



Federal AIS Funding, Program, and Auditor General Report

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Overview

- DFO's Activities on Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS): Update on the AIS National Core Program (AIS NCP) and collaboration with western provinces
- Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD)'s Audit on Aquatic Invasive Species 2019: recommendations and commitments
- Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans (FOPO) Report



DFO's Activities on AIS

- Budget 2017 allocated \$43.8 million over 5 years and \$10.6 million ongoing to DFO for AIS activities, including (on-going funding):
 - **AIS NCP**: \$3.4 million/year
 - Renewed Asian Carp Program: \$3.45 million/year
 - Sea Lamprey Control Program: \$2.2 million/year
 - DFO Science: \$1.1 million/year
- **AIS NCP** has grown to 25 dedicated staff across Canada (7 regions, including NCR)
- 7 new enforcement fishery officers in Edmonton, Winnipeg, Burlington, and Quebec City by 2020/2021



Green Crab, PAC



Tunicates, NL



Sampling, QC

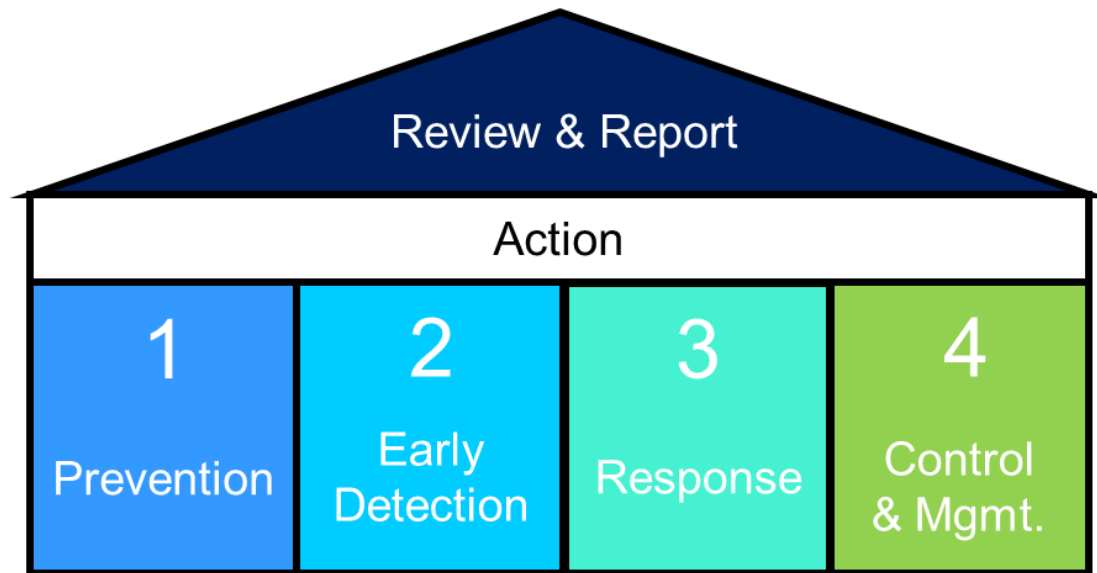
DFO's AIS National Core Program

DFO's lead on AIS, including

- Implementing the *AIS Regulations* which came into force on May 29, 2015 under the Fisheries Act
- Collaborating with partners including Provinces, Territories, other Federal Departments (e.g., ECCC), for example through the National Aquatic Invasive Species Committee (NAISC)
- Coordinating reporting for:
 - AIS National Core Program
 - Asian Carp Program
 - Sea Lamprey Control Program

AIS NCP: Mission and Vision

Mission: to implement the *AIS Regulations* and act on scientific and other advice according to the 4 international AIS pillars, and to review and report on AIS.



Vision: to protect Canadian freshwater and marine ecosystems from the introduction and spread of AIS, to mitigate the negative impacts of established AIS populations, and to benefit Canada's biodiversity, economy and society.

Update - AIS National Core Program

- Integrating AIS in DFO's regulatory environment under the *Fisheries Act*, *Species at Risk Act* and *AIS Regulations*
 - AIS NCP Pilot project and an updated website (launched May 1st 2019)
- Addressing CESD Audit and FOPO Report recommendations
- Delineating roles and responsibilities at the international border, and addressing enforcement gaps and clarifying *AIS Regulations* training needs with Cdn Border Services Agency
- National Aquatic Invasive Species Committee (NAISC):
 - *AIS Regulations* provincial and territorial training
 - “Don't Let It Loose” nationally consistent messaging
 - Collaborative funding
 - eDNA science advice

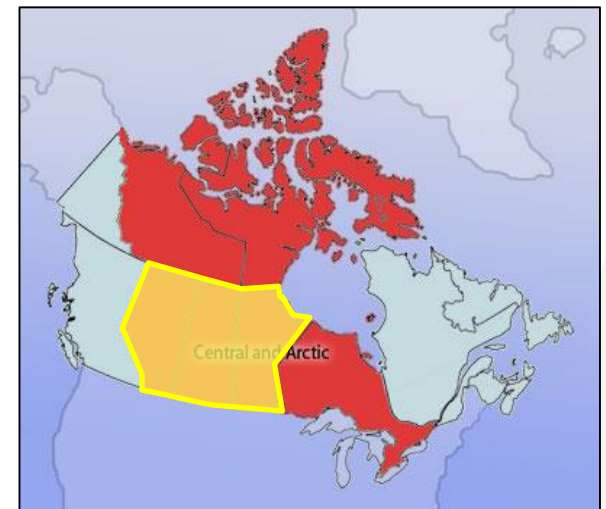
Funding Projects in Western Canada



- 2nd year of Canadian Council on Invasive Species' Clean Drain Dry (CDD) pilot project in BC (3 years of funding through grants and contributions)
 - Significant effort towards ameliorating communication of the CDD National Working Group
 - 34 partners approved to install CDD signs and resource packages (rack cards, decals, floating key chains, window clings)
 - Currently developing PSAs, commercials, and a social media outreach plan

AIS NCP Central and Arctic Region - Activities

- C&A region = 2/3 of Canada's landmass
- Focused AIS activities in Prairies (MB, SK, AB) given limited capacity/resources
- DFO working directly with Prairie partners through the Prairies AIS Steering Committee
- Activities include:
 - Addressing gaps at the international border with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)
 - Developing an Incident Command System for responding to AIS threats
 - Supporting early detection and research



Red area: C&A region
Yellow: C&A's AIS Core Program

AIS at the International Border

- Watercraft traffic is a high-risk pathway for AIS, including high-priority Zebra and Quagga mussels
- Western provinces have stressed the importance of addressing enforcement gaps at the international border
- Audit recommended DFO and CBSA improve collaboration; work under way and next steps include:
 - Delineating roles and responsibilities
 - Support CBSA with training and tools
 - Engage CBSA at both national and regional levels



Prairies Incident Command System (ICS)

- Management system to effectively respond to immediate threats (e.g. forest fires, missing persons, AIS)
- Successfully used by Asian Carps Program in Great Lakes; AIS NCP leveraging this knowledge to enable coordinated rapid response in the Prairies
- Hosted 1-day ICS workshop with Prairie provinces



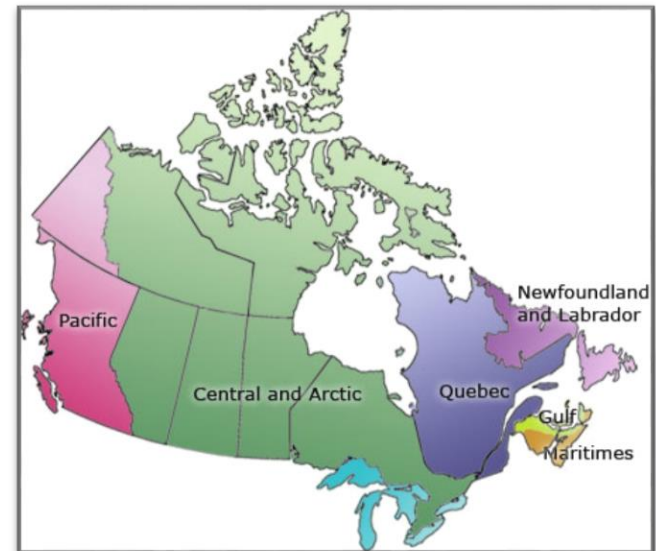
Early Detection and Science Support

- When requested, AIS NCP has supported early detection of AIS in the Prairies
- DFO Science is testing eDNA for early detection, including sampling, lab, and methodology



AIS NCP Pacific Region -Activities

- Invasive mussel management and control activities are lead by BC's provincial government; DFO plays a supporting role and is communicating regularly with provincial representatives.
- DFO Pacific region continues to collaborate closely with Yukon government to develop an invasive mussel defence program for the territory.
- DFO is developing an early detection monitoring program for European green crabs focusing on the Salish Sea



CESD Audit on AIS (April 2019)

Background:

- The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development Audit on AIS was initiated in February 2018; the final report was tabled in April 2019
- The report was presented to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development (ENVI Committee) on June 10, 2019
- The audit focused on whether Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canada Border Services Agency implemented adequate measures to prevent AIS from becoming established in Canadian waters
- AIS can devastate biodiversity and ecosystem functions, and can have negative impacts on communities, Indigenous peoples, infrastructure, recreation and local economies

CESD Audit on AIS (April 2019)

Overall Findings:

- DFO and CBSA did not take the steps required to prevent AIS from becoming established in Canada and did not adequately enforce the *AIS Regulations*
- DFO did not determine which species and pathways posed the greatest threats and were most important to regulate
- DFO has not distinguished roles and responsibilities with provinces/territories
- DFO has taken significant action to prevent Asian Carps from becoming established in the Great Lakes

CESD Audit on AIS (April 2019)

Efforts underway at DFO to address recommendations include:

- Develop a national enforcement strategy by September 30, 2019
- Support CBSA in the development and implementation of training, procedures, and tools to address AIS at the border by March 31, 2020
- Develop a systematic approach to determine biological and socio-economic risk assessment needs by March 31, 2021
- Create a platform to track AIS and share data by March 31, 2022

For detailed commitment timelines, see the **Management Action Plan:**
<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ae-ve/audits-verifications/19-20/CESD-Report1-eng.html>

FOPO Report #25 (June 2019)

Aquatic Invasive Species: A National Priority

Objective: assess DFO's AIS resources and their distribution across Canada; determine if the AIS National Core Program has sufficient resources

9 recommendations based on testimony from DFO and 22 other organisations (NGOs, researchers, industry) at 3 public meetings between 29 April – 8 May, 2019

- Overlap with the CESD Audit, including accelerate efforts to deliver on Audit commitments, ensuring DFO has the resources needed to fulfill its mandate
- Establish a shared system of tracking and coordinating AIS programs across jurisdictions for prevention, monitoring, and rapid response
- Research eradication products/methods; acquire approvals for application
- Permit Eurasian Water Milfoil control activities in the Okanagan Basin
 - BC government is responsible for decision making regarding activities in waterways under their jurisdiction

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/421/FOPO/Reports/RP10579463/foporp25/foporp25-e.pdf>

Summary

- The AIS National Core Program is a new program that is still under development; DFO recognizes the important issue that is AIS for Canadians and the Canadian environment
- We are taking action to improve the management of AIS and to address the CESD Audit and FOPO Report recommendations
- Ongoing collaboration and coordination with provinces and territories is critical for preventing the introduction and spread of AIS



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