



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY VANCOUVER ISLAND SALMON COMMITTEE

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

The overall goal of the Vancouver Island Salmon Committee (VISC) is to develop strategies to rebuild all southern BC stocks of concern and where needed identify strategies to fill gaps in our understanding and improving stock status for designation units. The process will also include, under agreed upon engagement terms, Tier One work to help inform the broader salmon engagement processes such as the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative. The VISC will be supported by a VISC technical working group (V-TWG) to help collate existing data, identify gaps, support rebuilding plans, identify potential restoration projects and gather local Indigenous knowledge. It is meant to support Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet Nations with the best available information, advice, strategic direction, and assistance to formulate action-based plans to protect and re-build local salmon stocks. There will be a team technical lead, contracted by the administrator of the program which is the Island Marine Aquatic Working Group (IMAWG).

The Project has six outcomes:

1. Development of goals and objectives with supporting criteria that could be tailored to support rebuilding plans in multiple systems within Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet stocks.
2. Identify potential impacts to salmon populations and their habitats and potential benefits to Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet stocks from rebuilding.
3. Identification of data gaps and uncertainties in habitat, stock and fishery information that are barriers to identifying priority activities for rebuilding and recovery.
4. Build upon the collaborative working relationship between Vancouver Island AAROMs and sectors in the common interest of conservation, rebuilding and sustainable fishery planning.
5. VISC to work in conjunction with the V-TWG to identify goals and objectives and priorities and initiate the implementation of recommendations and bring strategies developed to broader salmon initiatives.
6. Creation of an agreed upon engagement process to support sharing and information to and from any other existing processes involved in recovery and rebuilding. .

ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

The Project is scheduled to run from now until March 2024 with following deliverables:

- Technically working group, V-TWG, lead by a professional consultant supported by a regional committee, VISC.
- Establish a clearly defined process, structure and work plan that integrates traditional Indigenous knowledge, local expertise, science and knowledge.
- Meeting summaries and action tables from VISC and V-TWG meetings, imperative to determine actions, next steps, and areas of responsibilities.
- V-TWG to report summarizing key findings and recommendations from gap analysis and review of data deficient stocks to VISC. VISC to report out to Island Nations and DFO (where applicable).
- Create a rebuilding framework for stocks within the scope of the VISC.
- Identify of potential management responses to depressed stocks.
- Development of draft rebuilding strategies and project proposals with member Nations for stocks within the scope of the VISC
- VISC to provide suggestions and advice to the AAROM's for longer term technical support for Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet First Nations to implement rebuilding projects.
- Strategic planning document developed for future funding sources and potential further work required for the VISC and V-TWG activities via any projected BCSRIF funding/projects.

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES UNDER THE BCSRIF AGREEMENT

Year One: 15-April-2021 to 31-March-2022

Development, through workshops and actions from engagement sessions, of the VISC, its operating guidelines, terms of reference, objectives and deliverables to ensure transparency, accountability, communication and tangible outcomes. Establishing the participants for the VISC and the supporting TWG and reviewing priority actions and deliverables.

Tasks:

- Contracting of a technical expert consultant to coordinate process and work with the AAROM Collaborative. Consultant will have the applicable experience as necessary.
- Develop a clearly defined process and structure (collaborative engagement framework); this may include subcommittees by region (i.e., WCVI, Lower Strait of Georgia, Johnstone Strait and Mainland Inlets).
- Development of MOU's or LOI between the participating AAROMS.
- Development of agreed upon Terms of Reference for the Committee, and the supporting V-TWG, with a clear mandate/purpose, objectives, code of conduct, conflict

resolution, communication mechanisms/planning and reporting, engagement requirements, and methods of integration with other higher level salmon processes.

- Identification of potential/available data sources, (including the Government of Canada Open Data Portal), and development of data sharing arrangements for V-TWG members and external partners.
- VISC will develop work plans (long and short term) including progress and success indicators; clear timelines and documentation of roles and responsibilities of participants.
- Estimate one (1) meeting per month for both the VISC and TWG.
- Establish formal representatives for both the Committee and the TWG.

Deliverables:

1. Collaborative Engagement Framework; including Terms of References.
2. Memorandum of Understanding from participating AAROM groups.
3. Data sharing arrangements for V-TWG members and external partners.
4. Short- and long-term work plans.
5. List of formal representatives for both the Committee and the TWG.

Year One: 15-April-2021 to 31-March-2022

Originally negotiated for March 31, 2022 end, but required to move to next fiscal due to timing of confirmation of BCSRIF, postponement of higher-level salmon processes and Covid 19 related engagement issues.

VISC Committee and TWG collaborative engagement and processing deliverables.

Tasks:

- Attendance to VISC and broader salmon process meetings (including TWG meetings) and supported work required from actions/outcomes established at workshops.
- Identify potential impacts and benefits to Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet stocks from fishery management actions and develop recommendations.
- Gap analysis and review of existing fishery, habitat and other relevant data for data deficient Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet Chinook stocks.
- Develop recommendations and strategies for addressing data gaps which could include but are not limited to data collection and assessment methodologies/plans, and use of existing or new biological models.
- Estimate one (1) meeting per month for both the VISC and TWG.

Deliverables:

1. Engaging on key salmon processes with a broader scope to represent the interests of the VISC and TWG and Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet salmon stocks.
2. Meeting summaries and action tables from VISC Committee and TWG meetings, imperative to determine actions, next steps and areas of responsibilities.

3. Report summary of key findings and recommendations from gap analysis and review of data deficient Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet chinook stocks. Technical analysis of current fisheries management measures and review of upcoming management measures.

Year Two: 15-April-2022 to 31-March-2023

VISC Committee and TWG collaborative engagement and process deliverables.

Tasks:

- Attendance to VISC and broader salmon process meetings (including TWG meetings) and supported work required from actions/outcomes established at workshops.
- Identify potential impacts and benefits to Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet stocks from pre- and post-season management actions and develop recommendations.
- Gap analysis and review of existing data for data deficient Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet Chinook stocks. Develop recommendations and strategies for data collection and assessment methodologies needed to develop stock status.
- Estimate one (1) meeting per month for both the VISC and TWG.

Deliverables:

1. Engaging on key initiatives of higher level from a Vancouver Island perspective.
2. Meeting summaries and action tables from VISC Committee and TWG meetings, imperative to determine actions, next steps and areas of responsibilities.
3. Report summarizing key findings and recommendations from gap analysis and review of data deficient Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet chinook stocks. Technical analysis of current fisheries management measures and review of upcoming management measures.

Year Three: 15-April-2023 to 31-December-2024

VISC Committee and TWG collaborative engagement and processing deliverables. Agreed upon approach to develop local rebuilding plans/strategies for identified stocks of concern, including existing watershed health frameworks, action plans for rebuilding and strategies for implementation. Strategic Planning workshop(s) to assess the future of the VISC and supporting TWG, including funding opportunities, future work and priorities, revisit and revision of operating process and overall objectives.

Tasks:

- Attendance to VISC and higher-level salmon process meetings (including TWG meetings) and supported work required from actions/outcomes established at workshops.
- Identify potential impacts and benefits to Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet stocks from pre- and post-season management actions and develop recommendations.

- Gap analysis and review of existing fishery, habitat and other relevant data for data deficient Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet Chinook stocks. Develop recommendations and strategies for data collection and assessment methodologies needed to develop stock status.
- Estimate one (1) meeting per month for both the VISC and TWG.
- Workshop(s) to develop agreed upon approach to rebuilding plans for stocks.
- Develop draft rebuilding framework and assist in development of rebuilding plans when/where deemed appropriate.
- The Rebuilding Framework will provide a prioritized approach (components) to consider when developing rebuilding plans including development of rebuilding objectives, feasibility, methods, management and responsibilities, timeframe, evaluation of milestones, and associated costs/budget.
- Develop strategic planning document to summarize future priorities, needs, and objectives of the VISC and TWG.
- Review collaborative engagement framework, TOR, MOU's and other process documents developed in year one; revise as necessary.
- Review work plans (long and short term) including progress and success indicators; revise as necessary.
- Identify future funding sources and opportunities for the VISC and TWG.

Deliverables:

1. Engaging on key salmon processes with a broader scope to represent the perspectives of the VISC and TWG and Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet salmon stocks.
2. Copies of draft Rebuilding Framework and/or stock specific rebuilding plans within the scope of the VISC.
3. Meeting summaries and action tables from VISC Committee and TWG meetings, imperative to determine actions, next steps and areas of responsibilities.
4. Report summary key findings and recommendations from gap analysis and review of data deficient Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet Chinook stocks. Technical analysis and identification of factors affecting salmon such as management measures, habitat, productivity, climate change, etc.
5. Copy of the strategic planning document, including any revised versions of process documents developed in year one and future funding sources for the VISC and TWG activities.

ADMINISTRATION

IMAWG Responsibilities

- Communications of activities, outcomes, topics of interest and any updates required to the Island Nations and partners as directed by the Technical Expert and/or AAROM Partners.
- Booking and payment of meeting facilities.
- Paying contractors and professional fees for V-TWG and VISC committee participation.

- Reporting of activities to Fisheries and Oceans Canada.
- Lead contact person for the Technical Expert via IMAWG President for work specific direction and feedback.
- Develop a clearly defined VISC process and structure including: Collaborative engagement framework, that includes a Terms of Reference for the TWG and VISC, AAROM Memorandums of Understandings for signatures and timebound work plans.
- With advice from V-TWG and VISC, complete a strategic planning document (end of Year 1) to guide future years, including any revised versions of process documents and identification of future funding sources for VISC and TWG activities.
- Regional information updates to Island Nations four (4x) per year.
- Prepare social media platforms for updates.

Technical Expert Responsibilities

- Plan, send meeting requests and facilitate VISC Technical Working Group (V-TWG) engagements; this includes requesting IMAWG to book any in person meeting details at locations agreed upon by V-TWG.
- Compile meeting summaries, action tables and/or specific advice from the V-TWG meetings, imperative to determine actions, next steps, and areas of responsibilities to the VISC.
- With input from the V-TWG, collate, review and complete a gap-analysis report summarizing key findings and recommendations of a review of Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet salmon stocks.
- With input from the V-TWG, identify of potential management responses to depressed stocks.
- With input from the V-TWG, develop components of draft rebuilding plans for stocks within the scope of the VISC.
- With input from the V-TWG, create a rebuilding framework/strategy for stocks within the scope of the VISC.
- Provide suggestions and advice to the AAROM's for longer term technical support required for Vancouver Island and Mainland Inlet First Nations to implement rebuilding projects.
- By request from AAROM's, IMAWG or VISC, provide any related recommendations for VISC delegate(s) responsible for further salmon engagements with DFO, for example the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative process.
- Provide advice to IMAWG on the strategic planning document developed for future funding sources and potential further work required for the VISC and V-TWG activities.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ENGAGEMENT

This project will have two committees; the VISC, supported by the VISC Technical Working V-TWG. The foundation of this project is the conservation and rebuilding of chinook; however, the work will impact and benefit all salmon species of Vancouver Island and mainland inlets. This will be a collaborative approach to provide traditional Indigenous knowledge, local expertise, and knowledge specific to Vancouver Island and mainland inlet chinook (and other salmon species) populations. The VISC will complement and collaborate (not duplicate) existing work being done and required by individual Nations. The VISC will be guided, in partnership, by the four AAROM groups on Vancouver Island: A-Tlegay Fisheries Society, Uu-a-thluk Fisheries Society, IMAWG and Q'ul-Ihanumutsun Aquatic Resources Society, with the intention of collaboration and engagement with appropriate federal and provincial staff.

Vancouver Island Salmon Committee Structure and Responsibilities

- Meets up minimum of 4x per year, up to 12 times, as required and/or requested.
- Appointed Lead for the committee; IMAWG President.
- VISC Lead will design the agenda with input from the Technical Expert. Meeting to correspond with the work established by the V-TWG.
- Consist of four (4) to maximum eight (8) appointed delegates.
- Delegates to be appointed by the partnered AAROM regional organizations. Delegate can either be part of an AAROM and/or from an Indigenous community within their language group.
- Delegates are provided a professional fee of \$200 per engagement; in person travel is covered as per Treasury Board standards through claims provided by IMAWG.
- Communication of activities to the AAROMS is the responsibility of the delegates by their respective areas.
- Conclusions, recommendations, and/or decisions as appropriate will be made by consensus when possible.
- Duties of the VISC are to:
 - Receive high level updates, advice and current activities by the Technical Lead from the activities of the V-TWG.
 - Discussion information received from V-TWG to disseminate and gather insight for sharing out to AAROMS and local Indigenous communities.
 - Discuss any current issues or priorities that may be required to be worked on at the V-TWG; provide that direction to the technical lead.
 - Prepare VISC Lead, with support from Technical Expert, to present information to any higher-level salmon processes.
 - Ensure that the outputs of the V-TWG are being achieved.

- Invitation to other organizations or governments for engagement will be determined by the delegates as required or requested.

Vancouver Island Salmon Committee Technical Working Group Structure and Responsibilities

- Meets up minimum of 4x per year, up to 12 times, as required and/or requested.
- Appointed Lead for the committee will be the contracted Technical Expert.
- Technical lead will design the agenda with input from the delegates.
- Consist of minimum four (4) to maximum eight (8) appointed delegates.
- Delegates to be appointed by the partnered AAROM regional organizations. Delegate can either be part of an AAROM and/or from an Indigenous community within their language group.
- Delegates are provided a professional fee of \$450 per engagement; in person travel is covered as per Treasury Board standards through claims provided by IMAWG.
- Communication of activities to the AAROMS is the responsibility of the delegates by their respective areas.
- Conclusions, recommendations, and/or decisions as appropriate will be made by consensus when possible.
- Provide guidance on the outputs of the strategic and work plans to IMAWG.
- Duties of the V-TWG are to:
 - Work and support the Technical Expert on the objectives and deliverables of VISC.
 - Gather, review and disseminate scientific and indigenous knowledge/data.
 - Provide advice, guidance, recommendations and technical/indigenous knowledge.
 - Support the development of draft rebuilding plans, frameworks and projects.
 - Provide guidance on the outputs of the strategic and work plans to IMAWG.
 - Receive any direction from VISC on priorities and issues.
 - Develop linkages to other technical groups including, not limited to; FNFC Salmon Coordinating Committee and Indigenous Technical Advisory Network, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Province of BC.
 - Invitation to other participants through the V-TWG is done on a per as needed and requested by the delegates; this can include DFO, Province of BC, commercial and recreational industry, NGO's and other science-based organizations specializing in salmon rebuilding and recovery.
 - Any additional work of the delegates outside the meeting engagement will take place as requested by the V-TWG and if the budget is available at \$450 per day, or \$56.25 per hour.

- Technical lead will take record of the actions and outputs of each engagement to prepare to update the VISC.

CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISION MAKING

Consensus Recommendations:

- a. Participants will strive to develop consensus recommendations.
- b. If a group wishes to revisit an item for which consensus had previously been achieved, the onus will be on that group to bring the issue to the technical or VISC lead at the earliest opportunity and to explain the need for revisiting the item.
- c. If the group reaches a consensus that resolves most but not all of the issues that are being addressed, the group may agree on a statement describing the areas of disagreement, any lack of information or data that prevents such agreement and, where possible, a process for achieving agreement on such issues.
- d. If a group withholds agreement on an issue, that group will explain how the proposed agreement fails to meet their interests. The group withholding agreement will have the opportunity to propose alternatives so the other groups can consider how all interests may be met.
- e. If agreement is still not reached:
 - i. groups may choose to engage in dispute resolution (see below); or
 - ii. recommendations will be provided that accurately reflect participants' different perspectives.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Each committee will utilize and reference the IMAWG meeting guidelines when conducting engagements; specifically, when working with invited guests and government participants. These guidelines are intended to provide a tested formula to provide safe space when working with Indigenous people and build upon improving relationships.

V-TWG

Where consensus is not achieved on a specific issue, there is an internal conflict, or when time and resources available for review are insufficient, the V-TWG Technical Lead will report out on information that was presented to the VISC Lead, identifying that technical agreement was not achieved. In its report, the V-TWG Technical Lead, will identify the alternative perspectives considered by the group, as well as potential solutions and options for moving forward. The item in question may be considered still under review. The reports may include the following action:

1. Issues may be referred to the VISC Lead when they cannot be addressed through the V-TWG process for the following reasons:
 - a. Lack of consensus on a technical issue.
 - b. Issue is a management/policy level discussion item that is not directly technical.
 - c. The technical rationale or background data for the management/policy issue has not been provided to the V-TWG.
2. The VISC Lead will then review any issue(s) under collaborative discussion with the VISC delegates for next direction and next steps.

VISC

Where consensus is not achieved on a specific issue, there is an internal conflict, or when time and resources available for review are insufficient, the VISC Lead will report out on information that was presented to the IMAWG Board of Directors, identifying the agreement was not achieved. In its report, the VISC lead will identify the alternative perspectives considered by the group, as well as potential solutions and options for moving forward. The item in question may be considered still under review. The reports may include the following action:

1. Issues may be referred to the IMAWG Board of Directors when they cannot be addressed through the VISC process for the following reasons:
 - a. Lack of consensus on an issue.
 - b. Issue is a management/policy level discussion item that is not directly related to the project.

- c. There is a need for elder support and/or mediation to resolve any issues or differences. IMAWG Board of Directors will appoint a lead elder/mediator to assist with the issue.
2. The VISC Lead will then review any issue(s) under collaborative discussion with the IMAWG Board of Directors for next direction and next steps.