



French-language Services Plan

2024–2025

*Department of Fisheries
and Aquaculture*

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French-language Services Plan
Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
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Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : « Plan de services en français 2024-2025 »

Message from Deputy Minister Jason Hollett

The Acadian and Francophone populations are essential to Nova Scotia's history and culture and play a significant role in the aquaculture and fishing sectors of the economy. By committing to the Hello/Bonjour! programme, interacting with the Acadian and francophone communities, and increasing the prevalence and awareness of French-language services, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture is committed to effectively implementing the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations.

We look forward to advancing our work with the Acadian and francophone community, the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie, and other governmental departments and agencies working to improve French-language services in the province. We will continue to take a coordinated approach to the delivery of French-language services.

I am delighted to present the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture's 2024–2025 French-language Services Plan. As always, I invite residents of Nova Scotia and representatives of the business community to offer ideas on how the Department may collaborate with the Acadian and francophone populations to expand our industries and services in Nova Scotia.

Jason Hollett
Deputy Minister

What we're doing to contribute to the growth of the Acadian and francophone community

The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture's French-language Service Plan outlines the steps that were taken last year, as well as those that will be taken this year to further the provision of French-language services. Through this on-going work, the Department makes every effort to preserve and support Acadian and francophone communities in Nova Scotia.

We believe Nova Scotians should have access to quality government services in French and this plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our programmes, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. We support Nova Scotians in requesting services from government in either English or French. We also encourage Acadians and francophones to have their voices heard by participating on agencies, boards, and commissions, which are regularly advertised by the Executive Council Office.

We endeavour to fulfil our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations. To achieve this aim, we collaborate regularly with other designated public institutions across government, including the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie, through the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. As we continue to maintain and build upon our French-language services, we welcome feedback on our progress, and invite you to share your comments or questions by contacting our French-language Services Coordinator. Should you wish to make a formal complaint regarding French-language services, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

French-language services coordinator:

Stacy Bruce email: Stacy.Bruce@novascotia.ca Tel : 902-956-9082

Senior Corporate Policy Strategist / French Language Services Coordinator / Fisheries and Aquaculture

Stratégiste principal en politiques d'entreprise / Coordonnateur des services en français / Pêches et Aquaculture

Services we offer in French

- Offer of services in French through the *Hello/Bonjour!* program throughout various regions of the province.
- French report of the Maritime Lobster Panel (*Rapport du Groupe d'experts sur l'industrie du homard des Maritimes*).
- The Nova Scotia Seafood brand was translated for use in France.
- International fisheries resource meetings involving St-Pierre and Miquelon (France) occur in French.
- Programs and materials originating from the federal government are made available to clients in both official languages.
- Yearly French-language services plan.
- Departmental organizational charts.

How we communicate with the public in French

The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture responds to verbal and written communication, including invoicing and project administration documents, from Acadian and francophone communities, institutions, and businesses in their language of choice.

Departmental French-speaking staff members are available at the Yarmouth, Pictou, and Truro offices to offer initial services in French through the *Hello/Bonjour!* program and to also assist French clients with their requests. As required, the Department engages Communications Nova Scotia translation services.

New employees are advised of the appropriate process to follow when offering services to French-speaking clients through regular orientation sessions. The Department also supports staff enrolment in French-language courses sponsored by the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie with the goal of increasing French-language capacity in the department.

What we did to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2023–24

- Calls, inquiries, and requests for assistance received in French were responded to in French.
- New staff received information on French-language services information via the French Language Services Coordinator.
- Staff were provided updates about French-language services across government, including *Acadie at a Glance* training, the *Hello/Bonjour!* program and French-language courses supported by the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie.
- The Department contributed to the Government's annual progress report on French-language Services.
- The *Bonjour!* pin to identify French-speaking staff that volunteered to offer initial services in French was distributed to staff that volunteered to participate in the *Hello/Bonjour!* program.
- Increased employee and senior management awareness and obligations of the *French-Language Services Act* and Regulations.
- Departmental French-language Services Coordinator represented the Department during regular meetings of the French-language Services Coordinating Committee.
- The 2023-2024 French-language Services Plan was posted on the Departmental website.
- The Centre for Marine Applied Research released a series of free online bilingual classroom educational resources available in both English and French for grades P-6.
- A French version of the "Aquaculture and Underwater Heritage Preservation" brochure was produced and posted to the DFA website.

How we plan to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2024–25

Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administrative frameworks

- Integrate French-language services into the corporate planning process as appropriate.
- Conduct internal survey of all departmental staff to determine internal French language skills and recruit volunteer candidates for the *Hello/Bonjour!* program.
- Support French-language training for staff and explore options to address the challenges of training staff in rural areas.
- Deputy Minister will continue to champion French-language services and to raise awareness among staff about government initiatives that improve service delivery to the Acadian and Francophone community.
- Build awareness into the Department's New Staff Orientation Session.

Develop and deliver quality French-language services and programmes to the public

- Produce French versions of materials describing the aquaculture licensing and leasing process.
- Program information on the Atlantic Fisheries Fund is available in both official languages.
- Developing resources to offer assistance in completing Crown Loan applications in French.
- Increase employee awareness of and obligation to the *French-Language Services Act* and Regulations.
- Increase active offers of French-language services to clients by encouraging staff training and increasing the visibility and promotion of the Hello/*Bonjour!* program.
- Continue to translate pertinent documents and increase French content on departmental websites.
- Continue consideration given when developing promotional materials and industry outreach programming to include version in French.

Maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community

- Strive to meet the service needs of the Acadian and francophone community.
- Display the “Bonjour!” sign which lets the public know our organization will make an effort to offer French-language services.
- For regulatory changes requiring consultations, plans to be developed to include consultations with Francophone industry members.
- Work closely with the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie regarding the implementation of the *French-Language Services Act* and Regulations, including seeking advice and guidance on public consultations and translation of documents.

The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture continues to acknowledge and recognize the importance of Acadian and francophone communities and is committed to working together to advance the aquaculture and fishing industries within these communities. The Department will continue to consult and seek input from the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie to develop ways to further our efforts to improve our support through French-language capacity and to making our resources and services available in French.