q1. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all aware” and 5 is “very aware”, how would you characterize your level of awareness (e.g., the degree you feel informed) about each of the following in Canada? Base: Coastal Communities (N=1,656)

Coastal Communities	Aware (4-5)	Moderately Aware (3)	Not Aware (1-2)	Aware (4-5)		
	2024			2022	2020	2018
Marine safety issues including safe shipping practices	10%	28%	61%	20%	20%	29%
Steps taken to protect the marine environment	12%	36%	52%	21%	20%	29%
Marine response to offshore spills, incidents, and emergencies	11%	32%	56%	-	-	-
The reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	15%	35%	49%	-	-	-

Indigenous Peoples are only slightly more aware of marine-related issues than the general Canadian population. Notably, awareness is much higher among Indigenous coastal residents – 59% claim to be at least moderately aware of the protective steps taken, 48% of safe shipping practices and 52% of marine responses to offshore spills, compared to those residing in non-coastal areas (36%; 32%; 41% respectively). Meanwhile, awareness of strength and reliability of the supply chain between the two cohorts is similar (52% coastal vs. 48% non-coastal).

As with the general population, familiarity levels are down among Indigenous Peoples.

TABLE 3 – Q1. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all aware” and 5 is “very aware”, how would you characterize your level of awareness (e.g., the degree you feel informed) about each of the following in Canada? Base: Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

Indigenous Peoples	Aware (4-5)	Moderately Aware (3)	Not Aware (1-2)	Aware (4-5)		
	2024			2022	2020	2018
Marine safety issues including safe shipping practices	11%	24%	62%	17%	19%	23%
Steps taken to protect the marine environment	11%	29%	56%	22%	26%	24%
Marine response to offshore spills, incidents, and emergencies	12%	31%	54%	-	-	-
The reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	15%	33%	47%	-	-	-

Importance of Marine Safety

All aspects of marine safety tested are seen as highly important by the majority of Canadians, with the most important being marine response to offshore spills, incidents, and emergencies (75%) and protecting the marine environment (74%). Seven in ten (71%) also feel that Canada's supply chain being reliable and strong is very important to them.

- Protecting the marine environment is most important to residents of the territories (81%), Manitoba (80%), and British Columbia (78%), and responding to offshore spills are most important to residents of Manitoba (86%), the territories (81%), British Columbia (79%), and Atlantic Canada (79%).
- Safe shipping practices are somewhat more important for British Columbia (64%), Atlantic Canada (64%), the territories (64%) and Manitoba (68%) residents, while fewer in Ontario (58%) and Quebec (55%) feel the same way.
- When it comes to Canada's supply chain being reliable and strong, residents in Manitoba (80%), followed by residents of the territories (77%), British Columbia (74%), Ontario (74%), and Atlantic Canada (73%) say it is important, while Quebec residents (62%) are least likely to say it is important.
- Older Canadians, 50 years and over, are more likely to say all these aspects related to marine safety are important to them versus younger Canadians.

Perceived importance of marine safety including safe shipping and protecting the marine environment is much lower this year than compared to previous years. Lower awareness indicates Canadians are less engaged on marine safety issues, and thus give lower importance to these aspects as these are not top-of-mind factors. A similar decrease in importance levels compared to 2022 and earlier, as seen among general population, is also seen among coastal communities and Indigenous Peoples.

TABLE 4 – Q2. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important”, how important would you say that each of the following are to you? Base: General Population (N=3,100)

General Population	Important (4-5)	Somewhat Important (3)	Not Important (1-2)	Important (4-5)		
	2024			2022	2020	2018
Marine safety including safe shipping practices	59%	25%	12%	70%	76%	75%
Protecting the marine environment	74%	15%	7%	83%	83%	83%
Marine response to offshore spills, incidents, and emergencies	75%	14%	7%	-	-	-
The reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	71%	16%	7%	-	-	-

The importance of these issues is expressed more strongly in coastal communities.

TABLE 5 – Q2. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important”, how important would you say that each of the following are to you? Base: Coastal Communities (N=1,656)

Coastal Communities	Important (4-5)	Somewhat Important (3)	Not Important (1-2)	Important (4-5)		
	2024			2022	2020	2018
Marine safety including safe shipping practices	64%	25%	10%	81%	80%	82%
Protecting the marine environment	79%	14%	6%	89%	87%	87%
Marine response to offshore spills, incidents, and emergencies	80%	13%	6%	-	-	-
The reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	76%	16%	6%	-	-	-

Indigenous Peoples are only slightly more likely to give high importance to marine safety and Canada's supply chain than the general population. As with the general population trend, Indigenous Peoples who are older and who live in coastal communities place a higher importance on all aspects of marine safety.

TABLE 6 – Q2. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important”, how important would you say that each of the following are to you? Base: Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

Indigenous Peoples	Important (4-5)	Somewhat Important (3)	Not Important (1-2)	Important (4-5)		
	2024			2022	2020	2018
Marine safety including safe shipping practices	62%	25%	10%	74%	76%	74%
Protecting the marine environment	77%	15%	6%	80%	84%	82%
Marine response to offshore spills, incidents, and emergencies	77%	12%	8%	-	-	-
The reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	75%	13%	7%	-	-	-

Confidence in Canada's Marine Safety System and Habitat Protection

Seven in ten (69%) Canadians are at least moderately confident (rate 3, 4 or 5 out of 5) in Canada's marine safety system, with 30% saying they are highly confident and 39% saying they are moderately confident. Only 12% don't feel confident. One-fifth (19%) of the public don't have an opinion.

- Overall, Atlantic Canada (72%), British Columbia (71%), the territories (70%) and Quebec (70%) residents are most likely to express at least moderate confidence in Canada's marine safety system.

- Confidence is higher among those living in coastal areas, with three-quarters (76%) at least moderately confident in Canada's marine safety system. Confidence levels are similar in small, medium, and large coastal communities.
- Compared to the general population, confidence levels with Canada's marine safety system are slightly lower among Indigenous Peoples (65% at least moderately confident). Similar to sentiments expressed by coastal communities in general, Indigenous Peoples living in coastal communities (72%) are more likely to be confident in the marine safety system than those residing in non-coastal communities (63%).

After seeing a drop in confidence levels in 2022, confidence levels appear to have rebounded to levels seen in 2018 and 2020.

TABLE 7 – Q3A. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all confident” and 5 is “very confident”, how confident are you in Canada's marine safety system? Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

	Highly Confident (4-5)	Moderately Confident (3)	Not Confident (1-2)	Highly Confident (4-5)		
	2024			2022	2020	2018
General Population	30%	39%	12%	22%	29%	29%
Coastal Communities	35%	41%	10%	25%	32%	29%
Indigenous Peoples	28%	37%	17%	18%	22%	28%

Those who say they are highly confident about Canada's marine safety system (30% of the public) explain this confidence through a feeling that Canada has laws, policies, and regulations in place to ensure marine safety and that Canada has a reputation of being proactive about protecting the marine environment. Some mention that Canada has the resources to do a good job and responds quickly and efficiently, thus instilling confidence and trust in the marine safety system.

TABLE 8 – Q3B1. Why specifically do you feel this way? Open-ended Question. Base: General Population who rated 4 or 5 for Confidence in Canada's marine safety system (N=917).

Canada has laws, policies, regulations in place, is proactive, has a reputation for being environmentally aware	19%
Does a good job, knowledgeable, has resources (staff, equipment), efficient and quick response	16%
Generally positive comments (heard positive comments in media or news, have not heard of any incidents, etc.)	12%
No reason in particular/ Don't know	50%

Responses with similar context or themes are grouped into a common theme. Responses less than 5% are not shown.

Those who say they are not confident about Canada's marine safety system (12% of the public), largely cannot articulate a reason for their opinion. However, those who provide a response mainly lack confidence because they feel stricter regulations are needed, there should be more enforcement and adherence to laws and policies, and overall feel that the marine safety system is not managed properly as actions are more reactive than proactive. On similar lines, some feel that Canada's response to marine safety incidents is inadequate based on their awareness of negative incidents that have occurred.

TABLE 9 – Q3B2. Why specifically do you feel this way? Open-ended Question. Base: General Population who rated 1 or 2 for Confidence in Canada's marine safety system (N=391).

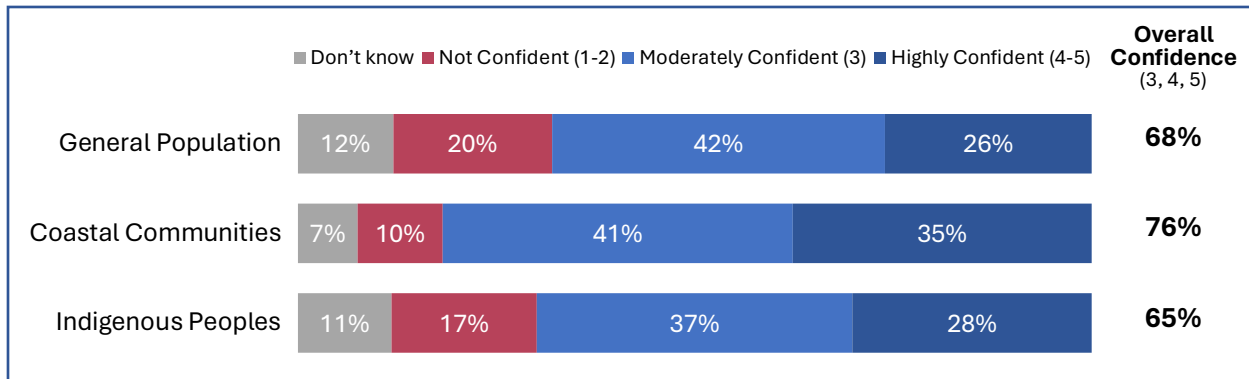
Need stricter regulations, more enforcement, adherence to laws, not managed properly, more reactive than proactive, better surveillance is needed	22%
Inadequate response, too slow to react, negative incidents have been happening (e.g., fires, accidents, spills, etc.)	16%
Budget cuts, lack of funding	4%
Need more resources (e.g., staff and equipment)	3%
No reason in particular/ Don't know	52%

Responses with similar context or themes are grouped into a common theme. Responses less than 3% are not shown.

Almost seven in ten (68%) Canadians are at least moderately confident (rate 3, 4 or 5 out of 5) about marine habitats and species being protected in Canada. One in four (26% rate 4 or 5) express high confidence and 42% moderate confidence.

- Seven in ten in Atlantic Canada (70%), British Columbia (69%) and Quebec (69%) are at least moderately confident about marine habitat and species protection in Canada. In comparison, fewer in the territories express at least a moderate degree of confidence (55%).
- Confidence levels increase with age – 18-34 year olds (64%) are least likely to feel confident in Canada's ability to protect marine habitat and species, compared to 35-49 year olds (68%) and 50-64 year olds (69%), with 65+ year olds (71%) expressing highest levels of confidence.
- 73% of coastal community residents feel at least moderately confident about Canada protecting marine habitat and species, with 27% feeling highly confident and 46% feeling moderately confident.
- Two-thirds (67%) of Indigenous Peoples express confidence in Canada's ability to protect its marine habitat and species, similar to the confidence levels expressed by the public. Overall confidence among coastal and non-coastal Indigenous communities is similar (69% vs. 66%).

CHART 1 – Q3C. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all confident” and 5 is “very confident”, how confident are you that marine habitats and species are protected in Canada? Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)



Awareness of Government of Canada's Programs and Regulations

While Canadians exhibit lower awareness of marine safety, when asked about specific programs, regulations and activities set up by the Government of Canada, there is significantly higher reported awareness. The majority say they are aware of the initiatives taken for marine pollution such as responding to incidents of oil spills (64%), monitoring marine pollution (58%) and prevention of oil spills and such incidents that contribute to marine pollution (55%). Awareness levels for these actions is somewhat lower when compared to previous years and is aligned with the overall drop in awareness when it comes to marine safety issues.

- Awareness of the different regulations and activities in place to prevent marine pollution are almost at par in all provinces – of note, British Columbia (72%) and the territories (70%) residents are somewhat more likely to claim awareness on steps taken to respond to oil spill incidents contributing to marine pollution.
- British Columbia (64%) and the territories residents (61%) are also more likely to say they are aware of the government monitoring marine pollution incidents.
- Awareness of responding to incidents contributing to marine pollution is much lower among 18-34 year old Canadians (56%), and increases with age, with those 65+ saying they are most aware (73%). Similar trend is seen when it comes to steps taken to monitor marine pollution – with 49% of 18-34 year olds saying they are aware compared to 64% of 65+ year olds.

Compared to non-coastal communities, coastal communities are more likely to say they are aware of steps taken to respond to (73% vs. 58%), monitor (65% vs. 54%) and prevent (59% vs. 53%) oil spills and such incidents that contribute to marine pollution. The awareness levels for responding to incidents is somewhat lower than seen in previous years, however awareness of monitoring and preventing marine pollution incidents is nearly the same as previous years.

Among Indigenous Peoples, the awareness levels are similar to those seen among the public, and comparatively lower than 2022 but at par with 2020 and 2018. Coastal Indigenous communities are more likely to report being aware of responding to (70% vs. 61%), monitoring (63% vs. 52%) and preventing (60% vs. 51%) marine polluting incidents like oil spills than those living in non-coastal communities.

TABLE 10 – Q4. As far as you know, does the Government of Canada have programs, regulations, and/or activities in place to: *Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)*

% Saying YES	General Population				Coastal Communities				Indigenous Peoples			
	2024	2022	2020	2018	2024	2022	2020	2018	2024	2022	2020	2018
Respond to incidents, such as an oil spill, that contribute to marine pollution	64%	74%	79%	74%	73%	77%	79%	72%	63%	72%	66%	64%
Monitor marine pollution incidents	58%	60%	63%	62%	65%	64%	67%	64%	54%	63%	51%	51%
Prevent incidents, such as an oil spill, that contribute to marine pollution	55%	62%	66%	63%	59%	65%	68%	61%	53%	55%	56%	50%

Half (53%) of Canadians believe that the government has programs and regulations in place to protect and restore aquatic habitats in coastal areas, while just over two-fifths (43%) believe that the government is working towards reducing the impact of marine shipping on the marine ecosystem. Those residing in coastal areas are more likely to say they are aware of steps taken to protect the ecosystem (61%; 51% respectively). Indigenous Peoples have marginally lower awareness than the public when it comes to action taken for protecting and restoring the marine ecosystem (49%) and reducing impact of shipping (40%).

Just under half of the public (45%) and Indigenous Peoples (45%) feel the government is working closely with Indigenous Peoples and coastal communities to protect Canada's coasts and improve marine safety. Coastal communities are somewhat more likely to say they are aware of this (49%).

TABLE 11 – Q4. As far as you know, does the Government of Canada have programs, regulations, and/or activities in place to: *Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)*

% Saying YES	General Population	Coastal Communities	Indigenous Peoples
Protect and restore aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas	53%	61%	49%
Work closely with Indigenous Peoples and coastal communities to protect Canada's coasts, waterways and ecosystems and improve marine safety	45%	49%	45%

Reduce the impact of marine shipping on Canada's marine ecosystem	43%	51%	40%
---	-----	-----	-----

Some Canadians say they are aware of steps taken to protect Canada's supply chain (48%) and create economic opportunities for coastal communities (40%). Residents in coastal communities (52%; 45% respectively) and Indigenous Peoples (52%; 42% respectively) have similar awareness levels as the public. Notably, those living in the large coastal communities (49%) are more likely to feel there are economic opportunities for communities near Canada's coasts and waterways.

TABLE 12 – Q4. As far as you know, does the Government of Canada have programs, regulations, and/or activities in place to: *Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)*

% Saying YES	General Population	Coastal Communities	Indigenous Peoples
Protect the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	48%	52%	52%
Create economic opportunities for communities near Canada's coasts and waterways	40%	45%	42%

Confidence in Canada's Marine Oil Spill Response System

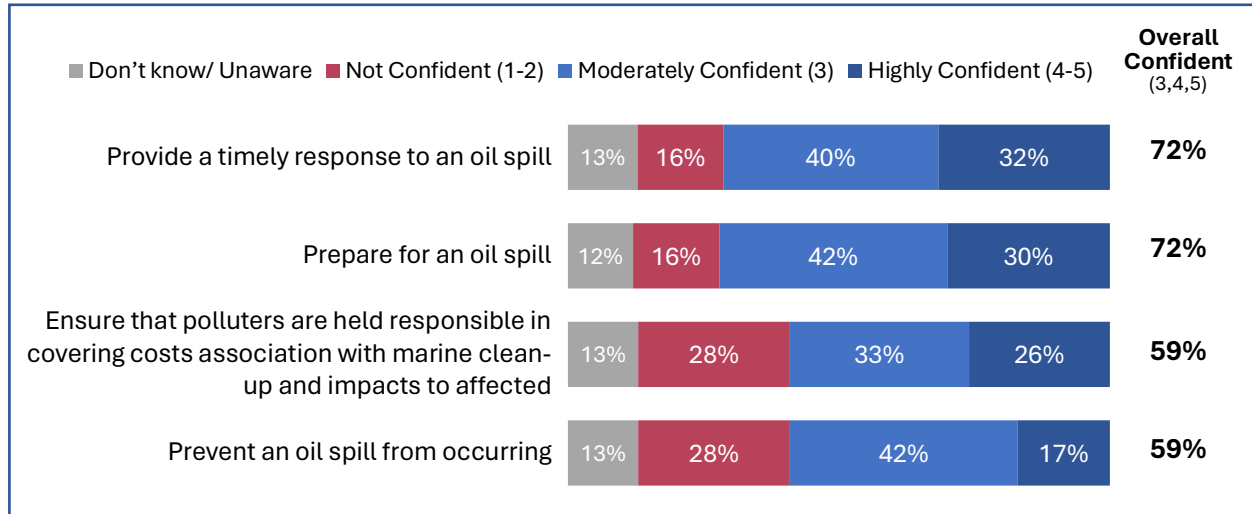
The majority of Canadians express at least moderate confidence (rating 3, 4, or 5 out of 5) in Canada's marine oil spill response system. Approximately seven in ten are moderately confident in the system's ability to prepare for (72%) and respond to (72%) an oil spill in a timely manner. Six in ten feel confident about the system's capacity to prevent oil spills (59%) and ensure that polluters are held accountable for covering cleanup costs and other impacts (59%). About one in three are highly confident in the system's readiness to respond promptly (32%) and prepare for (30%) an oil spill, while 16% lack confidence. However, regarding the prevention of oil spills, Canadians are more likely to express lack of confidence than high confidence (28% vs. 17%).

In comparison to 2022, similar proportions (30% in both 2022 and 2024) express high confidence in the response system's ability to provide a timely response to an oil spill. However, these levels are lower than those observed in 2020 and 2018 (37% in both years).

- Residents in Atlantic Canada are more likely to express overall confidence for all four actions of the response system (60% to 76%). While British Columbia and the territories residents are largely confident that response system can prepare for (70%; 71% respectively) and respond in a timely manner to oil spills (69%; 72% resp.), just about half are at least moderately confident about preventing oil spills (52%; 48% resp.) and ensuring that the polluters pay the costs associated with the spill (52% both).

- Those who are familiar (38% to 44%) with the Ocean's Protection Plan are also more likely to feel highly confident about the marine oil spills response system compared to those who are not very familiar (16% to 34%) or unaware (12% to 26%) of the plan.

CHART 2 – Q11. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all confident” and 5 is “very confident”, how confident are you that Canada's Marine Oil Spill Response System can do each of the following? Base: General Population (N=3,100)



Similar to the public, coastal communities also express confidence in the capabilities of the marine oil spill response system. Three-quarters of coastal residents are moderately confident or higher in the system's ability to prepare for (74%) and respond promptly to (75%) oil spills. Additionally, 57% express at least moderate confidence in oil spill prevention, while 58% are confident in ensuring that polluters cover associated costs. High confidence levels are similarly observed among coastal communities, resembling those of the general population and non-coastal areas. Notably, coastal communities in Atlantic Canada exhibit higher overall confidence in the response system compared to their non-coastal counterparts.

Overall, Indigenous Peoples also indicate similar levels of confidence across all four actions – 71% for preparing for an oil spill, 70% for providing a timely response, 60% for ensuring polluters pay and 58% for prevention. Atlantic Canada based Indigenous Peoples are more likely to be confident with the oil spill response system.

TABLE 13 – Q11. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all confident” and 5 is “very confident”, how confident are you that Canada's Marine Oil Spill Response System can do each of the following? Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

Overall Confidence (3, 4, 5)	General Population	Coastal Communities	Indigenous Peoples
Provide a timely response to an oil spill	72%	75%	70%
Prepare for an oil spill	72%	74%	71%
Ensure that polluters are held responsible in covering costs associated with marine clean-up and impacts to affected	59%	58%	60%
Prevent an oil spill from occurring	59%	57%	58%

2. Perceptions of the Oceans Protection Plan (Oceans Protection Plan)

Awareness of the Oceans Protection Plan

A slight majority (53%) of Canadians report some degree of awareness with the Government of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan (Oceans Protection Plan), though 12% say they are very or somewhat familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan.

In previous research waves, respondents were asked if they had seen, read, or heard about the Oceans Protection Plan, thus we cannot do a direct comparison. However, broadly speaking, there is a downward trend in familiarity, with 12% very/somewhat familiar today, compared to 16% who had heard of the plan in 2022, 21% who had heard of it in 2020, and the 22% who had heard of it in 2018.

As has been the case on past waves, awareness of the plan is higher in British Columbia than the national average. Awareness in British Columbia is similar within coastal (60%) and non-coastal communities (59%).

TABLE 14 – Q5. How familiar are you with the Government of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan?
Base: General Population (N=3,100)

	Total	ATL	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	North
Aware (Top3)	53%	57%	57%	49%	52%	61%	43%	60%	46%
Familiar (Top2)	12%	20%	8%	12%	14%	20%	10%	17%	16%
Very familiar	2%	3%	2%	2%	0%	5%	0%	2%	2%
Somewhat familiar	11%	18%	6%	11%	14%	14%	10%	15%	14%
Not very familiar	40%	37%	49%	37%	38%	41%	33%	43%	29%
Not at all familiar	47%	43%	43%	51%	48%	39%	57%	40%	54%

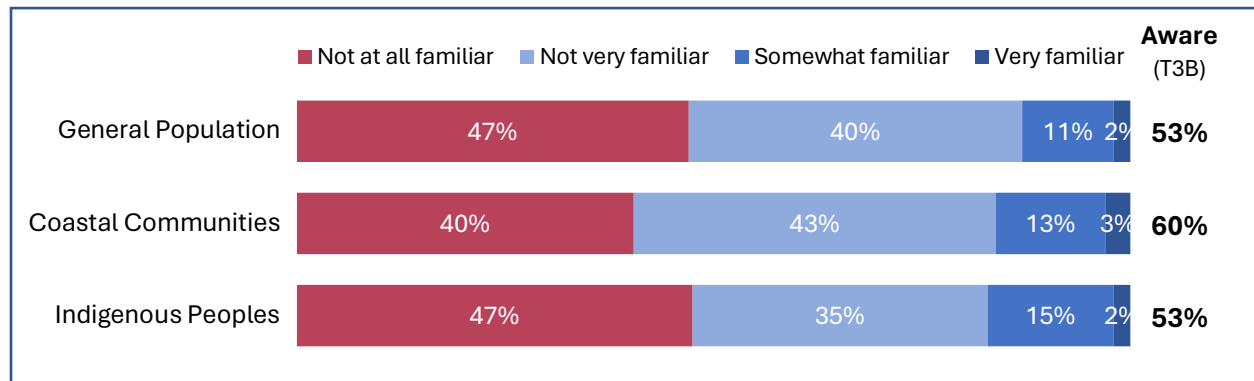
Notably, those who are familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan are much more likely to express a higher degree of confidence in Canada's marine safety system (87% overall confident; 53% high confidence). Those who are not very familiar (79%; 36%) are still modestly confident, whereas those who are completely unfamiliar express much lower confidence (56%; 19%).

Coastal communities are somewhat more likely to say they are aware of the Oceans Protection Plan (60%) than non-coastal communities (49%). However, just one in six (16%) say they are very or somewhat familiar.

Indigenous Peoples (53%) report similar levels of awareness of the Oceans Protection Plan as the public, but in comparison, they report relatively higher degrees of familiarity with the Oceans Protection Plan (18%). Awareness levels are higher among First Nations (58%) than Métis (48%).

Indigenous Peoples living in coastal areas report higher levels of awareness (67% vs. 49%) and familiarity (31% vs. 15%) with the plan compared to those living in non-coastal areas.

CHART 3 – Q5. How familiar are you with the Government of Canada’s Oceans Protection Plan?
Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)



Among those who are aware of the Oceans Protection Plan, one in ten (11%) have seen, read or heard something about the plan in the past year – *this translates to only 6% of the general Canadian population that have heard something about the Oceans Protection Plan*. Coastal communities (15%) are only slightly more likely, while Indigenous Peoples (22%) are twice as likely to say they have read or seen something about the plan compared to the public. Indigenous Peoples living in coastal communities are much more likely to have seen, read, or heard about the Oceans Protection Plan (34%) compared to those living in non-coastal communities (18%).

- Among those aware of the Oceans Protection Plan, less than one-fifth in Atlantic Canada (19%) and British Columbia (14%) have heard about the plan in the past year. Even lower proportions in Ontario (9%) and Quebec (10%) say they have heard about the plan in the past year. (*Note: Base sizes for other provinces are very low to have statistically relevant results).
- In line with awareness of the plan, 18-34 year olds (18%) are more likely to say they have read or heard something about the plan than those 35 and older (7% to 11%).

TABLE 15 – Q6: Have you seen, read or heard anything within the past year about the Government of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan? Base (Those who are very, somewhat or not at all familiar with Oceans Protection Plan): General Population (N=1,703); Coastal Communities (N=1,006); Indigenous Peoples (N=341)

	Yes	No	Unsure
General Population	11%	71%	18%
Coastal Communities	15%	70%	15%
Indigenous Peoples	22%	60%	18%

Those who report hearing, reading, or seeing something about the Oceans Protection Plan, primarily recall information about increased protection of the waterways, oceans, and coastlines (12%) and protecting the marine life and habitat including setting up marine parks or setting aside designated coastal areas to protect its habitat (11%). Some mention measures taken to clean the oceans and reduce pollution (9%), establishing new and stronger regulations and laws (9%), and setting up measures to protect the whales (8%). Notably, a large number cannot pinpoint specifics of what they heard regarding the plan (46%).

Residents of coastal communities are more likely to recall information on protection of whales. Indigenous People are more likely to recall hearing about the programs in general and are likely to mention collaboration with Indigenous Peoples as a related aspect of the plan.

TABLE 16 – Q7: What do you recall seeing, reading, or hearing about the Oceans Protection Plan?
Base (Those who recall hearing, reading, or seeing anything about Oceans Protection Plan in the past year): General Population (N=282); Coastal Communities (N=197); Indigenous Peoples (N=83)

	General Population	Coastal Communities	Indigenous Peoples
Increased protection of waterways, oceans, coastlines	12%	10%	9%
Protecting marine life and habitat (e.g., marine parks, setting aside areas for habitat protection, environmental protections)	11%	11%	12%
Cleaning the oceans, waterways, reduce pollution (e.g., new vessels/equipment to manage oil spills, reducing plastic waste)	9%	6%	11%
New, stronger rules, regulations, laws	9%	8%	6%
Protecting whales (e.g., protected areas for whales, changes in noise level and speeds of ships)	8%	13%	2%
Heard about programs, projects in place, progress report	5%	5%	18%
Collaboration with Indigenous Peoples	2%	2%	7%
Can't recall/ Don't know	46%	48%	48%

Responses with similar context or themes are grouped into a common theme. Other responses are less than 2%

Those who report recalling something about the Oceans Protection Plan learned about it primarily through the television (40%) and newspapers (35%). These have been the main sources of information about the Oceans Protection Plan in the previous years as well. Over one in four recall hearing about the Oceans Protection Plan on the radio (28%) or through social media platforms (27%). Fewer (12%) say they came across it on the Transport Canada website or some other government website, or say they received mail from the Government of Canada (6%).

- 18-34 year olds are more likely to have heard information about the Oceans Protection Plan through radio, newspapers, social media, and word of mouth than through TV. Those 35 and

above are more likely to mention television and newspapers as their main sources. Social media is also a popular source of information for 35-49 year olds including YouTube.

TABLE 17 – Q8. Where do you recall seeing, reading, or hearing about Canada's Oceans Protection Plan? Select all that apply. Base (Those who recall hearing, reading, or seeing anything about Oceans Protection Plan in the past year): General Population (N=282); Coastal Communities (N=197); Indigenous Peoples (N=83)

	General Population	Coastal Communities	Indigenous Peoples
Television	40%	46%	63%
Newspapers (print or online)	35%	27%	16%
Radio	28%	33%	21%
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)	27%	28%	41%
Word of mouth (through a friend, family, acquaintance)	21%	18%	22%
YouTube	14%	9%	22%
Neighbourhood or community newspapers	12%	12%	6%
Transport Canada or other GoC website	12%	12%	16%
Magazines (print or online)	10%	10%	18%
Mail from the Government of Canada	6%	4%	9%
Social media influencer	5%	2%	7%
Don't remember	4%	2%	6%

Importance of the Oceans Protection Plan

Overall, the different aspects of the Oceans Protection Plan are considered as important (rated 4 or 5 out of 5) by the majority of Canadians with at least nine in ten stating that all aspects are at least moderately important (rate 3, 4 or 5) to them. Response to and management of oil spill incidents such as ensuring polluters are held responsible to clean up hazardous spills (81%) and improving response times and actions for such incidents (78%) are considered most important.

The second tier of Oceans Protection Plan features that are important to Canadians are with regards to protecting the marine environment – such as, protecting and restoring the aquatic habitat (75%) and mitigating the impact of shipping on the marine ecosystem, including safeguarding of threatened or endangered whales (73%). Addressing and removing abandoned ships is not as high a priority with regards to the marine environment, but it is still considered important by at least half (50%) of the public.

At least six in ten Canadians agree that improving marine safety in the Arctic (67%), investing in and taking a scientific approach to making decisions on marine safety (66%) and meaningful

participation of Canadians, Indigenous Peoples and coastal communities in initiatives to improve marine safety (61%) are important elements of the Oceans Protection Plan.

Canadians believe that maintaining the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain should be a higher priority of the Oceans Protection Plan (72%), while developing economic opportunities for coastal communities is a moderate priority (61%).

- British Columbia and Atlantic Canada residents give higher importance to holding polluters responsible for clean ups of damaging spills (82%; 80% resp.) and improving response times for such incidents (78%; 74% resp.).
- In the territories, residents are more inclined to prioritize aspects of the Oceans Protection Plan such as holding polluters accountable for oil spill cleanups (86%), enhancing response times for spills (82%), mitigating the impact of marine shipping on the ecosystem (80%), and safeguarding and restoring aquatic habitat (80%). Additionally, there is a significant emphasis on improving marine safety in the Arctic (79%).

TABLE 18 – Q9. The following are some aspects of the Government of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "not at all important" and 5 is "very important", how important are each of following aspects to you? Base: General Population (N=3,100)

General Population	Important (4-5)	Somewhat Important (3)	Not Important (1-2)	Important (4-5)	
	2024			2022*	2020*
Ensuring polluters are held responsible for marine environment clean-up of hazardous and damaging spills	81%	10%	3%	83%	88%
Improving response times and actions for spills and incidents	78%	13%	3%	-	-
Protecting and restoring aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas	75%	16%	3%	81%	85%
Reducing impacts of marine shipping on Canada's marine ecosystems and species, including threatened or endangered whales	73%	18%	4%	-	-
Addressing and removing wrecked and abandoned vessels	50%	31%	11%	46%	46%
Improving marine safety in the Arctic	67%	20%	6%	70%	75%
Investing in and taking on scientific research to support evidence-based decisions for marine safety	66%	23%	5%	74%	79%
Including more meaningful participation from Canadians, Indigenous Peoples, and coastal communities in initiatives to improve marine safety	61%	23%	9%	58%	62%

Maintaining the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	72%	18%	3%	-	-
Creating economic opportunities for communities near Canada's coasts and waterways	61%	27%	5%	-	-

**In 2024, the statement texts have been modified, thus the data cannot be tracked exactly with 2020 and 2022 results. However, for statements where the context is similar, tracking data is shown.*

Majorities in the coastal communities consider all aspects of the Ocean Protection Plan as important. They are likely to give more importance to these aspects than the general population. Of note, coastal communities feel that holding polluters accountable for cleaning up hazardous oil spills (86%), maintaining Canada's supply chain strength and reliability (78%), and investing and taking on scientific research to support marine safety decisions (72%) are important priorities of the Oceans Protection Plan.

Indigenous Peoples are more likely than the public to give somewhat higher importance to enhancing marine safety in the Arctic (72%) and including Canadians, Indigenous Peoples and coastal communities in decision-making regarding marine safety (72%).

TABLE 19 – Q9. The following are some aspects of the Government of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "not at all important" and 5 is "very important", how important are each of following aspects to you? Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

Important (4-5)	General Population	Coastal Communities	Indigenous Peoples
Ensuring polluters are held responsible for marine environment clean-up of hazardous and damaging spills	81%	86%	84%
Improving response times and actions for spills and incidents	78%	82%	79%
Protecting and restoring aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas	75%	79%	79%
Reducing impacts of marine shipping on Canada's marine ecosystems and species, including threatened or endangered whales	73%	75%	76%
Addressing and removing wrecked and abandoned vessels	50%	54%	55%
Improving marine safety in the Arctic	67%	71%	72%
Investing in and taking on scientific research to support evidence-based decisions for marine safety	66%	72%	67%
Including more meaningful participation from Canadians, Indigenous Peoples, and coastal communities in initiatives to improve marine safety	61%	64%	72%

Maintaining the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	72%	78%	74%
Creating economic opportunities for communities near Canada's coasts and waterways	61%	63%	65%

Impact of the Oceans Protection Plan

Once informed about the Oceans Protection Plan's objectives, one-third to half (35% to 50%) of Canadians perceive very or somewhat positive impacts of the Oceans Protection Plan on various aspects of enhancing marine safety and safeguarding the marine ecosystem. It should be noted that many (35% to 42%) do not know enough to give a rating. Only 3% to 5% perceive a negative impact.

The most positive impacts of the Oceans Protection Plan are seen in the protection and restoration of aquatic habitats (50% positive), the overall health of Canada's coasts (47%), and reducing impacts of marine shipping on Canada's marine ecosystems and species, including threatened or endangered whales (47%).

Those who are familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan perceive markedly higher – that is, between 60% to 74% – positive impacts of the Oceans Protection Plan across these measures.

- Residents of the territories are less likely to feel the Oceans Protection Plan has had a positive impact on almost all the aspects tested, except investing in scientific research where they feel there has been a higher positive impact (48%). In particular, fewer than average feel there has been a positive impact on protecting and restoring the marine ecosystem (38%), ensuring polluters are held responsible for clean ups (38%), maintaining the reliability and strength of the supply chain (35%), creating economic opportunities for coastal communities (29%), and addressing and removing wrecked vessels (28%). However, lower perceived positive impact is likely an outcome of lack of awareness rather than negative perceptions.
- Residents in Atlantic Canada, on the other hand, are slightly more likely than the public to notice positive impacts of the Oceans Protection Plan on reducing the effects of shipping on marine safety (54%) and the overall health of Canada's coasts and waterways (51%).
- Among British Columbia residents, positive impact levels are nearly similar to those seen among the public. British Columbia residents are more likely to observe the positive impacts of the Oceans Protection Plan on protecting and restoring marine life (54%) and cleaning up abandoned and wrecked vehicles from the oceans (41%).

TABLE 20 – Q10. The Government of Canada launched the Oceans Protection Plan in 2016. Based on what you may know, what type of impact – if any – do you feel the Oceans Protection Plan has had on the following since its launch? Base: General Population (N=3,100)

General Population	Positive Impact (very/ somewhat)	No Impact	Negative Impact (very/ somewhat)	Don't know/ Unaware
The health of Canada's coasts and waterways, overall	47%	12%	4%	36%
Protecting and restoring aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas	50%	11%	3%	35%
Reducing impacts of marine shipping on Canada's marine ecosystems and species, including threatened or endangered whales	47%	13%	4%	37%
Addressing and removing wrecked and abandoned vessels	35%	19%	4%	42%
Improving response times and actions for spills and incidents	46%	11%	3%	40%
Ensuring polluters are held responsible for marine environment clean-up of hazardous and damaging spills	43%	15%	5%	37%
Investing in and taking on scientific research to support evidence-based decisions for marine safety	44%	12%	3%	40%
Improving marine safety in the Arctic	43%	14%	3%	40%
Including more meaningful participation from Canadians, Indigenous Peoples, and coastal communities in initiatives to improve marine safety	43%	15%	4%	38%
Maintaining the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	42%	14%	5%	38%
Creating economic opportunities for communities near Canada's coasts and waterways	41%	15%	4%	40%

Between two-fifths to half of respondents in coastal communities believe the Oceans Protection Plan has had positive impacts on various aspects of marine safety and environmental protection. The degree of positive impact of the plan on most aspects are perceived to be only marginally higher by coastal communities than the public and non-coastal communities. The Oceans Protection Plan's perceived effect on mitigating the impact of marine shipping (52% vs. 44%), ensuring meaningful participation of Canadians, Indigenous Peoples, and coastal communities in decisions on marine safety (46% vs. 40%), and maintaining the reliability and strength of Canada's supply system (46% vs. 40%), are observed to be more positive by coastal communities than by the non-coastal communities.

Indigenous Peoples are more likely to see the positive impacts of the Oceans Protection Plan compared to public, particularly on the increased inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and other Canadians in discussions on marine safety initiatives (52%), generating economic opportunities for

coastal communities (50%), taking a scientific approach to marine safety (50%), improving marine conditions in the Arctic (49%), and ensuring polluters clean up hazardous oil spills (49%).

TABLE 21 – Q10. The Government of Canada launched the Oceans Protection Plan in 2016. Based on what you may know, what type of impact – if any – do you feel the Oceans Protection Plan has had on the following since its launch? Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

Positive Impact <i>(very/ somewhat)</i>	General Population	Coastal Communities	Indigenous Peoples
The health of Canada's coasts and waterways, overall	47%	50%	51%
Protecting and restoring aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas	50%	52%	54%
Reducing impacts of marine shipping on Canada's marine ecosystems and species, including threatened or endangered whales	47%	52%	52%
Addressing and removing wrecked and abandoned vessels	35%	37%	41%
Improving response times and actions for spills and incidents	46%	48%	48%
Ensuring polluters are held responsible for marine environment clean-up of hazardous and damaging spills	43%	43%	49%
Investing in and taking on scientific research to support evidence-based decisions for marine safety	44%	44%	50%
Improving marine safety in the Arctic	43%	42%	49%
Including more meaningful participation from Canadians, Indigenous Peoples, and coastal communities in initiatives to improve marine safety	43%	46%	52%
Maintaining the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain	42%	46%	45%
Creating economic opportunities for communities near Canada's coasts and waterways	41%	43%	50%

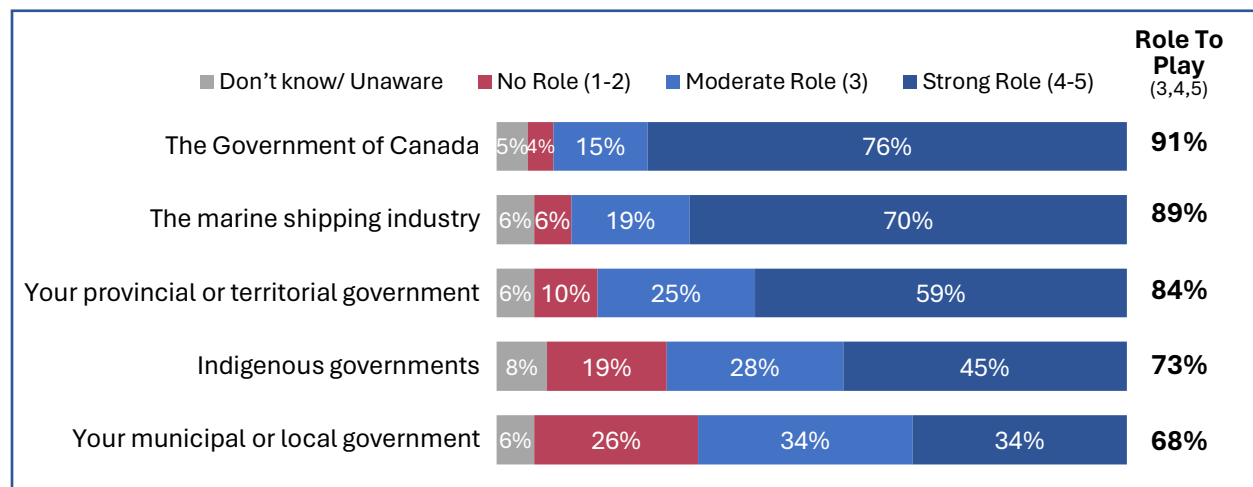
3. Roles in Developing and Addressing Marine Safety

Preferred Roles in Developing Marine Safety

Three-quarters (76%) of Canadians believe the Government of Canada should play a significant role (rate 4 or 5 out of 5) in developing marine safety, with two-thirds (63%; rate 5 out of 5) expecting the Government to play a larger and more pivotal role. Although the federal government is expected to hold a significantly larger role, the majority of Canadians still desire strong involvement from their provincial or territorial government (59%) in marine safety. In contrast, only about a third (34%) hold similar expectations from their municipal or local government. Additionally, a large majority believes that, alongside the federal government, the marine shipping industry should also bear responsibility for marine safety (70%).

Close to half (45%) of the public feel that Indigenous governments should also play a role when it comes to developing safe marine practices. This is notably expressed more strongly by Indigenous Peoples (61%). That said, Indigenous Peoples, similar to the public, still believe that the Government of Canada (75%) should play a larger role in developing marine safety, while they expect the role played by provincial or territorial government (59%) to be at a similar level as the Indigenous governments. They are also more likely to place higher responsibility on their municipal or local governments (40%) than the public.

CHART 4 – Q12. How much of a role do you believe each of the following should have in developing marine safety including safe shipping? Base: General Population (N=3,100)

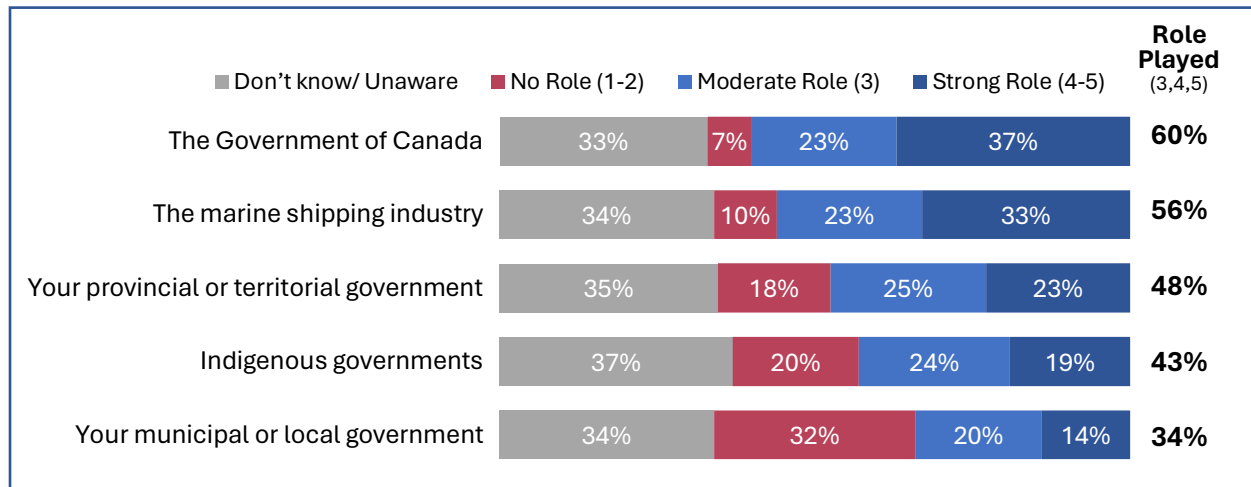


Perceived Roles in Addressing Marine Safety

Close to two-fifths (37%) of Canadians believe the Government of Canada has significantly contributed (rated 4 or 5 out of 5) to addressing marine safety in recent years. However, this proportion falls significantly short of the public's expectation of the government's role (76%). Similarly, Canadians perceive their provincial or territorial governments to have played a modest role in addressing marine safety (23%), whereas 59% express a preference for these governments to assume a larger role. Fewer than one-fifth of respondents believe their municipal or local government (14%) and Indigenous governments (19%) have made a substantial contribution in the past few years.

In general, a slight majority of Canadians believe the Government of Canada (60%) has played at least a moderate role in addressing marine safety, while lower proportions hold the same perception about the role played by their provincial or territorial government (48%) and Indigenous governments (43%). It is noteworthy that between one-third to two-fifths of respondents are either unaware or do not hold an opinion on the matter.

CHART 5 – Q13. As far as you know, in the past few years, how much of a role have each of the following played when it comes to addressing marine safety, including safe shipping practices? Base: General Population (N=3,100)



4. Extent and Importance of Involvement in Canada's Marine Safety System

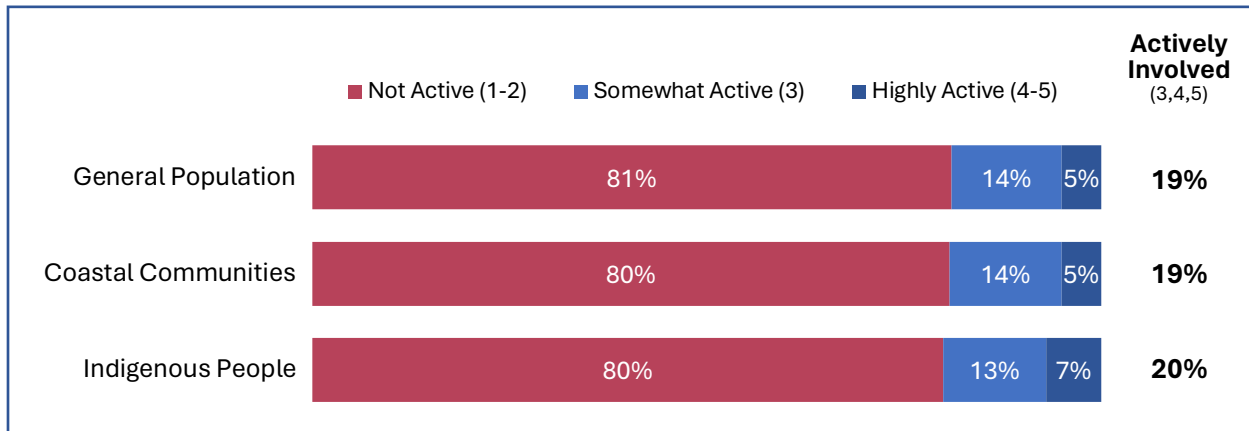
Level of Active Involvement in Canada's Marine Safety System

A significant majority of Canadians (81%) say they are not actively involved (rate 1 or 2 out of 5) in Canada's marine safety system. That leaves 19% who are at least somewhat actively involved (rate 3,4 or 5 out of 5), including only 5% who say they are very actively involved (rate 4 or 5).

The lack of engagement by the public on marine safety issues explains the low overall awareness of the marine safety system in Canada, including the Oceans Protection Plan. In contrast, those who are familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan report a significantly greater degree of involvement in Canada's marine safety system (60%); however, only a quarter (23%) among them report very high levels of engagement.

The level of involvement in Canada's marine safety system is not significantly higher among the coastal communities (20%) and Indigenous Peoples (20%). That said, one-third (34%) of Indigenous Peoples living in coastal communities are at least somewhat actively involved in Canada's marine safety system.

CHART 6 – Q20. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “not active at all” and 5 is “very active”, how would you characterize your level of involvement in Canada's marine safety system? Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)



Incidence of Searching for Information on Marine Safety

Similar to extent of involvement, very few Canadians have looked for information on marine safety in Canada (13%), while the majority 82% say they have never looked for any information and 5% can't recall. Compared to previous years, fewer Canadians report searching for this information, and these proportions have been declining over time – 24% searched for information in 2018, 23% in 2020 and 19% in 2022.

Coastal communities (16%) are more likely than non-coastal communities (11%) to look for information. Indigenous Peoples are somewhat more likely to search for information on marine safety (18%); however, this is largely due to coastal Indigenous communities being more interested in this information than those in non-coastal areas (28% vs. 16%). Among Indigenous Peoples, the likelihood to search for information had increased in recent years, before declining this year to even smaller proportions than seen in 2018 – 25% searched for information in 2018, 32% in 2020 and 39% in 2022.

TABLE 22 – Q15. Have you ever looked for information about marine safety in Canada? Select all that apply. Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

	Yes	No	Don't know
General Population	13%	82%	5%
Coastal Communities	16%	80%	4%
Indigenous People	18%	76%	6%

Importance of Receiving Information on Marine Safety Incidents and Protections

Despite relatively low levels of interest in searching for information about marine safety in Canada, nine in ten Canadians are interested in receiving information from the Government of Canada on not only incidences that impact marine safety, but also the actions taken towards marine safety. Three-quarters say it is highly important (rate 4 or 5 out of 5) for the Government to provide information to the public on incidences of accidents or spills (75%) and the records of cleaning up the spills (74%). Two-thirds feel it is very important to also let the public know about actions taken to protect and restore aquatic habitats in coastal areas (69%) and about new regulations implemented for the marine safe shipping sector (66%).

It is noteworthy that those who are not actively involved in Canada's marine safety system are much more likely than those who are actively involved to say it is very important that the government provide information on spill incidents (78% vs. 58% who are somewhat involved and 66% who are very involved), record of cleaning up the spills (76% vs. 63% and 72% respectively) and steps taken to protect and restore aquatic habitats (71% vs. 59% and 60% respectively). Likewise, those who are not very familiar (76% to 77%) with the Oceans Protection Plan are more likely to be interested in receiving information about spills and their clean up than those who are

familiar (69% to 70%). This indicates that despite a low level of engagement, there is substantial interest among Canadians to learn about the Oceans Protection Plan.

Similar to the decline in searching for information on marine safety, the importance of receiving information from the government on incidents of spills, records of clean ups and implementation of new regulations, is also declining over time.

TABLE 23 – Q17. How important is it for the Government of Canada to provide the public with the following information? Base: General Population (N=3,100)

	Highly Important (4-5)	Somewhat Important (3)	Not Important (1-2)	Highly Important (4-5)		
	2024			2022	2020	2018
Incidence of accidents/spills	75%	16%	3%	86%	89%	88%
The record of cleaning up spills	74%	18%	3%	83%	88%	85%
The record of protecting and restoring aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas	69%	22%	4%	-	-	-
Implementation of new regulations to the marine safe shipping sector*	66%	24%	4%	71%	79%	80%
Opportunities for training in marine response for residents in Indigenous and coastal communities*	60%	20%	7%	65%	67%	67%

**In 2024, the statement texts have been modified slightly. The context remains the same, thus tracking data has been shown.*

Receiving this information from the government is almost equally important for Indigenous Peoples and those residing in the coastal communities, as it is for the public. In previous years, importance of receiving this information was higher for Indigenous Peoples compared to the public.

While the Government providing information on opportunities available to Indigenous and coastal communities for training in marine response is moderately important for six in ten Canadians (60%) and the coastal communities (61%), it is much more important – and intensely so – for Indigenous Peoples (73%). It is somewhat more important to coastal Indigenous communities (77%) than non-coastal communities (72%).

TABLE 24 – Q17. How important is it for the Government of Canada to provide the public with the following information? Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

Highly Important (4-5)	General Population	Coastal Communities	Indigenous Peoples
Incidence of accidents/spills	75%	78%	77%
The record of cleaning up spills	74%	75%	78%
The record of protecting and restoring aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas	69%	71%	70%
Implementation of new regulations to the marine safe shipping sector*	66%	67%	69%
Opportunities for training in marine response for residents in Indigenous and coastal communities*	60%	61%	73%

*In 2024, the statement texts have been modified slightly. The context remains the same, thus tracking data has been shown.

Importance of Providing Input into Decisions about Marine Safety

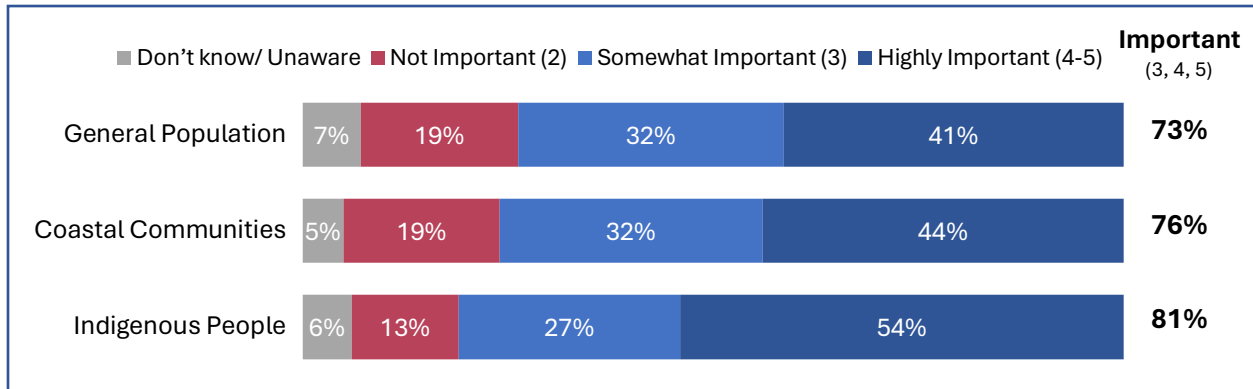
Although just a fifth (19%) of Canadians report being actively involved with Canada's marine safety system, the wider majority is interested in receiving more information about incidents and actions taken toward marine safety and also want to be involved in providing input on decisions made by the Government of Canada about marine safety, environmental protection, and emergency responses in their area.

While three-quarters (73%) of Canadians feel it is at least somewhat important (rate 3, 4 or 5 out of 5) for them to have input in the decisions made by the Government of Canada, only four in ten (41%) feel it is essential. Coastal community residents express similar levels of importance on being included in decisions as the public.

Indigenous Peoples are more likely to feel their involvement is necessary (81%), with over half (54%) saying it is vital to them to provide input when the government makes decisions on marine safety practices, response actions, and environmental protection. This is much more important to coastal Indigenous communities than non-coastal Indigenous communities (88% vs. 80%), with 60% saying it is very important (vs. 53%).

- Broadly, similar proportions across almost all regions feel their input is essential on decisions made by the federal government on all marine safety related aspects, with the exception of Saskatchewan, where fewer feel this strongly.
- Younger Canadians (under age 35), as well as younger Indigenous Peoples are more likely to feel their input and feedback on marine safety, environmental protection and emergency responses is important compared to older Canadians.

CHART 7 – Q14. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important”, how important is it to you to have input into or feedback on decisions the Government of Canada makes about marine safety including safe shipping practices and emergency response, and environmental protection in your area? *Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous People (N=624)*



Canadians that report being more actively involved in Canada’s marine safety system are much more likely to feel that being included and providing input on these decisions is highly important to them (76%) than those who say they are somewhat actively involved (50%). Those who say they are not actively involved are much less likely to feel providing input is important (38%).

5. Sources of Information about GoC's Programs & Initiatives on Marine Safety

The public, coastal communities, and Indigenous Peoples mention several sources they would prefer to use when searching for information about the Government of Canada's programs and initiatives.

- **Internet Search and Government Websites:** The majority of respondents across all groups (78% general population, 81% coastal communities, 78% Indigenous Peoples) prefer searching the internet, with a significant portion also relying on Government of Canada websites (49% general population, 58% coastal communities, 46% Indigenous Peoples). While internet searches remain popular, there is a notable decline in the use of Government of Canada websites since 2020, dropping back to 2018 levels.
- **Non-Government Organizations:** Fewer respondents (14%) now consider approaching relevant non-government organizations for information, with a notable decrease from previous years (from 29% in 2022 to 14% in 2024). This is a more popular source among coastal Indigenous communities (24%).
- **Industry Contacts:** There's a declining trend in seeking information from individuals working in the marine transportation and shipping sectors – about one in ten (14%; 13% respectively) say they will approach these individuals compared to two in ten as seen in previous years. Coastal Indigenous communities are slightly more likely to interact with individuals in the shipping industry (19%).
- **Social Media:** Only a minority (13%) mention social media as a source of information, with consistent usage levels since 2018.
- A few say they will visit the **GoC office** (12%) or call **1-800 O Canada** (6%).
- Older Canadians are more likely to use government websites, while social media is more popular among younger demographics.

TABLE 25 – Q16. Where would you look for information if you wanted to learn more about Government of Canada programs and initiatives to protect Canada's coasts and waterways? Select all that apply.

Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

	General Population	Coastal Communities	Indigenous Peoples
Internet search (e.g., Google)	78%	81%	78%
Transport Canada or other Government of Canada websites	49%	58%	46%
Someone working in local marine transportation and safety sector	14%	17%	15%
Relevant Non-Government Organization (e.g., environmental NGO)	14%	16%	18%
Someone working in the shipping industry	13%	15%	11%
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Reddit)	13%	13%	13%
Visit Government of Canada office	12%	11%	16%

My friends, family, or acquaintances	9%	9%	12%
Call 1-800 O Canada	6%	5%	9%
Don't know	7%	6%	6%

These findings indicate the evolving preferences of Canadians in seeking information about government initiatives related to marine safety, with internet searches remaining dominant but with fluctuations in other sources such as government websites and non-profit organizations. Additionally, degree of involvement in marine safety somewhat influences information seeking behaviour – those who say they are actively involved are more likely to seek information through social media, while those who are less involved are inclined to use Government of Canada websites.

6. Participation in Engagement Sessions

Few Canadians actively search for information or are involved with marine safety. Consistent with these findings, even fewer Canadians (4%) report participating in engagement sessions on marine safety or the Oceans Protection Plan. These results are consistent with results from previous years.

Indigenous Peoples (5%) and those living in coastal communities (5%) are equally likely to say they have participated in an engagement session as the general population. These results are lower than the previous years where between 9% to 11% said they had participated. Among Indigenous Peoples, it is primarily only those residing in coastal areas who say they have participated in the engagement sessions (14% vs. 2% in non-coastal areas).

TABLE 26 – Q18. Have you ever participated in an engagement session (e.g., a consultation or town hall) about marine safety, environmental protection or the Oceans Protection Plan? Base: General Population (N=3,100); Coastal Communities (N=1,656); Indigenous Peoples (N=624)

	Yes	No	Don't know
General Population	4%	94%	2%
Coastal Communities	5%	93%	2%
Indigenous Peoples	5%	93%	2%

Most of those who participated in engagement sessions say they were organized by the Government of Canada (45%). Some mention other organizers like environmental groups (25%) and their provincial (20%) or local (18%) governments. Participants in coastal communities report a higher likelihood of their municipal or local government (31%) and the marine shipping industry (16%) organizing these sessions.

TABLE 27 – Q19: Who was this session organized by? Base: General Population (N=139); Coastal Communities (N=96); *Indigenous Peoples (N=36)

	General Population	Coastal Communities	*Indigenous Peoples
The Government of Canada	45%	37%	63%
Environmental groups	25%	21%	24%
Provincial or Territorial Government	20%	21%	34%
Municipal or local governments	18%	31%	30%
The marine shipping industry	12%	16%	4%
Indigenous governments	4%	4%	30%
Other (please be as specific as you can)	8%	14%	7%
Don't know	8%	2%	1%

**Very low base for Indigenous Peoples. Results only provide direction and are not statistically significant.*

B. Findings from Indigenous Partners Interviews

The following section contains analysis of the qualitative findings from interviews with Indigenous partners for this research project. It is divided into 4 sub-sections:

1. Views on the Oceans and Marine Shipping
2. Awareness of the Oceans Protection Plan
3. Strength and Weaknesses of the Oceans Protection Plan
4. Consultation Preferences

1. Views on the Oceans and Marine Shipping

Indigenous partners expressed deep and multilayered views on the importance of Canada's oceans. Specifically, when asked about the importance of Canada's oceans and waterways, the Indigenous partners interviewed were nearly unanimous in raising the importance of this area from a traditional and cultural/spiritual point of view, namely living in symbiosis with and preserving water ecosystems. This perspective differs from the more utilitarian viewpoint expressed by marine stakeholders.

For Indigenous partners, the oceans hold traditional value, and they feel it is important to teach younger generations the traditional ways of interacting with oceans and waterways. As one Indigenous partner commented:

“It's very ingrained in our culture and belief system that water is life, and we have to protect it for future generations.”

On a more practical level, Indigenous partners focus on two key dimensions:

1. **Sustenance**
2. **Recreation**

Views on the functional significance of oceans and water bodies differ among communities. In remote northern areas, they serve as vital arteries for sustenance, providing essentials like food, fuel, healthcare, construction materials, and various goods and services. While some Indigenous groups highlight these lifeline aspects, their reliance on oceans for such necessities varies. Additionally, some engage with these water bodies mainly for recreational purposes.

One key comment summarizes the view of Indigenous partners on this issue:

“For us, historically, it was our main transportation route for hunting, fishing, trade. We have historical reports of our community going as far south as Niagara Falls, Montreal and even Green Bay, Wisconsin so we were routinely travelling the great lakes. Now it's less long distance...some

recreational fishing, and getting youth involved with outdoor aboriginal leadership engagement. It's about getting our youth back to relating to our territory. Giving them an opportunity to learn about themselves, who they are, where they are going in life, what are their challenges, reflecting on where they are going and who they are."

When Indigenous partners are asked to move from a general discussion about Canada's oceans to marine shipping specifically, here too, responses vary depending on the communities' proximity to shipping lanes. For some, it has a significant impact and is a major source of concern whereas some say they are not directly impacted. Many in this latter situation still say they are concerned because there is an indirect impact on water quality in their community and they are aware of significant increases in marine traffic in nearby waterways.

The primary concerns about the impacts of marine shipping are:

1. Increased volume of vessels which impacts circulation, blocking access to some traditional fishing and boating areas and increasing the risk of accidents.
2. Pollution related to operating these vessels.
3. Increased risk of spills.
4. Overgrowth of certain aquatic plants and algae species due to operational impacts such as ballast discharge.

Note that several community representatives also say their concern is not just associated with shipping vessels but also with cruise ships or other passenger vessels that have impacts on circulation and on the environment (e.g., ballast water discharge).

Regarding marine safety, Indigenous partners primarily consider the following aspects:

1. Safety to humans in vessels (i.e., training vehicle operators and enforcing regulations, having training and infrastructure in place to perform rescue operations in a timely manner).
2. Safe passage and use of vessels in designated areas (i.e., protecting access to waterways and fishing areas from the impacts of increased traffic).
3. Protecting aquatic ecosystems.

When asked to assess the Government of Canada's performance in marine safety, respondents generally acknowledge efforts being made in this domain. This perception is largely influenced by the implementation of the Oceans Protection Plan and the accompanying surge in initiatives concerning marine safety. However, many respondents struggled to provide a definitive evaluation, citing insufficient knowledge about ongoing efforts and a perception of substantial remaining challenges. Some express a sentiment that Canada has been fortunate to avoid major marine disasters that might reveal deficiencies but doubt the adequacy of preparedness measures. Additionally, there's skepticism regarding the sufficiency of regulations and resources to avert disasters and ensure efficient and timely cleanup.

2. Awareness of the Oceans Protection Plan

Although all Indigenous partners interviewed were aware of the Oceans Protection Plan to some extent, the depth of their understanding varied. Those who appeared to have the most knowledge about the plan typically gained it through in-person and virtual presentations and meetings. Conversely, individuals who sought information from the website and other government documents found the volume of information overwhelming and the website difficult to navigate. This feedback aligns with observations from marine stakeholders.

One of the most common themes we heard is that it is hard to get a clear sense about the overarching objectives and expected outcomes of the Oceans Protection Plan as a whole. Indigenous partners might know a lot about the initiatives their communities were involved with, but they did not necessarily know how this fit into the “big picture” of the Oceans Protection Plan.

“I know it entails a lot. So much I can’t explain except for how it trickles down to our community. Its funds made available for training and for protection of the marine environment, for safety of individuals but also with an understanding that our community leaders can contribute their expertise and combine it with expertise from the government. Part of my position is promoting the Oceans Protection Plan in the community so it’s very hard [because it’s so vast].”

As such, most describe the Oceans Protection Plan in vague terms, mentioning areas the Oceans Protection Plan seeks to address (i.e., marine safety, environmental protection, training, equipment, data collection, and Indigenous partnership). Most comment that the Oceans Protection Plan involves significant funding and a substantial and comprehensive government effort.

Several say the Oceans Protection Plan appears to be comprised of many useful but short-term initiatives and that it seems to lack the cohesiveness and guiding orientations expected of a plan. They feel this will likely limit the efficacy and overall outcomes achieved.

When it comes to the role the Government of Canada should play, expectations include:

1. Setting regulations to cover things like vessel licenses and permits, vessel maintenance, and permitted vessel routes. Many commented that these types of regulations are needed to minimize environmental impacts.
2. Enforcing these regulations.
3. Spill prevention. This includes making sure regulations are strict and are enforced to deter unsafe shipping behaviours.
4. Spill response. Indigenous partners stressed that preparedness is a key component of spill response; it is important to have sufficient infrastructure and training in place to respond rapidly to disasters. They also stressed the importance of having clarity on where responsibility lies when it comes to cleanup, to ensure each party fulfills their roles.

Several respondents add that they expect the Government of Canada to ensure that Indigenous communities are consulted when setting up these regulations and rules. They also expect transparency, including the publication of clear feedback as to how Indigenous input is incorporated in decisions made. As one partner states:

“A few years ago, there was talk about transporting nuclear waste on the great lakes. Any transport of hazardous material, the general public needs to be made aware and be able to review that kind of situation. They need to engage with us. Consult with us, seriously, and not just checking a box. And make sure our recommendations are reviewed or taken into account, with a draft plan, an opportunity to comment on it. We need to see what the draft report looks like. Knowing that, if we see a draft and have seen our comments in there, we have a path to provide additional comments.”

3. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Oceans Protection Plan

Most Indigenous partners hold favorable perceptions of the Oceans Protection Plan. Some admitted being skeptical initially, but now feel the Oceans Protection Plan has improved over time.

In terms of the **strengths of the Oceans Protection Plan**, several positive dimensions are mentioned:

1. Its significant amount of funding, which shows the extent of the government’s commitment.
2. Taking on areas that Indigenous partners generally agree are important and valuable. This includes safety and accident prevention, response training and equipment, and involving Indigenous communities in data collection.
3. Having increased consultation and collaboration with Indigenous communities.

On this aspect, we gathered several indicative comments:

“There are positive impacts. There is no way you can say there has been no impact. We have had marine first aid training. A 17-year-old learned things he will share with his friends and an 80-year-old learned things he should not have been doing. This program will have impacts on future generations.”

“I don’t know what’s happening elsewhere but our relationship with Transport Canada is good. We’ve been meeting regularly and trying to craft Indigenous involvement through the steering committee and that arrangement is working out pretty well for us.”

“The biggest positive is involving us in having eyes on the water. This year over year data collection needs to be extended. The conditions have changed so dramatically out there, really being out there and observing it and noting the changes is key.”

Though overall perceptions of the Oceans Protection Plan are favorable, participants pinpoint **areas of weaknesses:**

1. In order to be a true plan and for participants to have more faith in its ultimate efficacy, there should be clear, measurable objectives for the Oceans Protection Plan as a whole and a plan to assess its overall efficacy and implement lessons for improvement.
2. For many participants, the process of applying for funds is seen as complex and arduous and requires resources and capabilities that are in short supply in many Indigenous communities.
3. There is too much time spent on consultation and implementation, which matters a lot for communities where administrative resources are limited. Some participants mention the feeling that the interlocutors they interact with are often technocrats with little to no decision-making power. Thus, a lot of time wasted in conversations that result in no answers.
4. Participants feel they often have to deal with stakeholders from many different departments with differing requirements that can stall progress. Many say there needs to be a way to breakthrough silos and get everyone moving in the same direction.

Indigenous partners also offer a few **suggestions for improvement:**

1. There needs to be a way to assess impacts of the various individual initiatives and document learnings to make sure projects and collaborations improve over time.
2. Many complain that the funding horizons are too short term to make durable and truly impactful changes and recommend they be changed to 5 or more years.
3. As with the Marine Stakeholders, many Indigenous partners identify turnover in government personnel they deal with as a problem, as this lack of continuity makes it difficult to build meaningful relationships with community members. This is particularly important given historical skepticism and distrust of government. Many respondents mention the need for repeat visits by the same interlocutors over a period of years for a truly workable trust relationship to be established.

“One big obstacle is the turnover of staff. We are on our third Indigenous contact with DFO. I understand that people in the sector want to go up the ladder, but we haven’t had that consistency with somebody yet. I have been in my position for 8 years now, but in the past 3 years we’ve had 3 different people at DFO.”

Note that one representative of a community on the west coast says he feels the conversations engendered by the Oceans Protection Plan have replaced what were once negotiations between governments. He feels that the Oceans Protection Plan initiatives have become a way to avoid tackling more fundamental governance issues:

“Our interest has waned over the past few years because it hasn’t addressed any of the governance. We have gone backwards on governance since the Oceans Protection Plan. Before, we were able to sit with the government and have conversations about moving shipping lanes and negotiate for changes to shipping lanes. Since the Oceans Protection Plan, it’s been supplying information into different forums or tables. But we have lost leverage over time. The Oceans Protection Plan is not a conversation among territory holders. It’s not a government-to-government conversation and now when we travel to them, we get the runaround.”

4. Consultation Preferences

Participants are unanimous that the most effective consultation format is to hold in-person meetings in the community, because:

1. This is the customary and most popular way to engage with community members.
2. It gives community members a chance to answer questions and favors open exchange in a way that does not happen online.
3. It is important to build trust and show the community that the government is serious and committed to these partnerships.

Though in-person meetings are preferred, many Indigenous partners are also open to virtual meetings. However, some caution that engagement among older community members is not likely to be as high with virtual meetings. Social media is also seen as a good way to interact, specifically via Facebook community groups.

Participants suggest the following ways to increase community engagement and strengthen partnerships:

1. Reassure the community that the Oceans Protection Plan is a lasting commitment that will continue for many years. This would mean locking in funding commitments beyond 1-to-2 year horizons.

“I just hope this is a continuing and ongoing relationship. My fear and the community’s fear is that if the government changes this will change. We want this to be ongoing.”
2. Reduce staff turnover and invest in relationship building. This would include sending the same representatives to meet with the community in person once a year over the course of a few years, as it takes more than one visit and interaction to truly develop trust.
3. Show community members their input was taken into account. This could include sending back an annotated draft report or recommendations highlighting changes and reasons for those changes. If recommendations from consultations are not implemented, provide notes of deliberations that allow Indigenous partners to see why recommendations were overturned.

4. Share an easy to digest summary of Oceans Protection Plan related projects undertaken nationwide so community members can see the breadth and scope of the Oceans Protection Plan. One participant suggests creating a map with flags one can click on for details about projects undertaken in each area.
5. For lakeside communities, make it clear the Oceans Protection Plan is not exclusively for coastal communities despite the word "Oceans" in its name.

C. Findings from Marine Stakeholder Participant Interviews

The following section contains analysis of the qualitative findings from marine stakeholder interviewed in this research project. It is divided into 4 sub-sections:

1. Views on the Oceans and Marine Shipping
2. Awareness of the Oceans Protection Plan
3. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Oceans Protection Plan
4. Consultation Preferences

1. Views on the Oceans and Marine Shipping

Stakeholders offer a wide range of views about Canada's oceans and what they mean to their respective organizations. As a starting point, everyone agrees Canada's oceans play a crucial role in the country's economy, contributing to various sectors and providing numerous benefits. The stakeholders interviewed stress that Canada's oceans are a vital component of the economy, supporting a wide range of industries, providing valuable resources, and contributing to the well-being of coastal communities. Accordingly, the protection of Canada's oceans is important and begins with an understanding of what "safety" means. For one participant:

"Marine safety is a combination of a whole lot of factors. It's qualified, competent, and trained personnel who are all qualified for their roles related to marine shipping. It's safety standards on board for emergency protections, its standards for machinery and, and whole forms and all associated regulations that come under the Canada shipping act for safe shipping."

When encouraged to be more specific, stakeholders focus on a few key benefits provided by the oceans:

1. **Shipping and transportation**
2. **Tourism and recreation**
3. **Fisheries**

Many stakeholders, especially in Atlantic Canada, describe a very utilitarian relationship with Canada's oceans. They emphasize that Canada has an extensive coastline and numerous ports facilitating maritime transportation, connecting the country to international markets, supporting trade, and contributing to economic growth. Others also mention that Canada's oceans and waterways attract tourists and outdoor enthusiasts, contributing to the tourism industry.

Furthermore, many emphasize the importance of the fishing industry specifically, both commercial and recreational, and the extent to which this industry contributes significantly to the Canadian economy, providing employment and income for many coastal communities.

Stakeholders from British Columbia and the Arctic tend to have a more multi-layered relationship with our oceans. They also mention shipping, tourism and fisheries but quickly elaborate to include elements such as:

- 4. Biodiversity and ecosystems**
- 5. Research and innovation**
- 6. Employment**

Those stakeholders are also quick to comment on cultural and Indigenous connections. They expand on the reality that for Indigenous communities, the oceans have historical, cultural, spiritual, and economic significance. Many Indigenous Peoples rely on marine resources for sustenance and traditional practices, emphasizing the importance of sustainable ocean management. They mention the efforts made by their organization and the government to recognize and enhance this reality. In this vein, stakeholders recognize that sustainable management and conservation efforts are crucial to ensure the continued benefits of these oceanic resources for future generations.

This perspective could be seen in subsequent discussions about the Oceans Protection Plan, with British Columbia and Arctic participants more focused on how the Oceans Protection Plan intersects with topics around sustainability, marine protection, and reconciliation.

2. Awareness of the Oceans Protection Plan

The stakeholders who were interviewed for this research all have a basic understanding of the Oceans Protection Plan but the level of familiarity with the details of the plan varies greatly. One description from a stakeholder in Ontario is indicative of the general but broad understanding held by this group:

“It's a federal government initiative. It sets a number of targets related to protected areas, prevention measures for pollution, enhanced capability related to oil, hazardous and noxious substances. And as you know, the phase two is really a lot about Indigenous engagement. So coastal communities' Indigenous engagement. But it covers the broad scope of looking at environmental aspects. prevention measures, recovery measures, response measures. If there's an area that I probably can't talk too much on, is about the idea of how that translates into the blue economy. I don't have a sense of where the blue economy fits into the operation. And maybe they're already doing a good job of it.”

Specifically, most describe the plan as a vast set of funding initiatives aiming to improve marine safety, protect Canada's marine environment, and support responsible economic development. The plan is often described as “wide-ranging” and “ambitious”. When encouraged to be more specific, stakeholders mention initiatives to improve the following dimensions:

1. Enhancing Canada's ability to prevent and respond to marine incidents, such as oil spills, vessel accidents, and other emergencies, through improved response capacity and coordination. As one stakeholder summarizes it:

[It is] “the safe operation of ships in Canadian waters and elsewhere, because an oil spill that happens just across the border is going to affect people in Canada; if there was a ship that sank or collided with something, coordination is essential. That still is the bulk of our work.”

2. Improving marine safety and navigation through the implementation of measures such as enhanced navigation systems, increased vessel traffic management, and the establishment of measures to reduce the risk of vessel collisions. As one stakeholder mentions, there has been a lot of progress over the last few years:

“If you think about the things that have been done about shipping so much has changed. Primarily, advances in the standards of equipment available to particularly international ships under IMO standards. Then in 2004, Automatic Identification System became standardized, widespread, you could now see where ships are and with better tracking for navigational purposes.”

3. Investing in scientific research and monitoring initiatives to better understand marine ecosystems, assess potential risks, and inform evidence-based decision-making for the protection and sustainable management of oceans.
4. Fostering collaboration and partnerships among federal, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments, as well as industry stakeholders, to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to marine protection and safety.

Most stakeholders are aware of the importance of “**Indigenous partnerships**” as part of Oceans Protection Plan. They understand that collaborating with Indigenous communities and incorporating Indigenous knowledge and expertise in the development and implementation of marine safety and protection measures is a prominent dimension of the Oceans Protection Plan. For some, having “partnerships” needs to mean something specific and far-reaching:

“I think obviously, there's always going to be a role for the federal government when it comes to shipping and ocean protection because obviously, we need goods and services. But I do think that we almost need co-governance, like actual meaningful collaboration, governance in doing it together is important through the territories. Each nation needs to decide the level it wants to be involved in.”

However, there is a sense that the scope and details associated with Oceans Protection Plan is very broad and overwhelming for some, especially stakeholders from smaller organizations. While the plan is laudable, navigating through the different layers of Oceans Protection Plan and fully benefiting from the funding opportunities can be a challenge.

3. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Oceans Protection Plan

A majority of stakeholders praise the Oceans Protection Plan. They recognize the seriousness of the commitment from the Government of Canada to protect Canada's oceans and waterways both in terms of the financial scope and policy dedication. However, many suggest that the Oceans Protection Plan is "mis-named"; it is not a plan as much as a series of "loosely stitched initiatives". For most, a "plan" would have:

1. Clear strategic objectives
2. A roadmap explaining how the initiatives are related and contribute to the overall objectives
3. A program/initiatives evaluation process
4. A program review mechanism

Most fail to see the presence of such elements in the current Oceans Protection Plan framework or are unaware of their existence. Several marine stakeholders held views about whether the Oceans Protection Plan was "a Plan". For instance:

"I wouldn't say that we have a complete and transparent plan or a clearly articulated picture of all the initiatives. Where they are; and what's happening to them and what has been funded under the Oceans Protection Plan in the eight years since it was initially launched in 2016. Why? I mean, it is hard to get an understanding, or I would say most people in government would agree that it's hard to get an understanding of what the Oceans Protection Plan is and what's happening with it."

"They're really looking for the input to build a plan. If they were to have a plan at this point, I would say that that would not be a good thing, like a detailed plan. Yeah, there's some kind of targets that they want to meet. And of course, we're not just looking at it from a Canadian perspective, we're looking at it from a global perspective in terms of percentage of protection of the ocean. So, it's beyond Canada, but at this point, there's a lot of ideas, there's a lot of concepts. There's movement towards planning. So that's kind of on the latitude side, I would say that on the negative side of that, there's been a lot of money invested. That I would say was not strategically considered."

"We are probably some of the most informed people, we've been to all the dialogue forums, and we try to stay informed. So, we're probably aware of what's going on but it's not enough that we are comfortable to be able to say that we fully can comprehend, which projects are funded, which ones are complete, which ones are not started, how big they are, what their scope are. There's an absence of that comprehensive inventory of the projects and how they interrelate and, more broadly, how they relate to other non-Oceans Protection Plan projects."

"I would agree that it's a little bit more nebulous than a plan, per se, like when you usually use the word plan."

In terms of the **strengths of the Oceans Protection Plan**, several positive dimensions are mentioned:

1. The Oceans Protection Plan is effective in its aim to strengthen measures for preventing and responding to marine incidents, thereby reducing the environmental impact of accidents such as oil spills.
2. The plan provides substantial investment opportunities in maritime infrastructure, which can enhance the overall safety and security of Canada's coastal regions.
3. The Oceans Protection Plan has a clear objective of involving local communities, Indigenous groups, and stakeholders in decision-making processes related to marine safety and environmental protection. More importantly, there is a clear recognition of the importance of involving Indigenous communities in the protection and management of Canada's oceans and waterways.
4. The plan includes increased funding for research and monitoring activities which can contribute to a better understanding of marine ecosystems, enabling more informed decision-making and proactive measures.

Amongst the **weaknesses of the Oceans Protection Plan**, stakeholders mention:

1. The success of the Oceans Protection Plan relies heavily on effective implementation, and they perceive the process to be slow and very bureaucratic.
2. The high turnover among government staff associated with the Oceans Protection Plan is a major barrier to an effective process. This hinders the development of effective relationships and communication between stakeholders and government officials and slows down progress. One stakeholder was very direct in his assessment:

"The brain power is not what it used to be and now we need to get new people up to speed all the time."
3. The lack of clear strategic objectives in the plan may limit its ability to address the long-term challenges posed by climate change.

From this, stakeholders offer a few general **suggestions for improvements**:

1. Strengthen engagement with local communities and Indigenous groups to ensure their perspectives and traditional knowledge are considered in decision-making processes.
2. Invest in advanced technologies for real-time surveillance and monitoring of marine ecosystems to promptly identify and respond to potential threats such as oil spills, illegal fishing, or pollution incidents.
3. Increase the level of familiarity of the program by implementing educational programs to raise public awareness about the importance of Canada's oceans and waterways.
4. Pay more attention to smaller municipalities.

5. Be more transparent about the programs' outcomes and how the funds are spent. One stakeholder mentioned that the first step is to do a "forensic analysis of the financials."
6. Establish mechanisms for stakeholder feedback and participation in the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the Oceans Protection Plan.

On this final point, stakeholders are united in suggesting that steps should be taken not to necessarily increase the quantity of consultative touchpoints between Transport Canada and Oceans Protection Plan stakeholders, but the quality of such consultation.

4. Consultation Preferences

There is a strong consensus that there is a need for efforts to support a better understanding of the Oceans Protection Plan. Regardless of stakeholders' particular level of familiarity with the Oceans Protection Plan, most found the amount of information about it overwhelming.

Most stakeholders have consulted Government of Canada websites for information, and many report being frustrated with their inability to find what they were looking for. They describe the website as more of a repository of information instead of a useful guide towards information. They find it difficult to navigate and feel it is not interactive or particularly helpful.

This is not to say that stakeholders do not want to interact with Transport Canada. In fact, most have several contacts with the department. "In-person meetings" and "dialogue forums/workshops" are the preferred options, and most stakeholders have taken part in these types of consultation. However, many feel their experience with meetings and forums has been disappointing. One stakeholder describes the experience as "*trickle-down engagement*". They often feel they are "talked at"; being presented with loads of information instead of feeling engaged in a discussion. Some also commented that the meetings and forums feel like "presentations", "debriefings" and "information sessions". And at other times:

"It feels like some people from Transport Canada just want to have a meeting to have a meeting. And there's like no purpose. There's no prep for the meeting. And it's basically a waste of time."

As for the other potential consultation methods, no clear set of preferences emerge. We notice a generational effect where older stakeholders prefer direct mail and potentially a newsletter while younger stakeholders would like more communication via social media. For most, podcasts are an "*intriguing option*", but they would need to have more details.

Ultimately, regardless of consultation preferences, it is the quality of the interaction which matters most. The stakeholders interviewed have a very positive view of the Oceans Protection Plan, and they want to be engaged with Transport Canada to contribute in a meaningful manner in meeting the objectives of the Oceans Protection Plan.

Appendix

Appendix A: Quantitative Research Methodology Report

Pollara completed online surveys and computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI) with n=3,100 individuals across Canada. A detailed discussion of the approach used to complete this research is presented below.

Sample design

The sampling plan for the study was designed by Pollara in collaboration with Transport Canada. The research requirement entailed collecting samples from the following:

- General population sample of n = 1,600 Canadians 18 years of age and older
 - Regional quotas of n=300 in Atlantic Canada, n=300 in Quebec, n=300 in Ontario, n=50 in Manitoba, n=50 in Saskatchewan, n=50 in Alberta, n=450 in British Columbia, n=100 in the territories.
- Oversample of n = 500 among residents living in small coastal communities – defined as communities of < 30,000 people within 20 km of St. Lawrence seaway, ocean, or Great Lakes
- Oversample of n = 450 among residents living in mid-sized coastal communities – defined as communities of 30,000 or more people, but excluding Quebec City, Greater Montreal Area, Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, and Greater Vancouver Area
- Oversample of n = 500 self-identified Indigenous Peoples

Coastal communities were defined using Forward Sortation Areas (FSAs). Only in cases where the FSA provided by the respondent was not available in the pre-defined list, or covered both coastal and non-coastal communities, was the respondent categorized into a coastal community based on their self-selected answers in the survey.

The sample was primarily drawn based on randomly-selected individuals from an online panel. In the territories, sufficient sample was unavailable through online panels, and it was supplemented by CATI interviews.

Data collection

The surveys were conducted in English and in French, based on the respondent's preference, from December 5, 2023, to January 16, 2024.

The landing page for the online survey and introduction to the phone survey stressed that participation in the survey was voluntary, and that information provided would remain private and confidential, in compliance with the Privacy Act and the Personal Information Protection and

Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). Participants were provided assurance that none of their identifiable information would be shared with Transport Canada.

The surveys were offered to respondents in both English and French and completed based on their preference.

Pollara collected n = 3,100 interviews, more than the n = 3,050 specified in the quotas. While online surveys cannot be assigned a margin of error, a probability sample of this size would be accurate to $\pm 1.8\%$, 19 times out of 20.

The total of n=3,100 interviews includes:

- n=547 in Atlantic Canada, n=544 in Quebec, n=778 in Ontario, n=126 in Manitoba, n=78 in Saskatchewan, n=124 in Alberta, n=794 in British Columbia, n=109 in the territories
- n=1,656 in coastal communities, including n=709 in small coastal, n=574 in mid-coastal, and n=373 in large coastal communities
- n=624 among Indigenous Peoples
- n=2,571 in English and 529 in French

Of the total n=3,100 surveys, n=3,060 were conducted online through a randomly-selected online panel across Canada and n=40 were conducted through CATI among residents of all three territories.

Online participants took a median time of 13 minutes to complete the survey, while telephone interview participants took a median time of 25 minutes to complete the survey.

Among respondents who started the survey, 18% failed to complete it. These incomplete responses were not included in the final data set.

Demographic information of respondents was collected, and the final data was weighted to census proportions of Canadians by age and gender within each province and territory. After weighting the general population sample, a layer of weighting was applied to the coastal communities sample to ensure the proportion of this sample was accurately represented in the total dataset. Likewise, the Indigenous Peoples sample was weighted as per the actual incidence of Indigenous Peoples in Canada to ensure their proportion was accurately represented in the total dataset.

Quality controls

Prior to launching the survey, Pollara tested the links to ensure programming matched the questionnaire in both languages and included the correct use of skips and randomizations. A “soft launch” of the survey data was conducted first to ensure respondents were able to access the survey and did not have any issues with the question wording. Pollara reviewed soft launch data before proceeding to full launch.

Respondent Totals

Region	Unweighted total
Atlantic Canada	547
Quebec	544
Ontario	778
Manitoba	126
Saskatchewan	78
Alberta	124
British Columbia	794
Territories	109
Language	Unweighted total
English	2584
French	532
Coastal Communities	Unweighted total
Small	709
Medium	574
Large	373
Indigenous Peoples	Unweighted total
Residing in Coastal Communities	211
Not Residing in Coastal Communities	413
Age	Unweighted total
18-34	740
35-49	739
50-64	864
65+	757
Respondent	Unweighted total
Men	1375
Women	1706
Other	15
Prefer not to say	4

Appendix B: Qualitative Research Methodology Report

Methodology

For the qualitative component, in-depth interviews were conducted with 25 Indigenous partners and 27 Marine stakeholders between December 2023 and January 2024. This includes ten interviews conducted in Atlantic Canada, thirteen in Ontario and British Columbia, seven in Quebec, and nine in the Prairie and Northern Region. The table below shows the number of interviews per group and the location of the respondents:

Regions	Indigenous Partners	Marine Stakeholders
Atlantic Canada	5	5
Ontario	5	8
British Columbia	8	5
Quebec	2	5
Prairie and Northern	5	4
Language		
English	23	23
French	2	4

Respondents were recruited using a list of partners and stakeholders provided by Transport Canada.

Respondents were given the option of completing the in-depth interviews by phone or by Zoom, and all chose to complete the interviews by Zoom. Interviews were scheduled (and re-scheduled when needed) to accommodate the schedules of those being interviewed.

Indigenous Partners interviewed were given an honorarium to thank them for their participation.

A note about interpreting qualitative research results

It is important to note that qualitative research is a form of scientific, social, policy, and public opinion research. In-depth interviews are not designed to help reach a consensus or to make decisions, but rather to elicit the full range of ideas, attitudes, experiences and opinions of a selected sample of participants on a defined topic. Because of the small numbers involved the participants cannot be expected to be thoroughly representative in a statistical sense of the larger population from which they are drawn, and findings cannot reliably be generalized beyond their number.

Glossary of terms

The following is a glossary of terms which explains the generalizations and interpretations of qualitative terms used throughout the report. These phrases are used when groups of participants

share a specific point of view, and emerging themes can be reported. Unless otherwise stated, it should not be taken to mean that the rest of participants disagreed with the point; rather others either did not comment or did not have a strong opinion on the question.

Generalization	Generalization Interpretation
Few	Few is used when less than 10% of participants have responded
Several	Several is used when fewer than 20% of the participants responded
Some	Some is used when more than 20% but significantly fewer than 50% of participants respondents with similar answers.
Many	Many is used when nearly 50% of participants responded with
Majority	Majority or plurality are used when more than 50% but fewer than 75% of the participants responded with similar answers.
Most	Most is used when more than 75% of the participants responded with similar answers.
Vast majority	Vast majority is used when nearly all participants responded with similar answers, but several had differing views.
Unanimous/Almost all	Unanimous or almost all are used when all participants gave similar answers or when the vast majority of participants gave similar answers and the remaining few declined to comment on the issue in question.

Appendix C: Online Survey Questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey dealing with current issues.

Si vous préférez répondre au sondage en français, veuillez cliquer sur « Français » dans le coin supérieur droit.

Your participation is voluntary, and your responses will be kept entirely confidential. The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and is registered with the Canadian Research Insights Council's (CRIC) Research Verification Service under project code 20231121-PO108. This survey is being conducted by Pollara Strategic Insights on behalf of Transport Canada.

All survey responses collected are anonymous. Any personal information you provide is collected in accordance with the *Privacy Act* in accordance with the Treasury Board Directive on Privacy Practices. In addition to protecting your personal information, the *Privacy Act* gives you the right to request access to and correction of your personal information.

For more information about these rights, or about our privacy practices, please contact Transport Canada's Privacy Coordinator at 613-993-6161. You also have the right to file a complaint with the Privacy Commissioner of Canada at www.priv.gc.ca if you think your personal information has been handled improperly.

If you have special accessibility needs to complete this survey, please contact Pollara at information@pollara.com or 416-921-0090.

SCREENERS

SCR1. In which province or territory do you live?

Newfoundland and Labrador

Prince Edward Island

Nova Scotia

New Brunswick

Quebec

Ontario

Manitoba

Saskatchewan

Alberta

British Columbia

Yukon

Northwest Territories
Nunavut
I live outside Canada **[THANK AND TERMINATE]**

SCR2. What are the first three digits of your postal code? (Example: A1A)
[HAVE ANSWER BOX TO TYPE FSA]
[Only accept valid Canadian FSA.]

Z1. What is your gender?

Male
Female
Other
Prefer not to say

SCR3A. In what year were you born?
[Have answer box to type year of birth. Provide “prefer not to say” option]
[IF YEAR IS 2006 OR LATER, THANK AND TERMINATE]

[IF “PREFER NOT TO SAY” IN SCR3A, SHOW SCR3B]

SCR3B. In which of the following age categories do you belong?

18 to 24
25 to 34
35 to 49
50 to 64
65 or older
Prefer not to say **[THANK AND TERMINATE]**

SCR4. Are you a Canadian Citizen?

Yes
No **[THANK AND TERMINATE]**
Prefer not to say **[THANK AND TERMINATE]**

SCR5. Do you live in a **coastal community**? That is, a community within 20 kilometres of an ocean, the St. Lawrence River, or one of the Great Lakes.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

SCR6. About how large is the population of the city, town, or community where you live?

- A rural area, or a community of less than 5,000 people
- 5,000 to less than 30,000 people
- 30,000 to less than 100,000 people
- 100,000 to less than 500,000 people
- 500,000 people or more
- Don't know

SCR7A. Do you identify as an Indigenous Person (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

[IF "YES", AT SCR7A, ASK SCR7B]

SCR7B. And, which of the following best describes you? Are you a First Nations Person, Métis, or Inuit?

- First Nations persons in Canada
- Métis persons in Canada
- Inuit persons in Canada
- Other (*please specify*)
- Prefer not to say

[IF "FIRST NATION" (CODE 1) AT SCR7B, ASK SCR7C]

SCR7C. Do you live on a First Nations reserve for at least six months of the year?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all aware” and 5 is “very aware”, how would you characterize your level of awareness (e.g., the degree you feel informed) about each of the following in Canada? **[CAROUSEL. DO NOT RANDOMIZE]**

1. Marine safety issues including safe shipping practices
2. Steps taken to protect the marine environment
3. Marine response to offshore spills, incidents, and emergencies
4. The reliability and strength of Canada’s supply chain

[RESPONSE]

- 1 - Not at all aware
- 2
- 3 - Moderately aware
- 4
- 5 - Very aware
- Don't know

Q2. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important”, how important would you say that each of the following are to you? **[CAROUSEL. DO NOT RANDOMIZE]**

1. Marine safety including safe shipping practices
2. Protecting the marine environment
3. Marine response to offshore spills, incidents, and emergencies
4. The reliability and strength of Canada’s supply chain

[RESPONSE]

- 1 - Not at all important
- 2
- 3 – Somewhat important
- 4
- 5 - Very important
- Don't know

Q3A. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all confident” and 5 is “very confident”, how confident are you in Canada's marine safety system?

- 1 - Not at all confident
- 2
- 3 – Moderately confident
- 4

5 - Very confident
Don't know

[SKIP 3B, IF DK AT 3A]

Q3B. Why specifically do you feel this way?

[OPEN END]

No reason in particular/ Don't know *[EXCLUSIVE]*

Q3C. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all confident” and 5 is “very confident”, how confident are you that marine habitats and species are protected in Canada?

1 - Not at all confident
2
3 – Moderately confident
4
5 - Very confident
Don't know

Q4. As far as you know, does the Government of Canada have programs, regulations, and/or activities in place to: **[CAROUSEL. RANDOMIZE]**

1. Prevent incidents, such as an oil spill, that contribute to marine pollution
2. Monitor marine pollution incidents
3. Respond to incidents, such as an oil spill, that contribute to marine pollution
4. Work closely with Indigenous Peoples and coastal communities to protect Canada's coasts, waterways and ecosystems and improve marine safety
5. Protect the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain
6. Protect and restore aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas
7. Reduce the impact of marine shipping on Canada's marine ecosystem
8. Create economic opportunities for communities near Canada's coasts and waterways

[RESPONSE]

Yes
No
Unsure

Q5. How familiar are you with the Government of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan?

Very familiar

Somewhat familiar
 Not very familiar
 Not at all familiar

[SKIP Q6 IF “NOT AT ALL FAMILIAR” IN Q5]

Q6. Have you seen, read or heard anything **within the past year** about the Government of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan?

Yes
 No
 Unsure

[IF YES AT Q6, ASK Q7]

Q7. What do you recall seeing, reading or hearing about the Oceans Protection Plan?

[OPEN END]

Can't recall/ Don't know *[EXCLUSIVE]*

[IF YES AT Q6, ASK Q8]

Q8. Where do you recall seeing, reading or hearing about Canada's Oceans Protection Plan? Select all that apply.

Television
 Radio
 Newspapers (print or online)
 Neighbourhood or community newspapers (print or online)
 Magazines (print or online)
 Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn)
 YouTube
 Social media influencer
 Transport Canada or other Government of Canada website
 Mail from the Government of Canada
 Word of mouth (through a friend, family or acquaintance)
 Other (*please be as specific as you can*)
 Don't remember *[EXCLUSIVE]*

Q9. Since it was launched in 2016, the Oceans Protection Plan has strengthened protections for our coasts and wildlife, improved marine traffic and incident management, and advanced partnerships with Indigenous communities.

The following are some aspects of the Government of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "not at all important" and 5 is "very important", how important are each of following aspects to you? **[CAROUSEL. RANDOMIZE]**

1. Including more meaningful participation from Canadians, Indigenous Peoples, and coastal communities in initiatives to improve marine safety
2. Improving response times and actions for spills and incidents
3. Reducing impacts of marine shipping on Canada's marine ecosystems and species, including threatened or endangered whales
4. Protecting and restoring aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas
5. Addressing and removing wrecked and abandoned vessels
6. Investing in and taking on scientific research to support evidence-based decisions for marine safety
7. Improving marine safety in the Arctic
8. Ensuring polluters are held responsible for marine environment clean-up of hazardous and damaging spills
9. Creating economic opportunities for communities near Canada's coasts and waterways
10. Maintaining the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain

[RESPONSE]

1 - Not at all important

2

3 – Somewhat important

4

5 - Very important

Don't know

Q10. The Government of Canada launched the Oceans Protection Plan in 2016. Based on what you may know, what type of impact – if any – do you feel the Oceans Protection Plan has had on the following since its launch? **[CAROUSEL. RANDOMIZE 1-TO-10, THEN ALWAYS ASK 11 LAST]**

1. Including more meaningful participation from Canadians, Indigenous Peoples, and coastal communities in initiatives to improve marine safety
2. Improving response times and actions for spills and incidents
3. Reducing impacts of marine shipping on Canada's marine ecosystems and species, including threatened or endangered whales
4. Protecting and restoring aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas
5. Addressing and removing wrecked and abandoned vessels
6. Investing in and taking on scientific research to support evidence-based decisions for marine safety
7. Improving marine safety in the Arctic
8. Ensuring polluters are held responsible for marine environment clean-up of hazardous and damaging spills

9. Creating economic opportunities for communities near Canada's coasts and waterways
10. Maintaining the reliability and strength of Canada's supply chain
11. The health of Canada's coasts and waterways, overall

[RESPONSE]

- Very positive impact
- Somewhat positive impact
- No impact
- Somewhat negative impact
- Very negative impact
- Don't know /Unaware

Q11. Canada's Marine Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Regime was established in 1995 as a partnership between government and industry. As the federal department responsible for the regime, Transport Canada sets and enforces its guidelines and regulations.

On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is "not at all confident" and 5 is "very confident", how confident are you that Canada's Marine Oil Spill Response System can do each of the following? **[CAROUSEL. DO NOT RANDOMIZE]**

1. Prevent an oil spill from occurring
2. Prepare for an oil spill
3. Provide a timely response to an oil spill
4. Ensure that polluters are held responsible in covering costs associated with marine clean-up and impacts to affected communities

[RESPONSE]

- 1 - Not at all confident
- 2
- 3 - Moderately confident
- 4
- 5 - Very confident
- Don't know / Unaware

Q12. How much of a role do you believe each of the following should have in **developing marine safety** including safe shipping? **[CAROUSEL. DO NOT RANDOMIZE]**

1. The Government of Canada
2. Your provincial or territorial government
3. Your municipal or local government
4. Indigenous governments
5. The marine shipping industry

[RESPONSE]

- 1 – No role at all
- 2
- 3 – A moderate role
- 4
- 5 – A very strong role
- Don't know / Unaware

Q13. As far as you know, in the past few years, how much of a role have each of the following played when it comes to **addressing marine safety**, including safe shipping practices?

[CAROUSEL. DO NOT RANDOMIZE]

1. The Government of Canada
2. Your provincial or territorial government
3. Your municipal or local government
4. Indigenous governments
5. The marine shipping industry

[RESPONSE]

- 1 – No role at all
- 2
- 3 – A moderate role
- 4
- 5 – A very strong role
- Don't know / Unaware

Q14. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important”, how important is it to **you** to have input into or feedback on decisions the Government of Canada makes about marine safety including safe shipping practices and emergency response, and environmental protection in your area?

- 1 - Not at all important
- 2
- 3 – Somewhat important
- 4
- 5 - Very important
- Don't know

Q15. Have you ever looked for information about marine safety in Canada?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q16. Where would you look for information if you wanted to learn more about Government of Canada programs and initiatives to protect Canada's coasts and waterways? Select all that apply.

[MULTIPLE MENTION]

- Internet search (e.g., Google)
- Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Reddit)
- Transport Canada or other Government of Canada websites
- Call 1-800 O Canada
- Visit Government of Canada office
- My friends, family, or acquaintances
- Someone working in the shipping industry
- Someone working in local marine transportation and safety sector
- Relevant Non-Government Organization (e.g., environmental NGO)
- Other (*please be as specific as you can*):
- Don't know

Q17. How important is it for the Government of Canada to provide the public with the following information? **[CAROUSEL. RANDOMIZE]**

1. Incidence of accidents/spills
2. The record of cleaning up spills
3. Opportunities for training in marine response for residents in Indigenous and coastal communities
4. Implementation of new regulations to the marine safe shipping sector
5. The record of protecting and restoring aquatic habitats in marine and coastal areas

[RESPONSE]

- 1 - Not at all important
- 2
- 3 – Somewhat important
- 4
- 5 - Very important
- Don't know

Q18. Have you ever participated in an engagement session (e.g., a consultation or town hall) about marine safety, environmental protection or the Oceans Protection Plan?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

[IF YES IN Q18, ASK Q19]

Q19. Who was this session organized by?

- The Government of Canada
- Provincial or Territorial Government
- Municipal or local governments
- Indigenous governments
- The marine shipping industry
- Environmental groups
- Other (*please be as specific as you can*)
- Don't know

Q20. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “not active at all” and 5 is “very active”, how would you characterize your level of involvement in Canada’s marine safety system?

- 1 – Not active at all
- 2
- 3 – Somewhat active
- 4
- 5 – Very active

DEMOGRAPHICS

We're almost done, just a few final questions for demographic purposes, so that we can classify your responses. All your answers will remain anonymous and confidential.

Z2. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

- Some high school or less
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma
- College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma
- University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level
- Bachelor's degree

Post graduate degree above bachelor's level
Prefer not to say

Z3. Which of the following categories best describes your total annual household income, including income from all household members, before taxes are deducted?

Under \$20,000
Between \$20,000 and \$39,999
Between \$40,000 and \$59,999
Between \$60,000 and \$79,999
Between \$80,000 and \$99,999
Between \$100,000 and \$149,999
\$150,000 or above
Prefer not to say

Z4. Where were you born?

Born in Canada
Born outside Canada
Prefer not to say

Z5. Do you own a boat?

Yes
No
Prefer not to say

Z6. Do you work in the marine industry (e.g., fishing, marine tourism/transportation, port worker)?

Yes
No
Prefer not to say

THANK YOU!

Your feedback is important, thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Appendix D: In-Depth Interview Discussion Guide

Indigenous Peoples Interview Guide

Introduction (5 minutes)

- My name is _____ and I work for Pollara Strategic Insights. Thank you for taking the time to complete this interview.
- *Ask participant to introduce themselves. (confirm their organization and location)*
- This in-depth interview is being conducted by Pollara Strategic Insights, on behalf of Transport Canada. Our discussion will be on the Oceans Protection Plan and associated issues. You were invited to participate as you are a key partner on these issues. Even if you're not familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan, that's fine – you can still answer the questions.
- Our discussion will be about 45 minutes in length. However, please feel free to excuse yourself any time during our session if you need to do so. We can always schedule a time to finish this interview at a later date.
- Pollara will e-transfer you the \$150 honorarium within 10 business days, as a thank you for your participation. Can I confirm the e-mail address it should be sent to?
- As per the Government of Canada standards for conducting public opinion research, I would like to bring to your attention – and confirm your consent to – the fact that this session will be audio/video recorded for the purposes of our analysis, in case I need to double-check the record against my notes. These recordings will be used by Pollara only to write the report and will be destroyed after the completion of the final report.
- [IF OBSERVERS PRESENT] I'll also note that there are (INSERT NUMBER) observers present, watching this interview on Zoom. These are employees of Transport Canada, who are interested in hearing what you have to say on this topic. They will not participate in this discussion; they are only here to listen. They will respect the confidentiality of what you say.
- The entire discussion will remain completely confidential, and no comments or responses will be associated with you or anyone else who is participating. We're conducting 50 in-depth interviews on this topic, and the final report will not name anyone who participated. Rather, it will make comments like “most people felt this way” or “a few people felt this way”. We will not identify to Transport Canada who participated or did not participate in the interviews.
- For our time today, I will ask you some questions. Please feel free to express your thoughts and opinions and remember that there are no right or wrong answers. We respect and value everyone's opinion, so please give your honest opinion.
- I am not employed by Transport Canada and am not a subject matter expert, so I might not be able to answer all your questions. However, if you do have questions, I will make a note of

them, and will try to get you an answer as quickly as possible. I encourage you to ask questions, because it's useful for me to know if there are terms or concepts you're not familiar with, or if there are topics you'd be interested in learning more about.

Context (10 minutes)

1. What do Canada's oceans and/or waterways mean to your community?
 - a. (PROBE IF NEEDED) Why are oceans and/or waterways important to your community?
2. Is marine shipping important to your community? How so?
 - a. How is marine shipping affecting your community (in the past and in the present)?
3. When you hear the term "marine safety", what's the first thing that comes to your mind?
4. If we think of marine safety in terms of the protection of life and the environment through the safe movement of all forms of water transportation, what type of role do you believe the Government of Canada has around marine safety?
 - a. (PROBE IF NEEDED) How do you see the role of the Government of Canada when it comes to safe shipping?
 - b. (PROBE IF NEEDED) How do you see the role of the Government of Canada when it comes to marine pollution incidents, like spills?
 - c. Overall, how is the Government of Canada doing when it comes to marine safety?
 - i. Are they doing enough?

Oceans Protection Plan (20 minutes)

5. Have you heard about the Oceans Protection Plan? Do you feel you have a good understanding of what the Oceans Protection Plan is?
 - a. (IF THEY ARE FAMILIAR) Assume I'm not familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan. How would you describe it to me in 30 seconds?
 - b. (IF THEY ARE FAMILIAR) *When* did you learn about the Oceans Protection Plan? Have you heard more about it over the last year or two?
6. Are you familiar with the role Indigenous communities play in developing and delivering the Oceans Protection Plan?
 - a. Do you have any involvement with Indigenous partnerships connected to the Oceans Protection Plan? (IF NOT – Are you aware of any?)

- i. (IF YES – PROBE) Tell me a bit about those partnerships.
 - ii. (IF YES – PROBE) Have you seen new/stronger partnerships over the last year or two?
 - b. Are you and your community currently involved or planning to be involved in delivering the Oceans Protection Plan?
 - i. (IF YES – PROBE) In what ways?
 - c. As part of the Oceans Protection Plan, the Government of Canada provides Indigenous communities with training equipment to help protect Canada's coasts and waterways, including preventing and responding to accidents, as well as generating science related to marine safety. How do you feel about this?
7. What is working well with regards to the Oceans Protection Plan?
 8. What could be improved with regards to the Oceans Protection Plan?
 9. Where are you currently getting information about the Oceans Protection Plan?
 10. What are some ways the Government of Canada could collect support a better understanding of the Oceans Protection Plan within your community? (RECORD RESPONSES, THEN PROBE ON HOW THEY'D FEEL ABOUT THE OPTIONS BELOW AND IF PEOPLE IN THEIR COMMUNITY WOULD PARTICIPATE)
 - a. In-person meetings?
 - b. Virtual meetings be useful?
 - c. Social media?
 - d. Information on a website?
 - e. Direct mail?
 - f. Dialogue forums/workshops?
 - g. Newsletter you could subscribe to?
 - h. Podcasts?
 - i. Anything else?

Indigenous Engagement (10 minutes)

11. Do you feel that your community should have a larger role in protecting Canada's coast?
 - a. What role should your community have?

12. Do you feel that the Oceans Protection Plan can help Indigenous communities play a stronger role in decisions about marine safety? Why/Why not?
 - a. (IF NOT, PROBE) How could this be improved?
13. Does the Government of Canada currently collect input and feedback about marine safety from your community?
 - a. What are some of the ways the Government of Canada could collect input and feedback?
 - b. Are you satisfied with how the Government of Canada is supporting your community to have a better understand of – and greater involvement in - the Oceans Protection Plan?
14. What type of relationship would you like to see between your community and the Government of Canada?
 - a. How can you tell if a relationship between government and a community is meaningful or not?
15. How can relationships between the Government of Canada and Indigenous communities be created or sustained?
 - a. PROBE: What are the best ways to make sure these are effective partnerships?
 - b. What are the obstacles, if any, that you see to building relationships between the Government of Canada and Indigenous communities?
 - c. Is the Oceans Protection Plan an effective program to help create, maintain meaningful partnerships?

Thank you for your time! I'll follow up with an e-mail that has the password for the e-transfer once it has been sent to you. If you have any issues or don't see the e-transfer within 10 business days, you can always e-mail information@pollara.com.

Marine Stakeholders Interview Guide

Introduction (5 minutes)

- My name is _____ and I work for Pollara Strategic Insights. Thank you for taking the time to complete this interview.
- *Ask participant to introduce themselves. (confirm their organization and location)*
- This in-depth interview is being conducted by Pollara Strategic Insights, on behalf of Transport Canada. Our discussion will be on the Oceans Protection Plan and associated issues. You were invited to participate as your organization is a key stakeholder on these issues. Even if you're not familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan, that's fine – you can still answer the questions.
- Our discussion will be about 45 minutes in length. However, please feel free to excuse yourself any time during our session if you need to do so. We can always schedule a time to finish this interview at a later date.
- As per the Government of Canada standards for conducting public opinion research, I would like to bring to your attention – and confirm your consent to – the fact that this session will be audio/video recorded for the purposes of our analysis, in case I need to double-check the record against my notes. These recordings will be used by Pollara only to write the report, and will be destroyed after the completion of the final report.
- [IF OBSERVERS PRESENT] I'll also note that there are (INSERT NUMBER) observers present, watching this interview on Zoom. These are employees of Transport Canada, who are interested in hearing what you have to say on this topic. They will not participate in this discussion, they are only here to listen. They will respect the confidentiality of what you say.
- The entire discussion will remain completely confidential and no comments or responses will be associated with you or anyone else who is participating. We're conducting 50 in-depth interviews on this topic, and the final report will not name anyone who participated. Rather, it will make comments like "most people felt this way" or "a few people felt this way". We will not identify to Transport Canada who participated or did not participate in the interviews.
- For our time today, I will ask you some questions. Please feel free to express your thoughts and opinions, and remember that there are no right or wrong answers. We respect and value everyone's opinion, so please give your honest opinion.
- I am not employed by Transport Canada and am not a subject matter expert, so I might not be able to answer all your questions. However, if you do have questions, I will make a note of them, and will try to get you an answer as quickly as possible. I encourage you to ask questions, because it's useful for me to know if there are terms or concepts you're not familiar with, or if there are topics you'd be interested in learning more about.

Context (10 minutes)

16. So that I have a sense of where you're coming from, can you tell me a bit about what your role is with your organization, and how long you've been working there?
17. What do Canada's oceans and/or waterways mean to your organization?
 - a. (PROBE IF NEEDED) Why are oceans and/or waterways important to your organization?
18. Is marine shipping¹ important to your organization? How so?
 - a. How is marine shipping affecting your community (in the past and in the present)?
19. When you hear the term "marine safety", what's the first thing that comes to your mind?
20. If we think of marine safety in terms of the protection of life and the environment through the safe movement of all forms of water transportation, what type of role do you believe the Government of Canada has around marine safety?
 - a. (PROBE IF NEEDED) How do you see the role of the Government of Canada when it comes to safe shipping?
 - b. (PROBE IF NEEDED) How do you see the role of the Government of Canada when it comes to marine pollution incidents, like spills?
 - c. Overall, how is the Government of Canada doing when it comes to marine safety?
 - i. Are they doing enough?

Oceans Protection Plan (20 minutes)

21. Have you heard about the Oceans Protection Plan? Do you feel you have a good understanding of what the Oceans Protection Plan is?
 - a. (IF THEY ARE FAMILIAR) Assume I'm not familiar with the Oceans Protection Plan. How would you describe it to me in 30 seconds?
22. Is your organization involved in any aspects of the Oceans Protection Plan?
 - a. (IF YES, PROBE) In what ways are they involved?
 - b. (PROBE) Is your organization currently involved or planning to be involved in delivering the Oceans Protection Plan? In what ways?

¹ The shipment of goods (cargo) by ocean or waterway.

23. Are you familiar with the role Indigenous communities play in developing and delivering the Oceans Protection Plan?
- Have there been opportunities for your organization to work with Indigenous partners on Oceans Protection Plan issues?
24. What is working well with regards to the Oceans Protection Plan?
25. What could be improved with regards to the Oceans Protection Plan?
26. Where are you currently getting information about the Oceans Protection Plan?
27. What are some ways the Government of Canada could support a better understanding of the Oceans Protection Plan with marine stakeholders? (RECORD RESPONSES, THEN PROBE ON HOW THEY'D FEEL ABOUT THE OPTIONS BELOW AND IF PEOPLE IN THEIR ORGANIZATION WOULD PARTICIPATE)
- In-person meetings?
 - Virtual meetings be useful?
 - Social media?
 - Information on a website?
 - Direct mail?
 - Dialogue forums/workshops?
 - Newsletter you could subscribe to?
 - Podcasts?
 - Anything else?

Stakeholder Engagement (10 minutes)

28. Do you feel that marine stakeholders should have a larger role in protecting Canada's coast?
- Who else should play a larger role in protecting Canada's coast? (for example, local government, civil society, businesses, universities, etc.)
29. Do you feel that the Oceans Protection Plan can help the marine sector play a stronger role in decisions about marine safety? Why/Why not?
- (IF NOT, PROBE) How could this be improved?
30. Does the Government of Canada currently collect input and feedback about marine safety from your organization?

- a. What are some of the ways the Government of Canada could collect input and feedback?
 - b. Are you satisfied with how the Government of Canada is involving the marine sector when it comes to the Oceans Protection Plan?
31. What type of relationship would you like to see between your organization and the Government of Canada?
- a. How can you tell if a relationship between government and stakeholder groups like yours is meaningful or not?
32. How can relationships between the Government of Canada and organizations in the marine sector be created or strengthened?
- a. PROBE: What are the best ways to make sure these are effective partnerships?
 - b. Is the Oceans Protection Plan an effective program to help create, maintain and strengthen stakeholder relationships?

Thank you for your time!