Oyster Fisheries Regulations and Policies Gulf and Maritimes Regions

Lorne Penny & Florence Albert
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Gulf and Maritimes Regions

Purpose of Presentation

- One of the major factors affecting the management and development of aquaculture in Canada is the complex legislative and regulatory environment that governs the practice of aquaculture in this country. The federal government has several key areas of responsibility affecting aquaculture
- Identify the regulatory and policy structure and context for the various Oyster fisheries in the Gulf and Maritimes Regions as they relate to the Aquaculture sector

DFO Responsibilities

- Patrol shellfish harvesting / growing areas
- Issue licenses, prescribe harvesting locations / times and establish minimum harvest sizes for resource management purposes
- Issue Variation Orders and Prohibition Orders
- Ensure compliance with CSSP

Regional Perspective

- Federal regulations and policies governing Oyster fishing were drafted before Aquaculture was a significant activity
- Additional resource management tools such as: regional policies and protocols are required to regulate harvesting activities and promote flexibility for Industry sectors
- Advice and input from Industry sectors and Provincial/Federal governments assists in development of DFO Aquaculture/Resource management strategies

Regional Management Tools

- Oyster Cocktail Policy; allows for the harvest of <3” Oysters; regulated response to specific market niche

- Oyster Relay Policy; allows for the controlled harvest and natural decontamination of Oysters

Regional Management Tools

- Oyster Spat Collection Policy; allows for the re-population of Oyster Leases & public beds
- Harvest Protocols; assists with the controlled movement of Oysters in response to specific concerns (MSX)

Regional Management Tools

- Transfer Harvest Protocols – assists with the controlled movement of Oysters in response to specific concerns on diseases or invasive species

Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program

- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and Environment Canada (EC) are directly involved in the sanitary control of the shellfish industry
- DFO is responsible for the enforcement of closure regulations and enacting the opening and closing of shellfish areas under the authority of the *Fisheries Act* and *Regulations*

Regulatory Outlook

- The challenge is to find a way to improve the regulatory environment that meets to expectations/needs of so many regulators
- Regulators must operate effectively under the current multi-jurisdictional system to promote competitiveness of the various Industry sectors in the production of high-quality products
- Overall the goal is to design and implement a regulatory framework/system that encourages Aquaculture and Resource sustainability

DFO Initiatives – Aqua Garden Project

DFO Initiatives – Aqua Ed Site

Contact Information:

Florence Albert
DFO Senior Advisor, Gulf Region
Ph: (506) 851-6494 Florence.Albert@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Lorne Penny
DFO Resource Management Eastern Nova Scotia Area
Ph: (902) 564-2574 Lorne.Penny@dfo-mpo.gc.ca