

**Federal Authority Advice Record (FAAR)****FAAR Response must be submitted by December 13, 2025**

Bécancour Port Terminal Expansion Project – B6 Wharf – Société du parc industriel et portuaire de Bécancour

Registry File: 90011

Department/Agency	Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
Lead Contact	Claudie Lacroix-Lepage, biologist, Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program
Full Address	850 de la Mer Rd, Mont-Joli (QC) G5H 3Z4
Email	<a href="mailto:Claudie.Lacroix-Lepage@dfo-mpo.gc.ca">Claudie.Lacroix-Lepage@dfo-mpo.gc.ca</a>
Telephone	N/A
Alternate Contact	Alexandre Bissonnette-Lafontaine, senior biologist, Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program ( <a href="mailto:Alexandre.Bissonnette-Lafontaine@dfo-mpo.gc.ca">Alexandre.Bissonnette-Lafontaine@dfo-mpo.gc.ca</a> )

1. Will your department or agency exercise a **power, perform a duty or function**, or provide **financial assistance**, related to the project to enable it to be carried out in whole or in part?

As relevant,

- a) Specify the power, duty or function, or financial assistance, and the likelihood that it will be required to construct the project, based on the Initial Project Description, as either Required, Potential, Likely, Unlikely or Not Required

According to the information provided in the Initial Project Description (IPD), here are the powers that DFO may need to exercise and their level of likelihood:

Likely: The scale of the proposed works within fish habitat makes it highly likely that the project will require an authorization under paragraphs 34.4(2)b) and 35(2)b) of the *Fisheries Act* (FA). This authorization would be required for the proposed works, undertakings, or activities that could result in the death of fish and/or the harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction of fish habitat.

Potential: DFO also considers it possible that the project could have effects on aquatic species at risk and/or their critical habitat under section 32 of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). Based on the IPD, it is likely that species listed under Schedule 1 of this Act are present in the project area.

Furthermore, one or more aspects of the project could be subject to the *Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations* under the FA, for which DFO has a regulatory role.

- b) Describe any associated Indigenous or public consultation, including timelines

If DFO determines that an authorization under the FA is required following the project review, DFO will have a duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate Indigenous communities whose Aboriginal or treaty rights may be affected by regulatory decisions made under the FA and SARA, pursuant to section 2.4 of the FA. This may involve consultation and/or accommodation regarding potential impacts on Indigenous peoples of Canada and/or the traditional use of lands and resources related to fish and fish habitat.

With respect to public consultations, DFO does not consult the public prior to issuing an FA authorization and/or a SARA permit; however, information on the issued authorization will be made available to the public through the FA registry and, if applicable, the SARA registry should an authorization under that Act also be required.

DFO will also support the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC), if required, during its Indigenous and public consultations on matters within DFO's mandate.

- c) Describe any associated information requirements (e.g., alternative means assessment, habitat offsetting), and specify those that may be coordinated with the impact assessment process, if an impact assessment is required

The information requirements associated with obtaining an authorization under paragraphs 34.4(2)b) and 35(2)b) of the FA are outlined in the [Applicant's Guide supporting the Authorizations Concerning Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Regulations](#). Additional information may be requested for obtaining a permit under SARA.

DFO recommends that the proponent review the following guidance documents to meet the above requirements:

- [Measures to protect fish and fish habitat](#)
- [Standards and codes of practice](#) for managing risks of harmful effects to fish and fish habitat
- [Fish and fish habitat protection policy statement, August 2019](#)
- [Policy for applying measures to offset harmful impacts to fish and fish habitat](#)
- [Periods of low risk \(when work can be carried out\) to fish and fish habitat in freshwater environments](#)
- [Guidelines for Watercourse Crossings in Quebec](#)
- [Aquatic species at risk map](#) and [species at risk public registry](#)
- [Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations](#)

Other relevant documents are available at the following link: [Request a review of your project near water](#).

Although DFO cannot issue an authorization or permit until the impact assessment under the *Impact Assessment Act* is completed, the authorization application and review process can proceed concurrently during the impact assessment process. In this regard, the proponent has already submitted a project review request to DFO on November 7, 2025. DFO is currently analyzing this request.

- d) Identify any associated project-specific guidance or issues of which the proponent should be aware, or information the proponent should provide

See Table 1 below

- e) Indicate whether your department or agency has identified any power that it will not be exercising or may not be able to exercise to allow the project to be carried out, in whole or in part.

As indicated in section (a), DFO is not in a position at this stage to rule out the exercise of its authorities. The need to obtain a permit under SARA will have to be determined during the detailed analysis of the project.

2. **Using Table 1**, identify project- and context- specific **key issues**, based on the expertise within your mandate<sup>1</sup> and the information in your possession, including the Initial Project Description, any exchanges with the proponent or others related to the project and known means to address the effects of the project. For each key issue:
- a) Specify the key issue (e.g., specific species and location)
  - b) Specify the project component or activity linked to the key issue
  - c) Explain why it's a key issue based on:
    - i. biophysical effect pathway(s) from the specific project component or activity
    - ii. concern unique to the project or a priority within your mandate
    - iii. the issue being material<sup>2</sup> to decision making under the *Impact Assessment Act*

<sup>1</sup> Refer to the [Memoranda of Understanding with IAAC](#).

<sup>2</sup> An issue is material to decision making if its analysis is anticipated to affect the conclusions on (1) whether adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or direct and incidental adverse effects (collectively adverse federal effects) are likely not significant, or of low, medium or high significance; (2) appropriate mitigation measures for significant adverse federal effects; or (3) justification in the public interest.

- d) Identify how the issue could be resolved, including through means other than an impact assessment
- e) Identify additional information the proponent could provide including to give confidence on how the issue can be addressed through other means.

---

Name and title of Departmental /  
Agency Responder

---

Date

**Table 1: Key Issues to inform the impact assessment process**

This table should outline key issues to inform the impact assessment process, including whether an impact assessment is required and, if so, the scope of the assessment and tailoring of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines.

Key issues are the major concerns directly related to a project component or activity, the analysis of which is anticipated to be material to decision-making under the *Impact Assessment Act*.

Federal authorities' advice should be guided by the identification and resolution of key issues. If an impact assessment is required, it will be focused on key issues.

Comment ID	a) Key issue	b) Project component or activity	c)(i) Biophysical effect pathway(s)	c)(ii) Concern unique to the project or a priority within your mandate	c)(iii) Material to federal decision-making	d) Means for issue resolution	e) Additional information from the proponent
<p><i>Identify comments by organization and comment number.</i></p> <p><i>e.g.: IAAC-01</i></p>	<p><i>Specify the key issue (e.g., specific species and location).</i></p>	<p><i>Identify the project component or activity linked to the key issue.</i></p> <p><i>Be specific about the nature, scale, novelty and complexity or the component or activity.</i></p>	<p><i>Identify the specific biophysical effect pathway between the project component or activity and the affected environmental or human receptor (including Indigenous Peoples).</i></p>	<p><i>Describe why it's a key issue within the mandate of your department or agency, including in terms of priorities of the federal government and in terms of anticipated likelihood, severity or uncertainty of effects.</i></p> <p><i>Identify if the key issue is common for projects of this nature or in this sector, or whether it's unique to this project due to its complexity, size or novelty; a sensitive or rare receiving environment; and/or proximity of sensitive environmental or human receptors (including Indigenous Peoples).</i></p>	<p><i>Describe why the key issue is material to decision-making as either:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>an adverse effect within federal jurisdiction, or a direct or incidental adverse effect, that may be significant based on available evidence including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>federal experts' knowledge and experience with past project assessments;</i></li> <li>○ <i>presence of sensitive species, habitats or human receptors (including Indigenous Peoples);</i></li> <li>○ <i>novel or complex project activities, components or technologies;</i></li> <li>○ <i>high uncertainties in effects or in the effectiveness of mitigation measures;</i></li> <li>○ <i>unknown or unproven mitigation; or</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>a factor for the justification in the public interest anticipated to be material to decision-making such as a likely positive effect contributing to sustainability, to Canada's environmental obligations or climate change commitments or in supporting governmental priorities, such as reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Describe how the key issue could be resolved or addressed by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Any means, including powers, duties, functions, frameworks, policies or guidance that your department or agency has;</i></li> <li>• <i>Any means, including powers, duties, functions, frameworks, policies or guidance from another jurisdiction, including the province;</i></li> <li>• <i>Common, proven, well-understood or standard mitigation measures to mitigate the effect or effect pathway(s); or</i></li> <li>• <i>Commitments made by the proponent (e.g., in the Initial Project Description).</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Describe information the proponent can provide, or commitments the proponent can make, in their Response to the Summary of Issues that would provide confidence that the issue can be resolved by existing means.</i></p> <p><i>Consider whether information, studies, analyses or collaborative work with other authorities would be required to address the issue beyond existing means.</i></p>
<p>DFO-01</p>	<p>Significant direct impacts on fish habitat, including aquatic vegetation beds.</p>	<p>Construction of the new wharf and backfilling of the new storage area.</p>	<p>The construction of the new wharf and the backfilling of the new storage area will result in the destruction of a significant portion of fish habitat by converting aquatic habitats into terrestrial zones inaccessible to fish. The affected habitats include aquatic vegetation beds that are important for fish species that use them. These environments provide high-quality habitat for fish, offering spawning, feeding, and refuge functions against predators. Their destruction will therefore compromise key ecological functions and reduce the availability of suitable habitats for species survival, particularly for young-of-the-year Yellow</p>	<p>It is prohibited to cause the harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction of fish habitat unless the activity is authorized by DFO and complies with the established conditions.</p> <p>For this project, the destruction of high-quality fish habitats is unavoidable, as the port expansion cannot be carried out elsewhere and there are constraints upstream and downstream of the site. This type of issue related to prohibited effects on fish habitat is common to port expansion projects. However, the scale of the proposed works and the sensitivity of the habitats are significant.</p>	<p>The anticipated impacts on fish habitat are significant. They must be assessed and addressed by the proponent through the avoid-mitigate-offset approach. Detailed mitigation and offsetting measures will need to be provided to demonstrate their ability to reduce and counterbalance all expected adverse effects. The loss of fish habitats, particularly for Yellow Perch, Northern Pike, and Striped Bass, is among the concerns expressed by the W8banaki Nation.</p>	<p>Authorization under the FA/SARA.</p> <p>DFO will need to ensure during the regulatory phase that the proponent implements appropriate measures to avoid, mitigate, and offset the impacts of the proposed project on fish and fish habitat, including species at risk. Consultations with First Nations regarding these elements will also be required. Provincial authorizations from MELCCFP may also be required to address impacts on aquatic habitats.</p>	<p>Information may be provided either within the impact assessment or through DFO's regulatory process.</p>

			Perch, Northern Pike, and Pumpkinseed.				
DFO-02	Potential indirect effects on high-quality habitats located downstream of the port area, including spawning grounds, nursery areas, and aquatic vegetation beds.	Dredging for the foundations of the new wharf and the new vessel approach area, and backfilling of the new storage area.	The volume of sediments to be dredged is significant and will cause the dispersion of suspended matter within the basin and downstream of the port facilities. According to the environmental impact study submitted to MELCCFP as part of the renewal of SPIPB's ten-year maintenance dredging program, more than fifty fish species are present in the immediate vicinity of the Bécancour port basin. Confirmed spawning grounds for about ten species are also present, and the shores of the St. Lawrence downstream of the port facilities include several sites of interest for wildlife. In the littoral zone downstream of the port, there is a summer nursery area for several fish species, as well as aquatic vegetation beds important for the species that use them.	It is prohibited to harmfully alter, disrupt, or destroy fish habitat unless the activity is authorized by DFO and complies with the established conditions.  In the context of this project, the proponent does not appear to have considered the assessment of indirect impacts on fish habitats located downstream of the port in the IPD.	All potential impacts on fish and fish habitat must be assessed and identified to ensure they are addressed in compliance with the FA. As mentioned in the project's IPD, the loss of fish habitats—particularly for Yellow Perch, Northern Pike, and Striped Bass—is also among the concerns expressed by the W8banaki Nation.	Authorization under the FA/SARA  DFO will need to ensure during the regulatory phase that the proponent conducts the necessary studies to identify all impacts of the proposed project. Additional avoidance, mitigation, and offsetting measures may need to be implemented should potential indirect impacts arise.	Provide an assessment of the potential indirect effects of the proposed dredging on sensitive habitats located downstream of the port. The assessment should, at a minimum, be informed by site-specific hydro-sedimentary dynamics, the dredging methodology (including equipment and release rates), and the sediment characteristics (grain-size distribution) and total dredged volume.
DFO-03	Species at Risk: likely occurrence of Eastern Sand Darter, Hickorynut, and/or Striped Bass within the project area.	Dredging for the foundations of the new wharf and the new vessel approach area, and backfilling of the new storage area.	According to the IPD, several species at risk are likely present within a 5 km radius around the Port of Bécancour.  The IPD also indicates that mussel surveys were conducted in the port area and that individuals were not formally identified, although some appeared similar to the Hickorynut.	SARA prohibits killing an individual of a wildlife species listed as extirpated, endangered, or threatened, or harming, harassing, capturing, or taking it.	A detailed analysis of the potential presence of species at risk listed under Schedule 1 must be carried out to determine whether prohibited effects under SARA could result from the proposed project. If so, specific measures may be required, such as conducting surveys and relocating any Hickorynut individuals that may be present at the site.	Authorization under the FA/SARA.	The information on the biological and physical characteristics of the site, as well as on the potential presence of species, is preliminary in the IPD. Additional information is required, including mussel surveys in the area impacted by the works.
DFO-04	Information on certain elements of the project is limited in the IPD, which restricts the ability to identify potential issues and the measures required.	The information on the following project components is limited in the PID: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of the new wharf</li> <li>• Work methods</li> <li>• Temporary structures</li> <li>• Work schedule</li> <li>• Biological characterization</li> </ul>	Missing or limited information on the listed elements may affect the analysis of effects on fish and fish habitat. For example, compliance with periods of low risk (when work can be carried out), or the use of specific work methods could help mitigate certain impacts of the proposed works.	Under paragraphs 34.4(2)b) and 35(2)b) of the FA, it is prohibited to carry out any work, undertaking, or activity that causes the death of fish (except during fishing) or results in the harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction of fish habitat. These prohibitions, however, do not apply when the activity is authorized by DFO and conducted in accordance with the conditions set by DFO.	All potential impacts on fish and fish habitat must be assessed and identified to ensure they are addressed in compliance with the FA. The proponent must provide details on the listed components to ensure that impacts are adequately avoided, mitigated, and compensated under the FA.	The process of applying for authorization under the FA would require the proponent to provide these details on the planned works as part of their application. DFO must ensure during the regulatory phase that the proponent provides the necessary information on the proposed works to identify all potential project impacts. Additional avoidance, mitigation, and compensation measures may need to be implemented if required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of the new wharf, work methods, and temporary structures: According to the PID, five options are currently under consideration for the construction of the future wharf. Work methods (type and quantity of structures installed in the aquatic environment: piles, caissons, sheet piles, etc.), the need for prior dredging or excavation, or for protective riprap will vary depending on the selected option. Temporary structures and their impacts on fish and fish habitat will also depend on the chosen design. Detailed information on the selected design, work methods, and associated temporary structures must be</li> </ul>

							<p>provided for the project analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work schedule: Construction is expected to begin in summer/fall 2027. A more precise schedule must be provided to ensure that periods of low risk for fish and fish habitat (in-water works) are respected.</li> <li>• Description of the aquatic environment: Additional details must be included in a technical report during subsequent stages.</li> </ul>
DFO-05	Impacts of increased marine transportation.	Marine transportation associated with the project.	The increase in the number of vessels places additional pressure on fish habitat in the St. Lawrence, particularly due to wake effects. The cumulative effects of increased marine transportation have also been identified by First Nations as an activity likely to significantly and negatively affect their access to the territory and their use of resources, among other concerns.	The issue of increased marine transportation is common for projects of this nature. The risks associated with an increase in marine transportation are frequently raised by Indigenous communities during consultations.	<p>The issue of impacts related to increased marine transportation is an important consideration for decision-making, particularly due to the increase in wake effects, which can degrade shallow and shoreline habitats such as aquatic vegetation beds and emergent marshes. The effects of the analyzed project would be combined with those of other port projects on the St. Lawrence River that also involve increased commercial navigation. In addition to impacts on aquatic habitats, the cumulative effects of increased navigation have frequently been identified as a major concern by First Nations.</p> <p>DFO does not have the authority to regulate the modalities of commercial navigation. Identifying and addressing the cumulative effects of increased marine transportation on fish and fish habitat, as well as on First Nations, are key elements to consider in federal decision-making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct consultations with Indigenous communities at a spatial scale that accounts for potential impacts in other areas of the St. Lawrence where vessels will transit.</li> <li>• Implement compensatory measures to restore suitable habitat for the targeted fish species. The proponent is currently considering a shoreline project on the St. Lawrence near its facilities.</li> <li>• The regional assessment of the St. Lawrence River area initiated by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) should help identify more precisely the cumulative effects of increased marine transportation and the potential measures that could be implemented to mitigate and compensate for these effects.</li> </ul>	The anticipated increase in marine transportation associated with the construction of the new B6 wharf was described in the PID, but further details are needed to determine the number of vessels that will continue their transit upstream on the St. Lawrence.