

HOW OCEANS BENEFIT CANADIANS

The Census of Environment organizes data on ecosystems, like those found in oceans, through natural capital accounts. This helps us to understand how nature, society and the economy are interconnected and to examine the costs and benefits of conservation, development and use of resources.



Natural capital accounts provide information on the extent and condition of ecosystems, the services they provide and their value.¹

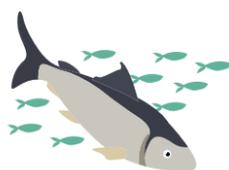
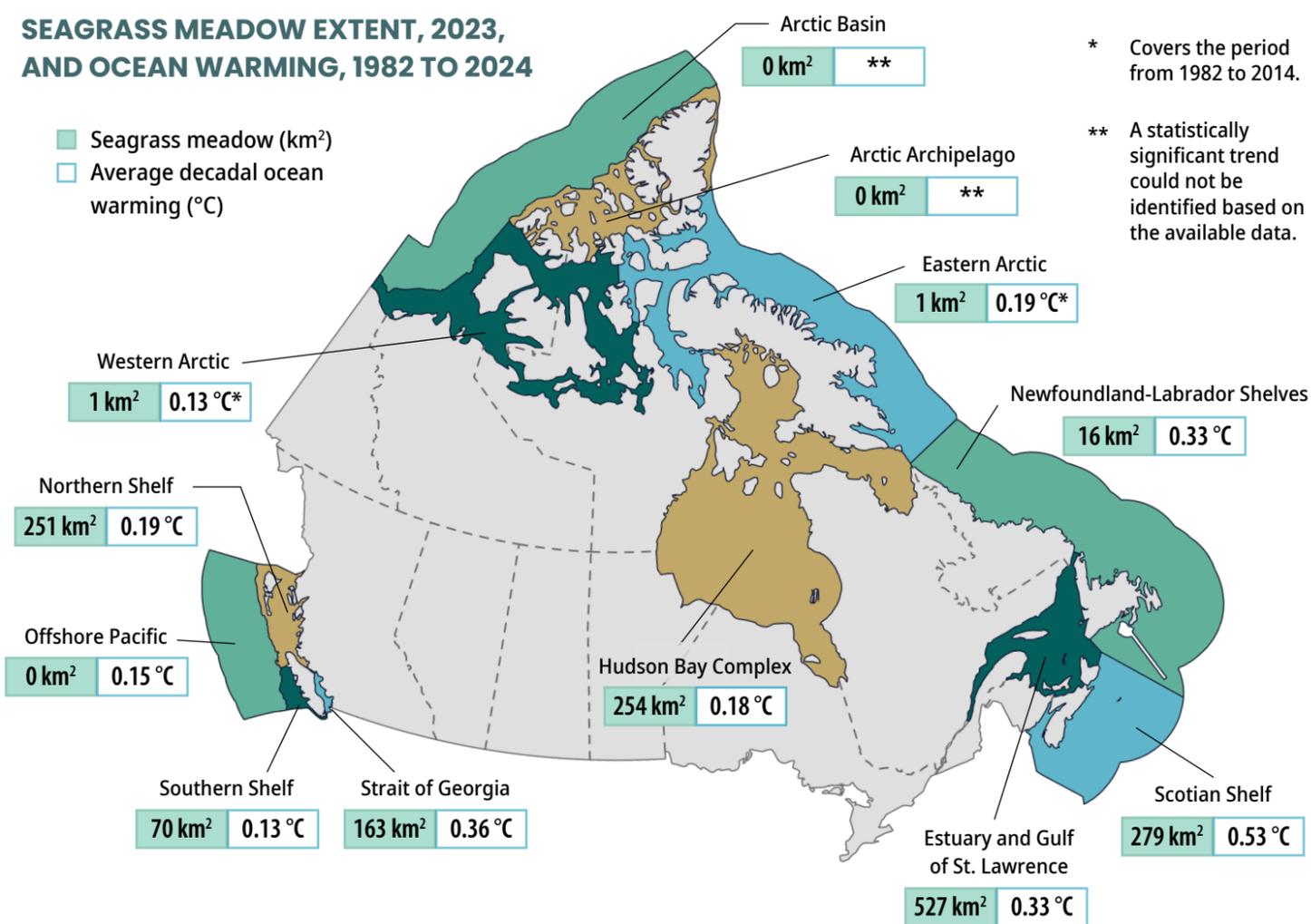
EXTENT	CONDITION	ECOSYSTEM SERVICES	ESTIMATED VALUE
Canada has 5.8 million km² of ocean area.	Canada's oceans have warmed since 1982.	In 2023, 638 kilotonnes of wild fish and seafood were harvested commercially from Canada's oceans.	Commercial fishing, carbon sequestration and nature-based tourism —three ecosystem services provided by oceans—were valued at \$7.1 billion in 2023 . Commercial fishing represented \$1.2 billion of this amount.

Changes in the extent and condition of ocean ecosystems can impact the services they provide to humans.



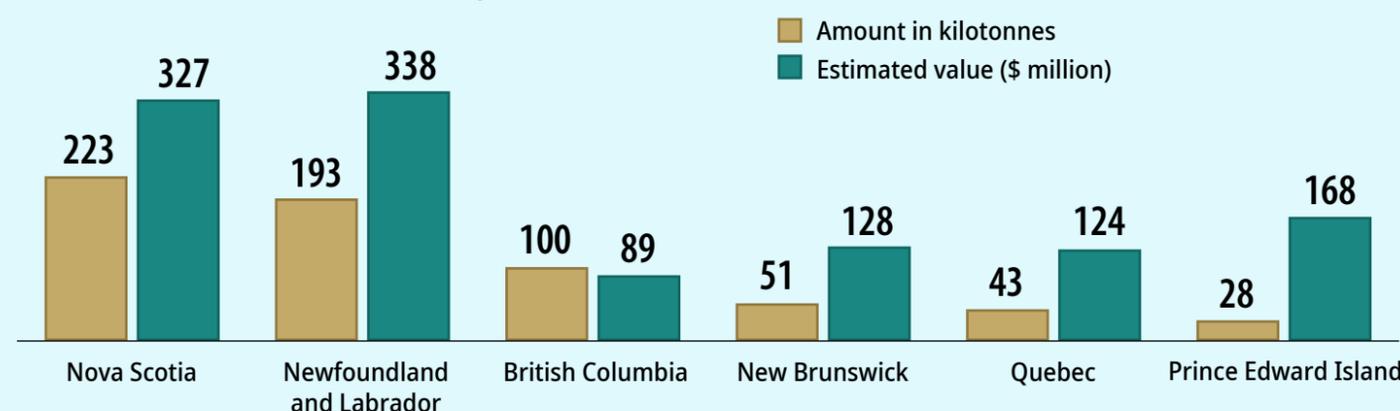
Ecosystems like seagrass meadows provide shelter and nursery habitats for marine wildlife such as fish, crustaceans and mollusks. They also sequester carbon in coastal sediment.

SEAGRASS MEADOW EXTENT, 2023, AND OCEAN WARMING, 1982 TO 2024



Warming oceans can affect fish and seafood **directly** (e.g., decreased reproduction) and **indirectly** (e.g., changes to their habitat). This could impact their future contribution to the economy and food supply.

Harvested fish and seafood, 2023



1. In this infographic, extent refers to the size and location of ocean and coastal ecosystems, condition is an indicator of an ocean ecosystem's health, ecosystem services provide information on the direct contributions of oceans to humans and the economy, while estimated value indicates the direct economic value of each ecosystem service in dollars.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2026, "Ecosystem spotlight—Oceans," EnviroStats, Catalogue no. 16-002-X; Statistics Canada, 2025, "Census of Environment: Ocean condition account," The Daily; Statistics Canada, table 38-10-0153-01 – Ocean and coastal ecosystem extent account; table 38-10-0171-01 – Ecosystem services, biomass provisioning services by ecosystem type and type of product; table 38-10-0190-03 – Ocean and coastal ecosystem services: Experimental monetary measures, provinces and territories.