Conservation Harvesting Plan

LOBSTER– AREA 22 – MAGDALEN ISLANDS FLEET
SEASON 2026

Approved May 01, 2026

1. Application

This Conservation Harvesting Plan (CHP) applies to the Lobster licence holder's fleet of the area 22.

2. Fishing Areas

The fishing areas coordinates are listed in the Conditions of licence and are also indicated on the fishing areas maps.

3. Fishing closures

3.1 Coral and sponge Conservation Areas in the Estuaruy and Gulf of St. Lawrence

All fishing activities that use bottom-contact gear or gear designed to come into contact with the sea bed, including but not limited to bottom trawls, dredges, gillnets, bottom longlines, bottom seines and traps, are forbidden in the conservation areas.

For more information and maps of the eleven coral and sponge conservation areas, please visit the dedicated DFO website Coral and sponge conservation measures in the Estuary and Gulf of St. Lawrence

3.2 Other Area Closures

3.2.1 Pursuant to the *Atlantic Fishery Regulations, 1985*, lobster fishing is prohibited in the Magdalen Islands lagoons.

3.2.2 Fishing is also prohibited in a sector of the Grande-Entrée channel and in the aquaculture sites under federal lease. The coordinates of these areas are described in the *Conditions of licence.*

4. Fishing Seasons

The fishing season usually runs from early May to early July and includes 54 fishing days.

The fishing season established above is in effect for the duration of this PPAC. It represents the maximum fishing period, subject to, among other things, specific orders and closed seasons. Accordingly, opening dates may vary depending on specific circumstances and fisheries management considerations, including industry requests, while closures may be brought forward, particularly for conservation reasons.

Opening and closing fishing dates will be confirmed through *Notices to Fish Harvesters* or *Variation Orders*.

Fishing (lifting of traps) is authorized during the period comprised between 5 h and 21:30 h, from Monday to Saturday, with the exception of the last two fishing days of the season when the fishing schedule does not apply. If, for exceptional reasons beyond his or her control, a licence holder is unable to respect the fishing schedule in effect, he (she) must contact a DFO Fishery Officer to obtain authorization to deviate from the established schedule for that day.

Fishing remains unauthorized on Sundays, the day the traps are set and the day after the traps are set.

Moreover, to encourage the safest possible setting of traps for all lobster licence holders, a Weather Condition Monitoring Protocol is in place in order to postpone the setting of traps when, at 15:30 h the day before the opening, the wind forecast is more than 20 knots for the following morning.

It should be reminded that it is the responsibility of the captain to acquaint himself with the marine safety notices published by Environment and climate change Canada and Transport Canada as well as with the standards and best practices in marine safety and to take all measures necessary to insure a safe fishery during the period where fishing is authorized.

5. Number of licences and access

325 licences.

6. Management Regime

Competitive fishery managed by controlling fishing effort.

7. Catch management

7.1 Characteristics of authorized catches

The minimum size allowed for keeping catches is 83 mm. The maximum size is 145 mm.

It is prohibited to have female lobsters carrying eggs in one's possession.

7.2 Hauling of traps

Licence holders are not authorized to haul their traps more than once per day.

7.3 Discarding Incidental Catches

All fish, exept male common crabs, caught incidentally while fishing under a lobster fishing licence must returned to the water at the exact location where they were caught, and if the fish are alive, in a manner that causes them the least harm.

8. Fishing Gear

8.1 Number of Authorized Fishing Gear

Licence holders are authorized to use 273 traps.

8.2 Characteristics of Fishinf Gear

The requirements and prohibitions regarding, in particular, dimensions, escape mechanisms, escape panels, ropes ans trap lines are presented in the *Conditions of licence.*

Traps autorized have a maximum outside dimensions not exceeding 82 cm in length, 61 cm in width and 50 cm in height, regardless of the shape of the trap.

8.3 Hauling and soaking duration

It is the responsibility of fishers to haul their fishing gear at least once every 72 hours.

Under the *Fisheries Act*, it is forbidden to place fishing gear in the water or on the shore for the sole purpose of soaking, at any time. A trap without a net and not capable of catching and/or holding fish is not considered as a fishing gear.

8.4 Gear marking

All traps used for fishing must bear a single valid annual tag with a unique identification number. Fishermen must obtain their tags from suppliers approved by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).

The minimum requirements regarding the number and position of colour markings are details in the Conditions of licence. Please refer to the *Notice to Fish Harversters* of August 14, 2020.

It is prohibited to have on board a fishing vessel an untagged trap. Licence holders are authorized to keep on board the fishing vessel two replacement traps, as long as they bear a valid tag.

In addition to the regulatory requirement to mark buoys with the vessel registration number (VRN), licensees must add a sequential number to each main buoy in order to be able to individually identify each fishing gear.

8.5 Requirement to Report Lost and Retrieved Gear

The licence holder and fishing vessel operator must report any loss or recovery of fishing gear. Reports regarding the loss or recovery of gear must be submitted to DFO through the online Fishing Gear Reporting System or by completing and submitting the Loss Fishing Gear Form or the Retrieval of previously reported lost fishing gear form, wich are avaiblable online and attached to the *Conditions of licence*.

9. Marine Mammal interaction Reporting

Licence holders and fishing vessel operators must provide information regarding all interactions with a marine mammal that occur during fishing expeditions in accordance with the Conditions of Licence. To do so, the licence holder and fishing vessel operator must complete the section reserved for that purpose in its ELOG or the marine mammal interaction form available on the Report a marine mammal or sea turtle incident or sighting page and attached to the Conditions of licence, and it must be submitted as per the instructions provided on the form.

In addition, if you observe a dead or distressed animal, please contact Marine Mammal Emergencies as soon as possible at 1-877-722-5346. If possible, do not hesitate to take photos or videos that will allow DFO to assess the situation and identify the species.

10. Fishing Activities Declaration and Monitoring

10.1 LogBook

Licence holder must keep a true record of their fishing activities and catches in their in their Electronic logbook (Elog) in accordance with their Conditions of licence.

The use of an electronic logbook (Elog) is mandatory. Fish harvesters must use a client application approved by Fisheries and Oceans Canada for the Quebec region for the form ELOG – Logbook – Lobster. Furthermore, fish harvesters must have obtained and installed their Elog Key in their client application in order to allow data transmission to the Department.

The Elog must be completed for each fishing expedition and “closed” before landing. A fishing expedition means a voyage that commences at the time a fishing vessel leaves a port to engage in fishing and terminates at the time fish caught during that period are offloaded. Hence, when a fisher goes back to port for a reason other than for offloading fish and leaves port again, the fishing expedition goes on until fish are offloaded.

To consult the list of client applications approved by the Department and to obtain your Elog key, visit Fisheries and Ocean’s web page at the following address: Electronic logbooks (ELOGs).

To request a modification to data that has been transmitted to Fisheries and Oceans, you must communicate with the client support service at 1-877-535-7307.

10.2 Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)

As announced in the *Fishers’ Notice* of November 26, 2025, the implementation of the VMS will take effect starting with the 2027 fishing season.

Vessels will be required to be equipped with an active VMS approved by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Each licence holder must register their VMS with DFO prior to the start of fishing activities. Data must be transmitted every 5 minutes.

The current list of DFO-approved VMS units and the procedure and form to register a VMS unit are available at National Vessel Monitoring System page.

11. Specific Provisions Applicable to the Fishery

11.1 Characteristics and Use of Boats

Licence holders or fishing vessel operators may use fishing vessels with a length overall (LOA) of less than 15.24 metres.

11.2 Simultaneous fisheries

No person on board the fishing vessel must participate in recreational fishing activities of any kind.

The licence holder and fishing vessel operator who hold a commercial fishing licence for whelk and/or rock crab and/or toad crab (hyas sp.) are not authorized to fish these species during the whole duration of the lobster fishing season in area 22.

12. Species At Risk Act

Pursuant to the Species at Risk Act, no person shall kill, harm, harass, capture, take, possess, collect, buy, sell or trade an individual or any part or derivate of a wildlife species designated as extirpated, endangered or threatened.

All incidental captures of species at risk must be immediately returned to the water where they were captured and, if the animal is still alive, in the manner that causes it the least harm. All incidental captures of species at risk must be recorded in the « Species at Risk » section of the logbook. Furthermore, all interactions with species at risk, notably the North Atlantic Right Whale, the Blue Whale (Atlantic population) and the Beluga Whale (St. Lawrence Estuary population) must be recorded in this section of the logbook.

These requirements are additional to any obligation to declare an interaction with a marine mammal using the prescribed form (see section Marine mammal interaction reporting).

13. Crew registry

All independent core licence holder and their approved substitute designated operators must keep records of all the crew members working aboard the bessel on every fishing trip in accordance with its *Conditions of licence*. This requirement does not apply to pre-1979 corporation licence holders, midshore licence holders nor to any holder of a licence issued under the authority of the *Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences Regulations*. For further details, refer to the March 17th, 2021 Notice to fish harvesters, New inshore regulations or contact the Customer support at 1-877-535-7307 or fishing-peche@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

14. Discharge of waste

The licence holder and fishing vessel operator are prohibited from discarding in Canadian fisheries waters from their vessel any item that may be harmful to fish or fish habitat. Please refer to the following Notice to Fish harvesters : New condition of licence relating to discharge of garbage.

15. *Conditions of licence*

To obtain their Conditions of licence, fish harvester must access the National Online Licensing System. For National Online Licensing System assistance, please contact customer support by phone at 1-877-535-7307 or by email at fishing-peche@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

Note: in the event of a discrepancy between the French and English versions of the CHP, the French version shall prevail.

Approved by :

Maryse Lemire
Fisheries Management Regional Director
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Quebec

For any question regarding this CHP

You may call at :
Magdelen Island area : 418-986-2095

For additional information

Please visit our Fisheries web page (dfo-mpo.gc.ca).