

Southwest Nova Scotia / Bay of Fundy Herring Management Plan Working Group Terms of Reference

Updated March 2026 - DRAFT

Purpose

The Scotia-Fundy Herring Advisory Committee (SFHAC) provides advice and recommendations to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) on the conservation, protection and management of the Atlantic herring fishery resource in Herring Fishing Areas (HFAs) 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22. The committee serves as the main consultative forum for the development and implementation of the integrated fisheries management plan (IFMP) for herring fisheries in Maritimes Region.

The Southwest Nova Scotia / Bay of Fundy (SWNS/BoF) Herring Management Plan Working Group is established as a component of the broader SFHAC that exists to facilitate focused discussions on issues relevant to this portion of the herring fishery.

The purpose of the SWNS/BoF MPWG is to provide advice with respect to the development and implementation of an updated management plan for the SWNS/BoF fishery. This will either take the form of a rebuilding plan, or updates to the management plan within the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan. The Working Group will prioritize initiatives to sustainably manage SWNS/BoF herring, and this work will be reviewed by the Scotia-Fundy Herring Advisory Committee.

Scope

This working group is established pursuant to the Terms of Reference for SFHAC, which state that ad hoc subcommittees / working groups can be established to review and assess specific policy options and management measures.

Should the Department determine that a rebuilding plan is required for the SWNS/BoF stock, this working group will focus on the development of that rebuilding plan and the associated components and measures. Members will review drafts and provide feedback on components of the plan, providing their perspectives and expertise.

Should a rebuilding plan not be required, this working group will focus on a management plan to be incorporated within the context of the IFMP.

Operating principles / terms and conditions

All working group members will act with respect, honesty, integrity and openness and in accordance with the *Maritimes Region Resource Management Advisory Committees Code of Conduct*. The working group will work collaboratively, with patience and discipline. To the extent possible, members will work together to satisfy the interests of all members. Each member should have the opportunity to express their opinion, be listened to and accept a group conclusion that considers all relevant factors. It is not necessarily the optimal decision for each member.

Terms of reference will be reviewed as required.

Administration

Structure

Changes to the structure and administration of the working group will be discussed with the existing membership, and final decisions will be made by DFO.

Meetings

Meetings can be held throughout the Maritimes Region. When feasible, meetings will be held at times and places convenient to the membership.

Meetings will be held as required, dependent on the elements of the management plan that require discussion and input from the working group.

If a member cannot attend, an alternate may be nominated and the chair notified as far in advance of the meeting date as possible.

The Chair will provide the agenda for each meeting at least 7 days in advance.

Expenses

Members do not receive funding from DFO for expenses incurred when attending meetings.

Record of discussion

DFO will prepare and distribute a record of discussion within a reasonable time following the meeting. Those working group members that were present at the meeting will be given an opportunity to review a draft of the minutes prior to their being finalized.

The record will provide sufficient detail to summarize group discussion under key agenda items. Key considerations raised during the meeting will be noted so that members can track, convey and follow up on those issues. When conclusions are reached they will be noted. Areas for further action will also be noted, along with assignment of responsibility and other key information. Records of discussion will not include attribution of comments or quotes unless a member specifically requests that their view be noted in the minutes.

Records of discussion will be provided to the broader SFHAC as part of the mechanism for reporting back the activities of this working group. Once presented to SFHAC, these records are public information and may be distributed by request once finalized.

Provision of advice / recommendations

No formal voting procedures will be established. Recommendations and actions from this working group will be brought to the broader SFHAC either by presentation at the next full SFHAC meeting, or via email to the SFHAC distribution list.

Public access

Generally, the meetings of this working group will not be open to members of the public and media, unless a majority of committee members request this before a meeting starts. No electronic recording devices are permitted without the express permission, on a case-by-case basis, of the members and of the chair.

Individuals with an interest in the SWNS/BoF fishery may request to attend meetings as an observer. Observer status requires that individuals identify themselves as such at the beginning of the meeting. Some observers may be represented in the discussion by their official committee member.

Interested observers without representation on the committee may present briefs with prior approval of the Chair.

Membership

Chair - The position of chair will be held by a DFO official within Resource Management. Generally this will be the Senior Advisor for Small Pelagics, Regional Headquarters (RHQ).

The working group membership will reflect the structure and nature of the SWNS/BoF herring fishery. When required, experts, academics or other representatives may be invited to attend meetings as presenters, advisers or observers because of their knowledge of the subject or sector or as part of another consultation mechanism.

The membership will comprise those with an interest in the SWNS/BoF fishery, and may vary from time to time depending on the specific issues being examined by the working group.

The general proposed membership is as follows:

DFO	Resource Management (RHQ, Area Offices, FRM) Science Branch Conservation and Protection
Indigenous groups and organizations	Licence holders Commercial fishery liaison coordinators Other Indigenous groups with an interest in the area
Harvester associations, inshore & coastal	1 Fundy United Federation 1 Fundy Weir Fishermen's Association 1 Grand Manan Fishermen's Association 1 Yarmouth Herring Management Committee
Processors and purse seine fleet	Up to 4 representatives of the processors and purse seine fleet
Processor associations	1 Seafood Producers Association of Nova Scotia 1 Nova Scotia Seafood Alliance
Provinces	1 NS Department of Aquaculture and Fisheries 1 NB Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries
Other	2 Herring Science Council 1 Ecology Action Centre 1 Oceans North 1 Oceana