

**Southwest New Brunswick
Marine Advisory Committee
Consensus Based Advice / Recommendations on
Marine Debris**

September 25, 2013

Background:

Marine debris, derelict structures, unmarked marine obstructions and abandoned equipment pose a threat to safe navigation, they are unsightly blemishes on the marine environment and in some cases can compromise the health of the bay. While all marine resource users are encouraged to observe the principles of good environmental stewardship and husbandry practices there are occasions whereby agencies with some level of regulatory authority in the marine environment are called upon to take corrective action including enforcement. The layering and in some cases the overlapping of Federal and Provincial regulatory responsibilities or gaps in legal authority can be confusing to the public at large. In particular, it is the gaps in the legal framework for government departments to respond that limit what, if any, corrective actions can be taken by the authorities.

Marine Debris Working Group Terms of Reference

A Marine Debris Working Group was established and generally met bi-weekly for the purpose of identifying specific issues of concern as they relate to marine debris, derelict structures, unmarked marine obstructions and abandoned equipment along with the respective regulatory agency responsible for taking corrective action. The Working Group role was to identify administrative, policy or regulatory gaps impacting the capacity to deliver corrective measures affectively and to bring Advice and Recommendations forward to the Marine Advisory Committee as a whole for review and action as deemed to be appropriate. The Working Group's advice and recommendations could also be taken to include: the development of marine environment stewardship codes of practice; raising public awareness; and, the development and delivery public education programs.

Committee Structure

Chairperson: Ken Hirtle, MAC Member
Members: Lois Mitchell, MAC Member
Greg Thompson, MAC Member
Matthew Abbott, Fundy Baykeeper
Betty House, ACFFA
Secretariat: Russell Henry, DAAF
Karen Coombs, DAAF
Loretta McAleenan, DAAF

MAC Advice / Recommendations

The Marine Debris Working Group presented its' findings to the September 25, 2013 Marine Advisory Committee Meeting. The focus of the materials presented by the Working Group was



on “Prevention / Correction” where prevention included: communication/education; regulation; incentives; and, alternatives. Correction included the topics of: clean-up / budget; source identification; and, enforcement. The key recommendations brought forward and unanimously endorsed by the MAC are as follows:

Recommendations

- 1.) **Prevention:** That one government department or agency should be identified or established and made responsible for the communication / education of marine debris prevention and that resources be made available, creating a culture of marine debris prevention through education, communication, regulation, an Extended Producer Responsibility Plan (EPRP) and involving all stakeholders.
- 2.) **Correction:** That a management group for the Southwest New Brunswick Marine Planning Area be established consisting of industry, government and the public, funded by stakeholders and government with the appropriate resources to manage programs such as: coordinating beach clean-ups; establishing and maintaining a marine debris inventory; and, preparing and publishing annual status reports on the state of marine debris in the planning area.

Based upon these recommendations, the MAC further identified Action Items that can be pursued at any time by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries (DAAF) through the MAC Secretariat. Those immediate action items include:

Action Items

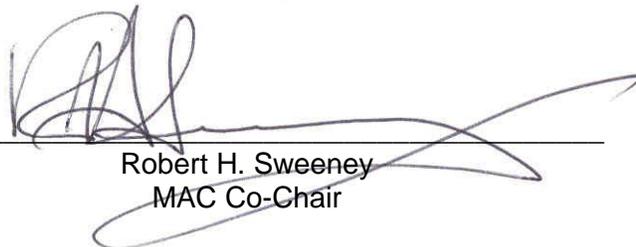
- 1.) DFO and DAAF should engage the municipalities, Atlantic Canada Fish Farmers Association (ACFFA), Traditional Fisheries Coalition (TFC), Fundy Baykeeper, tourism operators and the Southwest Solid Waste Commission (SWSWC) as a first step towards establishing a management group for the planning area. All resources compiled by the Marine Debris Working Group will be made available to the management group.
- 2.) Once established, the management group should give consideration to developing and implementing an all sector marine waste management initiative similar to the Clean Nova Scotia “Ship to Shore” Program. <http://clean.ns.ca/programs/waste/ship-to-shore/>
- 3.) Disposal of plastics, ropes and Styrofoam is considered to be a significant marine waste management issue. In the course of the Working Group’s efforts it was found that private sector interests located within the planning area are likely in a position to receive and process this waste stream. DAAF in particular should investigate this opportunity with a view towards providing assistance or direction as needed to put into place a viable marine waste management plan for the region.
- 4.) The MAC website should be expanded to become an online library for access by all marine resource users and the public at large to report the presence of marine debris. The library could include photos of the offending material, geographic location, date that it was reported

along with the date of removal, source of offending material if known and filing of all Annual Reports on the State of Marine Debris in the Planning Area. It is the Working Group's understanding that a mobile smartphone app may be available to allow for uploading of real time reports related to the presence of marine debris. The MAC Secretariat should implement the web-based library and begin sourcing a complimentary smartphone app without delay.

5.) DFO and DAAF should collaborate to identify sources of funding to create the position of a Lead Marine Debris Coordinator for the Planning Area. The Coordinator would be responsible for, but not necessarily limited to the following :

- be responsible to the management group identified in Action Item #1
- pursue programs and tasks as identified by the management group
- manage the MAC online Marine Debris Library
- assist the public as necessary with marine debris issues
- prepare and file online the Annual State of Marine Debris reports

Dated: October 21, 2013



Robert H. Sweeney
MAC Co-Chair