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Evaluation of the Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Programs



Photo credit: Indigenous Affairs Directorate, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

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Evaluation context

Overview

This report presents the results of the Evaluation of the Indigenous Commercial Fisheries (ICF) Programs, conducted by the Evaluation Division at Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) from April 2020 to February 2021. The ICF programs include three grants and contributions programs within the department's Fisheries and Harbour Management Sector: the Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (AICFI), the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI) and the newly formed Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (NICFI).

The evaluation complies with the Treasury Board Policy on Results and meets the requirements of the *Financial Administration Act*.

Evaluation context, scope and objectives

As per the *Act*, evaluations of AICFI and PICFI were required to be completed by March 2021. Although NICFI was recently designed and implemented, it was scoped into the evaluation to examine and report on early implementation.

The *Act* also required that the evaluation include an assessment of the programs' relevance and effectiveness; program design and delivery was also assessed. The evaluation examined activities of AICFI and PICFI between 2016-17 and 2019-20, and those of NICFI since its design phase, which began in 2017-18.

The objective of the evaluation was to provide senior management with information for decision-making and learning that could be used to improve the ICF programs or other programs within the department. To respond to senior management needs, the evaluation also included an assessment of the collaborative approaches (i.e., co-design, co-development, and co-delivery) that are being used to deliver the programs.

Evaluation methodology and questions

The evaluation used multiple lines of evidence to examine the questions summarized in Table 1 including: a literature review, document review, data analysis, and interviews (see Appendix A for the detailed evaluation methodology).

Of note, the evaluation was designed to use the findings of the Indigenous Program Review (IPR) conducted by the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute in cooperation with DFO from 2017 to 2019 (see pages 4 and 31 for more on the IPR).

Table 1. Summary of evaluation questions

Relevance	Extent to which the programs align with the priorities of the federal government and the department, and the extent to which the programs address the needs of Indigenous communities.
Design and delivery	How the programs have defined co-design, co-development and co-delivery; how these approaches have been used to facilitate the collaboration of Indigenous Peoples in the programs; how they have been applied and evolved over time; and the impact of their use on the results of the programs. Whether there are any known barriers to participation in the programs and how the programs minimize barriers.
Performance	Extent to which the programs are achieving their expected results and whether those results align with how Indigenous communities define success.

Program context

Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Indigenous programs

The Indigenous Affairs Directorate is within DFO's Fisheries and Harbour Management Sector. The Directorate administers and delivers a number of grants and contributions programs to support Indigenous fisheries through its Indigenous Fisheries Programs branch. For example, the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, developed in 1992, supports Indigenous groups in managing fisheries for food, social and ceremonial purposes. The Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management program, created in 2004, provides funding to Indigenous organizations to develop capacity to participate in advisory and decision-making processes related to aquatic resources and oceans management.

The Indigenous Program Review

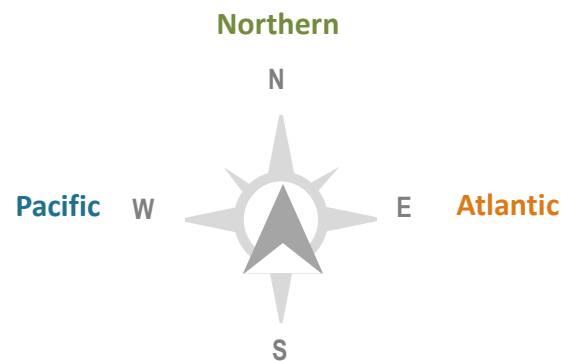
Between May 2017 and May 2019, the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute and DFO collaborated to review the department's suite of Indigenous fisheries programs, including the commercial fisheries programs. The review, which took place in three phases, involved extensive consultations with Indigenous Peoples, technical experts and other stakeholders in communities across Canada. Phase one was designed to seek input about what was going well and what could be improved in AICFI and PICFI, with the intent to support renewal of the programs as they evolve into the future. In phase three, participants were engaged to develop a new northern initiative (i.e. NICFI).

The IPR, including recommendations pertinent to renewing the ICF programs, is referenced throughout this report. Where relevant, actions that the department has made a commitment to implement, are also referenced.¹

The Indigenous commercial fisheries programs

The three ICF programs that are the subject of this evaluation focus on building capacity in Indigenous communities so that they can be meaningfully involved in the commercial fishing industry. The approval of a combined \$40.07M in annual ongoing funding for AICFI, PICFI and NICFI in 2017 signals the federal government's intent to provide long-term funding for this goal, which will support ongoing needs for the establishment of self-sustaining commercial fishing enterprises (CFEs) for Indigenous Peoples.

While each of the ICF programs have similar objectives, they have different beginnings and have evolved differently over time within unique contexts that are important to understand. Figure 1 (on page 5) illustrates key timelines for the ICF programs. A summary of each of the programs and related contexts follows on pages 6 to 8.

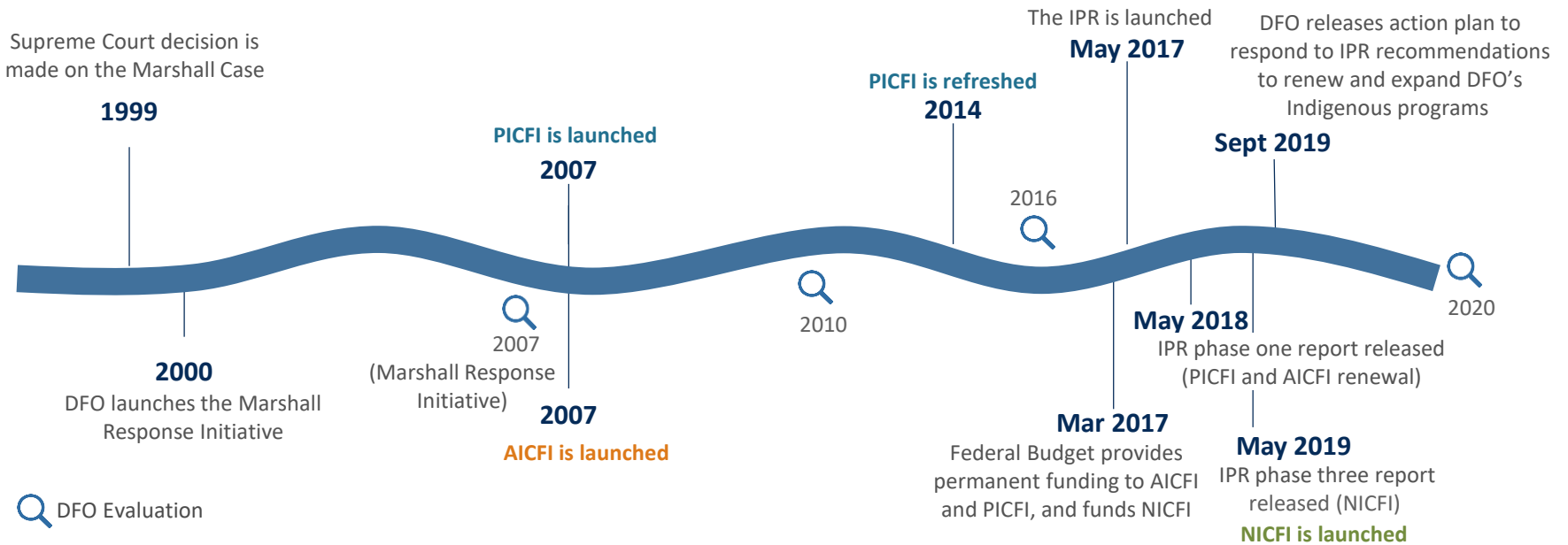


The colours in this graphic are used throughout the report to represent the three ICF programs. Orange was selected for **AICFI** to represent the rising sun. Blue was selected for **PICFI** to represent the ocean. Green was selected for **NICFI** to represent the northern lights.

¹ For more on the IPR see <http://indigenousfisheries.ca/en/indigenous-program-review/>.

Program context (continued)

Figure 1. Key timelines for the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs



Program profiles

Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

Program context and objectives

In September 1999, the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in the *R v Marshall* case affirmed a treaty right to hunt, fish and gather in pursuit of a moderate livelihood. The Marshall decision affected 34 Mi'kmaq (pronounced meeg-mah) and Maliseet (pronounced mah-liseet) First Nations in the Maritime provinces and the Gaspésie region of Quebec.²

Following this decision, DFO launched the Marshall Response Initiative, which addressed the 1999 Supreme Court decision by providing First Nations communities with fishing licenses, vessels, and gear to support participation in the commercial fisheries. Through the Marshall Response Initiative, communities began building capacity in the fishing industry and establishing CFEs.

AICFI was established in 2007, following the conclusion of the Marshall Response Initiative, to continue to build the capacity of the 34 eligible First Nations to manage their CFEs and to strengthen community economic self-sufficiency.

Program resources

AICFI was originally announced in the 2007 federal budget as a five-year, \$55.1M program. After several years of short-term, temporary funding, the initiative received permanent funding in 2017. AICFI has an annual, ongoing budget of \$11.02M and is supported by 4.5 permanent full-time equivalents (FTEs). See Appendix B for more details on the program budget.

Program delivery

AICFI uses a step-by-step approach to help CFEs develop governance and business management skills, build capacity in commercial fisheries and aquaculture operations, and obtain fisheries enterprise-specific training that meets the needs of participating communities.

Funding can be received under four components: capacity building/business development, harvester training, expansion and diversification, and aquaculture (see Appendix C for a description of the components). Multi-year funding agreements were added to the program in 2017 when the AICFI program annual budget was made permanent. This has allowed for larger investments to be possible.

Communities participating in AICFI have established CFEs at a "one-community-to-one-CFE ratio".

Two Indigenous organizations, the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations and the Ulnuweg Development Group, have been engaged from the beginning of AICFI to assist with program delivery, particularly with respect to recruiting specialists to work directly in communities [e.g., as members of the business development team (BDT)]. The BDT and other structures are described more fully on page 15 of this report, however, it is important to note that the AICFI BDT has been in place since the beginning of the program, offering regular (often on-site) contact with CFEs to provide support and guidance with respect to their commercial fishing activities.



Photo credit: Indigenous Affairs Directorate, DFO

² One First Nation, which was not formally recognized in Canada at the time of the *Marshall Decision*, has since been recognized and determined to be part of the original treaty. Therefore, there are now 35 First Nations that are eligible for AICFI.

Program profiles

Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

Program context and objectives

PICFI was launched in 2007, building on fisheries reform work that began in response to the 2004 reports of the First Nations Panel on Fisheries and the Joint Task Group on Post-treaty Fisheries. The program provides funding and support to Indigenous groups and communities in Canada's Pacific region to maximize the potential of their communal fishing enterprises and to strengthen community economic self-sufficiency within the framework of an orderly, stable integrated commercial fishery.

While all First Nations in British Columbia were eligible at program inception, eligible participants have also been described as those in the province in proximity to commercial fishing opportunities, with interest or not, or on major tributaries that empty into the Pacific ocean.

As context for this program, it is important to note that salmon is a critical component of the west coast fisheries, both commercially and in terms of cultural and historical importance to First Nations. Communities fishing salmon as a sole species are subject to changing market conditions and declining stock, both of which can have an impact on CFE successes.

Program resources

PICFI was announced in 2007 as a five-year, \$175M program. It was extended for a series of one to two-year intervals from 2012-2013 to 2016-2017. In 2017, it received ongoing, permanent funding. PICFI's annual planned budget is \$22.05M and it is supported by 22.5 FTES on an ongoing basis. See Appendix B for more details on the program budget.

Program delivery

Like AICFI, PICFI is also delivered using a step-by-step approach, however it was designed to support the development and operation of CFEs at the aggregate level rather than at an individual band level. In this model, communities partner with others to create a CFE. The aggregate model was implemented to accommodate as many First Nations communities in British Columbia as possible.

CFEs can apply for funding under three different components: capacity building, business development, and aquaculture (see Appendix C for a description of these components). Multi-year funding agreements were added to the program in 2017 when the PICFI annual budget was made permanent.

PICFI has undergone many program adjustments since its establishment including a program refresh between 2014 and 2016 to address several issues including, but not limited to, low Indigenous employment in commercial fishing and the practice of CFEs leasing their licenses to non-Indigenous fishers rather than fishing the quota themselves. Also, up until 2014, services were offered to communities directly by DFO. During the refresh, a similar delivery model to AICFI was put in place, notably a BDT, operated through the First Nations Fisheries Council, and administered by the Castlemain consulting group, was added. Management of the BDT has recently transferred to the Skeena Fisheries Commission.

Other key program changes under the program refresh included: PICFI came under responsibility of a new Director, which centralized its governance in National Headquarters; a new funding stream was developed and mainstreamed to capture diversification activities (i.e. Business Development Source); and the co-management focus was de-emphasized.



Photo credit: Indigenous Affairs Directorate, DFO

Program profiles

Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

Program context and objectives

NICFI was co-designed and co-developed during an 18-month engagement process (2017-2019) during the IPR, which culminated in recommendations for the design of the program. The program is aimed at supporting communal commercial fishing enterprises and aquaculture development.

The program provides funding and support to Indigenous groups and communities that are not eligible for AICFI or PICFI in all areas where DFO manages the fishery.³

The first full year of program implementation was 2019-20. As important context, the second year of program implementation has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in slower progress than planned.

Program resources

NICFI was announced as an ongoing \$7.0M per year program in 2017. It was assigned one and a half FTEs in 2017 and as of 2019-20, was supported by three permanent FTEs. See Appendix B for more details on the program budget.

Program delivery

Like the other initiatives, NICFI is delivered using a step-by-step approach. Funding can be obtained under four different components: capacity building/business development, harvester training, expansion and diversification, and aquaculture (see Appendix C for a description of the components).

While modelled after AICFI and PICFI, this program has a slightly different implementation model in that it offers business development planning and advice, and targeted fisheries enterprise-specific training to meet the needs of communities whether they wish to pursue a commercial fishery, a redistributive (artisanal) commercial fishery, or a hybrid of the two.

The development of a local redistributive (artisanal) enterprise option is intended to address acute health and food security challenges faced by many of the communities eligible for NICFI support. After business planning and commercial fishing enterprise governance requirements are met, program participants are then eligible for expansion or diversification.

Given the large geographic area being served by NICFI, it is broken down into different operating regions: Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut; central Canada (Aquaculture only); and Northern Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador and the Maritime provinces.

At the time of the evaluation, the already existing BDTs for PICFI and AICFI were providing service to the NICFI operating regions. However, they were in the process of recruiting additional members to the BDT who have experience working with challenges unique to the operating regions, particularly with respect to food security. The Waubetek Business Development Corporation, an Indigenous-owned and controlled organization, is providing support to Indigenous communities in central Canada that are involved primarily in aquaculture.



Photo credit: Indigenous Affairs Directorate, DFO

³ The *Fisheries Act* provides for the management and control of fisheries in Canada, to Canadian fisheries waters, and any portion of the continental shelf of Canada that is beyond the limits of Canadian fisheries waters.

Evaluation findings: relevance

Alignment of program objectives with federal and departmental priorities

The Indigenous commercial fisheries programs' objectives are well-aligned with current federal and departmental priorities to work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to create healthy, prosperous, and self-sufficient communities. In addition, the programs are viewed as important contributors to the government's reconciliation agenda.

The programs align with federal priorities

At the highest level, the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which declares that Indigenous Peoples have the right to engage freely in all traditional and other economic activities and the right to the improvement of their economic and social conditions.⁴ The federal government fully endorsed the Declaration, voting in favour of it in 2007, and is now working to implement it into Canadian law.

Building Indigenous commercial fisheries capacity to enhance economic returns for the benefit of their communities are integral objectives of the ICF programs. These objectives align specifically with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (92. ii) to:

“Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.”⁵

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's findings are the foundation of the federal government's commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Therefore, the ICF programs are an on-the-water expression of reconciliation.

There is strong alignment with departmental priorities

The objectives of AICFI, PICFI and NICFI align directly with DFO's core responsibilities and commitments to reconciliation. The programs also contribute to the departmental result: Canadian fisheries are sustainably managed. The programs are designed to support Indigenous Peoples and significantly strengthen their ability to become successful fishers, contributing to the economic well-being, not only of Indigenous communities, but of all stakeholders in the fishery.

The ICF programs support DFO in its key role in the transformation of Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples, as outlined in DFO's Reconciliation Agenda.⁶ In addition, as expressed in the department's 2019 mandate letter, the ICF programs are a medium to accelerate and build progress made with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples.⁷

“The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of indigenous peoples. It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous peoples of the world and it elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of indigenous peoples.”

- The United Nations -

⁴ The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the General Assembly on Thursday, 13 September 2007. See: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>.

⁵ See Action 92. ii.: http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf.

⁶ See: DFO-Canadian Coast Guard Reconciliation Strategy, September 2019 (<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/aboriginal-autochtones/reconciliation-eng.html>).

⁷ Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard Mandate Letter, December 2019 (<https://pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters/2019/12/13/minister-fisheries-oceans-and-canadian-coast-guard-mandate-letter>).

Evaluation findings: relevance

Alignment of program objectives with expressed needs of Indigenous communities

Indigenous commercial fisheries programs' objectives are aligned with the expressed needs of Indigenous communities regarding commercial fisheries.

Program objectives and needs of Indigenous communities

The three programs have the core objective to provide funding to Indigenous communities to access commercial fisheries and build capacity to fish and operate CFEs.

The evaluation found that the core objective of the programs is in direct alignment with the key needs that have been expressed by Indigenous communities, particularly with respect to capacity building and access to the fisheries. The key needs that have emerged from the evaluation are summarized in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Expressed needs of Indigenous communities

Expressed need	Why this is needed
Capacity Building	Communities need governance, management, administrative and operations skills to run CFEs; and training to ensure that harvesters can fish and operate vessels safely.
Access	Communities need access to commercial fishing licenses and fish/species quota to be able to access the fish resources and to diversify commercial fishing opportunities.
Employment	Communities need job opportunities (e.g., year-round employment, support for youth employment) to generate revenue, which helps address other needs (e.g., social).
Diversification	Communities need support to grow and expand their CFEs, including for the creation of other revenue streams through other fisheries-related business opportunities (e.g., fish processing, tourism).

Indigenous communities in northern and central Canada have unique needs

Indigenous communities in the north share needs common to communities that participate in AICFI and PICFI, such as business planning and training needs. However, as found in the IPR, NICFI is specifically needed to meet unique needs given the “multiple cultures, languages, and governing structures across a vast area with diverse geographic, infrastructure, and species-specific realities”. The realities of northern Indigenous communities include isolation and the high cost of fuel, but, by far, the most significant priority remains food security.

Northern Indigenous communities also have some unique needs related to the lack of physical infrastructure (e.g., processing plants, landing sites, community freezers), and market access and development.

The evaluation found that there are also different needs in Canada's interior regions, in particular related to aquaculture opportunities.

Indigenous Peoples in Canada

In 2016, approximately 1.67 million Canadians self-identified as Indigenous, about 4.9% of the total population.⁸ Since 2006, the Indigenous population has grown by 42.5% - a rate four times that of Canada's non-Indigenous population. In comparison to non-Indigenous people, Indigenous Peoples income and education levels are typically below the Canadian average. Recent research has found that there is a direct relation between educational attainment rates and income. Indigenous educational programs are crucial to closing the income gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous wage earners. Additionally, the harvesting of traditional foods, such as seal, caribou, duck, whale and fish, helps offset issues related to food access for some communities.⁹

⁸ Chapter 2. Profile of Indigenous Canada : Trends and data needs, 2020. <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/e6cc8722-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/e6cc8722-en&mimeType=text/html>

⁹ Social Conditions of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, 2020. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/native-people-social-conditions>

Evaluation findings: relevance

Alignment of program objectives with the expressed needs of Indigenous communities (continued)

The needs of Indigenous communities in relation to commercial fisheries differ across communities and have changed and evolved over time as communities have built their capacity.

Needs differ across Indigenous communities

The evaluation showed that the needs of Indigenous communities vary, that those needs are largely locally driven, and a number of factors will affect community needs, including but not limited to:

Size: Not all CFEs are at the same level of business development. As they become effective in on-the-water fishing and grow in size, there is interest in expanding to related activities such as marine engine repair, fish processing and/or product transport.

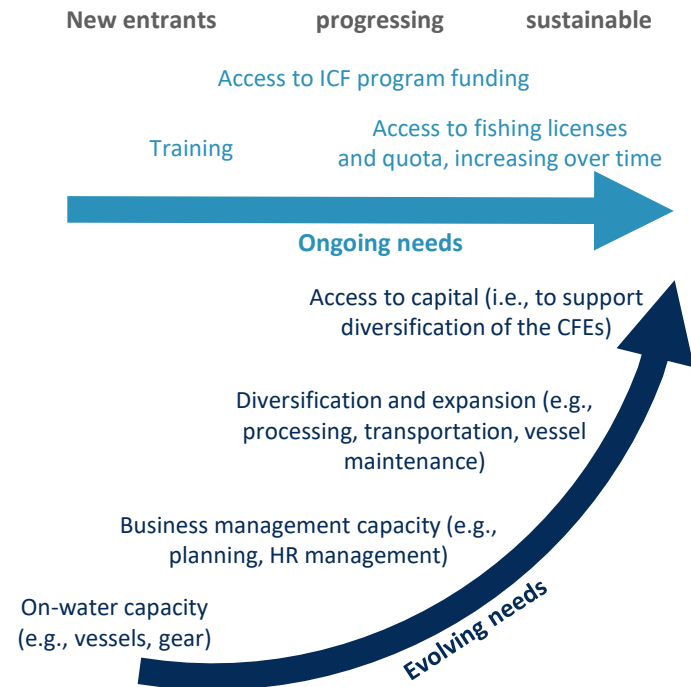
Species being fished: Some CFEs are interested in fishing geoduck, cucumbers, and sea urchins, which requires specialized diver training.

Geography: While many coastal CFEs are looking to acquire more access and vessels, inland CFEs, particularly those dependent on fluctuating salmon stocks on the west coast, have more of a need for value chain investments (e.g., logistics, distribution, sales) and greater collaboration between CFEs to take advantage of economies of scale in supply, distribution and sales. Some of these inland communities and Indigenous groups in the north have an interest in artisanal fisheries.

Needs evolve over time

Over time, some community needs have remained the same (e.g., the need for harvester training; access to funding, fish resources, and capacity building). However, the evaluation found that the needs of communities have evolved over time, particularly as CFEs have become more mature and have built more complex business operations (Figure 3). For example, while an earlier need of many communities was capacity on the water (e.g., vessels and gear), as CFEs became more established, the needs changed to building more business management capacity (e.g., training for human resource management, strategic planning).

Figure 3. Needs of Indigenous communities



This is a simplified representation of how the needs of a community may evolve as it builds capacity in the fishing industry. It is important to understand that community needs will not evolve in a linear or cyclical fashion, nor at the same pace. Rather, the needs of a community will be dependent on local conditions, as already noted, but also on a number of other factors (e.g., market cycles, socio-economic circumstances, worker availability and the turnover of people working in the industry).

Evaluation findings: relevance

Alignment of program objectives with the expressed needs of Indigenous communities (continued)

The Indigenous commercial fisheries programs have been responsive and flexible by making adjustments as new needs have been identified. However, some of the needs that are being met have also been identified as gaps, signalling a continued need for the programs.

Programs have made adjustments to respond to different needs

As noted on the previous page, community needs vary and evolve over time. Evidence from the evaluation showed that the programs have been very flexible and responsive and have made adjustments based on new needs that have been identified.

The IPR was instrumental in helping to identify existing community needs, and both AICFI and PICFI are making adjustments as a result. In addition, the review was used specifically to design NICFI to address unique needs in the northern and central regions of Canada.

Specific examples of adjustments made to the programs include:

- AICFI improved the electronic fisheries management system database and provided training and support to CFEs to use the system.
- Aquaculture-specific funding was added to AICFI and PICFI beginning in 2018-19.
- PICFI improved program accessibility by working on a “new entrants” process to open the program to additional communities.
- Indigenous communities in the Atlantic provinces that were not eligible for AICFI were provided program access through NICFI.
- PICFI and AICFI changed to a multi-year funding model to improve the flexibility for CFEs to allocate funding according to their priorities. Some participants interviewed for the evaluation mentioned that the introduction of multi-year funding in AICFI and PICFI allowed them to engage in long-term planning to address some of their greater financial investment needs.

There is a continued need for the programs

Interestingly, while the evaluation found that the programs are meeting many of the expressed needs of communities, participants indicated that financial needs are still great for many reasons, including for access to more commercial licenses and species quota. Some other situations that might be driving continued needs mentioned during interviews included:

- diversification to build a more sustainable business might mean increasing the number and types of licenses;
- licenses to expand beyond salmon on the Pacific coast into more high-value species are very expensive to acquire;
- expansion into aquaculture is very capital intensive in terms of developing infrastructure;
- in NICFI, there is a cap in funding, which prevents some CFEs from acquiring more expensive licenses; and
- there are high costs associated with development in remote northern communities such as high transportation costs to bring materials in for infrastructure development (e.g., harbours).

To respond to the IPR recommendations, the department committed to continuing multi-year funding in two of its actions (see Appendix D).

Evaluation findings: design and delivery

Defining co-design, co-development, and co-delivery

There are no consistent definitions for co-design, co-development, and co-delivery, however there is a common understanding that these approaches are about Fisheries and Oceans Canada working collaboratively with Indigenous communities and other stakeholders according to a set of principles that achieve specific goals.

Collaboration between DFO and participants

The ICF programs work with eligible participants, Indigenous organizations, and other stakeholders to co-design, co-develop and co-deliver programs that achieve DFO's intended result of improved outcomes for Indigenous Peoples.

One of the primary objectives of the evaluation was to better understand and describe these three collaborative approaches, how they have been applied, success factors and challenges that have been experienced, and the impact of their use on results.

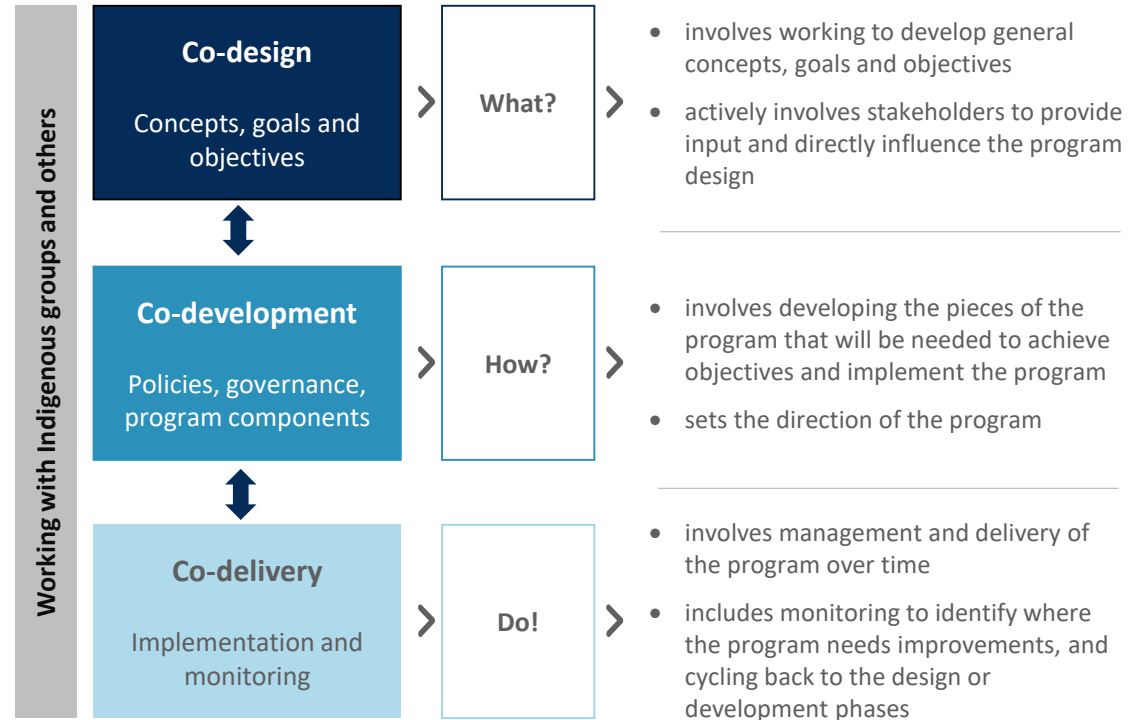
Defining co-design, co-development, and co-delivery

The evaluation found that there are no consistent definitions for co-design, co-development, and co-delivery. However, it was possible to describe these collaborative approaches (Figures 4 and 5), and identify their goals as:

- to jointly deliver programs that meet the needs of both parties (i.e., DFO and the communities being served); and
- to conduct joint decision-making.

It was also possible to describe common principles, which are described on pages 18 and 19.

Figure 4. Description of co-design, co-development, and co-delivery



'Co' is a prefix defined in Merriam-Webster dictionary as: with, together, joint, or jointly. Also implies partnership or equality.



The programs have the representation of Indigenous persons or organizations on several of their structures (see page 15) including the BDTs, program management committees, and application review committees.

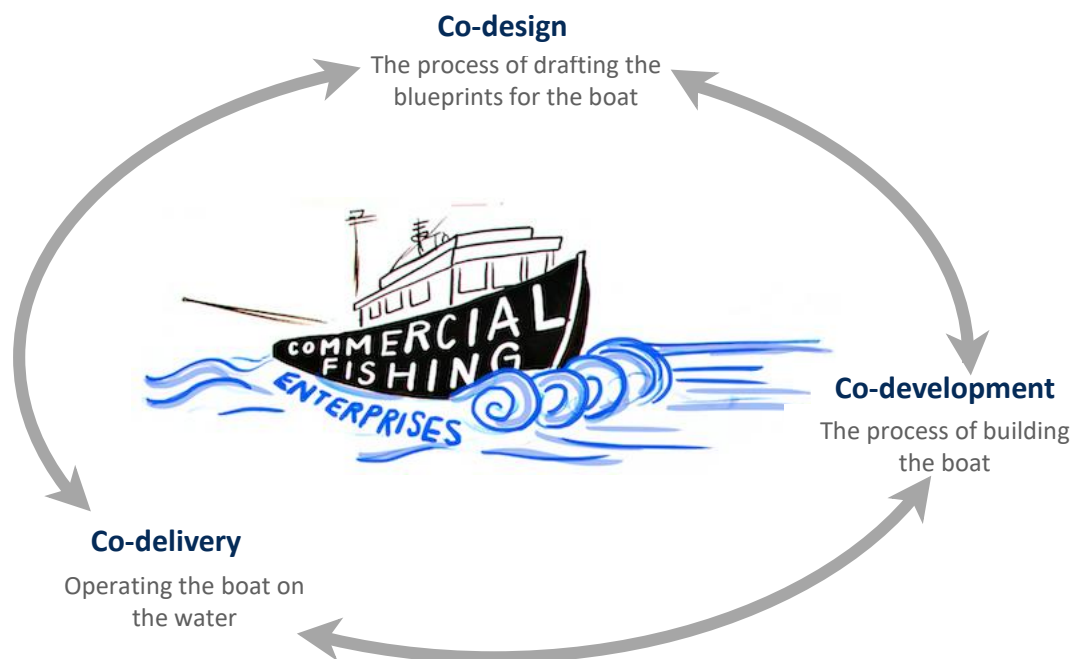
Evaluation findings: design and delivery

Defining co-design, co-development, and co-delivery (continued)

If a boat analogy was used to describe co-design, co-development and co-delivery, a boat builder would work with a community to design, build and operate the boat to ensure it met everyone's needs, including those of the marine architect and the industry (i.e., standards).

The two-way arrows in Figure 5 indicate that once operating, a boat needs ongoing monitoring and maintenance to run properly. So too, a program requires continual monitoring and sometimes needs to return to the design or development phase to ensure it continues to meet the dynamic needs of participants.

Figure 5. Analogy for collaborative approaches



Source for boat image: National Indigenous Fisheries Institute, Indigenous Program Review Phase One: Tanya Gadsby, The Fuselight

An example of co-design: NICFI

The IPR engaged more than 50 different communities, 17 groups, and 143 participants in the co-design and co-development of NICFI. Participants came from communities with multiple cultures, languages, and governing structures across a vast area with diverse geographic, infrastructure, and species-specific realities, as well as from interior regions interested in pursuing aquaculture ventures.

As a result of this process, the unique contexts of many eligible communities, particularly with respect to food security needs, were recognized, and two different implementation models were designed for NICFI. These two models are limited to NICFI participants only.

1. Local redistributive model: supports developing business management skills, building capacity in redistributive fisheries operations, and improving indicators of health and food security.
2. Combined commercial/redistributive model: ensures program design flexibility for redistributive businesses moving into small-scale commercial activities.

Evaluation findings: design and delivery

Program structures in place to support co-design, co-development, and co-delivery

There are six key structures in place that facilitate the collaborative approaches of co-design, co-development and co-delivery. Although these structures have generally been applied consistently across the three programs, there are some differences in how they have been applied over time.

Figure 6. Indigenous commercial fisheries programs' delivery structures

The six key structures in place to support to the delivery of the programs and the use of a collaborative approach are summarized in Figure 6. See next page for more on how these structures have evolved.

Program management committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sets direction and guides programs; and oversees work of service provider• Co-chaired by a DFO staff and a member of an Indigenous organization and includes other DFO personnel, Indigenous organizations, service providers, and other governmental departments
Business development team*	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides comprehensive hands-on advice and assistance to participating communities and CFEs, often in person• Provides advice on fisheries business planning and development to support the operation and sustainability of CFEs (* for more on the BDT, see next page)
Application review committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviews funding applications for CFEs. Provides recommendations to DFO on applications• Minimum of three voting board members, of which at least two have to be Indigenous.• Meets at least once a month• Meetings are co-chaired by either an Indigenous organization or DFO
Third-party evaluator (TPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviews and assesses applications for funding, focusing on the technical feasibility and practicality of the proposal• Reviews and assists with the development of program documentation (e.g., policy, statistical reports)
Training advisory coordinator (TAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Works with program participants to identify training needs and ensure needs are known and understood by all stakeholders• Ensures that training methodologies are in line with industry standards• Facilitates the scheduling of training activities
Special planning sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensures that day-to-day adjustments of the programs are co-developed and meet the needs of participants• Includes management committee members and service providers• Held bi-annually

Evaluation findings: design and delivery

Program structures in place to support co-design, co-development, and co-delivery (continued)

Evolution in the application of the collaborative approaches

As noted on page 14, NICFI was co-designed using the input gathered from the IPR. AICFI and PICFI also used a co-design approach at the outset of program implementation. However, according to the 2010 evaluation of PICFI, First Nations consultations for AICFI continued throughout the initiative's development, incorporating feedback received into program design and delivery. Although PICFI also engaged in community consultations, the initiative was less successful at incorporating the feedback from the consultation processes.

Therefore, while all three ICF programs are using the same approaches, the ways in which they have been applied have evolved over time and there are a few differences that are worth noting.

- The BDT and TPE were put in place for AICFI at program inception in 2007. Delivering services to CFEs and communities through First Nations organizations helped minimize the effect of historic tensions between DFO and First Nations.
- Arms-length delivery structures were not put place for PICFI until 2015-16. The 2010 evaluation of PICFI noted that with no buffer between DFO and First Nations communities, relationships were less effective early on.
- Since 2015-16, the lead for the PICFI BDT has changed hands twice causing a disruption in key contacts and relationship building.
- A northern BDT was established in 2020 to provide services to NICFI participants in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, while the AICFI BDT expanded to support other eligible NICFI participants based in Northern Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador and the Maritime provinces.

- NICFI also has an aquaculture BDT that supports Indigenous communities based in central Canada that are participating in the program.
- AICFI has a training advisor who manages the commercial fishing courses in collaboration with a community college. PICFI uses a coordinator and delivers training through local college infrastructures. The BDT also assists the PICFI coordinator with training activities.
- PICFI has a new TPE as of the spring of 2020.



Photo credit: Indigenous Affairs Directorate, DFO

Evaluation findings: design and delivery

Effectiveness of the business development teams

The business development teams were found to be one of the most effective structures in the programs, contributing significantly to co-design, co-development and co-delivery on the ground, although some challenges related to the functioning of the business development team on the Pacific coast have been identified.

Effectiveness of the business development teams

Overall, the BDTs are key drivers of collaboration and contribute directly to the success of the programs. The evaluation identified a number of reasons why the BDTs have been effective in helping to build the capacity of the communities with which they work:

- they are led by and/or include members from Indigenous organizations, typically with existing or past involvement with communities, thus they already have pre-established relationships;
- they have expertise in areas of economic development, business planning, human resources and financial management and are knowledgeable in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors;
- they operate in confidentiality related to CFE business, which interviewees noted helps build trust;
- they operate at arm's length from DFO, limiting direct government involvement. This adds an element of independence, which allows BDT members to provide ongoing, transparent support to commercial fishing enterprises; and
- they employ a positive, constructive and future-oriented approach that is based on mutual respect, effective inter-personal relationships and professionalism.

The **AICFI BDT** works under the direction of the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations and the Ulnooweg Development Group to provide comprehensive, hands-on assistance to Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and Passamaquoddy First Nations communities located throughout the Maritimes and Gaspésie region of Quebec.

AICFI interviewees had very positive views with respect to the BDT, noting that members: are extremely helpful as they provide first-hand knowledge and free expertise to CFEs; have a good understanding of communities, including the language and culture; and work to ensure that available resources are used within the community being served. The only issue raised with respect to the BDT was that sometimes access was limited due to the large number of communities that it supports.

The **PICFI BDT** first operated through the First Nations Fisheries Council, administered by the Castlemain consulting group. In 2019-20, it transitioned to the Skeena Fisheries Commission. Some interviewees view the recent move of the BDT as positive because it places the knowledge and capacity building in the Indigenous communities and eliminates the reliance on consultants.

However, there were indications of some challenges with the PICFI BDT, which can likely be linked to recent turnovers in personnel, which have hindered the BDT's progress, capacity and ability to build relationships. Interviewees noted a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities of the BDT, resulting in community members approaching the service providers for issues outside of their role (e.g., issues with the program or with DFO in general). Interviewees also raised concerns around whether the BDT had enough knowledge of the Pacific coast fisheries.

Due to the fact that NICFI is still early in its implementation and that COVID-19 has delayed progress, interviewees felt it was too early to comment on the functioning of the **NICFI BDT**.

Evaluation findings: design and delivery

Success factors related to co-design, co-development and co-delivery

There are a number of success factors or principles that have contributed to the effective co-design, co-delivery, and co-development of the Indigenous Commercial Fishers programs.

What is working well in the collaborative approaches?

While it was difficult to define the three collaborative approaches, evidence collected for the evaluation identified **four success factors or principles** that contribute to effective collaboration with Indigenous groups. Further, the evidence indicates the programs are applying these principles, especially in how the service providers (i.e., BDT, TAC, TPE) work in the communities and the way in which the governance committees are structured.

1. Employing flexibility in program delivery

Flexibility allows the programs to be responsive to needs and make changes, where needed.

Flexibility and responsiveness were common themes when interviewees were describing what is working well in the programs.

There is strong evidence that the programs employ flexibility at the local level, especially relevant to co-delivery. Because members of service provider organizations are in the communities, they are in touch with local priorities and aspirations relevant to commercial fisheries. They can help CFEs design projects and assist with subsequent applications for funding.

Flexibilities are also evident at the program level. Page 12 provided some examples of how the programs have made changes over time to adjust to changing and evolving needs.

2. Using a ground-up, grass-roots approach

Working on the ground allows for a direct connection with the programs' beneficiaries.

The BDT, the TAC and the TPE are in touch with the community and on the ground listening to the needs and priorities of the communities. In addition to responding with free advice, which is appreciated by members of the commercial fishing enterprises, the contact allows for mutual learning which strengthens relationships.

These structures allow funding proposals to be generated using a grass-roots approach.

3. Allowing for joint decision-making at different levels of the program

Supported by open dialogue, joint means the perspectives of both the department and Indigenous stakeholders are represented and able to influence decisions.

There is shared decision-making at the local level:

- The BDT responds to questions and requests and the TAC works to understand training needs. The TPE assesses what is feasible, knowing the objectives and requirements of the department. These exchanges provide input into the development of applications.
- Indigenous to program representation is at a 2 to 1 ratio for the application review committee that reviews applications and makes recommendations to the funding authority about what projects to support.

Evaluation findings: design and delivery

Success factors related to co-design, co-development and co-delivery (continued)

4. Supporting meaningful engagement through open dialogue

Open dialogue implies two-way communication and active listening. It builds trust and demonstrates respect. Respect is central to effective collaboration and positive relationships.

Evidence supports that there is open dialogue with Indigenous participants, in particular within the service provider structures operating at the community level.

The structures and governance committees are lines of communication for CFEs to voice concerns and priorities, make requests, and gather information and free advice. The exchanges support projects that are both feasible and focused on local needs.

The program management committees have broad membership, meet frequently and are used to transfer what is learned at the local level to the DFO program authority and other stakeholders.

The IPR is the best example of how the programs were open to hearing the input from Indigenous groups about what is working well and where improvements are needed to evolve the programs into the future. The department has committed to the recommendations of the IPR with an action plan (see details in Appendix D).

Direct and frequent communication are part of the success of the ICF programs. The direct communication and active listening of partners is particularly appreciated by First Nations.

Members of the BDTs and the TACs have not been able to meet face-to-face during the COVID-19 pandemic which has been difficult.

Ethical space: a best practice

“Ethical space” is the concept of creating a venue for collaboration and advice that respects the integrity of all knowledge systems, and allows for cross-validation (where one side validates the others perspectives or decisions). Its purpose is to co-create a space for achieving common ground.¹⁰ It creates space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to contribute equally and meaningfully in decision-making processes.

Co-development requires transparency and open dialogue.

- Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *A new approach: Co-development of a new fiscal relationship between Canada and First Nations*. -

¹⁰ We Rise Together - Achieving Pathway to Canada Target 1 through the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas in the spirit and practice of reconciliation. The Indigenous Circle of Experts' Report and Recommendations. March 2018.

Evaluation findings: design and delivery

Success factors related to co-design, co-development and co-delivery (continued)

Other success factors

In addition to the four success factors outlined on the previous two pages, the evaluation identified other elements of the programs that are contributing to effective collaboration with Indigenous Peoples.

- **Low turnover of DFO program personnel:** overall, the low turnover in DFO program personnel has contributed to positive relationships being built. Some interviewees external to the department indicated they knew the names of program personnel and felt they could call them directly if needed.
- **Leveraging other programs:** the use of other programs has broadened opportunities and extended what the ICF programs can accomplish on their own. For example, the horizontal Strategic Partnership Initiative was used to create the Pacific Commercial Fisheries Diversification Initiative, which allowed PICFI CFEs to access additional funding to expand viable businesses. In response to recommendations of the IPR, the department has committed to seeking out and advising CFEs on the availability of funding from other sources. (see Appendix D)
- **Involvement of other organizations:** representatives of other government departments attend ICF program management committee meetings (i.e., Indigenous Services Canada, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency). This broadens partnership opportunities and integrates departmental knowledge, CFE or community insight, and program participation history within management committee processes. Also in response to IPR recommendations, DFO has committed to exploring areas of collaboration with other government departments to respond with a more horizontal approach to emerging opportunities.



Photo credit: Indigenous Affairs Directorate, DFO

Following the department's collaboration with the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute to conduct the IPR, DFO continues to partner with the Institute on training opportunities. The IPR resulted in a recommendation to secure more funding to support training that would help communities offer meaningful employment along career progression paths in the fisheries. DFO and the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute are currently collaborating on a number of tasks to explore how they can support and achieve this objective.

Evaluation findings: design and delivery

Challenges in applying co-design, co-development and co-delivery

Those involved in Indigenous commercial fisheries programs noted that there are challenges related to collaboration, as well as other challenges which are mostly outside of the programs' control.

Challenges with respect to collaboration

Some challenges were identified regarding collaboration. These challenges were not found to be affecting the performance of the programs, but are important to recognize in the programs' delivery.

- Building and maintaining relationships is a key aspect of collaboration—something that takes a lot of time, effort, willingness, and clear communication from the people involved. This means there can be extra work and time required for both DFO and service providers.
- With many different parties involved (e.g., BDT, regions, service providers, management committees) miscommunications sometimes occur, which can cause confusion.
- Indigenous stakeholders often bring issues to the management committees or to the attention of the BDTs, that are outside the scope of the programs (e.g., regulatory in nature or related to policies that DFO is working on), and for which the programs have limited ability to address.
- Timing of information sharing is important and can lead to further complications or confusion if not delivered in a timely manner.

Other challenges

A range of challenges were noted in the evaluation evidence which are largely outside the control of the programs. A few fall within DFO's mandate while others are outside the control of the department. The issues summarized below can add to the challenges in achieving program results.

- **Access:** the timing of licenses/quota becoming available do not typically align with the funding cycle, which can prevent participants from purchasing more access.
- **Regulatory:** new safety regulations for commercial fishing or new species listings under the *Species At Risk Act* can change license/quota availability.
- **Vessel length and licenses:** vessel length must match the license/quota based on provincial regulations, which limits flexibility.
- **New DFO policies:** the department's work on new policies (e.g., policy on Preserving the Independence of the Inshore Fleet in Canada's Atlantic Fisheries, Gulf Snow Crab Policy Change, or Elver Licensing Policy) can result in changes to license/quota allowances.
- **CFE changes:** CFEs' organizational changes (e.g., new band leaders) can affect the business plan and direction for the CFE.
- **Geography:** the reliance of inland fisheries on single species (i.e., salmon on the Pacific coast) is challenging for the development of self-sustainability for their CFEs.

Evaluation findings: performance

Program participation

Indigenous communities are participating in the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs and the programs have put in place measures to address known barriers to participation.

The evaluation aimed to understand the results of ICF programs. This was done through examining the level of participation in the programs, the extent to which they are building the capacity of communities, benefitting communities, and the impact of the programs on relationships. Also core to examining performance was understanding the extent to which the results of the programs align with Indigenous definitions of success.

Projects funded through the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs

The ICF programs sign contribution agreements with Indigenous groups to provide funding for activities that support commercial fishing enterprises. Between 2016-17 and 2019-20, the programs signed a total of 592 agreements with Indigenous groups in the areas of capacity building, business development, harvester training, expansion and diversification, and aquaculture (Table 2).

There are no notable trends in the number and types of agreements signed, as it will vary year to year depending on community needs. In the period of the evaluation:

- **NICFI** had the fewest agreements signed, with 38, as the program is still very early in its implementation. In addition, the majority of agreements (20 of 38) were for aquaculture projects.
- For **AICFI** and **PICFI**, the fewest number of agreements signed were in the aquaculture component because it was only added as an eligible activity in 2018-19.¹¹

¹¹ In addition, information from program staff indicated that Indigenous knowledge of aquaculture regulation has been a challenge for many projects under the PICFI Aquaculture Development Source and that the majority of projects that have not been funded are due to a lack of regulatory clearance.

Table 2. Number and types of agreements funded, by program (2015-16 to 2019-20)

	AICFI	PICFI	NICFI
Capacity building	104	97	8
Business development		96	
Harvester training	94	--	0
Expansion and diversification	120	--	10
Aquaculture	26	17	20
Total	344	210	38

Note: For NICFI, this data is for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

AICFI and NICFI fund projects under the same four components. PICFI funds projects under three components, however the types of activities funded are the same as those funded through AICFI and NICFI. In the Pacific initiative, harvester training is funded through the capacity building component and expansion and diversification is funded through the business development component.

Evaluation findings: performance

Program participation (continued)

Participation in the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs

As of March 2020, the ICF programs had a total of 174 Indigenous communities participating in the programs, through an established 67 CFEs (Table 3).

- Participation in the **AICFI** program has been consistent over the evaluation period, with 33 participating groups and 33 established CFEs in most years of the evaluation period. The participation rate in AICFI is very high, with 33 of 35 (or 94%) of eligible groups participating in the program, as of March 2020. Note that the number of participants is always the same as the number of CFEs because none of the communities have partnered to create a CFE.
- The number of CFEs established through **PICFI**¹² has also been consistent over the evaluation period at 25. The number of Indigenous groups participating is much higher than the number of CFEs established because of the use of the aggregate approach (i.e., communities partner to create a CFE). The number of groups participating increased from 97 in 2016-17 to 118 in 2019-20 due to the addition of aquaculture as an eligible activity in 2018-19.
- While the first year of implementation of **NICFI** was 2019-20, the department signed agreements with Indigenous communities in 2018-19, thus participation in the program started in that year. The program saw an increase in participation in the following year, from 12 communities to 23 communities. Three of the 12 in 2018-19 were participating through a CFE and the remaining nine through aquaculture agreements; nine of the 23 in 2019-20 were participating through a CFE and the remaining 14 through aquaculture agreements.

Table 3. Participation in the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs, by program (2015-16 to 2019-20)

	AICFI		PICFI		NICFI		Total	
	CFEs	Groups	CFEs	Groups	CFEs	Groups	CFEs	Groups
2016-17	33	33	25	97	--	--	58	130
2017-18	33	33	25	97	--	--	58	130
2018-19	34	34	25	119	3	12	61	165
2019-20	33	33	25	118	9	23	67	174

In looking at participation in NICFI from a geographic perspective, groups located in Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador comprise the majority of the participating groups (17 of the 23, or 74%).

¹² For PICFI and NICFI, it is not possible to determine the rate of participation in the programs due to the fact that the programs are open to virtually all communities where DFO manages the fishery and not all of these communities will be able to participate in the program (i.e., they may not have opportunities for commercial fishing or aquaculture), nor will they all be interested in participating.

Evaluation findings: performance

Barriers to program participation

Barriers to participation

As per the Directive on Results, evaluations are required to include a gender based analysis plus (GBA+).¹³ The ICF evaluation conducted the GBA+ by examining whether there were any existing barriers to participating in the programs based factors such as sex, gender, language, education or geography; and whether the programs have taken steps to reduce barriers to participation. Three key barriers to participation were identified and the evaluation found that the programs have implemented some measures to mitigate them.

Geography

Geography can be a barrier to participating in the programs, particularly for northern and remote communities, where costs for materials and transportation are higher and the ability to obtain equipment and services in a timely fashion is a big challenge.

In addition, some communities in the Atlantic provinces (e.g., in Newfoundland and Labrador, individuals living off-reserve) were not eligible to participate in AICFI. To address this, when NICFI was implemented, the boundaries were extended to provide program access to those communities/persons. NICFI is also open to Indigenous groups and communities that are not eligible for AICFI or PICFI in areas where DFO manages the fishery.

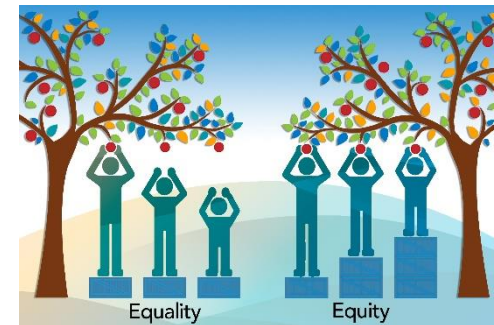
In addition, access to the PICFI program was based on an initial intake that was completed and communities that were not part of that initial intake have not have access to the program. The program administered a “new entrants” process in 2019-20 to give communities not currently participating an opportunity to enter the program. It is expected that some additional communities will begin participating in the program as a result.

Language

Language was identified as a potential barrier to participation in the programs, particularly for northern communities and for some French-speaking communities. To address this, the programs aim to have native-speaking (e.g., French, Mi’kmaq, Inuktitut) members on the BDT; the fisheries management system is available in French; and to the extent possible, materials are provided in French, English and Inuktitut. No materials are currently available in some languages, such as that of the Innu in Eastern and Northern Quebec.

Culture or social barriers

Certain factors such as low literacy or education levels can pose barriers to communities when establishing CFEs. The ICF programs aim to reduce these barriers by having the BDTs work directly with communities to provide support and advice. In addition, visual tools are developed to communicate concepts in northern communities where literacy levels may be low. Finally, the programs fund training activities, which are aimed at increasing the skills and knowledge that are needed to work in a commercial fishing enterprise (see next page for more on this).



The goal of GBA+ is to ensure that groups have equitable access to programs and services.

Source: Saskatoon Health Region (2014).

¹³ Gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) is an analytical tool, process, or product used to assess the potential impacts of policies, programs, services, and other initiatives on diverse groups of women and men, taking into account gender and other identity factors. The "plus" in the name highlights that gender-based analysis goes beyond gender, and includes the examination of a range of other intersecting identity factors (such as age, education, language, geography, culture, and income).

Evaluation findings: performance

Capacity building and sustainability of commercial fishing enterprises

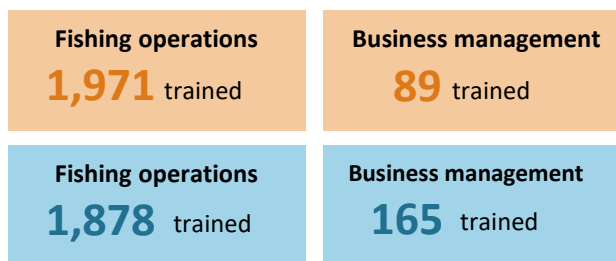
The Indigenous commercial fisheries programs are building the capacity of Indigenous communities through the training that is being delivered and that training is preparing communities for employment in the commercial fishing industry. In addition, commercial fishing enterprises are moving towards sustainability.

Training taken through the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs

To support the programs' objectives related to capacity building, each has a component through which funding can be obtained to support training and mentoring. The training and mentoring can be related to either fishing operations (e.g., vessel operation, safety) or business management skills (e.g., financial management, strategic planning). The business management skills are gained primarily through the fishing enterprise management training.¹⁴

Each CFE has an annual training plan, which outlines its training requirements. Training has yet to be delivered through NICFI, however training plans are in development. The number of people trained and the type of training taken will vary from year to year depending on the training needs that have been identified by the CFE.

Between 2016-17 and 2019-20, a total of 4,103 people have been trained through the **AICFI** and **PICFI** programs.



For AICFI, this includes Indigenous participants only. For PICFI, this includes Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants.

Impact of training

Information from the evaluation showed that training is very important to communities, particularly with respect to on-vessel training and safety, as they are needed to meet Transport Canada standards. On-going training is also required to allow communities to respond to changing needs. Communities reported that training is meeting the needs that have been identified and that there is flexibility to address changing needs. It was also reported that the training provided is preparing communities for employment in the commercial fishing industry.

Training gaps

Few gaps were identified with respect to training, although a few interviewees noted that if additional funding was available, they would be able to do more training, including more complex or advanced training (e.g., diving certification).

Inconsistencies in the application of the training component and challenges with data

The evaluation noted inconsistencies between AICFI and PICFI with respect to how the training component is applied. The training data provided by the programs showed that AICFI's training has been accessible only to Indigenous participants. PICFI's training data showed that training has been accessible to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. The evaluation was not able to clarify the policy on training eligibility in program documentation.

In addition, the evaluation found that training data is not collected consistently across programs, nor compiled at the national level for reporting purposes.

¹⁴ The fishing enterprise management training was specifically developed to provide business management training to those working in a commercial fishing enterprise. The course includes six modules on topics such as financial management, fisheries operations management, strategic business planning, and human resource management.

Evaluation findings: performance

Capacity building and sustainability of commercial fishing enterprises (continued)

Measuring the sustainability of commercial fishing enterprises

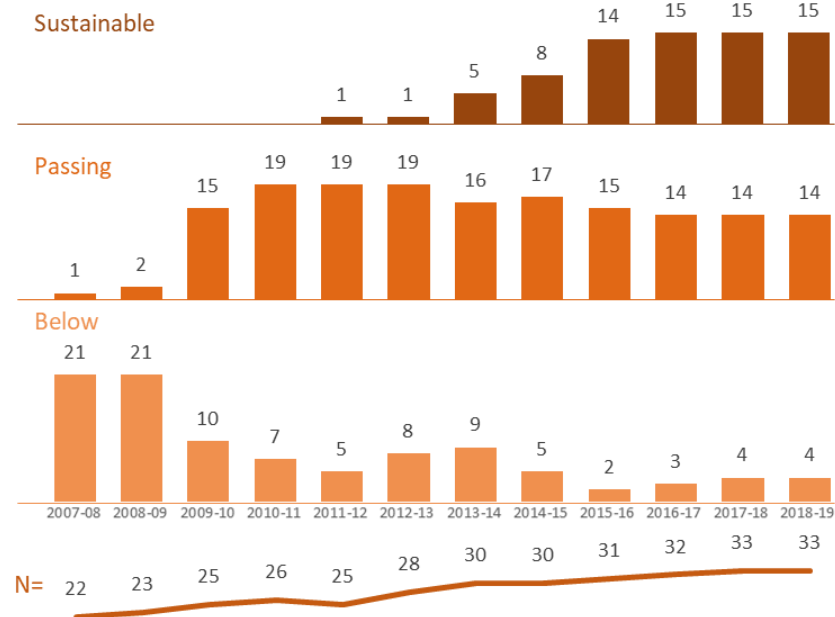
One of the key indicators used by AICFI and PICFI to measure capacity building is the level of sustainability of CFEs (is not yet in place for NICFI), which is done through a business capacity ratings (BCR) system. It is an annual assessment conducted jointly by the programs, the BDTs, and the TPEs for each respective program. CFEs are rated on five capacity building components, each of which have a number of criteria against which CFEs are scored.¹⁵ Based on the scoring received, CFEs receive a *below*, *pass*, or *sustainable rating*.¹⁶ The programs expect that it should take anywhere between 10-15 years for a CFE to attain a sustainable status.

Sustainability levels of commercial fishing enterprises has increased

The IPR found that AICFI and PICFI have built the capacity of Indigenous communities to operate commercial fisheries. This finding is supported by the BCR data that was analyzed for the evaluation. BCRs for AICFI were completed starting in 2007-08, which show that CFEs have made significant progress in building their capacity and are moving towards sustainability.

- At the outset of the program, almost all participating CFEs (21 of 22) were at a below rating (Figure 7). However, only two years into the program (2009-10), 15 of 25 had a pass rating and 10 of 25 remained below.
- In each year that followed, CFEs continued to build their capacity, with the first achieving a sustainable rating in year five of the program.
- Since that year, there has been a steady progression of CFEs moving from below to sustainable ratings. In the most recent year for which data were available (2018-19), only four of the 33 CFEs, for which ratings were completed, remained at a below rating and 15 of the 33 had achieved a sustainable rating.

Figure 7: Number of AICFI commercial fishing enterprises with below, pass, and sustainable business capacity ratings (2007-08 to 2018-19)



Note: BCR data were not available for 2019-20 as they were not completed due to COVID-19. Source: AICFI rating system data compiled by the program.

When comparing the percent change in rating between a CFE's first rating and its most recent rating, all have experienced a positive change, thus regardless of the current level of sustainability achieved, all CFEs have continued to make progress in building capacity and moving towards sustainability.

¹⁵ The five capacity building components are: governance; organizational structure; documentation of management, administrative, and operational policies; implementation of management, administrative, and operational policies; and status of additional special markers of business activity and capacity.

¹⁶ A below rating is received when a CFE's assessment score is less than 52%. A pass rating is received when a CFE's assessment score is equal to or greater than 52%, but less than 82%. A sustainable rating is achieved when a CFE's score is equal to or greater than 82%.

Evaluation findings: performance

Capacity building and sustainability of commercial fishing enterprises (continued)

BCR data for **PICFI** were available starting in 2015-16, following a refresh of the program. The BCRs for PICFI follow the same methodology as AICFI. The ratings data show that CFEs have made progress in building their capacity over the period of the evaluation (Figure 8).

- In fiscal year 2015-16, most of the CFEs (23 of 25) were at a below rating. The other two were at a pass rating.
- In the years that followed, more CFEs began moving to a pass rating and by 2019-20, 15 of the 25 had achieved a pass rating. In that same year, the program's first two CFEs achieved a sustainable rating.
- However, in 2019-20, eight of 25 still remained at a below rating.

Both the AICFI and PICFI programs began in the same year, however, the BCRs data suggest that AICFI CFEs appear to be achieving sustainable status more quickly than those in PICFI. This is attributable to some of the programs' context (see pages 6 and 7) including:

- PICFI CFEs did not receive much of their access to the fisheries until approximately 2012-13, which delayed the full operation of CFEs that had been established;
- challenges with the PICFI program prior to its refresh and the application of a new delivery structure between 2014 and 2016; and
- the establishment of CFEs in the Maritimes predate the AICFI program through the Marshall Response Initiative.

Participant views on the business capacity ratings system

The findings from the IPR and the ICF evaluation showed that communities have concerns that the programs are not being transparent about how they are measuring capacity building through the BCR system.

Figure 8: Number of PICFI commercial fishing enterprises with below, pass, and sustainable business capacity ratings (2015-16 to 2019-20)



Note: because PICFI CFEs are based on aggregates, the rating for each CFE would apply to multiple communities. For example, the two sustainable CFEs include nine Indigenous communities.

Source: PICFI rating system data compiled by the program.

When comparing the percent change in rating between a CFE's first rating and its most recent rating available, all but two have experienced a positive change, thus regardless of the current level of sustainability achieved, all CFEs have continued to make progress in building capacity and moving towards sustainability.

Evaluation findings: performance

Support for employment and other community benefits

The Indigenous commercial fisheries programs have supported employment in participating communities and have resulted in other community benefits, including infrastructure improvements, support for other community priorities, and increased food security.

Impact of program on employment in Indigenous communities

Participants interviewed for the evaluation reported that the ICF programs have supported employment in Indigenous communities and expanded the opportunities in the industry. Support for jobs has been an important benefit of the programs, given that Indigenous communities typically have lower rates of employment than non-Indigenous communities.

While there were some limitations¹⁷ with respect to employment data, the data support the findings from interviews. Between 2016-17 and 2019-20 the programs reported that they supported an average of 3,000 jobs per year (average of 1,785 per year for AICFI and 1,324 for PICFI, respectively). As NICFI is still in early implementation, the number of jobs supported is not yet tracked.

One concrete example of how the programs support jobs is with respect to the use of fishing licenses. The programs have increased the capacity of some CFEs so they can now use their fishing licenses instead of leasing them, which results in direct benefits to the communities.

Other program benefits

The evaluation identified a number of other benefits of the programs to communities, which are summarized in the following paragraphs.

- **Improved infrastructure:** the programs have supported communities in developing the infrastructure needed to establish and operate CFEs (e.g., accommodation facilities for workers who live far from the fishery). Improved infrastructure can serve to diversify the economic base of communities.

- **Support for other priorities:** some interviewees reported that revenue generated from the CFEs has helped support other community programs (e.g., housing, social programs). This was noted as a particular benefit during the COVID-19 pandemic as some industries in the community have been affected and the fisheries sector was able to support them.
- **Food security:** for northern communities, NICFI has contributed to an increase in food security since part of the catch is redistributed to community members (e.g., family, elders). For instance, in one community, members now have prawns and halibut delivered to their doors because of the NICFI program.

As mentioned by participants in the IPR, broader benefits to communities are a true measure of the success of the programs.

Limitations with measuring economic benefits

The evaluation design included the monetary value of CFEs as an indicator of the programs' performance. However, given the large number of factors that can affect the value of a CFE (e.g., market fluctuations), it is not the best indicator of program performance. In addition, the evaluation identified a number of limitations with respect to how the programs are reporting on this indicator,¹⁸ thus it was not able to use this data to support an assessment of program performance.

¹⁷ The data on employment are not collected consistently across AICFI and PICFI and are not compiled at the national level. Some limitations with the data include: AICFI data are from several different sources and there are existing gaps; for PICFI some of the data were estimates of the number of jobs supported, not the actual number of jobs supported.

¹⁸ The monetary value of CFEs is reported by the program in its departmental results reporting. However, the evaluation team was not able to verify the methodology used to establish the numbers reported, nor was it able to obtain the source data for what was being reported.

Evaluation findings: performance

Alignment of program results with Indigenous definitions of program success

The results of the programs are aligned with how Indigenous communities define success for the program, particularly with respect to supporting employment, however, some gaps exist.

Indigenous definitions of success, as identified in the IPR, align with evidence from the evaluation. Generally, they can be categorized into two streams: those related to benefits for communities; and those related to the resource.

Benefits to communities

Meaningful community employment is considered to be the true measure of success for Indigenous communities. Fishing the access, (i.e., Indigenous communities using the licenses instead of leasing them to non-Indigenous communities) is a second measure of success. Both of these measures align with what was heard in interviews. We also heard that band councils need revenues generated from commercial fishing to benefit their communities more broadly including to support social programs in their communities.

For remote and northern communities, participants indicated that food security would be a key sign of success as it is crucial to the health and wellness of communities.

The long-term goals for the communities are that the ICF programs help them build Indigenous-owned, sustainable CFEs (e.g., through diversification, more access to local and export markets), and eventual self-sufficiency.

Success in relation to the resource

Healthy fish stocks and true co-management were identified in the IPR during consultations for both AICFI and PICFI and were marked as visions for success in the development and implementation of NICFI. Northern communities want to understand fish stock abundance and participate in resources management decision-making.

How do the program results align with these definitions?

Overall there is strong alignment with the programs' results and Indigenous definitions of success. As described in the previous pages, the programs are supporting employment, CFEs have been established, and communities are participating in commercial fishing activities while progressing towards sustainable businesses (as measured for AICFI and PICFI). NICFI, which is modeled on AICFI and PICFI, also has a unique program feature to address food security.

While all three programs are achieving benefits for Indigenous communities, and NICFI is heading in the right direction, some gaps were noted. Anecdotal evidence suggested that sometimes bands are forced to lease licenses to non-Indigenous fishers at the expense of community jobs. Also, some jobs supported are only seasonal, and there is a desire for training to support career progression in all aspects of the fisheries. This would help attract youth who are not necessarily staying in communities to work the fisheries.

Regarding resource-related definitions of success, although both AICFI and PICFI originally had co-management objectives and PICFI made early progress on this front, one previous PICFI evaluation questioned whether DFO's Indigenous commercial fishing programs were best placed to have responsibility for this aspect. Resource co-management continues to be an issue the department is focused on, and it is identified as such in the IPR Action Plan and the DFO Reconciliation Strategy.

Further, the IPR recommended that the ICF programs support synergies and collaborations, which would advance co-management objectives. This recommendation is linked to "what the department needs to do to demonstrate a true investment in relationship building".

Evaluation findings: performance

Impact of programs on relationships

Within the context of the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs, relationships between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Indigenous peoples are described as good, or improving as a result of the programs. However, relationships with Indigenous Peoples extend beyond the commercial fisheries programs and more improvements are still needed.

Impact of programs on relationships with Indigenous Peoples

The state of the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the federal government is larger than one individual program in one department. There are a number of factors that affect the relationships (e.g., historical events).

That being said, DFO's suite of Indigenous programs, including the commercial fisheries programs, are expected to contribute to the departmental result of: enhanced relationships with, involvement of, and outcomes for Indigenous Peoples. Foundational documents for the ICF programs indicate that Indigenous fishing is critical to achieving federal reconciliation objectives.

By their design, the ICF programs work with Indigenous communities to increase their capacity to operate CFEs. The evaluation found that, through this work, the programs have helped improve relationships between the department and Indigenous communities. Some interviewees believe that positive and lasting relationships have been formed with both program personnel and delivery partners, as a result of their involvement in the program.

Other interviewees described relationships between DFO personnel and the communities as 'good', but did not necessarily attribute this to the programs. A few interviewees believed that the relationships have always been good.

Interviewees also noted that programs have helped to improve relationships between different Indigenous communities. To a lesser extent, a few interviewees said that the programs have also helped to improve relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.

"There remains no more important relationship to me and to Canada than the one with Indigenous Peoples".

- Mandate Letter of the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, 2019. -

More work is still needed to improve relationships

While perceptions were generally positive regarding relationships, a common theme from the evaluation was that there is still so much more work to be done. Some of the barriers to improving relationships are not unique to the ICF programs but are general challenges intrinsic to the relationship with government such as a lack of trust when meeting officials or dealing with bureaucracy (e.g., burdensome paperwork).

A few interviewees also noted that there is a lack of education in Canadian society about Indigenous treaty rights, and the lack of social well-being in many Indigenous communities in Canada - challenges that are addressed in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (numbers 62 to 65). This can affect the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.



Source: National Indigenous Fisheries Institute, Indigenous Program Review Phase One: Sam Bradd, Drawing Change

Evaluation findings: performance

Implementation of the Indigenous Program Review action plan

The IPR was a significant, collaborative undertaking by the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute and DFO. A desktop review of more than 150 evaluations, audits, reviews and reports was conducted, and as shown in Table 4, it involved extensive consultations to renew AICFI and PICFI, and to co-design NICFI.

Table 4: Number of commercial fishing enterprises and participants who provided input into the Indigenous Program Review

	AICFI	PICFI	NICFI
Number of CFEs	22 of 33 (67%)	19 of 25 (76%)	50 communities
Number of participants	45	71	143

The review generated 96 recommendations, including 26 relevant to one or more of the ICF programs. The department committed to addressing all the recommendations in an action plan (see Appendix D), some of which require collaboration across DFO programs.

While the evaluation did not conduct a full analysis of progress on the actions, some have been completed. For example, the Indigenous Marine Servicing Initiative was established to provide funding to increase Indigenous participation in the marine-related service industry. Other actions are being implemented, however, there is a lack of clarity on the timelines, and it is not clear how progress is being monitored, tracked and reported on. The most recent status update on the DFO website is dated September 2019. Overall, this could put the successful implementation of the action plan at risk.

Given the successes highlighted regarding the use of the collaborative approaches and positive program results outlined in the performance section of this evaluation report, more clarity on the completion of the action plan is needed. This will ensure that positive aspects of the programs continue and that ongoing changes will be made to improve outcomes for Indigenous Peoples in Canada, in keeping with the principles of co-design and co-development.

A plenary session at one of the IPR conferences.



Source: National Indigenous Fisheries Institute, Indigenous Program Review: Phase One.

Conclusions and recommendations

Relevance

Each Indigenous commercial fisheries program has a different beginning and has developed within a unique context, however, the programs have similar goals and objectives and they are well aligned with federal and departmental priorities. By funding capacity building in the commercial fisheries sector, they support the ongoing development of healthy, prosperous, self-sufficient communities for Indigenous Peoples, and are making important contributions to the federal and departmental reconciliation agendas. Collectively, the programs contribute to DFO's core responsibilities related to sustainable fisheries management.

Program objectives align directly with key needs that have been expressed by Indigenous communities, particularly with respect to capacity building and access to commercial fisheries. The programs demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness, taking into account different local needs and making adjustments to changing needs as commercial fishing enterprises grow and evolve.

While many needs are being met, there is an ongoing need for funding to support increased access to commercial licenses and quota so commercial fishing enterprises can continue to grow.

Design and delivery

The programs use the collaborative approaches of co-design, co-development and co-delivery to work with Indigenous partners, and stakeholders, to establish programs that meet not only departmental objectives and needs but also those of the Indigenous communities being served.

While there are several structures in place to apply these approaches, the BDTs were found to be particularly effective in facilitating collaboration, especially in the context of AICFI, where a BDT has been operating for over 12 years. Some challenges were noted with the PICFI BDT, partly due to a high turnover of members in recent years, which has had an affect on relationship building.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the BDTs can be attributed to several factors including that they are led by and/or include members from Indigenous organizations, typically with established relationships and involvement with community members. Further, BDTs operate on the ground, at arm's length from DFO, and uphold confidentiality related to CFE business.

The evaluation identified four principles that the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs apply to facilitate effective collaboration with Indigenous participants:

- flexibility in program delivery;
- ground-up, grass roots approach;
- joint decision-making, particularly at the local level; and
- meaningful engagement through open dialogue.

Collaboration is not without challenges. It takes a lot of time and effort to engage regularly with Indigenous partners to build and maintain relationships, and sometimes messages get miscommunicated. A range of other issues, some of which are outside the scope of the department and/or program (e.g., the introduction of new regulations or policies, changes to CFE leadership) can add to the challenges in achieving program results.

Program performance

Participation in the programs

As of March 2020, a total of 174 Indigenous communities across Canada were participating in the ICF programs, either through a commercial fishing enterprise or an aquaculture agreement. While the evaluation found that there have been some barriers to participating in the programs related to geographical challenges, language differences, and social/cultural factors, the programs have worked to address those barriers.

Conclusions and recommendations (continued)

Program results

To support capacity building, the ICF programs include a training component, which provides communities with access to fishing operations and business management training. The training offered has met the needs of communities, is flexible to address changing needs, and has prepared community members for employment in the commercial fishing industry. While the need for training is ongoing, few specific training gaps were identified.

However, the evaluation noted inconsistencies between AICFI and PICFI with respect to how the training component is applied. Program data showed that AICFI's training has been accessible only to Indigenous participants, while PICFI's showed that training has been accessible to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. The evaluation was not able to clarify the policy on training eligibility in program documentation.

Recommendation #1: It is recommended that the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbour Management clarify the policy regarding participant eligibility for the training offered through the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs and ensure that this policy is documented and applied consistently across the three programs.

As a result of participating in the AICFI and PICFI programs, Indigenous communities are building their capacity to operate commercial fisheries, as shown by the level of sustainability achieved by the commercial fishing enterprises. AICFI CFEs appear to be moving towards sustainability more quickly than those in PICFI. This is, in part, attributed to PICFI CFEs not receiving much of their access to the fisheries until approximately 2012-13, which delayed the full operation of CFEs that had been established. In addition, the Marshall Response Initiative contributed significant funding to establish CFEs before AICFI was subsequently created.

The ICF programs have also resulted in other community benefits, which are strongly aligned with how Indigenous communities have defined success for the programs. One of the most important benefits of the programs has been support for employment and expanded opportunities in the commercial fishing industry, although there is a desire for training to support career progression in all aspects of the fisheries. The programs have also improved community infrastructure; generated revenue to support other community priorities such as social programs; and increased food security in northern communities.

While the program data analyzed for the evaluation showed that the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs are having a positive impact on Indigenous communities, the evaluation identified some limitations with respect to the data that are being collected to report on program results. Limitations include: inconsistencies in how the data are being collected across the three programs; gaps in data; and, lack of clarity about the methodologies being used to generate some performance data. These limitations affect the reliability of the data being used to report on program results at a departmental level. In addition, there was evidence that some of the performance indicators being used are not allowing the program to fully report on all program results.

Recommendation #2: It is recommended that the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbour Management, in consultation with the Head of Performance Measurement and relevant Economics, Analysis and Statistics Divisions (i.e., in NHQ and the Pacific Region), review and update the performance indicators for the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs. In addition, it is recommended that standard methodologies be put in place to monitor, track and accurately report on the performance of the three programs.

Conclusions and recommendations (continued)

Within the context of the ICF programs, relationships between DFO and Indigenous peoples were described as good or improving as a result of the programs. However, the state of relationships between Indigenous Peoples and the federal government is larger than one individual program in one department, and a common theme from the evaluation was that there is still much more work to be done to improve the relationships.

Implementation of the Indigenous Program Review action plan

The Indigenous Program Review was completed through extensive consultations with Indigenous communities and other external stakeholders, and was conducted to provide the basis for the renewal of DFO's suite of Indigenous fisheries programs. The review resulted in 96 recommendations, including 26 relevant to one or more of the commercial fisheries programs. The department committed to addressing these recommendations in an action plan, which includes actions that require collaboration across programs within the department.

While the evaluation did not complete a full analysis on progress against the action plan, it was noted that some actions have been completed and some are in the process of being implemented. However, there has not been regular reporting against the plan and the timelines and responsible program leads for actions are not clear. This could have an impact on the successful implementation of the action plan and subsequently on the ongoing success of the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs.

Recommendation #3: It is recommended that the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbour Management, in consultation with the Head of Performance Measurement, clarify accountabilities and key milestones for the implementation of the Indigenous Program Review action plan as related to the commercial fisheries programs; and determine how progress on the action plan will be integrated into departmental reporting on key priorities through, for example, the Road to Results.



Photo credit: Indigenous Affairs Directorate, DFO

Appendix A

Evaluation methodology and limitations

The evaluation was conducted using an evaluation framework, which included the evaluation questions summarized on page 3, as well as indicators. Data was collected through the following lines of evidence, which were triangulated to develop the overall findings.

Literature Review

The evaluation team conducted a literature review to understand and define the terms of co-design, co-development, and co-delivery. The literature review included national and international references.

Limitations: The literature available regarding these approaches was limited in quantity, and most was relevant to different contexts such as conducting research or developing a policy. Further, it was limited in context to Indigenous programming. While the evaluation team was not able to draw clear definitions for the approaches, it was able to extract general principles related to collaboration and these helped put a framework around the collaborative approaches used in ICF programs.

Data Analysis

Program statistics (e.g., number of eligible Indigenous groups accessing programs, trend in number of jobs created in Indigenous commercial fisheries, number of funded projects) were analyzed to help understand the extent to which the programs were achieving certain intended results.

Limitations: There were limitations in some of the data analysed for the evaluation, which are well-noted in the performance section of the report. However, this did not prevent the evaluation team from using the data to identify findings, as they were validated and strengthened by qualitative data.

Document Review

The document review examined information relevant to all three ICF programs and included: management committee meeting minutes, previous evaluation reports, documents from the IPR, other program documents and public reports.

Interviews

The evaluation team conducted 41 interviews with 60 individuals, including 17 DFO staff members, 23 external program personnel (e.g., from the BDTs), and 20 program participants. Interviews were structured to discuss a range of questions related to program relevance, effectiveness, and design and delivery.

Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the evaluation team was unable to meet with ICF program participants and other external informants in person and instead, interviews were conducted via teleconference.

Limitations: During the conduct of the evaluation, there were disputes occurring in Nova Scotia concerning Indigenous rights to fish for a moderate livelihood. These disputes may have had an impact on views related to commercial fishing.

Indigenous Peoples interact with the department through a variety of forums and programs (e.g., Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management Program). It is possible that when answering some of the evaluation questions, some of our interviewees were encompassing opinions from other experiences with the department. The evaluation team mitigated this possibility through the phrasing of the written and verbal introductions and by asking clarifying questions in interviews.

Appendix B

Indigenous commercial fisheries program resources

AICFI planned budget (millions) and full-time equivalents (2016-17 to 2020-21)

Budget item	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
FTEs	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
Salary	\$ 0.5	\$ 0.5	\$ 0.5	\$ 0.5	\$ 0.5
Operations & maintenance	\$ 0.6	\$ 1.0	\$ 1.0	\$ 1.0	\$ 1.0
Contributions	\$ 8.7	\$ 10.8	\$ 9.0	\$ 9.0	\$ 9.0

Source: Office of the Chief Financial Officer and program personnel.

PICFI planned budget (millions) and full-time equivalents (2016-17 to 2020-21)

Budget item	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
FTEs	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
Salary	\$ 2.0	\$ 1.6	\$ 1.6	\$ 1.5	--
Operations & maintenance	\$ 3.4	\$ 2.2	\$ 1.3	\$ 0.4	\$ 0.4
Contributions	\$ 15.4	\$ 16.4	\$ 17.4	\$ 18.2	\$ 18.2

Note: planned salary was not available for 2020-21.

Source: Office of the Chief Financial Officer and program personnel.

NICFI planned budget (millions) and full-time equivalents (2017-18 to 2020-21)

Budget item	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
FTEs	1.5	2.5	3	3
Salary	\$ 0.16	\$ 0.23	\$ 0.33	\$ 0.33
Operations & maintenance	\$ 0.28	\$ 0.56	\$ 0.56	\$ 0.48
Contributions	\$ 1.4	\$ 3.0	\$ 5.9	\$ 5.9

Source: Office of the Chief Financial Officer and program personnel.

Appendix C

Indigenous commercial fisheries program components

Component	AICFI (4 Components)	PICFI (3 Components)	NICFI (4 Components)
Capacity Building	Provide capacity building support for commercial and local business planning and development services, to establish, develop and implement business development plans suited to the unique needs of each participating community.	Provide capacity building support for commercial business planning and development services, to establish, develop and implement business development plans suited to the unique needs of each participating community. Includes training and mentoring support for participation in the commercial fishery (harvest knowledge and skills), aligned to the objectives and targets set out in the individual enterprises' business and training plans. To support community employment in the sector, PICFI facilitates the development of training plans, which outline the suite of required training for individuals to acquire the fishery skills and accreditations to fish commercially as captains or crew on vessels.	Provide capacity building support for commercial and local business planning and development services, to establish, develop and implement business development plans suited to the unique needs of each participating community.
Business Development		The Business Development Source (BDS) component provides support to groups that wish to pursue projects to expand or diversify their commercial fishing enterprise. Benefits for recipients under this component include, but are not limited to: fisheries access acquisition; fishing vessel and gear acquisitions or upgrades; fishing operations upgrades; and commercial fisheries related onshore facilities.	
Harvester Training	Provide training and mentoring support for participation in the commercial fishery (harvester knowledge and skills), aligned to the objectives and targets set out in the individual enterprises' business and training plans. In order to support community employment in the sector, AICFI facilitates the development of training plans, which outline the suite of required training for individuals to acquire the fishery skills and accreditations to fish commercially as captains or crew on vessels.	Note: Harvester Training support to PICFI participants is delivered through the Capacity Building component of the program.	Provide training and mentoring support for participation in the commercial fishery (harvester knowledge and skills), aligned to the objectives and targets set out in the individual enterprises' business and training plans. To support community employment in the sector, NICFI will begin with the development of training plans, which will outline the suite of required training for individuals to acquire the fishery skills and accreditations to fish commercially as captains or crew on vessels.
Expansion / Diversification	Provide support to groups that wish to pursue a projects to expand or diversify their commercial fishing enterprise. Benefits for recipients under this component include, but are not limited to: fisheries access acquisition; fishing vessel and gear acquisitions or upgrades; fishing operations upgrades; and commercial fisheries related onshore facilities.	Note: Expansion and diversification is supported by funding through the Business Development Source (BDS) component.	Provide support to groups that wish to pursue projects to expand or diversify their commercial or local redistributive fishing enterprise. Benefits for recipients under this component include, but are not limited to: fisheries access acquisition; fishing vessel and gear acquisitions or upgrades; fishing operations upgrades; and commercial fisheries related onshore facilities.
Aquaculture	Provide capacity building and funding support to groups interested in entering into an aquaculture business or expanding their existing aquaculture business.	Provide capacity building and funding support to groups interested in entering into an aquaculture business or expanding their existing aquaculture business.	Provide capacity building and funding support to groups interested in entering into an aquaculture business or expanding their existing aquaculture business.

Appendix D

Indigenous Program Review recommendations and DFO actions for the commercial fisheries programs

The following table provides a summary of the recommendations related to the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs that were included in DFO's action plan in response to the Indigenous Program Review recommendations.

Renewal streams	Programs	Recommendations	Actions
Continue to strengthen program administration	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Annually update and make accessible clear and consistent program guidance materials including transparent criteria for the program milestones identified for new, emerging, progressing and sustainable enterprises and criteria used in decision-making	DFO has updated application guidance documents for AICFI and PICFI to response to IPR's recommendations and incorporated findings. Application guidance documents have also been developed for NICFI participants and are promoted to participants in an accessible manner.
Ensure the program structure meets enterprise needs and aspirations at all stages	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Expand and promote business development team service offerings and continue to build expertise in areas such as aquaculture and emerging fisheries.	DFO will continue to promote the BDT offerings and communicate out to CFEs.
	AICFI, PICFI	Continue to support flexible funding eligibilities and opportunities to expand and diversify	DFO will continue to provide multi-year funding options for expansion/diversification related projects, where possible, based on program funding constraints and standard project approval processes.
	AICFI, PICFI	Continue to allow multi-year funding options for larger acquisitions	DFO will continue to provide multi-year funding options for expansion/diversification related projects, where possible, based on program funding constraints and standard project approval processes.
	AICFI	Support enterprises in the pursuit of industry information, including market, value-added and supply chain intelligence	DFO will explore ways to expand BDT offerings.
	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Ensure training flexibility to increase community employment opportunities in value-added businesses, management, and new fisheries	DFO will look to continue strengthening the expertise and offerings of the Business Development Team and Training Advisory Coordinator to meet the demand for an expanded CFE training suite.
	AICFI	Enable groups that want to transition into larger capital and export companies	DFO will increase the flexibility of CFEs to allocate funding according to their priorities and will provide multi-year funding options when possible for expansion/diversification related projects
	AICFI, NICFI	Continue to modernize and improve the electronic fisheries management system database	DFO will continue to explore enhancement of the fisheries management system to better meet the needs of CFEs participating in each of the AICFI, NICFI and PICFI programs.
	PICFI	Pilot a licence bank for interested participants to pool resources together in order to increase their buying power to gain access to high-economic value quota and licences	DFO will explore opportunities to increase the flexibility of CFEs to allocate funding according to their priorities.
	PICFI	Maintain options for practical, hands-on and locally delivered training	DFO will ensure harvester and management training support is flexible and supported by training coordinators and meets requirements of CFEs.
	PICFI	Enable groups that want to pursue collaborations with other First Nations enterprises	DFO has begun to improve program accessibility, for example, by working on a new entrants process to accommodate additional PICFI participants.

Appendix D

Indigenous Program Review recommendations and DFO actions for the Commercial Fisheries Programs (continued)

Renewal streams	Programs	Recommendations	Actions
Reflect Indigenous definitions of success in the desired outcomes of the program	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Track and regularly report on program success at the community level by drawing from the annual reports that enterprises develop and give to their communities	DFO will continue to track and regularly report on program level by drawing from the annual reports that enterprises develop and give to their communities.
Maximize Departmental and other Federal Government collaborations	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Help commercial fishing enterprises access program funding from aquaculture and other business or economic development funding programs, such as the Atlantic Fisheries Fund.	DFO has mainstreamed Aquaculture specific funding envelope beginning in 2018-19, additionally, the Business Development Team will continue to seek out and advise CFEs on the availability of funding from other sources, including for projects.
	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Use the Strategic Partnerships Initiative to advance marketing activities with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and certain infrastructure priorities with appropriate agencies, such as processing or retail facilities, new gear or fishing technologies.	DFO will explore areas of collaboration with other government departments to respond with a more horizontal approach to emerging opportunities.
Support Succession Planning	AICFI, NICFI	Leverage best practice of linking Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy community fishing activities with commercial enterprise succession planning	DFO will explore areas to leverage best practices in succession planning.
	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Support community outreach programs that align training, accreditation, professionalization, and career progression paths to employment in all aspects of the fishery	Along with the BDT and Training Coordinators, the DFO will explore the mapping of career progression paths, which CFEs could use when engaging communities.
	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Hold workshops to help enterprises learn how to develop and implement a succession plan	Along with the BDT and Training Coordinators, DFO will explore the mapping of career progression paths, which CFEs could use when engaging communities on succession planning.

Appendix D

Indigenous Program Review recommendations and DFO actions for the Commercial Fisheries Programs (continued)

Renewal streams	Programs	Recommendations	Actions
Invest in relationship building	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Encourage regular networking opportunities for departmental program administrators, the business development team, and enterprise managers to continue to build knowledge about the communities they serve and their fisheries	DFO will continue to explore and facilitate networking opportunities to advance knowledge sharing.
	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Support synergies and collaborations between enterprises and aquatic resource and oceans management groups; especially, activities related to co-management of fisheries	DFO will identify best practices and develop models to support synergies and collaborations between enterprises and aquatic resource and oceans management groups.
	AICFI	Help enterprises address issues with other fishery participants at advisory committee and other decision-making tables by holding more joint Indigenous and non-Indigenous commercial fish harvester activities	DFO will explore and identify issues with other fishery participants and explore options to support joint Indigenous/non-Indigenous commercial fish harvester opportunities.
	PICFI	Develop a program to “up ramp” departmental staff to learn files more quickly and respond with confidence to First Nations and internally within the Department and with other agencies	DFO will continue to provide a permanent (2017) program with a staff complement who will share knowledge, network and collaborate with staff of varying skill sets.
Continue to build Indigenous co-management capacity	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Hold the Department’s resource management and science fisheries advisory meetings with First Nations governments (Tier 2) prior to engaging stakeholder resource users	DFO Indigenous Commercial Programs will work with other sectors and branches of the department to improve coordination, and to promote consideration of resource management and science fisheries advisory meetings with Indigenous governments prior to engaging stakeholder resource users.
	AICFI, PICFI, NICFI	Hold annual decision-making workshops for First Nations and department staff in resource management and science	DFO will explore and identify areas for collaborative workshops between DFO staff and First Nations in support of resource management and science.
Tackle Difficult Issues	PICFI, NICFI	Deal with access and licensing issues to increase Indigenous Peoples participation in the fishery	DFO will continue to support Indigenous Peoples participation in the commercial fishery by providing funding to acquire access.
	PICFI	Strengthen the management of all federally regulated recreational fisheries to ensure reliable catch estimates, improved stock assessments, and fully informed decision-making	DFO will work with other sectors and branches of the department to improve the coordination and consideration of scientific data and knowledge related to all federally regulated recreational fisheries, in order to strengthen the management of the recreational fishery.
	PICFI, NICFI	Focus aquaculture efforts on building knowledge about what species and technologies are viable on land or in water	DFO will continue to support aquaculture activities through its expanded Indigenous commercial programs.

Appendix E

Management Action Plan (MAP)

Evaluation of the Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Programs – Project #96420

PMEC Date: March 2021

MAP Completion Target Date: August 2022

Lead ADM: Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbour Management

Recommendation 1: Completion date: April 2022

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbour Management clarify the policy regarding participant eligibility for the training offered through the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs and ensure that this policy is documented and applied consistently across the three programs.

Rationale:

The evaluation noted inconsistencies between AICFI and PICFI with respect to how the training component is applied. Program data showed that AICFI's training has been accessible only to Indigenous participants, while PICFI's showed that training has been accessible to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. The evaluation was not able to clarify the policy on training eligibility in program documentation.

Management Response

The Indigenous Programs Branch, within the Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation Directorate, supports the need for a clear policy regarding participant eligibility for training and consistency in how it is applied. To achieve this, Indigenous Commercial Programs will consult with co-delivery partners (e.g., management committees) to review and co-develop a program policy aimed at standardizing participant eligibility for the training offered through the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs. The review will focus on both the harvester and management training offerings of each program, with the goal of maximizing the support offered to Indigenous People. [Departmental Results Report (DRR)].

Appendix E

Management Action Plan (MAP) - (continued)

Link to larger program or departmental results (if applicable)			
Departmental Results Framework result of “Enhance relationships with, involvement of, and outcomes for Indigenous people.”			
MAP Results Statement <i>Result to be achieved in response to the recommendation</i>	MAP Milestones <i>Critical accomplishments to ensure achievement of result for PMEC’s approval</i>	Completion Date <i>Month, Year</i>	DG Responsible
1. A co-developed policy and standardized approach to harvester and management training eligibility is implemented across the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs.	1.1 Co-delivery partners are consulted on the development of a policy around eligibility for training.	August 2021	Director General Indigenous Affairs Directorate Fisheries and Harbour Management
	1.2 The revised co-developed policy on training eligibility is approved and documented.	January 2022	Director General Indigenous Affairs Directorate Fisheries and Harbour Management
	1.3 The revised co-developed policy on training eligibility is implemented across the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs.	April 2022	Director General Indigenous Affairs Directorate Fisheries and Harbour Management

Appendix E

Management Action Plan (MAP) - (continued)

Recommendation 2: Completion date: August 2022

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbour Management, in consultation with the Head of Performance Measurement and relevant Economics, Analysis and Statistics Divisions (i.e., in NHQ and Pacific Region), review and update the performance indicators for the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs. In addition, it is recommended that standard methodologies be put in place to monitor, track and accurately report on the performance of the three programs.

Rationale:

While the program data analyzed for the evaluation showed that the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs are having a positive impact on Indigenous communities, the evaluation identified some limitations with respect to the data that are being collected to report on program results. Limitations include: inconsistencies in how the data are being collected across the three programs; gaps in data; and, lack of clarity about the methodologies being used to generate some performance data. These limitations affect the reliability of the data being used to report on program results at a departmental level. In addition, there was evidence that some of the performance indicators being used are not allowing the program to fully report on all program results.

Management Response

The Indigenous Programs Branch, within the Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation Directorate, agrees that there are limitations with respect to the data that is being used to report on program results at a departmental level. These limitations specifically impact the ability for the programs to fully report on progress made in capacity building. The Program will undertake a review of its performance measurement indicators in coordination with management committees and other partners. This will include the co-development of an approach to review and update the performance indicators for each program, where necessary, and implement standard methodologies across the programs. The Program will also work with the Head of Performance Measurement to help ensure there is a meaningful suite of indicators available and to approve the performance information profile (PIP).

The Indigenous Programs Branch will also work closely with relevant Economic, Analysis and Statistics divisions in NHQ and Pacific Region to identify new areas for analysis which could better inform capacity building progress being made within Indigenous commercial fisheries enterprises as a result of the programs.

The above actions will aim to develop/refine program performance indicators, where possible, that accurately report on the performance of the three programs and inform the Department's corporate reporting obligations.

Link to the larger program or departmental results (if applicable)

Not Applicable (N/A)

Appendix E

Management Action Plan (MAP) - (continued)

MAP Results Statement <i>Result to be achieved in response to the recommendation</i>	MAP Milestones <i>Critical accomplishments to ensure achievement of result for PMEC's approval</i>	Completion Date <i>Month, Year</i>	DG Responsible
2. Updated suite of performance indicators are applied consistently across the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs and are available to fully report on their progress.	2.1 Review and analysis of current indicators in collaboration with Head of Performance measurement, including engaging with Economic Analysis and Statistics on economic and socio-economic data.	July 2021	Director General Indigenous Affairs Directorate Fisheries and Harbour Management <i>in collaboration with:</i> Director General Planning, Results and Evaluation Office of Chief Financial Officer Director General Economics, Statistics and Data Governance Strategic Policy
	2.2 Following consultation with Economic Analysis and Statistics (EAS), Indigenous commercial programs has made a request to EAS for economic, socio-economic and statistical data to enhance performance indicators.	November 2021	Director General Indigenous Affairs Directorate Fisheries and Harbour Management <i>in collaboration with:</i> Director General Economics, Statistics and Data Governance Strategic Policy

Appendix E

Management Action Plan (MAP) - (continued)

	MAP Milestones <i>Critical accomplishments to ensure achievement of result for PMEC's approval</i>	Completion Date <i>Month, Year</i>	DG Responsible
	2.3 Indigenous commercial programs establish revised performance indicators and document how they will collect the data to inform the performance indicators and align and implement this system across the three programs.	July 2022	Director General Indigenous Affairs Directorate Fisheries and Harbour Management <i>in collaboration with:</i> Director General Economics, Statistics and Data Governance Strategic Policy
	2.4 A revised Performance Information Profile (PIP) for the Indigenous commercial fisheries programs is approved by the Director General of Indigenous Affairs and the Head of Performance Measurement.	August 2022	Director General Indigenous Affairs Directorate Fisheries and Harbour Management <i>in collaboration with:</i> Director General Planning, Results and Evaluation Office of Chief Financial Officer

Appendix E

Management Action Plan (MAP) - (continued)

Recommendation 3: Completion date: April 2022

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Harbour Management, in consultation with the Head of Performance Measurement, clarify accountabilities and key milestones for the implementation of the Indigenous Program Review action plan as related to the commercial fisheries programs; and determine how progress on the action plan will be integrated into departmental reporting on key priorities through, for example, the Road to Results.

Rationale:

The Indigenous Program Review was completed through extensive consultations with Indigenous communities and other external stakeholders and was conducted to provide the basis for the renewal of DFO's suite of Indigenous fisheries programs. The review resulted in 96 recommendations, including 26 relevant to one or more of the commercial fisheries programs. The Department committed to addressing these recommendations in an action plan, which includes actions that require collaboration across programs within the Department.

While the evaluation did not complete a full analysis on progress against the action plan, it was noted that some actions have been completed and some are in the progress of being implemented. However, there has not been regular reporting against the plan and the timelines and responsible program leads for actions are not clear. This could have an impact on the successful implementation of the action plan and subsequently on the ongoing success of the Indigenous Commercial Fisheries programs.

Management Response

The Indigenous Programs Branch, within the Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation Directorate, recognizes the need for clarified accountabilities for the implementation of the Action Plan for the Renewal and Expansion of DFO's Indigenous Programs. This is important because the majority of IPR recommendations are cross-cutting in nature, and implicate multiple Sectors and Branches in the Department. As such, in the context of the Department's Indigenous Reconciliation Strategy, the Indigenous Programs Branch will work with other implicated partners to co-develop and establish a framework that will ensure review on a regular basis and progress is made in implementing the Action Plan to implement IPR recommendations. The framework will clarify accountabilities and milestones, as well as communicate internally the results achieved in renewing DFO's suite of Indigenous Programs, including the commercial fisheries ones.

The above actions will involve engagement with the Head of Performance Measurement to help develop this framework for reporting internally on the public commitments contained within the Action Plan (e.g., reporting through an existing PMEC process). The framework should also investigate and establish a process and a frequency for reporting publicly on DFO's progress.

Link to the larger program or departmental results (if applicable)

Departmental Results Framework result of "Enhance relationships with, involvement of, and outcomes for Indigenous people."

Appendix E

Management Action Plan (MAP) - (continued)

MAP Results Statement <i>Result to be achieved in response to the recommendation</i>	MAP Milestones <i>Critical accomplishments to ensure achievement of result for PMEC's approval</i>	Completion Date <i>Month, Year</i>	DG Responsible
3. The internal framework to monitor, track and report on progress against action plan milestones is established and accountabilities are clear.	3.1 In coordination with the Head of Performance Measurement, discuss with responsible program delivery partners in the regions and other relevant groups in the Department to identify Action Plan accountabilities and milestones.	August 2021	Director General Indigenous Affairs Directorate Fisheries and Harbour Management <i>in collaboration with:</i> Director General Planning, Results and Evaluation Office of Chief Financial Officer
	3.2 A strategy for monitoring and reporting on Action Plan progress is implemented, in consultation with the Head of Performance Measurement, using new or existing monitoring and reporting processes.	April 2022	Director General Indigenous Affairs Directorate Fisheries and Harbour Management <i>in collaboration with:</i> Director General Planning, Results and Evaluation Office of Chief Financial Officer