

# What you need to know about Eco-Certification

## The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)



The MSC was established to address the global problem of unsustainable fishing and to safeguard seafood supplies for the future. Fishery representatives in Canada have entered 40 separate fisheries on 21 species into the MSC program to increase and secure access to global and local markets. Further information can be obtained on the MSC website (MSC.org).

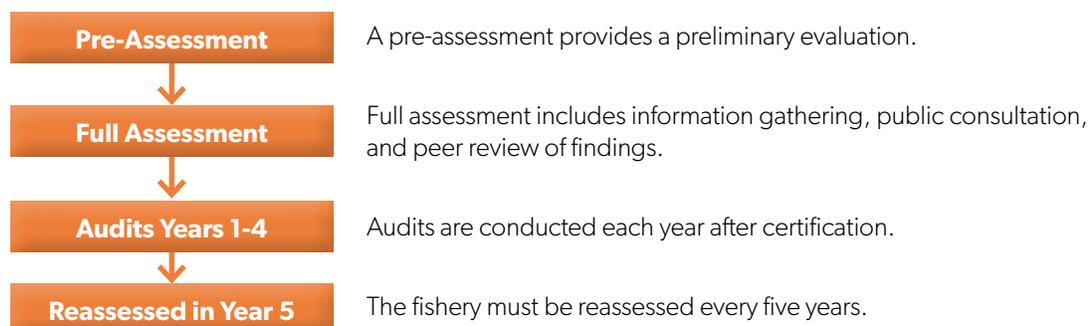
For many Canadian seafood marketers the MSC program is a key component of their brand promise. While we in Canada may feel that our resource management practices are world class, it is not enough. For seafood consumers and marketers worldwide the MSC logo and program provides a third-party verification that supports our claims and along with the attributes of the Canadian brand provides exporters with a powerful brand to achieve premium prices in markets worldwide.

When fisheries become certified, sellers of the certified product can use the MSC logo on packaging to provide assurance to buyers and consumers that the product is from a sustainable fishery.

The MSC standard measures sustainability using **three broad principles**:

- **Principle 1:** Sustainable fish stock – The fishery operates in a way that protects the target stock and allows fishing to continue indefinitely.
- **Principle 2:** Environmental impacts – The fishery does not compromise the abundance or diversity of other species and fishing habitats.
- **Principle 3:** Effective management – The fishery meets all laws and has an effective management system.

A certification normally takes up to 18 months and monitoring of compliance is ongoing.



## Atlantic Canada

There are nearly 500,000 mt of landings annually in Atlantic Canada that are MSC certified. This is 72% of all landings and 87% of the landed value using the latest available DFO data (2014). This ensures N.S. supplies meet the needs of the most demanding buyers around the globe.

## MSC Fisheries

In Nova Scotia there are 12 certified fisheries and 1 in the assessment process. There have been conditions associated with each certification. These conditions normally relate to progress regarding fishery Reference Points (RPs), Harvest Control Rules (HCRs), and impact of the fishery on bycatch species, including SARA species and benthic habitat. Often there is need for more information on bycatch. Of particular concern to the MSC is the fishery impact on species of concern such as wolffish.

## Relevant Fisheries

Initially, MSC certified fisheries were led by offshore interests but for the past number of years all major inshore fisheries have also entered the program. The most relevant fisheries to the inshore sector are lobster, haddock, scallop, snow crab and shrimp.

Fishery	Conditions	Status
Haddock	5	Reassessment Jan 2016
Halibut	9 all closed	3rd Audit April 2017
Herring 4T-16F	3	1st Audit Nov 2016
Lobster: Inshore	5	1st Audit April 2016
Lobster: Offshore	4 all closed	1st Audit Reassessed Jun 2016
Scallop: Full Bay	8	3rd Audit Dec 2016
Scallop: Offshore	5 all closed	1st Audit Reassessed Jun 2016
Shrimp Trawl	3	2nd Audit Reassessed April 2017
Snowcrab	4 all closed	Reassessment Sep 2016
Surf Clam	3 all closed	4th Audit Dec 2016
Swordfish: Harpoon	4, 2 closed	Under Reassessment
Swordfish: Longline	11, 5 closed	3rd Audit Feb 2016
Redfish	na	In assessment
Herring	na	In assessment

## Impact on Harvesters

Most conditions require actions by DFO or the MSC certified client group. However, some conditions impact harvesters either directly (they need to do something) or indirectly (DFO management decision impact). The conditions associated to inshore fisheries that may impact harvesters are summarized and further discussed.

Performance Indicator	Lobster	Haddock	Scallop	Snow Crab	Shrimp
Reference Points			X	X	
Harvest Control Rules	X		X	X	
Mackerel Bait	X				
Bycatch	X	X	X		X
Habitat Impact & Strategy			X		X
Fishery Objectives in IFMP			X	X	
Research Plan	X			X	X

## Lobster

Harvesters may have to participate or may be impacted in the following ways for each of these conditions:

Condition	Year	Harvester Impact	Evidence Required
Harvest Control Rules	2019	Yes	HCR's must be implemented.
Mackerel Bait	2018	Possibly	Demonstrate lobster fishing does not hinder mackerel stock recovery.
Bycatch	2018	Yes	Collect and monitor bycatch interaction.
Research Plan	2018	No	Document and annually update research plan and findings.

- **Harvest control rules:** Determine which effort reduction tools may be used if stocks fall into the cautious zone. Participate in modeling of impact of harvest control rules selected.
- **Mackerel bait:** It may be necessary to provide bait use information for each LFA in order to demonstrate bait use does not hinder mackerel stock recovery. However, if the 2017 stock assessment indicates stock improvement this may not be necessary.
- **Bycatch:** Gather and report bycatch information for most LFAs. Monitor change to bycatch interactions over time.

## Haddock

Harvesters may have to participate or may be impacted in the following ways for each of these conditions:

Condition	Year	Harvester Impact	Evidence Required
Bycatch	2020	Likely	Cod mortality must be maintained at level that enables recovery.
	2020	Likely	Skate mortality must be maintained at level that enables recovery.
	2018	Yes	4X5Y LL and OT fleet will likely have increased observer coverage.

- **Cod:** Bycatch continues to exceed established targets. Further measures to exclude cod and verification of cod encounters (observer coverage) may be necessary.
- **Skate:** A conservation strategy is in place but must be proven to be effective, measures to monitor discards and increased observer coverage may be necessary.

## Scallop

Harvesters may have to participate or may be impacted in the following ways for each of these conditions:

Condition	Year	Harvester Impact	Evidence Required
Reference points	2016/17	Yes	Harvesters must be consulted in development of reference points.
Harvest control rules	2016/17	Yes	Harvesters must be consulted in development of harvest control rules.
Bycatch	2019	Yes	Collaborate to develop appropriate monitoring coverage, implement and monitor bycatch reporting system
Habitat impact	2018	Possibly	Document habitat structure, determine impact, develop and monitor a strategy.
Fishery objectives	2018	Yes	Harvesters must be consulted in development of objectives to manage impact on directed and non directed species and the ecosystem.
Management evaluation	2018	Yes	Annual post season meetings must include discussion regarding bycatch and ecosystems.

- **Consultations:** Harvesters must be consulted and participate in finalizing reference points, harvest control rules, development of a bycatch data collection system, and development of fishery objectives.
- **Bycatch:** It is possible that observer requirements may increase (especially in 29A) in order to validate bycatch encounters, and survivability of bycatch.

## Snow Crab

All conditions are closed. However, Harvest Control Rules are not well understood. The Reference Points are based on the 'carrying capacity', and when the carrying capacity changes each year the reference points move in relation to the fishable biomass. This results in confusion when the fishable biomass declines and the carrying capacity remains the same or increases. Confusion increases when catches per trap remain high, though fishable biomass declines. This combined capacity and fishable biomass model is successful when catch rates remain consistently high, which indicates a balance of stock abundance in a geographical area.

## Shrimp

All conditions are closed with no specific impact on harvesters.

## Who to Contact

To obtain further information about MSC certification or the conditions related to any of these inshore fisheries please use the client group contacts provided:

Lobster:	Geoff Irvine	(902) 497-9128
Haddock:	Kris Vascotto	(902) 526-4582
Scallop:	Joy Fry	(902) 742-9101
Snow Crab:	Peter Norsworthy	(902) 497-4134
Shrimp:	Derek Butler	(709) 726-3730