STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT #1

February 2021

A report summarizing the results of two stakeholder engagement sessions, in support of the End-of-life Fishing Gear Management Project, hosted by the Fishing Gear Coalition of Atlantic Canada

Contents

Overview

This report is the result of two engagement sessions held with a variety of stakeholders from various sectors, which all have a perspective on how end-of-life fishing gear should be managed. For a complete list of participants please see Appendix A. The project has a broad focus on many types of gear and equipment used in the fishing industry, however, that focus was narrowed for the engagement sessions and the discussions primarily centered on the management of end-of-life lobster traps and rope – gear that is perceived to be of no value to the current fish harvester and has been brought ashore by fishers at recognized sites.

The sessions took place via the Zoom video conferencing platform on the morning of Wednesday, February 17, 2021 and the evening of Thursday, February 18, 2021. The two sessions were identical in format, instruction, and questions posed to participants.

The session agenda included:

- Welcome and introductions to the Fishing Gear Coalition of Atlantic Canada (FGCAC) team and the Third Sector Enhancement facilitation team.
- Review of the agenda and objectives for the session.
- Review of the results from the pre-consultation survey.
- An overview of the project and how this portion fits into the overall project.
- Small group discussions on questions which were distributed to participants prior to the meeting (see Appendix B for the questions). The small group composition changed from session to session.

Small Group Session #1 consisted of two reflective exercises relating to problem identification and prioritization. Small Group Session #2 focused on identifying options or opportunities related to perceived problems.

Each breakout session was facilitated by a moderator and a note taker.

Small groups presented overall thoughts to the full group following the breakout discussions.

While discussions took place on a variety of related topics such as lost gear and shoreline cleanups, this report represents a synthesis of the opinions and perspectives presented during the two engagement sessions directly related to the primary topic of end-of-life lobster traps and rope.

Session Summaries

The following pages summarize the results of the reflections and discussions by participants in each of the three exercises. It is noted that given the diversity of the participants, opinions and perspectives were varied, sometimes diverse, sometimes conflicting. Opinions were sometimes presented as facts. Consensus was not always reached. There was also some misrepresentation of facts. While there were comments related to other aspects of ocean related environmental issues, only those that relate to end-of-life fishing gear brought ashore by fishers at recognized harbours are included in this analysis.

Breakout Session #1 - Problem Identification

The participants identified problems/issues/challenges related to the collection, sorting, storing, and disposal of end-of-life fishing gear. Specifically, the following issues were raised and are listed in order of priority rating*.

1. Labour incurred by fishers to separate and dispose of gear
2. Tipping fees
3. Limited recycling options
4. Distance to waste resource management facilities
5. Lack of storage space or limited collection options
6. Cost incurred by municipalities to accept gear for recycling/landfilling
7. Communication

The following table represents a summary of the contributing factors to each of these problems.

#*	Problem	Contributing Factor(s)
1	Fisher labour	Time, effort, and cost related to sorting, separation, ballast removal, dismantling, storage, and delivery to a waste resource management facility.
2	Tipping fees	Varied jurisdictional application and rules, varied fees related to types of materials/separation requirements for materials, price, and illegal dumping.
3	Limited recycling options	Distance, lack of clear criteria for acceptance, limited markets, and gear made of multiple materials.
4	Distance to facility	Lack of convenient locations, time to drive to facilities, and drop-off vs. pick-up.
5	Lack of storage space	Inconsistent availability, public abuse, safety concerns, timely pick-up, unsightly piles, and requires monitoring.
6	Municipal cost	Self-financing model, varied materials, expensive to handle and process, and taxpayer subsidized vs. user pay.
7	Communication /education	Communication/education was identified given the varied and sometimes conflicting inputs referred to above. It was not a direct contribution by participants.

Breakout Session #2 - Opportunities

Session #2 focused on the identification of potential opportunities or solutions.

The results can be characterized in three sections:

1. Recycling/repurposing/reuse
2. Disposal/landfilling
3. Communication/education

The following table summarizes the inputs provided by the participants.

Program/Initiative	Contributes to	Barriers
Rope recycling program	• Costs when purchased • Consistency and coordination • On-site/wharf collection • Supporting new recycling/energy industry • Finding market for rope • Return benefit for fishers/ communities • Style of bin and signage helpful for education • Local economic development/jobs • A circular economy • Potential for municipal and provincial education programs	• Time to prepare material/sorting • Where to take rope • Large amounts of rope • Multi-material nature of rope (blends) • Shredding capacity • Storage/time/effort • Regulations around recycling facilities are limiting • Needs continuous funding (grants/fees) • Logistics • Not enough education • Use of bins by general public for household garbage resulting in contamination and extra costs • Need large-scale solution • In need of leadership • Lack of standardization
Government procurement policy for use of plastic lumber on wharfs	• Creating a consistent and local market for the product • Government ownership showcases support to public	• Relies on government supporting the market • Takes time to set up policies
Protect fisher livelihood	• Ability to sell sustainable seafood • Economic development • Collaboration towards same goal • Feel good	• Changing attitudes • Marketing sustainability
At-wharf collection days	• Hired individuals/volunteers to separate materials • Convenient for fishers to participate • Regularly scheduled (start and end of season) • Program self-funded	• Who should pay? A part of fishing association fees? • Who should organize?

Provincial/municipal standardization at waste resource management facilities	• Standardizes acceptance (more accessible) • Simplifies education • Sharing best management practices • Requires common understanding/ communication sharing	• Each municipality sets its own rules and tipping fees • May be more difficult for some facilities • Cost in separating • Requires accessible and effective education • Lack of consistency
Rope collection tender system for artisans	• Providing "one-stop-shop"(website) connecting artisans seeking old rope to folks collecting old rope • Individuals or organizations doing cleanups can help find what artisans are looking for, collect and sort it so the artisans may pick it up and use it • Supporting artisans • Diversion of rope from landfills	• Who will develop and manage? • Requires logistics • Needs a website or webpage to coordinate and share information
Province-wide education program	• General education • Teach next generation of fishers to be stewards • Youth can help educate their families and friends	• Requires stakeholder collaboration (fishers, consumers, community members, etc.) • Costs and logistics of providing education across the province
Beach cleanup	• Cleaner shorelines • Reduced impact to wildlife	• Cost of dealing with collected materials

Options for Programming

A synthesis of the reflections and discussions relative to opportunities for future programming identified two broad categories of options: recycling/reusing/repurposing and disposal/landfilling. A third, communications/education, was not a direct result of participant inputs but is included based on comments above regarding misunderstandings and misrepresentations.

The following table begins to articulate some aspects of these options.

Description	Opportunity	Benefit	Barrier	Comments
Recycling Rope	Industrial	Revenue, divert resources from landfill	Cost, collecting, sorting, storing, transporting, multi-material construction	Goodwood Plastic Products manufacturing plastic lumber using rope
	Artisan	Small business development	Collecting, sorting, storing	Use small/limited quantities
Repurposing Traps	Resell to other fishers	Revenue, extend life of asset	Sorting, storage, repair	Reused in other districts
	Use for construction (gabion baskets)	No tipping fees	Small size	Limited market
Recycling traps	Recycle components	Divert from landfill, potential revenue	Time and effort, limited value, multi-material construction	Design gear for easier recycling, e.g., eliminate concrete ballast
Landfilling rope		Keeps it out of the ocean	Collecting, storing, trucking, inconsistent rules, high tipping fees	Should be looking to eliminate waste
Landfilling traps		Keeps it out of the ocean	Collecting, trucking, high tipping fees, labour	Often done at home, stockpiled, or illegally dumped
Communication	Ongoing education	Creates clarity, educates public on efforts (helps buy-in)	Responsibility, management, cost	Who has responsibility for this?

For more detail on options for recycling, reusing, and repurposing as well as disposing/ landfilling and associated tipping fees, please see the FGCAC's report titled *End-of-Life Fishing Gear Management in Nova Scotia.*

Communication/Education

While there is a high degree of concern and commitment to better managing end-of-life fishing gear, there is also a lack of common understanding of the issues and opportunities. A well-designed and executed education strategy and communication plan would support and focus the commitment on a common approach that will benefit all stakeholders.

General Comments

- Participants in the two engagement sessions demonstrated a high-level of concern, interest, and commitment regarding the topic of end-of-life fishing gear.
- There is a need to raise the level of ownership of this issue from a number of stakeholders including fishers, retailers, and government.
- There is a need for a coordinated and collaborative approach among the sector participants, i.e., manufacturers, suppliers (retail and wholesale), Harbour Authorities, fishers, recyclers, and government. This may lead to clear and consistent policies, rules, regulations, standards, practices, and cost sharing/reductions. The roles and responsibilities of each must be defined.
- The varied lobster fishing areas and seasons could lead to planned programming and efficiencies. The materials are generally consistent across boundaries.
- Shippagan Enterprises/Vernon d'Eon Fishing Supplies Ltd. indicated that they recognize this as an important issue and offered their support to help work towards a solution.
- Various costing approaches were discussed including paying a fee at the time of purchase so the rope or lobster traps could be dropped off at a collection site free of charge or paying a deposit on a lobster trap when the trap is returned to a designated collection site.

Summary

The first stakeholder engagement sessions brought together a variety of stakeholders who shared a common goal of improving the management of end-of-life fishing gear and who participated in some honest discussions on how this gear may be managed. Options and solutions to collect, sort, and process rope and lobster traps were debated along with opportunities, barriers, and potential benefits. The main solutions proposed included both large-scale industrial recycling and small-scale repurposing options, while highlighting the need for a comprehensive education and communications plan on end-of-life fishing gear management that will benefit all stakeholders.

The four main interrelated themes of cost, labour, storage, and transportation will be explored in greater detail during the second round of stakeholder engagement sessions. By working through the opportunities and challenges of some potential solutions, we are optimistic that a program which works for fishers, retailers, and other industry stakeholders in Nova Scotia is achievable.

Appendix A – List of Engagement Session Participants

Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Alexa Jillian Goodman	Coastal Action	Halifax	NS
Andrea Garrett	Valley Waste Resource Management	Kentville	NS
Ashley David	Nova Scotia Environment	Halifax	NS
Charlene LeBlanc	Municipality of Argyle	Tusket	NS
Dan Fleck	Brazil Rock 33 34 Lobster Association	Tusket	NS
Elizabeth Baker	Canadian Wildlife Federation	Halifax	NS
Eric Demers	Kent Regional Service Commission	Bouctouche	NB
Erin Adams	Net Your Problem	Belfast	Maine, US
Floyd d'Entremont	Dennis Point Wharf	Lower West Pubnico	NS
Frederick Whoriskey	Ocean Tracking Network	Halifax	NS
Glendon Ring	Yarmouth County Solid Waste Management Authority (YCSWMA)	Yarmouth	NS
Jordan Gardiner	Dalhousie University	Halifax	NS
Linda Gregory	Municipality of Digby/Waste Check	Culloden	NS
Lloyd d'Eon	Vernon d'Eon Fishing Supplies Ltd	West Pubnico	NS
Raymond Richard	Small Craft Harbours	Yarmouth	NS
Reanne Harvey	Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) NS	Dartmouth	NS
Roschell Clarke	Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) Solid Waste Department	Sydney	NS
Sean Burke	Polysteel Atlantic Limited	Leitches Creek	NS

Thursday, February 18

Angela Riley	Scotian Shores	Eastern Passage	NS
Angela Worsley	All For Knot Rope Weaving Inc.	Debert	NS
Beverley Richard	Mermaid Tears Jewelry	Dartmouth	NS
Chelsea Boaler	WWF-Canada Marine Conservation Fisheries	Toronto	ON
Debbie Feltmate	Small Craft Harbours	Antigonish	NS
George Koszucki	Retired	Wolfville	NS
Harold Newell	Newell Trucking	Barrington	NS
Kim Timmer	Cleanfarms	Etobicoke	ON
Lloyd Robicheau	Fisher and Harbour Authority Manager of Three Fathom Harbour	Three Fathom Harbour	NS
Matt Corey	Spartan Industrial Marine	Dartmouth	NS
Natasha Tucker	Concerned Citizen	Halifax	NS
Noel Facey	Digby Neck Harbour Authority	Sandy Cove	NS
Richard Stuart	Harbour Authority of Lower Sandy Point	Shelburne	NS
William Giles	Harbour Authority	Point Aconi	NS
Marie-Ève Clark	Merinov	Dartmouth	NS

Appendix B – Questions Discussed During Small Group Sessions

FISHING GEAR COALITION OF ATLANTIC CANADA

End-of-Life Fishing Gear

Engagement Session

Breakout Session #1

Nearly all respondents to the pre-consultation survey feel that finding a way to manage end-of-life fishing gear is an important issue. In addition, more than 60% of respondents said that managing end-of-life fishing gear is both a problem, and an opportunity. This first question asks you to examine, in more detail, the extent of the problems related to end-of-life fishing gear.

Exercise 1A

Below is a table which lists the most common responses we received in our pre-consultation survey when we asked about the problems or issues related to managing end-of-life fishing gear. Using the table below, please rank/prioritize the problems with 1 being the highest priority. If you think there are others that should also be addressed, please add them in the blank spaces and include them in your rankings.

Problem or Issue	Ranking	Comments
Tipping fees incurred by fishers		
Cost incurred by municipalities to landfill/recycle gear		
Labour incurred by fishers to separate materials		
Distance to waste resource management facilities		
Lack of storage space		
Limited recycling options		

Exercise 1B

Now, take the top three priority problems identified by your group in Exercise 1A, and list them in the 'Problem' column in the table below.

Use the 'Contributing Factor' column to describe what you believe to be the most important/significant contributing factors to the priority problems you identified. List as many contributing factors as you can.

Problem	Contributing Factor
	1 **2** **3**
	1 **2** **3**
	1 **2** **3**

Breakout Session #2

The pre-consultation survey identified several opportunities for the management of end-of-life fishing gear. They are listed below:

- Creates economic development within Nova Scotia
- Promotes and encourages repurposing or recycling of fishing gear
- Managing the fishing gear responsibly protects the environment
- Protects fish harvester's livelihoods and reputation as stewards of the ocean
- Reduces management costs for end-of-life fishing gear
- Protects the natural beauty of Nova Scotia's coastline
- Other (please specify)

Using your understanding of the problems and the contributing factors to those problems (both discussed in the previous breakout session), let's now focus on the perceived opportunities (shown above, plus any others you may identify). In your group, discuss and list potential solutions, which may include programs and/or initiatives that could be designed to solve the problems you identified in Breakout Session #1, and/or contribute to the identified opportunities.

- Use the ‘Program/Initiative’ column to list the potential solutions.
- Use the ‘Contributes to’ column to identify which problem or opportunity is addressed by the suggested program/initiative.
- Use the ‘Barriers’ column to list the barriers to the solutions you’ve listed.

Program/Initiative	Contributes to	Barriers
	1 **2** **3**	**1** **2** **3**
	1 **2** **3**	**1** **2** **3**
	1 **2** **3**	**1** **2** **3**