Federal Role in Achieving Sustainable Aquaculture

Aquaculture is farming of fish, shellfish and aquatic plants in fresh or salt water. There are fish and seafood farming operations in every Canadian province and in the Yukon Territory.

Federally, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is responsible for the sustainable development of Canada's fishery and aquaculture resources. We work with all levels of government to help enable the aquaculture industry reach its full potential, ensure it is managed to minimize environmental impacts, and maintain high food safety standards.

DFO is committed to developing an environmentally sustainable, internationally competitive aquaculture industry in Canada through investments in scientific research, partnerships with the provinces and territories, and support for industry development programs.

DFO Objectives for Managing Aquaculture

Environmentally Sustainable

Supported by a science-based management approach and decision-making.

Socially Responsible

Based on clear management protocol that recognizes aquaculture as a legitimate user of the marine resource.

Economically Viable

Foster an internationally competitive industry that is robust, diverse, self-reliant and contributes to the economic base of coastal communities.

DFO Regulatory Role

Regulatory

- Screen proposed farm sites under Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA); enforce regulations under the Federal Fisheries Act to protect habitat; licence the movement of fish into pen sites; and monitor habitat impacts.

Research

- Provide scientific advice that supports management of the industry consistent with the department's role as science-based organization

Management

- Manage aquaculture as a legitimate user of the marine resource and coordinate our efforts with provincial agencies.

Communication

- Obtain views from public and other interests, and increase awareness and understanding of government's role in managing aquaculture.

DFO Actions in Support of Aquaculture

Regulatory

- Incorporate new science-based tools. E.g. DEPOMOD - a computer model to predict waste deposition for more precise regulatory reviews of new farm sites.
- Standardize environmental assessment methods to ensure each review of new farms is done in a scientifically-sound and objective manner.

Research

- DFO conducts a variety of developmental and ongoing research programs to inform its management decisions, specifically to:
  - determine the environmental interactions of aquaculture
  - study the ecosystem effects of aquaculture and better assess cumulative impacts

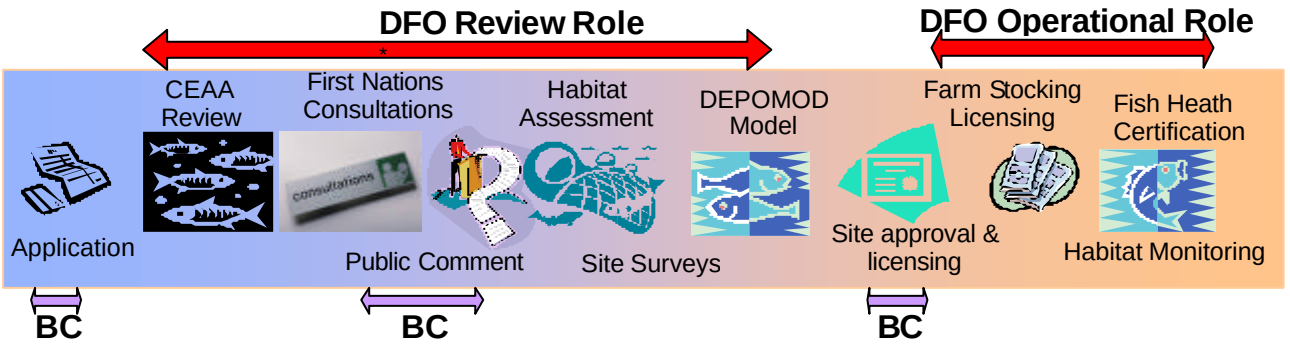
Management

- Support the Aboriginal Aquaculture Association and its efforts to coordinate First Nations' interests in aquaculture.
- Collaborate with provincial agencies to develop regional guidelines for developmental aquaculture.

Communication

- Meet with community, aboriginal and environmental organizations to consider issues and discuss how they may be addressed.
- A new federal aquaculture website to provide greater access to information on key issues and background on the industry. http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/aquaculture_e.htm

DFO Aquaculture Regulatory Regime - 2006



For further information please visit: http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/multimedia/ppt_20060201_e.htm