

Fisheries and Sealing Division Strategic Plan

Year 2 Summary and Year 3 Plans

Update to Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

September 2025

Year 2 (2024-25) Implementation Summary:

The Fisheries and Sealing Division made significant progress in Year 2 of the Strategic Plan implementation, completing key initiatives while advancing long-term priorities across the three pillars: fisheries, sealing, and capacity building.

Major Accomplishments:

The Division strengthened international collaboration by building active relationships with Government of Greenland and Greenlandic companies and enhanced relationships with Inuit Organizations. A highlight was the successful delivery of the Nunavut Fisheries Symposium in February 2025, which enhanced visibility and engagement with communities across the territory. The Division expanded its regional presence by attending trade shows in all three regions and successfully staffed the Kugluktuk office with a Fisheries Sector Specialist position.

Financially, the Division secured significant additional funding Grants and Contribution Programs for 2024-25, with increased community funding applications including a significant Baffin Region request that was fulfilled. The sealing sector saw the rebranding of the Dressed Sealskin program to Qisiapiit based on community feedback, with program expansion to include more Designated Market Agents and additional seal species.

Other notable achievements included launching the Nuliajuk promotional campaign following attendance at Arctic Net, supporting cultural knowledge exchanges between Greenlandic and Nunavut seamstresses, and continuing active participation in transboundary meetings and the NFR working group.

Projects Deferred:

Several initiatives were postponed to Year 3 due to capacity limitations, delays in shared files, and pending federal funding decisions. Key deferrals included the advocacy plan for fisheries licensing, marketing initiatives review, and the Nuliajuk long-term research plan. Training-related initiatives were deferred as training facilities undergo changes, though meetings were held with Pinnguaq and other territorial training organizations.

Ongoing Initiatives:

Many strategic priorities remain in active development, reflecting the multi-year nature of the plan. Ongoing work includes advocacy with Qikiqtani Inuit Association and the Nunavut Fisheries Association regarding competitive fishery conversion, continued collaboration with Greenlandic companies, support for communities through the IQaluk program, and infrastructure inventory development. The Division continues small craft harbour advocacy and maintains ongoing support for inshore fisheries development for Nunavut.

Year 3 (2025-26) Implementation Plans:

Year 3 focuses on continuing momentum from Year 2 achievements while advancing deferred priorities and new strategic initiatives across all sectors.

Key Fisheries Initiatives:

A Fishers Knowledge exchange with Greenland is being planned in 2025-26 to be offered in 2026-27, building on the Memorandum of Understanding drafted in Year 2. The Division will conduct a market scan in Canada of fisheries products and hold fish plant meetings in fall 2025 to better understand challenges and barriers facing processing operations.

Sealing Sector Development:

A major focus will be planning and executing a sealing-specific symposium for 2026-27 to enhance collaboration and community engagement. The Division aims to re-establish the Nunavut sealing working group and develop workshops in partnership with elders and other stakeholders. Plans are underway to conduct an environmental scan of tanneries in remote locations, progressing feasibility studies for potential Nunavut-based processing capacity.

Capacity Building and Infrastructure:

The Division will continue efforts to fill remaining regional vacancies, including developing a business case to reinstate the Rankin Inlet position. Internal processes will be developed to assist communities in accessing territorial and federal programs. A comprehensive scan of training opportunities in Nunavut is planned for 2025, building partnerships with training organizations as facilities stabilize.

Research and Knowledge Sharing:

Development of the Nulijuk research report is scheduled for early 2026. The Division will engage partners to plan cultural training development, assessing capacity for Year 4/5 delivery of training programs for researchers working in Nunavut.

Year 3 represents a consolidation phase, building on established relationships and completed foundational work while positioning the Division for expanded programming and enhanced community support in the remaining years of the strategic plan.